Exposition of the Lord's Prayer

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Thine.

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Amen.

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A brief

EXPOSITION

OF THE

Lord's Prayer

Mat 6.9-13

Overview

In the Prayer are three things observable.

1. The Preface, Our Father
2. The Prayer itself, divided into six petitions
3. The conclusion of faith in the word Amen.

The soul goes up to heaven, and follows the petition, hallowed be your name; let it be Lord, as you may have glory. Look as a man that darts an arrow, he puts the utmost of his strength into it. So the word Amen speeds all the rest, speeds all and brings a good issue to the soul by all.

First, for the Preface, and there we must examine in general two things, the sense, and meaning of the words.

Secondly, what ground of encouragement it affords us to seek God. And

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First, observe the party sought, Father.

Secondly, the excellence of him, which art in heaven.

Thirdly, the interest we have in him, he is Our Father.

Why or in what sense is God called a Father?

First, He is the Father of Christ by eternal generation.

Secondly, he is the Father of men in two ways:

1. By creation, so the Scripture runs, Job 1.9; the angels are called the sons of God, because they were created by God; so God is our Father by creation, and thus he is a Father to the just and unjust, Psa 139. I am wonderfully made, says the Text.
2. By adoption and grace in that he does freely take us to be his sons in Christ; he puts us into the right of his children, as a man puts a stranger into the right of his son. And thus God is a Father to his chosen only, that look what Christ has, they have, Rom 8.17. If sons, then heirs; we are heirs, God's chosen children.

Both these ways God is our Father.

Do we only pray to the Father, in that we say, 'Our Father'?

No, we pray not to the Father only, but we pray to the holy Trinity. We make mention of the Father only, yet we must direct our prayers to one God in three persons in that Godhead. However we mention not all, yet we direct to all, all our petitions. The reason is this: because otherwise we should have made an idol of God; I say concerning but of one [3] person we make an idol of God, and call not upon him as he is.

How may we apprehend of God aright in prayer?

Thus: as God has revealed himself in his Word, so we apprehend him, not putting any image at all upon him; as instance thus; two ways:

First, he that creates all, governs all, knows all, sees all, by whom I live, move, and have my being; [Act 17.28] to that God I pray. The Scripture has revealed God thus, and he fills heaven and earth, etc. To that God, then, that is thus infinite, to him I call; I go now no further to the seeing of an image, but to an all-seeing God I come.

Secondly, instance thus, look abroad into the creatures, and in all you shall see a power and a goodness. Now from whence came this power? The power of beasts came not from the power of trees and the like, but there was a first power which gave all power to the creatures. The Creator is infinitely more powerful than the creature.

There is goodness also in the creatures; all that came from the first goodness, that let itself out; now that which lets forth itself to the creature, is in the Creator infinitely above the creature; that is, the Lord. Thus you must quit yourselves of an image; he that gives all, is above all; God gives all, therefore he is above all; and to that God I put up my petition.

Why do we not mention the son and the Holy Ghost as well as the Father?

[4] Because the Father is the first person in the Trinity, and the Fountain from whence all flows; the Father works of himself, the son of him, the Holy Ghost from them both. Therefore we mention him only, though we may mention the other, yet we pray only to the Father.

How does this word 'Father' help a man to call on God by Prayer?

When we conceive of God as a Father, it puts us in mind of his mercy, that he will pity us as a Father. A man will be reconciled unto his son easily, and will spare his son, though he be a prodigal; yet a father will pass by and cover all. So I pray to a Father; did I pray to a Judge that will condemn me, or an enemy that would not be reconciled to me, little hope I had to speed because I have wronged him? Yet I will arise and go to my Father, and say, "Father, I have sinned." Psa 103.13. As a father pities his son, so God pities them that fear him. He is my child, says God, though stubborn, and I must look to him. When a man's rebellions witness against him, and Satan vexes him, and says, "What, do you think to have mercy, and are so vile?" True, says the soul, I am nothing, but I go to a father. If a child but aims at a thing, the father accepts him. If he speaks but half a sentence, the father interprets it. So this is the great encouragement of the faithful to go to God, that notwithstanding so many failings, and though so dead and so barren, yet a father bears all. The Lord interprets all, though but broken speeches, he accepts all, and regards all. We have a Father [5] to go to, that is willing to pass by many failings.

