

opened them; it is Thy intercessory work in Heaven that keeps them open still.

How unlimited the promise—"Whatsoever ye shall ask!" It is the pledge of all that the needy sinner requires—all that an Omnipotent Saviour can bestow! As the great Steward of the mysteries of grace, He seems to say to His faithful servants, "Take thy bill, and under this my superscription write what you please." And then, when the blank is filled up, he further endorses each petition with the words, "I will do it!" He farther encourages us to ask "in His name." In the case of an earthly petitioner there are some pleas more influential in obtaining a boon than others. Jesus speaks of this as forming the key to the heart of God. As David loved the helpless cripple of Saul's house "for Jonathan's sake," so will the Father, by virtue of our covenant relationship to the true Jonathan (lit., "the gift of God"), delight in giving us even "exceeding abundantly; above all that we can ask or think."

Reader, do you know the blessedness of confiding your every want and every care—your every sorrow and every cross—into the ear of the Saviour? He is the "Wonderful Counsellor." With an exquisitely tender sympathy He can enter into the innermost depths for your need. That need may be great, but the everlasting arms are underneath it all. Think of Him now, at this moment—the great Angel of the Covenant, with the censer full of much incense, in which are placed your feeblest aspirations, your most burdened sighs—the odour-breathing cloud ascending with acceptance before the Father's throne. The answer may tarry; these your supplications may seem to be kept long on the wing, hovering around the mercy-seat. A gracious God sometimes sees it meet thus to test the faith and patience of His people. He delights to hear the music of their importunate pleadings—to see them undeterred by difficulties—unrepelled by apparent forgetfulness and neglect. But He will come at last; the pent-up fountain of love and mercy will at length burst out, the soothing accents will in His own good time be heard, "Be it unto thee according to thy word!"

Soldier of Christ! with all thine other panoply, forget not the "All-prayer." It is that which keeps bright and shining "the whole armour of God." While yet out in the night of a dark world; whilst still bivouacing in an enemy's country, kindle thy watch-fires at the altar of incense. Thou must be Moses, pleading on the Mount, if thou wouldst be Joshua, victorious in the world's daily battle. Confide thy cause to this waiting Redeemer. Thou canst not weary Him with thine importunity. He delights in hearing. His Father is glorified in giving. The memorable Bethany utterance remains unaltered and unrepealed—"I knew that Thou hearest me always." He is still the "Prince that has power with God and prevails"—still He promises and pleads; still He lives and loves!—*I bid.*

[The "Words of Jesus" and "The Mind of Jesus" are replete with the most pointed and spiritual appeals, warnings and consolations, and should be very widely circulated. They are by a minister of the Church of Scotland, who also published anonymously *Morning and Night Watches*, and some other works—

all of the same earnest and excellent character. ED. MONTREAL WITNESS.]

\* The minister above alluded to is, we believe, the Rev. M. Duff, of Glasgow, who was spoken of as likely to accompany Rev. N. McLeod on an inspecting missionary tour to Turkey. He is the author of the following works in addition to those mentioned above, viz:—"The Footsteps of St. Paul," "Family Prayers," "The Woodcutters of Lebanon" and "The Exiles of Lucerne," "The Great Journey, a pilgrimage to Mount Zion," and "The Faithful Promise." These works are all characterized by a deep vein of earnest piety, and should be extensively perused. We commend them earnestly to the attention of our Readers. ED. PRESBYTERIAN.

#### EXTRACTS FROM THE REV. N. MACLEOD'S HOME SCHOOL.

##### OBEDIENCE.

Obedience, in its lowest form, is submission to mere authority, because it has a right to command; in its highest and truest it is submission to authority, because it commands what is right. Disobedience in either case is that essential evil in us, which consists in setting up our own will, as the supreme will, and self-worship in the place of God. "My own way!" and not *the* way which we should go, is the motto upon man's treason-banner. "Let me alone, give me my own way" is the child's first petition to its parents though only expressed by tears and fretfulness, when its self-will is thwarted. "My own way!" cries the rebellious young man, as, in the pride of fancied independence, he spurns the control of all authority, and despises the laws of God and man. "My own way!" is the last prayer which rises from the heart of the hoary-headed sinner as he totters on the brink of eternity, to the very last the slave of his own lawless desires and rebellious will.

