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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day & date		MORNING.	EVENING.
S. April 21	1 Sun after Easter.	Deut. 6: Act 21	Deut. 7: 2 Peter 3
M. " 22	St. Mark, Ryan & Excl. 4	23	Excl. 5: 1 John 1
T. " 23	(Mat. 3) Sam 21	23	Sam 21
W. " 24	" " " "	24	1 Kings 11
T. " 25	" " " "	25	" " " "
F. " 26	" " " "	26	" " " "
S. " 27	" " " "	27	7: 2 John 3

Poetry.

THE SUFFERING REDEEMER.

COME, poor sinner, weak and weary,
Burdens'd with a load of clay,
As along the dark and dreary
Toilsome path you wend your way;
Come, and take a passing view—
See what Christ has borne for you.

See Him now, the "Man of Sorrow,"
Crossing Cedron's sacred brook;
Slowly his disciples follow,
Slowly, with dejected look:
Hark! their sad foreboding sighs,
Herald coming miseries.

Oh! behold Him, crushed with anguish,
Standing there apart, alone;
See His drooping eyelids languish,
Hear that bosom-rending groan;
Mark! the bloody sweat drops now,
Trickling from His pallid brow.

Low in supplication bending,
Hark, He breathes the fervent prayer—
"Father! mercy never ending,
Spare me this, this torment spare;
Yet, O Father, be it done
As thou wiltest to thy Son."

O what wondrous resignation!
Heaven's eternal Majesty
Yields to this severe probation,
Bears this load of agony;
On his head the vengeance hurl'd
For a guilt-polluted world.

Who such mighty love can measure?
Who its compass can define?
Yet, my heart, this noble treasure,
None could purchase, may be thine!
Haste, thy readiness to prove—
Haste to claim this proffered love!

Religious Miscellany.

A CALL TO PRAYER.

By THE REV. J. C. RYLE, B. A. CHRIST CHURCH,
OXFORD, RECTOR OF HELMINGHAM, SUFFOLK.

(Concluded.)

I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of earnestness in prayer. It is not necessary that a man should shout, or scream, or be very loud, in order to prove that he is in earnest. But it is desirable that we should be hearty, and fervent, and warm, and ask as if we were really interested in what we were doing. It is the "effectual fervent" prayer that "availeth much," and not the cold, sleepy, lazy, listless one. This is the lesson that is taught us by the expressions used in Scripture about prayer. It is called "crying, knocking, wrestling, labouring, striving." This is the lesson taught us by Scripture examples. Jacob is one. He said to the angel at Peniel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Gen. xxxii. 26.) Daniel is another. Hear how he pleaded with God: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God." (Dan. ix. 19.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is another. It is written of Him, "In the days of his flesh he offered up prayer and supplication, with strong crying and tears." (Heb. v. 7.) Alas! how unlike is this to many of our supplications! How tame and lukewarm they seem by comparison! How truly might God say to many of us, "You do not

really want what you pray for!" Let us try to amend this fault. Let us knock loudly at the door of grace, like Mercy in "Pilgrim's Progress," as if we must perish unless heard. Let us settle it down in our minds, that cold prayers are a sacrifice without fire. Let us remember the story of Demosthenes, the great orator, when one came to him, and wanted him to plead his cause. He heard him without attention, while he told his story without earnestness. The man saw this, and cried out with anxiety that it was all true. "Ah!" said Demosthenes, "I believe you now."

I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of praying with faith. We should endeavour to believe that our prayers are always heard, and that if we ask things according to God's will, shall always be answered. This is the plain command of our Lord Jesus Christ: " whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." (Mark xi. 24.) Faith is to prayer what the feather is to the arrow: without it prayer will not hit the mark. We should cultivate the habit of pleading promises in our prayers. We should take with us some promise, and say "Lord, here is thine own word pledged. Do for us as thou hast said." This was the habit of Jacob, and Moses and David. The 119th Psalm is full of things asked, "according to thy word." Above all we should cultivate the habit of expecting answers to our prayers. We should do like the merchant, who sends his ships to sea. We should not be satisfied unless we see some return. Alas! there are few points on which Christians come short so much as this. The Church at Jerusalem made prayer without ceasing for Peter in prison; but when the prayer was answered, they would hardly believe it. (Acts xii. 15.) It is a solemn saying of old Traill's, "There is no surer mark of trifling in prayer, than when men are careless what they get by prayer."