Secondly, we have a ground of pity; if it be but a sigh, he receives it. So this may persuade us of the willingness of God to help us. If a man were to go to him that is hard-hearted, little hope he had to speed. We say he is a cruel man; we had as good pull water out of a flint, etc. A child will not beg of a stranger, but will go to his father. So we pray to our Father, who is more willing to hear and grant than we are to ask (Luk 15). I will go to my Father, says the prodigal, as who should say,[1] I am unworthy, yet I go to a Father. No, the Lord hears before we call; he prepares the heart to call, and answers what it craves when they ask. The father puts into the child's mouth what shall say, and then he will give it what it craves. So God would have us seek for abundance of mercy, open your mouth, etc. God would fain[2] give, but none will crave. It is God what will give a heart to crave, and this is gotten by prayer. As water put into a pump will bring forth much waters. So pray that you may pray. If your earthly father knows what to give to you, how much more can your heavenly Father give you a heart. Nothing shall be wanting to them that go to God as a father. God bows his ear to the prayer of his people; he condescends to our weakness, buckles himself to hear us.

Thirdly, we are here to take notice of God's fatherly providence, to provide what may be suitable to our occasions. God has all in store, All the beasts of the field are mine; he is the God of all comfort, [6] herefore he is provident. He that provides for the ravens, and causes the lilies of the field to grow; if God cares for these, how much more for you? Mat 6, has the Lord a care for oxen? He that feeds the ravens and clothes the lilies, he will much more provide for him that

calls on him. Who then would not have God to his Father? As the Father provides for the son, so God is a provident Father. Let us walk in his ways, and commit ourselves to his providence and care.

Fourthly, this must teach us an awfulness to come before him. What awe should be in our hearts to come before a heavenly Father?

Preface: Our Father.

First, observe that it is the term of relation, and it is in two things:

1. Consider the sense of the words.
2. The Motives

For the sense of the words, three things are implied.

First, a propriety: an interest we have to challenge in special, not as one friend to another, or one neighbor to another, or the like; but he is our Father; as we say it in our land, so when we say Our Father, we imply a special claim to God; all that compassion and mercy in God is mine. As Nabal said, It is my meat.[1Sam 25.11] The word 'my' implies a possession. Deut 32, Our God is not like the gods of the heathens. [Deut 32.30-31] And as Job says, My Redeemer lives. [Job 19.25]

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Secondly, this laying claim to God implies a community to all the household of God; as the sun is every man's, so God is every man's that is faithful.

Thirdly, it notes a bond of society between the faithful children the same Father. This is the meaning of the word 'our;' as the members agree with the head, so they are helpful; so God is helpful to all his faithful ones.

Now the motives whereby the soul may be furnished to call on God are three:

First, a cheerful readiness to repair unto the Lord, etc. Why, we have an interest in him; he is our Father. The interest a child has in his father, [which] stirs him to come readily to his Father, he does not crave from a stranger, as when the child cried they carried him to his mother. If anything befalls the child, he says, 'I will tell my father, and complain to my mother,' and the like.

So ask the child, who will provide for him? He says, my father. So it is here with our God. There is a fresh and living way that is marvelous, easy, and open. Whosoever seeks shall find, whosoever knocks it shall be opened to him. Mat 7.7 Therefore, whatever our injuries are, we should not complain to the world. No, pour forth your prayers to your Father, and he will be sure to hear you.

Secondly, as there should be a cheery readiness to come to the Lord, so there should be a spiritual boldness to challenge what may be needful. Among strangers we are strange, but among friends we are bold. We have a right and title to these things, and we may be bold with our own. Thus David [8] challenges God. As you are faithful, deliver me, I am your servant, etc. Psa 143.12 If a servant wants food or raiment, he goes to his master. So says David, I am your servant, therefore give me understanding, that I may live. Psa 119.125, 116 When they bragged of Paul and Apollos, he says, All is yours. 1Cor 3.22 This should comfort our hearts. Let us claim our portions. God is our Father and he will give it. Therefore be humbled in regard of your weakness and unworthiness, and confident in regard of his mercy, and walk comfortably in regard of the Lord. If I should see the child doubt in regard of my readiness, I should wonder. Care not, he says, it is your own, and he is our Father, and all that is in him is ours, Mat 6.32.

