

## "LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY"

**"Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks."**

**– 1 Thessalonians 5:17,18.**

IN THE beginning, when Adam was in harmony with God, he was in the condition represented in the Scriptures as covenant relationship with God. The Word declares that Adam broke this holy Covenant. (Hosea 6:7, margin.) He became a sinner; and his children, born later, were sinners with him, through heredity. Instead of being born in covenant relationship with God, the children of Adam were born aliens. But God has had dealings with a few who exercised special faith and a desire to come into harmony with Him. Abel, the second son of Adam, was one of these. He approached God with an animal sacrifice and was accepted. Enoch and Noah also came into a condition of fellowship with the Lord by faith, even though they were still legally under the condemnation passed upon Adam, the Ransom-price not yet having been given.

Later on, God entered into covenant relationship with Abraham, because of his great faith and obedience; and afterwards with his son Isaac; then with his grandson Jacob. Still later, God entered into relationship with the seed of Jacob, under the Law Covenant at Sinai. The Lord had changed the name of Jacob to Israel – "a prince with God" (Genesis 32:24-30); and the whole nation of Israel, the descendants of Jacob, were received as God's people, and were treated as if without sin. They had the privilege of going to Him in prayer. But the sins of the Jewish nation were only typically blotted out from year to year. The blood of bulls and goats could never really take away sin, and the Jews held only the relationship of servants to God.

The Gentiles were altogether without God. They had no privilege of prayer. We come down to the beginning of the Gospel Age and to the case of Cornelius. We read that he was a just man, who gave much

alms to the people and prayed always. But his prayers could not be accepted, even after Jesus died. The death of Jesus did not bring Cornelius into covenant relationship with God. But when the seventy symbolic weeks of Jewish favor had been fulfilled, the due time had come for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles. God was then ready to receive him, and He sent an angel to him, who gave him this message from the Lord: "Cornelius, thy prayers and thine alms have come up for a memorial before God." The prayers and the alms of Cornelius had risen up as an incense before the Lord. [R5833 : page 19]

Had God not accepted these offerings before? No. They had been noted of God, but had not been received. God's way of receiving – except in a limited or typical way previous to the Gospel Age – is by certain definite means which He has appointed – through an Advocate in this Age, and through a Mediator in the next. "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me," says Jesus. Even when the due time had arrived, Cornelius could not come until God sent him word how to proceed.

### **KNOWLEDGE OF TRUTH NECESSARY**

The angel of the Lord said to Cornelius: "Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee *words* whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." (Acts 11:13,14.) Those *words* were necessary to his saving – to the bringing of him into covenant relationship with God. Cornelius, being obedient, sent for Simon Peter, who gave him the necessary instruction for drawing nigh unto God through Jesus. And unless we come to the Father through Christ, our prayers would not be received any more than those of Cornelius had been.

What St. Peter told Cornelius was to the effect that God had provided a great Sin-Offering; that Jesus had tasted death for every man; that now, in advance of dealing with the world, God is taking out a Little Flock, to be joined with Christ in the blessing of the world. When Cornelius heard the good Message, he believed with all his

heart; and likewise those who were with him. Doubtless he had heard of Jesus before, but now he understood the matter. He had been in the right condition of heart all along. He had been praying and fasting. But even so he could not be accepted of God except through Jesus. He must have Christ as his Advocate.

## **HOW JESUS BECOMES OUR ADVOCATE**

But what does it mean to have Jesus as our Advocate? It means that first, we must accept Him as our Ransom from sin and death. Next, He tells us, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." By merely believing that Jesus died, and that He was holy, etc., no one can become His disciple. "The devils also believe, and tremble." But justification to life comes when we receive the Lord on His terms. Then He becomes our Advocate.

No one has a right to expect an answer to prayer except one who has become a disciple of Christ through full consecration. And whosoever cometh to the Father by Him shall in no wise be cast out. (John 6:37.) There is but one exception to this rule, and this is a class of minors, children lacking the full age of responsibility [**R5833 : page 20**] and of comprehension of these matters, one or both of whose parents are disciples of Christ. That age of responsibility would vary – in some it might be from twelve to fifteen years of age, and in some even later. But whoever reaches the point of full comprehension and responsibility, and does not consecrate himself to the Lord, would lose the privilege of prayer. In the case, then, of a minor child, either of whose parents is consecrated, he would have a right to look for answers to his prayers to God.

