

reason to think that those who had been miraculously fed had been joined by others who had not been so deeply impressed, and who gave utterance to different sentiments. These we here find cavilling at Christ's miracles and insinuating that they were not equal to those of Moses. Moses, they asserted, had fed the whole Jewish nation, and for that purpose had brought down bread from heaven.

Vv. 32, 33.—Our Saviour informs them that the bread given by Moses was not really heavenly bread, being a material substance given for the support of their mortal bodies; but that he who came down from God, and through whom eternal life was given to the whole world of believers, and not to one nation only, was alone entitled to be spoken of as bread from heaven.

V. 34.—Though they did not fully comprehend his meaning, yet many of them felt that he spoke of something precious, and greatly to be desired. Hence the prayer, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."

V. 35.—Our Lord here claims, as no other religious teacher ever did, to be himself the nourishment of those who received his doctrines. The great and glorious truths connected with his person, character and work, convert the soul and impart spiritual life, and as we are in daily need of bread to maintain the life of the body, so constant meditation on these truths, constant communion with Christ and prayer to him, are necessary to maintain the life of the soul. They who thus live near to Christ shall find all the restless longings of the heart satisfied, and shall enjoy that peace which passeth knowledge.

Vv. 36, 37.—The Jews had witnessed the most wonderful proofs that Jesus was the Messiah and yet had not been convinced. No man can come to Jesus, if he be not given to him by the Father. Those who are chosen by the Father, that is, the elect, will alone choose Christ. The gracious declaration in the end of the 37th verse, is an ample encouragement to every sinner to come.

V. 38.—The Saviour comes not to carry out any private purpose of his own. His will in all respects corresponded with that of the Father.

V. 39.—Proves the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. It is the will of God that all who are given shall come, and that all that come shall be saved.

LESSONS:

1. It is our duty to pray in secret.
2. Nothing is too difficult when we act by the command of Christ.
3. In times of trouble and danger Christ will come to our relief.
4. Pride often comes before a fall.
5. We ought carefully to examine the

motives which govern our conduct in regard to religion.

DOCTRINE:

Christ is our hope in trouble,—Matt. xi. 28; Matt. xiv. 30, 31; Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

Missionary Intelligence.

The Missionaries and the Bombardment of Tanna and Erromanga.

The Foreign Mission Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland being met in Glasgow, on the 8th of Nov., 1866, entered upon the consideration of the share which their missionaries had taken in the bombardment of Tanna and Erromanga, by H. M. S. Curacoa. The secretary [the Rev. John Kay, of Castle-Douglas], read the following statement of facts, as submitted by Dr. Steel, at a public meeting held in Sydney, in August, 1866:—said statement being the result of an interview between Drs. Laing and Steel and Sir Wm. Wiseman, Commodore in H. M. Navy.

The Rev. Dr. Steel addressed the meeting. He said, having had an earnest desire to arrive at the truth respecting the connection of the *Curacoa's* visit to the New Hebrides and the Presbyterian missionaries on these islands, I was very happy to have an opportunity of an interview with Commodore Sir William Wiseman. Nothing could exceed the courtesy or the frankness of the Commodore. He readily and fully answered all inquiries, and indicated his willingness to give us copies of any papers he possessed that we might wish.

1. He stated that his visits to these islands did not then originate with the missionaries, and that his conduct was not in consequence of the request of the missionaries. He had reports and despatches from the Home and Colonial Governments that required him to visit the islands. There had been considerable delay in prosecuting the matter, for the New Zealand war and the wreck of H.M.S. *Orpheus* had prevented any of the vessels of the navy visiting these islands since the complaints and memorials had been sent to the Government—all the documents had been lost in the *Orpheus*. The visit of the *Curacoa* in 1865 was the first opportunity since the visit or H.M.S. *Pelorus* in 1861. The last-named vessel made a very hurried visit, and there was not sufficient time to enter into the matters requiring attention. The report sent to the Admiralty directed special attention to Tanna and Erromanga. Since that period other outrages have been committed on British subjects. It was, therefore, the intention of the Commodore to