Thirdly, this stirs up our hearts to have a fellow-feeling of our brethren's misery in our prayers. Therefore God cuts off all in-seekings of our own. Our, as if he should say, 'Is there never[3] a Joseph in prison, never a Daniel in the lions' den, remember and pray for them. If one suffers, all suffer; we are all members of one body. We should mourn with those that mourn, and weep with them that weep, Isa 58. Rom 12.15Put up a prayer for the remnant. Isa 37.4 Oh that our hearts would have a fellow-feeling of their trouble. Paul begs for prayers as for a penny. Eph 6.19, for me also; no, he entreats the Romans to wrestle for him in prayer. Rom 15.30

Which art in Heaven, etc.

First, we are to open the sense of the word heaven; secondly, the motives to move the heart thereto.

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Whether is God more in than in any other place?

No. God, in regard of his essence, is in all places alike; he is wholly everywhere. The Godhead is altogether indivisible; things of quantity fill a room, but God is indivisible; as he is unchangeable, so he is a simple being; therefore all of God is in the whole compass of heaven and earth. Psa 139.8, If I go to hellyou are there, etc. [4] God is the same manner everywhere; you must conceive no parts of God. If God is immense, then all of him is everywhere and

altogether in every place. All creatures have their being from God; he is in them and beyond them; he is excluded out of no place, included in no place.

If all of God is in every place, why then is he said to be in heaven only?

First, because God would manifest the glory of his power more in heaven than in earth, because we see him not here, Acts 17.24-27. We grope after him; but we know the royalty of a king appears more in court or parliament, so the excellency of God appears most in heaven.

Secondly, there are three heavens; the heaven where the birds are, the heaven where the stars are, and the highest heaven. Now the third heaven is meant here, for God has reserved this place as his chair of state. The heavens (says David) are the Lord's. [Psa 115.16] No unclean thing can come there. The angels sinned, and all the visible heavens are defiled by man; the sun is abased, the air polluted, all these creatures that serve man are by man [10] defiled. But the highest heaven was never defiled because it is the chamber of God. God leases out these things to man, but he reserves this heaven for his own habitation. This is the special reason why God is said to be in heaven.

What motives have we to prepare our hearts to prayer, which is the scope of the Preface?

They are specially three.

First, it teaches us to take notice of the purity of God, what ought to be the frame of our spirits when we appear before him. He cannot abide sluggish prayers from an impure heart, heavenly dispositions best suits with God's holiness. The sanctity of our affections ought to answer God's purity. Kings (we know) as they will be entertained, so their entertainment must be that which suits their greatness. God is in heaven beyond all corruption. Therefore if we approach near to God, we should answer to his purity with hearts purged, so that our hearts may be in heaven, because he is in heaven to whom we pray. Cursed be the deceiver that has a male in his flock, and offers a female, etc. [Mal 1.14] Our sacrifice is our service, and prayer is one of the chief. The God of heaven is a pure God; then cursed be the man that has strong love, desires, and other affections, and offers the weakest to God, and serves God with rubbish. Cursed be that man; the pure God of heaven will not look on such service and impure prayers. God is pure; therefore the service ought to be so. When men are fit before princes, they are to fit themselves accordingly. So it is here: Let us then think it an indignity [11] to God to appear with rubbish dispositions before him. He that will perform a solemn duty to a prince will lay aside all other occasions. So as he said in another case well, lay by all the world, let me now have heavenly joy, for I come before a heavenly Father.

Secondly, it is a ground of comfort that our spirits may be cheered; since God is in heaven, he is

able to effect whatever our hearts desire. To be in heaven, it argues majestically: now we do not pray to an earthly parent, who is liable to corruption, but to a heavenly Father we pray, who can do what we will. He that is in a high place has the advantage of all other things; therefore what we crave is done already; he can do it; and our God is in heaven – he will do what he will. A vileness ever accompanies earthly things, but our Father is in heaven. Therefore Nehemiah made his prayer to the God of heaven. There are dunghill [duties] in the world; but our Father is in heaven. The king could not help the woman,[5] but our Father is not an earthly father, but we pray to the God of heaven. We have but earthly opposition here, but our Father is in heaven, who can over-power all wrongs done to his children and rewards them.

Thirdly, this shows we should with trembling approach his presence: the God of heaven is powerful; we are creeping worms, and dare we come carelessly to such a Father? A father implies a readiness, and heaven an awfulness;[6] when the mountains move, and the devils shake [12] at the presence of God, and the blessed angels tremble before him, how dare we approach his presence unseemly, lest we have no answer; or to turn the eye one way and the head another? We are not able to bear it in a child. Do not suffer your minds to wander. Dare we press in headily into the presence of God, when the angels cover themselves before him? Let the fear of the Almighty fall on us: since God is in heaven, let our hearts be reverently affected, for in him we live, move, and have our being. Act 17.28

This much for the Preface.

