

"The Lord's Prayer. 'Forgive Us Our Trespases'"

The Present Truth – December 20, 1900

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"FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES"

"Show me Thy glory." This was the prayer of Moses many hundreds of years before the angel's song to the shepherds in the midnight watches, "Glory to God in the Highest." Do you not think that each of the shepherds, as he heard the angel's song, must have prayed in his heart this same prayer? Do you not think they all must have longed to see for themselves this great glory, that they might join in the glad song of rejoicing, and know the peace and goodwill that it had brought to the earth?

We may be sure that they did, because they went with such haste when the angel told them just where the wondrous glory was shining forth in its fulness. Let us see how the Lord answered the prayer of Moses, and what He showed to the shepherds, and this will open our eyes so that we too may "behold the glory of the Lord," and sing, "Glory to God in the Highest!"

When Moses prayed, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory," the Lord answered him, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee." Then He passed by before him and proclaimed the name of the Lord before him: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." So He showed to Moses that His glory is the goodness, mercy, and grace by which He forgives sin.

Now let us see what it was that showed to the shepherds this same glory. The angel said to them: "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Hastening to Bethlehem, the city of David, the shepherds found, so the angel had said, "a babe lying in a manger."

Can this be what had brought the angel host from the courts of heaven, singing songs of deeper gladness than when "all the sons of God shouted for joy" over the creation of the new earth? Where is the glory of which the angels had sung? Ah, the shepherds saw it, and they made it known abroad, and "all they that heard it wondered."

For this infant whom they saw lying helpless in a manger, was their Saviour, "Christ the Lord." No doubt they learned from His mother Mary the baby's sweet name: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." This was the fulfilment of what the Lord had spoken by the prophet long before: "They shall call His name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us."

From all this we learn what is the only thing that can save us from our sins; it is "God with us." Jesus saves us from our sins because He brings God to dwell with us. This is what the shepherds saw, and what we too may see, in this little babe lying in the manger.

But this, the angel said, is to "be a sign unto you," a sign that God has come to dwell on earth, and that He is with every little child ever born, to save them from their sins if they will let Him. It was not that God was with Him only, but, "God with us," God dwelling in us to be our Saviour.

This wonderful love, "the tender mercy of our God, whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace"—this is the glory of our God. He forgives and blots out our sin by His pure and holy presence with us, making us pure in heart, so that we may see God.

But the angels sang, "Glory to God in the Highest!" Yet the shepherds found Him in a very low and humble place. Not even in a poor home, but out in the stable of the inn, "a babe lying in a manger."

"Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining,
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall."

Can this be "God in the Highest"? Yes; for He is the Most High for evermore, and wherever He dwells is "the Highest," "the high and holy place." He says, "I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit."

In sending forth His son in the form of a little child, God has shown that it is possible for every little one to be a child of God, dwelling with Him in "the high and holy place" and showing forth the glory of His love. So each one of you may be, as you often sing.

"A gleam of grace to all around.
A little spot of hallowed ground."

In our talks together about the petitions in the Lord's prayer, we have come to this one for you to think about: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." This shows us that we must learn of God how to forgive. The coming of Jesus to this earth teaches us of our Heavenly Father's tender love, that covers all our sins, and blots them out and remembers them no more. He so loves us that He comes to dwell with us, to save us from our sins.

The knowledge of this great love, which makes us at peace with God, makes us at peace also with every one else. And so Jesus brought "peace on earth, goodwill toward men." For can we have a hard and unforgiving spirit in our hearts, toward anyone else, when we think of Him who shed His own blood, to wash away our trespasses against Him?