The Lord does not hinder any one from bowing the knee. Savages do so right along, but their prayers do not ascend up to God. The Jews were at one time an exception as regards prayer, but they were a typical people. That arrangement, however, was temporary, and has passed away. But soon they will again have the privilege of

prayer, through the great Mediator; and all the world may join them in this privilege. Jesus will not be the Advocate for the world. This arrangement is only for the Church of the present Age.

### **OUR LIVES TO BE A PRAYER**

Prayer seems to be the natural attitude of the human mind toward the Almighty. Even the heathens have a disposition to pray. Their fears, their hopes, all lead them to appeal to some great Power beyond themselves. But the people of God, who know of His Wisdom, Power and Love, and who have met the conditions of acceptable prayer, are alone authorized to come to the Throne of Grace. We realize what a blessing it is to have access to God, access to His presence – to have the ear of the Almighty Ruler of the Universe. We know that with the emperors and kings of earth it is very difficult to gain a hearing; and that with people of great prominence it is not easy to secure an audience. Yet the great God has made provision that His people may come to Him and make their petitions known.

The unrepentant sinner cannot come to God. But Divine Wisdom has made arrangement by which the sinner can get rid of his sin, and can then come to Him in prayer and communion. The Jews had typical sacrifices, a typical Atonement Day, and a typical forgiveness of sins. But the forgiveness of our sins, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice, is actual, and brings us to the place of acceptableness with the Father. He is pleased to have His children come to Him in prayer. And it is our glad privilege to offer Him worship and praise – the homage of our hearts.

We would make a distinction between worship and prayer. Worship is a bowing down, an acknowledgment of the majesty of God, an act of reverence, of adoration. But prayer is the offering of a petition. So when the Lord's people are encouraged in His Word to come to Him in prayer, it is with the understanding that they are informed before they come as to what is pleasing to God for them to

request. We have an example given of what a proper prayer would be in the one which our Lord taught His disciples.

The Holy Spirit is the blessing most to be sought. This Spirit of God may be possessed in a greater or a lesser measure. We are given a measure of the Spirit when we are accepted as the disciples of Christ; and that flame of love there started is to become a consuming power in our lives. It is to burn out everything contrary to God, that our life may be a burning and shining light. In proportion as we recognize that we are deficient in the Spirit of righteousness, the Spirit of Truth, in that same proportion we should be importunate in prayer. Whoever realizes his need, and knows the Source from which he can obtain the needed supply, will come to the Throne of Heavenly Favor. We are not to neglect the duties and responsibilities of life in order to spend much time each day upon our knees, but our entire life is to be a ceaseless prayer.

From the time we become the Lord's children, we should strive more and more to attain the character-likeness to Christ, and we should continue in prayer and not faint. We should seek for more and more of the Spirit of the Lord, and should see that we fulfil the conditions by which we may obtain the filling of the Spirit. In this sense of the word, we should pray without ceasing, continuing to present the petition until we receive what we desire. But we shall not obtain the fulness of our desire until we are changed into the higher life, into the perfection of the new nature, in the resurrection. Then we shall pray no more. Then we shall be fully satisfied. Prayer will be swallowed up of praise.

### **OUR LORD'S SAMPLE PRAYER**

In the prayer taught us by our Lord, we first give honor to God, recognizing Him as our Father, acknowledging His greatness, and expressing the desire that His Name be hallowed. We remember the Kingdom that is promised; and we tell Him of our desire of heart for that Kingdom to come. We pray that His will may be fully done on

earth. This implies that we have given up our own will, that we wish to have God's will wholly done in our mortal bodies.

In this prayer there is a brief mention of our daily temporal needs: "Give us this day our daily bread" – no stipulation of fruits and vegetables, of delicacies, etc. – but simply our necessities for the day. We ask no more – we wish no more. Then we pray that our trespasses may be forgiven, **EVEN AS WE FORGIVE**. Finally comes the petition for our protection from evil influences. This expresses the appreciation of the fact that there are temptations from those with whom we have contact, and from the powers of evil – the powers of the air – and from our own flesh; and that we need Divine aid. The petitions of this prayer, however, are very brief.

