

Lesson IV.

JESUS TEACHING HOW TO PRAY

July 22, 1906

Luke 11 : 1-13. Commit to memory vs. 9, 10. Read Luke 10 : 1-23, 38-42 ; 18 : 1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT—Lord, teach us to pray.—Luke 11 : 1.

1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, ¹ as John also taught his disciples.

² And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, ² Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. ³ Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

⁴ Give us day by day our daily bread. ⁴ And forgive us our sins ; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. ⁵ And lead us not into temptation ; ⁶ but deliver us from evil.

⁵ And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves ;

⁶ For a friend of mine ⁶ in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him ?

⁷ And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not : the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed ; I cannot rise and give thee.

⁸ I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. ⁹ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. ¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. ¹¹ If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone ? ¹² Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ? ¹³ Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion ? ¹⁴ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children : how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?

Revised Version—¹ even as ; ² Omit our, and which art in heaven ; ³ Omit remainder of verse ; ⁴ we ourselves ; ⁵ bring ; ⁶ is come to me from a journey ; ⁷ And of which of you that is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give ; ⁸ or a fish, and he for ; ⁹ give him.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—November or December. A D. 29 ; somewhere in Perea.

Connection—The Lesson follows close on the parable of the Good Samaritan.

I. THE PRAYER.—1. As he was praying ; Possibly, as Farrar thinks, at early dawn (see Mark 1 : 35). Prayer was Jesus' constant practice, chs. 3 : 21 ; 5 : 16 ; 6 : 12 ; 9 : 18, 28, 29. Luke's is the Gospel that tells us most about the prayers of Jesus. Teach us to pray ; for what ? with what words ? in what spirit ? As John (the Baptist) . . . his disciples. We do not know whether John gave his disciples any form of prayer, but Jewish rabbis were accustomed to do this for their pupils.

2. When ye pray, say ; not always in the same words, for the form of the prayer in Matthew (ch. 6 : 9-13) differs from that given here. Besides, Jesus himself prayed in different words from these. The form is a model, embracing "in the best order, every divine promise, every human sorrow and want, and every Christian aspiration for the good of others." **Our Father.** The great and holy God is One whose image we bear, who is full of lovingkindness towards us, to whom we can tell all our needs. Which art in heaven ; the throne of God, as the earth is His footstool, Isa. 66 : 1. Hallowed ; treated as holy. Thy name ; including all the attributes of God, such as His power, wisdom, etc. Thy kingdom come. Let God's rule be extended from heaven to earth, so as to root out all wickedness. Thy will be done ; the great rule for our lives, as for that of Jesus, John 5 : 30 ; 6 : 38. As in heaven (by the angels, Ps. 103 : 20), so on earth. This clause belongs to each of the three foregoing petitions.

3, 4. Daily bread. In this petition we acknowledge our dependence on God for the simplest blessings, we ask these for others as well as for ourselves, we ask them day by day, and ask no more, Prov. 30 : 8 ; John 6 : 27. Forgive. See the promise, 1 John 1 : 9. For we also forgive ; else we cannot be forgiven, Matt. 6 : 14, 15. Indebted to us ; not those

who owe us money, but all who have wronged or injured us. Lead us not into temptation ; a prayer not to be tempted beyond our ability to bear (see 1 Cor. 10 : 13). Deliver us from evil ; the evil one, that is, Satan.

II. THE ILLUSTRATION.—5-8. At midnight. An untimely hour, although in the East traveling is often done at night to avoid the heat of the day. Nothing to set before him. It would be a deep disgrace for the very poorest not to provide food for a visitor. Door . . . shut ; a second difficulty. In bed ; difficulty number three. Because of his importunity ; literally, "shamelessness." By dint of sheer persistence all difficulties are conquered. (Compare ch. 18 : 1-8 ; Matt. 15 : 27, 28.) As many as he needeth ; more than the three "loaves" (thin flat cakes) asked for.

III. THE PROMISE.—9-13. Ask ; of the heavenly Father. Given you ; not because God does not wish not to be troubled, but because He loves to give. Every one ; not merely some special friend or favorite, but all who ask aright. Any of you . . . a father. A father's relation to his son pictures God's relation to us. A stone ; resembling the thin, flat, round barley loaf then used in the East. A serpent ; which some kinds of fish resemble. A scorpion ; which, with legs and tail folded round its body, is not unlike an egg. If ye . . . being evil, etc. Even imperfect men will not give harmful things to their children. How much more . . . heavenly Father,



Praying at the Street Corner
(See Matt. 6 : 5, 6.)