

we imitate Abraham in this? See Heb. 4: 16; 10: 22; 1 John 4: 15-18. This is the first prayer recorded in the Bible. Abraham seems to forget even Lot in his concern for the doomed Sodomites. He knows that they deserve their doom, and the only plea that he can think of is that perhaps some innocent persons may suffer in the general overthrow. So he presents this with reverent persistence. Does God ever spare the wicked for the sake of the righteous? Read Matt. 13: 29; 5: 13; 24: 22. No one is punished for the sins of another (Ezek. 18: 4), although the innocent may be involved in the consequences of another's sin. It is not then punishment but discipline, see Rom. 8: 28; Heb. 12: 5-11; Jas. 1: 12. Give some instances in which the presence of a good man was a blessing to others (Gen. 19: 21; 1 Kings 17: 15, 16; Acts 27: 24). I will spare all the place for their sakes—Compare with this Jer. 5: 1; Ezek. 22: 30; Matt. 24: 22; 2 Pet. 3: 9.

II. PERSISTENT PLEADING. Was God angry with Abraham for being so importunate? Read Prov. 15: 8; Jas. 5: 16; Luke 11: 5-8; 18: 1-8. Never get tired of asking for what you need, or for the welfare of your friends. **Dust and ashes**—"Dust at first and ashes at last." See similar descriptions of human frailty, Job 4: 19; Gen. 3: 19; Ecc. 12: 7; 1 Cor. 15: 47, 48; 2 Cor. 5: 1. How kind and condescending in God to listen so graciously to our prayers! Nay rather, what marvellous love to give his Son to die for such unworthy creatures. We have so much more knowledge that our less gross sins are more heinous than those of Sodom, and yet he is sparing us. Read what Jesus says about this, Matt. 10: 14, 15; 11: 20-24; Mark 6: 11; Luke 10: 12. If there had been Bibles and churches and sabbath schools in Sodom it might not have been such a wicked city. I will speak yet this once—How often did Abraham ask for mercy to Sodom? Would it have been any use for him to have gone further? How many good people were there really in the city? (2 Pet. 2: 7, 8). God did not "slay the righteous with the wicked." Perhaps Abraham thought that the cities were sure to have at least ten righteous in them, and did not know till next morning, when he saw the smoke, that he had not gone far enough. Mention two cases where persistence would have brought a larger blessing. (2 Kings 4: 6; 13: 18, 19).

**To the Scholar.**—Study the lesson carefully, turning up the marginal references and reading the "Daily Portions." Then close your Bible and try to answer in writing the questions following *without accepting aid from any quarter* after you have begun to write. Then bring this leaflet to Sabbath School with you on the day of its date. If you cannot come, fill out the blank and send the leaflet (with the answers written out) to your teacher by some friend, or by mail, and you will receive credit for the work done as if you had been present. If your excuse is satisfactory, you will not lose in record of attendance.

- 1.—Who were the three strangers entertained by Abraham? (4)
- 2.—What announcement did they make regarding himself and Sarah, and what regarding Sodom? (4)
- 3.—For what purpose did the two go towards Sodom? (4)
- 4.—What reason did Abraham urge why God should spare Sodom? (5)
- 5.—How many times did he repeat his petition, and with what numbers? (4)
- 6.—What did Abraham see when he came back to the spot next morning? (4)

Name, .....

Dear Teacher,—Please excuse my absence from Sabbath School to-day, I cannot come because I have read the "Daily Portions" and answered the questions as well as I could. I have committed to memory verses in addition to the Golden Text, and Questions in the Catechism and have recited them to I was at church  
I send with this my Weekly Offering of cents.