Self-will in childhood is the leprous spot, which, unless cured by the reception of "the Spirit of Life, which is in Christ Jesus," will surely spread itself over, and consume the whole body. It is the spark which, unless extinguished by the fire of Divine love, will kindle itself to "everlasting burning." It is the birth of a demon, who, unless destroyed by the birth of a new man in Christ Jesus, will live for ever an enemy to the living God. Self-will is an enemy to God. It desires to reign without Him, and would, if it could, hurl Him from His throne of supreme authority. It is hell begun!

Parents! do not think lightly of or trifle with such evil as this. Earnestly contend against it. Pray God to master it. Let all the power of love and authority which He has given you be put forth to accomplish its destruction, by establishing in its place the reign of principle, and the habit of yielding obedience to what is right. Unless this is done in early, it cannot be done by you in riper years. If the tiger cannot be tamed or overcome when young, how shall you expect to subdue it when it has reached its strength? Habitually check, control, this wilful rebelliousness; and mould the infant mind into obedient submission. Let the child be accustomed always to yield its will to yours—at first, if necessary, simply because it is *your* will,—until it is able to see its righteousness. Thus will you train them up to God, so that, in after life, they may be able to say: "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of our spirits, and live?"

It is remarkable, the connexion traced everywhere in the Bible between obedience to God. In point of time, the heavenly is rooted in the earthly. The first curse after the flood was occasioned by irreverence to a parent. When God promised to bless all nations through Abraham which was the bringing all nations into obedience with himself, He connected this with the fact of obedience to parents, "all nations shall be blessed in him, (Abraham) for I know that he will

command his children," &c. "Children," says Paul, "obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that thou mayest live long on the earth." It is "the first commandment" of the second table of the law; thus forming a link, as it were, between our duties to God and man, or the two great commandments to love God and our neighbours as ourselves. Our blessed Lord magnified this law of obedience and made it honorable by having been "subject to His parents." This was the feature in childhood of His life, whose meat and drink it ever was to do the will of His Father in heaven, and those things always which pleased Him.

It is good for parents to be reminded of God's judgements pronounced upon rebellious children, as recorded again and again in the Old Testament. How solemn are those!

"He that smiteth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death."

"He that curseth his father or his mother shall surely be put to death."

"If a man have a *stubborn* and *rebellious* son, who will not obey the voice of his Father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and his mother lay hold upon him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place: and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die. So shalt thou put evil away from among you."

Though God does not punish this evil now as He did then—a far worse punishment being in reserve—the evil is still the same in His sight. See then, that it is evil—very evil itself—and beware lest, by your own disobedience to God's will, you bring upon yourselves such heavy punishments as He sent Eli, who, though God's High Priest and, in the main, a religious man, nevertheless, through easiness of temper, permitted his children to have their own way; and, while he trembled for the Ark of God, trembled not for the sins of his own household. "I have told him," said the Lord, "I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth, because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

It is very true that "the best men are but men at the best," and will come far short of this model of perfection. But it is Jesus who says: "Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." Remember that those who aim high, while they may not come up to the mark that is higher, yet come very much nearer it than those who aim at the ground.

You know how very unlike the training is which those parents who even profess godliness give their children to that I have been speaking about; nay, how often is it quite of an opposite character! Let me ask you a few homely questions on this point, to illustrate more fully and plainly what I have said.

Do you ever break your word to your children?—If so, is this being like God to them?—Does He ever fail to keep His word to you?

Do you give way to angry, unreasonable passion with your children?—If so, is this God's method with you?

Do you wish your children to be clever, wealthy or prosperous rather than to be good, and do you train them up accordingly?—Is it for such ends God is first educating you?

Are you hard, unfeeling, unsympathizing, unforgiving to your children?—Is God so to you? Are you so indifferent as not to chastise your children when they require it?—Will God thus deal with you?

Do you chastise from hate, and not for good?—Does He so deal with you?

I need not enlarge my catechism. You see, I hope, clearly what is meant by educating your children in the spirit with which God, your own Father, educates yourselves.