### **BECOMING MODESTY IN PRAYER**

It would seem as though many have a wrong conception of prayer. We hear some people trying to tell the Lord things that He knows better than they. It is always improper, even in our intercourse with men, to tell a person better educated than ourselves anything about that which he knows far better than we. Jesus and the Apostles never undertook to give any instructions to the Father regarding His Plan, so far as we know. And when any one attempts to give the Lord instructions, he deceives neither the Lord nor others who hear; for He knows and they know that such a one is not addressing *God*, but the *people*. We have before mentioned an announcement in a Boston paper that on a certain occasion "Rev. So-and-so delivered the most beautiful prayer ever offered to a Boston audience."

Undoubtedly if we had the right conception of prayer – the Bible conception – our prayers in public would be very brief. The Scriptures are the only criterion, the only guide. They give us no account of any instance where the Lord's saints offered lengthy prayers in public. Praying in an unknown tongue would also be valueless, the Apostle Paul tells us, unless some one present interpret the same; and if one prays in an incoherent manner, so that he cannot be understood by

those who hear, prayer might as well be offered in an unknown tongue. [R5834 : page 21] "How shall any say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? While this shows that the Lord wishes us to take into consideration the hearers, we are not to pray to them, but are to turn the thoughts of all toward God, to an appreciation of His Goodness, of His Wisdom, Love and Mercy.

Leaving out all thought of *teaching* the people at that time, we should seek to direct all in a reverent manner to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, in thought, that they may humble themselves before God. That which Christian people sometimes attempt to do in *prayer* should be done in *preaching*. According to the declaration of the Word, it has not pleased God to save by prayer those who believe, but by preaching. (Romans 10:14; 1 Corinthians 1:21.) This does not mean necessarily public speaking, but includes also more private proclamation of the Truth and also preaching by the printed page. We are to follow the direction of the Word in all ways.

While we thus speak of public prayer, and in respect to the propriety of brevity, and of the examples of Scripture concerning this, we would not give the thought that one should be limited in his private devotions. He who was perfect set us an example of private prayer. Our Lord sometimes prayed all night. But we presume that with the most of us it would be better not to do this; for we would be weaker for service the next day. In our weakness and imperfection we are probably not able to appreciate the peculiar position of our Lord. We would have nothing that we could say to the Lord which would keep us all night in prayer, except that which would be repetition. And our Master said: "Use not vain repetition" – "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." We are to ask rather for the condition of heart whereby we may be able to receive whatever He shall see fit to send, that we may get a blessing out of each of the Lord's providences.

So, then, summing up the matter, our petitions in public should be modeled considerably after the sample our Lord gave His disciples – a brief expression of earnest desire for the coming of God's Kingdom, an acknowledgment of sin, a request for Divine forgiveness and help and supply of our needs, and a rendering of worship and praise. We think this should be about the range of our private devotions also, as a rule, respecting ourselves. It is eminently appropriate, however, that we remember one another at the Throne of Grace in private, and in a general way in public. But evidently the instruction of Scripture is that we should not seek to use prayer as a means to gain earthly favors, or tell the Lord what we wish done, or to be heard of men, but that we are to put first the spiritual things, the things for which we have been instructed to pray.

### **CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTABLE, EFFECTIVE PRAYER**

When Jesus said to His disciples, "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," He was setting before them a glorious standard in respect to the Heavenly Father. But later on, this standard was very largely lost. During the Dark Ages the God of Love was made to appear anything but loving and kind, and as having no real interest in the majority of His creatures. It was made to appear that the few in whom He had an interest were those who were relentless, cruel and vicious toward all outside their pale.

How terribly our God has been maligned by those who have claimed to be His special representatives! How differently was He depicted by the Son who knew Him so well! Hear Him: "Be ye like unto your Father which is in Heaven; for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." When the Apostles asked Jesus whether they should call fire to come down from Heaven upon the Samaritans who refused to sell them bread, what was the Master's reply? "Ye



know not what manner of spirit ye are of! The Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And He was the Image of the Father, and came not to do His own will.

Man is in a sadly fallen condition and needs to be restored to the image of God, to the likeness of God, to the condition of love, mercy and sympathy of which God is the embodiment. Yet, notwithstanding our fallen condition, parents love to give good gifts to their children. What parent, if his child should ask for a fish, would give him a serpent? Or if he should ask for bread, would give him a stone? And as we have received these traits from the Lord, and still have them to a considerable extent even in our blemished condition, we may form some idea of how He who is the Perfect One, the Infinite One, would delight to give good gifts to His children – "*How much more* shall your Father in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" And His very best things are the spiritual things.