I commend to you in the next place, the importance of boldness in prayer. There is an unseemly familiarity in some men's prayers, which I cannot praise. But there is such a thing as a holy boldness which is exceedingly to be desired. I mean such boldness as that of Moses, when he pleaded with God not to destroy Israel: "Wherefore" says he, "should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains? Turn from thy fierce anger." (Exod. xxxii. 12.) I mean such boldness as that of Joshua, when the children of Israel were defeated before Ai, "What," says he, "wilt thou do to thy great name?" (Josh. vii. 9.) This is the boldness for which Luther was remarkable. One who heard him praying said, "What a spirit,—what a confidence was in his expressions! With such a reverence he sued, as one begging of God, and yet with such hope, and assurance, as if he spake with a loving father or friend." This is the boldness which distinguished Bruce, a great Scotch divine of the 17th century. His prayers were said to be "like bolts shot up into heaven." Here also I fear we sadly come short. We do not sufficiently realize the believer's privileges. We do not plead as often as we might; "Lord are we not thy own people? Is it not for thy own glory that we should be sanctified? Is it not for thine honour that thy Gospel should increase?"

I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of fulness in prayer. I do not forget that our Lord warns us against the example of the Pharisees, who for pretence make long prayers; and commands us when we pray not to use vain repetitions. But I cannot forget on the other hand, that He has given His own sanction to large and long devotions, by continuing all night in prayer to God. At all events

we are not likely in this day to err on the side of praying too much. Might it not rather be feared, that many believers in this generation pray too little? Is not the actual amount of time that many Christians give to prayer in the aggregate very small? I am afraid these questions cannot be answered very satisfactorily. I am afraid the private devotions of many are most painfully scanty and limited—just enough to prove they are alive, and no more. They really seem to want little from God. They seem to have little to confess, little to ask for, and little to thank Him for. Alas! this is altogether wrong. Nothing is more common than to hear believers complaining that they do not get on. They tell us that they do not grow in grace, as they could desire. Is it not rather to be suspected that many have quite as much grace as they ask for? Is it not the true account of many, that they have little, because they ask little? The cause of their weakness is to be found in their own stunted, dwarfish, clipped, contracted, hurried, little, narrow, diminutive prayers. They have not because they ask not. Oh! reader, we are not straitened in Christ, but in ourselves. The Lord says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." But we are like the king of Israel, who smote on the ground thrice and stayed, when he ought to have smitten five or six times.

I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of particularity in prayer. We ought not to be content with general petitions. We ought to specify our wants before the throne of grace. It should not be enough to confess we are sinners. We should name the sins of which our conscience tells us we are most guilty. It should not be enough to ask for holiness. We should name the graces in which we are most deficient. It should not be enough to tell the Lord we are in trouble. We should describe our trouble and all its peculiarities. This is what Jacob did, when he feared his brother Esau. He tells God exactly what it is that he fears. (Gen. xxxii. 11.) This is what Eliezer did, when he sought a wife for his master's son. He spreads before God precisely what he wants. (Gen. xxiv. 12.) This is what Paul did when he had a thorn in the flesh. He besought the Lord. (2 Cor. xii. 8.) This is true faith and confidence. We should believe that nothing is too small to be named before God. What should we think of the patient who told his doctor that he was ill, but never went into particulars? What should we think of the wife who told her husband she was unhappy, but did not specify the cause? What should we think of the child who told his father he was in trouble, but nothing more? Oh! reader, Christ is the true bridegroom of the soul,—the true physician of the heart,—the real father of all His people. Let us show that we feel this, by being unreserved in our communications with Him. Let us hide no secrets from Him. Let us tell Him all our hearts.

I commend to you in the next place, the importance of intercession in our prayers. We are all selfish by nature, and our selfishness is very apt to stick to us, even when we are converted. There is a tendency in us to think only of our own souls,—our own spiritual conflict,—our own progress in religion, and to forget others. Against this tendency we have all need to watch and strive, and not least in our prayers. We should study to be of a public spirit. We should stir ourselves up to name other names beside our own before the throne of grace. We should try to bear in our hearts the whole world,—the heathen,—the Jews,—the Roman Catholics,—the body of true believers,—the professing Protestant Churches,—the country in which we live,—the congregation to which we belong,—the