### **PROSPECTIVE SONS BEFORE PENTECOST**

We are to remember that our Lord when on earth was in the fullest sense the Representative of the Father in the flesh. He was indeed "God manifest in the flesh." And those who were of the right attitude of heart were able to see the character of the Father in the Son. Those who believed on Jesus were accepted and treated in many respects as though they had been already fully received of the Father. The Scriptures, however, declare that the Holy Spirit had not yet come. We see that the Spirit could not be given in begetting power until Jesus had died, and had entered into the presence of God to make reconciliation for the sins of the Church. Forty days after the resurrection of Christ, He ascended to Heaven to present His merit, imputing it on behalf of all who would become His disciples during the Gospel Age, the period of the High Calling.

Even though the Holy Spirit had not yet been bestowed, Jesus told His disciples that they might pray, "Our Father." This was in view of the condition of sonship into which they were so soon to be

ushered. God is not the Father of any others than those who come to Him in His appointed way – through His Son as the Ransom-price, having made a full surrender of themselves and their all to God. While our Lord was still in the flesh, His true followers were sons in a prospective sense. And yet, after the Master's death and resurrection, He told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on High. The Father would defer the answer to some of their prayers. He would not give them the blessing just at the time it was asked. There might be some good reason for withholding it until some future time – as in the granting of the Holy Spirit in begetting. Yet they were to hold themselves in the proper attitude of faith, that they might be ready for the blessing when it should come from on High.

Their prayer might properly have been: "Heavenly Father, we have learned that at the proper time Thou wilt give us the Holy Spirit. We perceive that Thou hast already given Thy Spirit to Jesus our Master; that at the time of His baptism He received an unction from on High. And so we wait for the Holy Spirit – we wait to receive this unction, this blessing from Thee." And **[R5834 : page 22]** those who tarried in the upper room after the ascension of the Lord, received at Pentecost this very blessing, the Holy Spirit – in its due time.

## **JESUS THE ONLY WAY**

If we come down to the present, and inquire what we may pray for, the Lord answers through His Word that we may not pray except upon these same terms; namely, faith in His Son as our Redeemer, and a full dedication, devotion, of ourselves to walk in the footsteps of the Master – our blessed Exemplar. No man can come to the Father but by Him. All such will be accepted, up to the required number of the Elect. It would, therefore, not be right to encourage any to come to the Father in prayer until they have become members of His family by a full consecration.

In the case of Cornelius, the Roman centurion, which we have cited in this article, we have seen that he was a just man, a good man.

But he did not belong to the Jewish nation, to whom God had given His Law. The only way in which Cornelius could have come into God's favor prior to His appointed time – three and a half years after the cross – was to have become a Jewish proselyte. But when it became chronologically due time for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles, this good man was notified, and gladly accepted the conditions and became a son of God, through faith in Christ. He received the begetting and anointing of the Holy Spirit, just as the Jews had previously received them. All this shows us that God has a particular course marked out by which any may become His children. Unless they come in the appropriate way and in the appropriate time, none will be accepted as sons of the Highest.

### **PRAYERS THAT COME UP AS A MEMORIAL**

God's dealing with Cornelius would indicate that in the case of any who now come to God, and pray to Him, not knowing the appointed way, their prayers would, like those of Cornelius, come up as a *memorial* before God. As the Lord took notice of the prayers of Cornelius and the desires of his heart to worship and serve God, so we may suppose that He would take notice now of prayers and desires to come close to Him. He might not send some one like Peter to give them instruction at this time. That would depend upon His decision as to whether this would be the course of wisdom, as to whether such a one was suited to His present purpose. But any prayers offered in sincerity would not pass unnoticed, but would receive reward in due time, whether now or later.

Suppose that one were living in a heathen land where **[R5835 : page 22]** Christ was not known, and suppose such a one was feeling after God and praying according to his light. The Lord could not accept him as His child under those conditions; but He might, if His Wisdom approved, guide that honest seeker to a knowledge of Christ, whether it would come through tracts in the mail, through a sermon, or through meeting one of the Lord's ambassadors who could

communicate with him in his own tongue. We are sure that every hungry soul will receive the light and the knowledge necessary to his salvation in the Lord's own good time. After hearing of God, and of the manifestation of His love in Christ, it remains for each individual to accept or to reject the Message. If he fails or refuses to make consecration to God when he receives the light, no prayer he would offer would be accepted.

### **THE CHIEF OF ALL GOOD GIFTS**

We read that the Heavenly Father will give good gifts to those who ask Him; that is, He will give that which would be good for them. We are not to dictate to Him what His blessings are to be. We are not to ask for all manner of earthly things. In the case of the Jews, they asked chiefly for the earthly blessings; because Heavenly blessings were not promised them. But we who come into the relationship of sons of God are to pray for what He has specifically promised us – the Holy Spirit. And our Father in Heaven will give us those things which are best to fit and prepare us for the Heavenly Kingdom.

The Lord will give whatever temporal blessings are to the best interests of the New Creature. Everything that He would give will be a good gift. We do not always know what would be best for us. A parent dealing with a child might find it necessary at certain times to give medicine instead of food. The parent gives this for the good of the child. So with our Heavenly Father. Sometimes He gives us tests of faith, tests of loyalty, tests of love. All these experiences are designed to develop in us strength of character, and to thereby fit us for further and more advanced blessings.

The Father deals with us as New Creatures in Christ. If, for instance, some of His children are becoming overcharged with the blessings or cares of this life, God might give to such some kind of a purgative as respects earthly things. Such a one might break a leg or have some other earthly calamity – something that would work out for his good as a New Creature. If the Lord's consecrated people

would all come to the point where their chief desire, their highest aspiration, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might be filled with the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of a sound mind, that they might know and do His will, what a great blessing it would bring! It is the will of the Lord that His children should have in large measure this chiefest of all blessings, but He grants it only on certain conditions. He withholds it until they learn to appreciate its value and to so earnestly desire it that they will apply themselves diligently to meet these conditions, and will continue in supplication until their importunity shall bring down the answer.

### **THE UNSPEAKABLE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER**

The Apostle Paul exhorts the saints that they "pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance." These words do not signify that we should be always upon our knees or continually uttering a prayer. But we should never cease to pray, and our prayers should be *in the spirit* – earnest, sincere. The children of God are not to "say prayers," they are to *pray*. There is much formal prayer – much saying of prayers – which do not get higher than the head of the one who repeats the words. The Scriptures speak of this as drawing near to God with the lips when the heart is far from Him. It would be better that we should not approach the Lord at all than that we should do so in an improper manner.

It is a most wonderful privilege to draw near the great Creator and Lord of Heaven and earth; and we should come in the spirit of reverence and devotion. Our Lord declared that the Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in Truth. We must come only in the name of Christ. He is the only Way of approach. And we must come thoughtfully and earnestly. We should not think of uttering a single word that we do not mean and have not thought upon. We believe a great many have done themselves injury by going through a form of words in a mere formalistic manner. This is not prayer. True prayer is the language of the heart. Therefore the greater

our earnestness, the more [R5835 : page 23] acceptable the prayer will be, and the greater blessing shall we receive.

We are not to come to God without *faith* and without an earnest desire for His blessing. We are to enter into the spirit of our petition, that the Lord may see the earnestness of our heart in the matter. There seems to be a difference between the thought of prayer and that of *thanksgiving*. Prayer, as we have said, is the offering of petition. None may come to the Lord with recognition, except those who have come into Christ. Others are strangers and aliens. But any one may express thanks to God or render worship, adoration, homage.

### **PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER NECESSARY**

There is a difference also between prayer and supplication. Prayer would be any petition, great or small; whereas supplication would mean a special desire for a thing – an earnest entreaty. Whether it be ordinary prayer or be supplication – an intense form of prayer – we should always come in the spirit, with appreciation of the fact that we are coming into the presence of the great Jehovah, and that it is a privilege accorded to only a very few at this time.

And we are to "watch thereunto, with all perseverance." If we really believe that the Lord has indicated that we should pray, and that it is His will to give us the things we need, and above all His Holy Spirit, then we should be alert to note when we receive the answer to our petitions. If we pay no attention to our prayers after they are uttered, never look to see whether they are being answered, this would indicate that we have not really appreciated our need. It would seem that this is the reason why God does not answer many of our prayers more quickly. We should learn to watch for the answers to our prayers, and thus learn the lesson of appreciation and gratitude to Him as we realize that He has granted us our request.

We are, then, to pray with *perseverance*, not watching merely for a few hours for the fulfilment, nor merely for a day or a week. The

Lord might see best to defer the fulfilment of our petition, either to test our faith or to bring us into a better condition to receive the blessing. Perhaps we have all had these experiences, and were thus more hungry for the answer when it came. We are to be sure that the Lord is never indifferent to the pleading of His children, and will pursue the course which is best for us, just as would a faithful teacher with his pupil, and as would a loving parent with his child. Our Father in Heaven wishes to give us His best things, and will not withhold anything that is really good. (Psalm 84:11.) But He requires sometimes that we shall wait for a considerable time. At other times, there may be a speedy answer to our petitions.

Whether we are on our knees or in the busy walks of life our hearts should go out continually to the Lord for His guidance in all our affairs and experiences, that we may serve Him in a manner that will be pleasing and acceptable to Him, that we may be shielded from temptations that without His aid would be beyond our endurance, and that He will in His own due time deliver us from all evil and imperfection and grant us a place in His Heavenly Kingdom. Dear brethren, let us constantly put into practise the injunction of our Master, "Watch and pray, lest ye *enter into* temptation." – Mark 14:38.

### **SHOULD WE WRESTLE IN PRAYER?**

But although the Scriptures enjoin upon us *persistency* in prayer, and the parable of The Importunate Widow also teaches this, nothing in the Word of God, in our judgment, warrants us in doing what some people call "wrestling with God in prayer." We believe that our God is willing to give us the things that are best for us, and anything that God is not willing to give us we should not desire. We should not strive to induce the Lord to do anything that He is unwilling to do, but should wish that only His will be done. At the time when Jacob wrestled with the angel, we would understand that he did the right and proper thing. Any of us in the same position would have done well if

we had followed his course. That was a rare occasion. Jacob was returning to his home for the first time since he had fled to Padan-Aram from his brother Esau, and he feared that Esau might still seek his life. And now the Lord had manifested Himself to Jacob in the form of this angel. The angel could have broken away, but he permitted Jacob to get into that earnest attitude where he said: "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me!"

But *we* do not need to wrestle with God for His special blessing. We already have this blessing. We are not servants crying for a crumb. The Lord has put upon us His best robe; He has given us His Holy Spirit. But He has promised us certain things conditional upon our asking, and He wishes us to continue to come to Him in faith, in simple, earnest prayer – not *wrestling* in prayer.

### **THE KINGDOM AT THE DOOR**

The world is full of woe and wretchedness because of sin. And our hearts cry out, How long, O Lord, how long until Thou wilt deliver Thy people and establish righteousness in the earth? So we pray day by day, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth!" Should we **[R5836 : page 23]** grow tired of this? No; for the Lord has bidden us to continue to wish for it, to pray for it.

The Kingdom *will* come! And the Lord wishes us to have this thought – *Thy Kingdom is coming!* To give up praying would be to give up our faith. Continue to hope, continue to believe, continue to pray without ceasing! Continue to say: "Thy Kingdom come!" Continue to long for the time when that Kingdom will bless all the families of the earth. This is very different from *wrestling*, according to our view of the meaning of that word. This is importunity, this is persistency, this is continuance. And *in everything* we are to give thanks. But we would not want to hasten the Lord's time one minute. Even though we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," this does not mean that we wish to have the Kingdom come before the Father's time. But we



whose eyes are anointed know that the time will not tarry long, but that it is nigh.

Whatever may be our natural inclinations as regards constancy and definiteness in prayer, we must take our instructions from the Word of God. We must overcome our natural tendencies along this line. Let us as true, obedient children conform our views and our conduct to the words of counsel which our Father has given us. Let us remember the promise of the Master, "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." – John 16:24.

"Breathe on us, Lord! Thy radiance pour  
On all the wonders of the page  
Where hidden lies the Heavenly lore  
That blessed our youth and guides our age.  
Grant *faith*, that treads the stormy deep,  
If but Thy voice shall bid it come;  
And *zeal*, that climbs the mountain steep,  
To seek and bring the wanderer home.  
Give *strength*, blest Savior; in Thy might  
Illuminate our hearts, and we  
Transformed into Thine image bright,  
Shall teach and love and live *like Thee!*"

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