Petition 1: Hallowed be Thy Name

Now we come to the Petitions, which are six. The Lord condescended to our weakness and feebleness, and therefore contrives them into a narrow scantling:[7] three concerning God's name, kingdom, and will; three concerning ourselves, things of this life, things of grace – and they in respect both of justification and sanctification. In all observe,

First, the meaning of the Petition.

Secondly, the carriage of the heart in pressing of it, hallowed be your name. In it observe two things:

First, what is meant here by name.

Secondly, what it is to hallow this name.

What is here meant by name, or what is the name of God?

I answer, by name is meant whatever God is made known to us by; this is his name, as a man [13] is known by his name, so the Lord reveals himself to us by his name. Now this consists in two things:

First, all the glorious attributes of God, as Holy, Pure, Wise, Infinite, etc. – these are the names of God.

Secondly, all the ordinances of God, and the graces of God's saints, and the providence of God in the creature. And it is not the thing itself, but there is a declaration of God in these that is his name. The creature is not the name of God, but God working there. Grace is not so much as the appearance of God in that grace.

What do you mean byhallowed? Can you make God holier than he is, or add anything to God?

No, we cannot add anything to him that gave all to us.

How then do we hallow God's name?

When we make God's name to be discovered as a holy thing, the expression of this is that we would hallow.

How shall we do that?

There was a consultation in heaven, how the Godhead might be manifested, might be conferred, else none were here to apprehend it from eternity. No, if there had been any, they could not apprehend it. I will, says God, have my attributes expressed. Therefore God would have a Word, wherein his goodness should be discovered. Exo 33.23 You shall not see my face, but my back-parts you shall see. As it is with a torch, carry it from one place to another, and it will leave a [14] glimpse behind it. So it is in the surpassing beauty of God. He leaves some beams behind him, that we may say justice and mercy, etc. have been here. Now we are said then to hallow his name, as when we make this appear: when we deal with God's name as a holy thing; and that appears in three particulars:

First, when we acknowledge the excellency of him, we ought to take notice of the beauty and glory of God. Men of place[8] think themselves abused if we pass by them and do not reverence

them. So when we come to deal with God's ordinances, do you know what you do? God's name is there; therefore observe it.

Secondly, as we should acknowledge the worth of it, so we should labor to preserve it. Upon things of great weight and worth, what a price do we set upon them? And how tenderly do we look to them that no blemish be cast upon them? So we should do with the name of God. Go to the Isle of Shittim, etc. Jer 2.10-11 They cast the commandments of God behind their backs. Neh 9.26 The heathen (says God) would not do so; they kissed the threshold where Dagon was. 1Sam 5.5 So deal with God's name. Let no blemish betide[9] it, but deal with it as with a holy thing. The least stain of sinful distemper does not become the name of God; you respect a holy thing, so do the name of God.

Thirdly, as we should acknowledge this worth, so labor to set it out that others may see it, as occasion shall be offered, when any honor may come to it thereby. Express the beauty of the virtues [15] of God, that they may be observed. Holy things are not to be kept secret when opportunity serves. Let your light so shine (says the text) that men may see the good in you. Mat 5.16 So whatever we see in the name of God, as we should keep it from blemish, so we should set it out in the glory of it. A man should hold out the light of the Gospel, not hide it under a bushel. Mat 5.15 Show as much of God as we can, that men may say, God has been here indeed – that a man's word should be like God's Word, that indites them.[10]

How does the heart behave itself in the putting up of this Petition?

First, this behavior of the soul mainly appears in two things:

First, it heartily desires in all things that it shall do that it may lift up the glory of God. Now this we do when in all things we have or do, there is a disposition for the furtherance of God's praise. All our life should be like a lantern to convey light to others. So the heart should desire that in all things, God's glory should be furthered, that we may do nothing but we might further God's glory by it.

Silver and gold are fit to stamp the king's image upon. So a man's practice should be good metal to stamp God's glory upon: not as painted windows to hinder the light, but to rebound the light. The text says, Herod did not give God the glory, Act 12.23 the voice of God and not of man. He took the glory of God to himself, and did not give it to God. There are some kinds of glass [which] will reflect a man's image; so there should be a conveying of glory from ourselves to God. [16] Look as it is with a ball. The falling of it makes it rebound. So it should be with our hearts; they should rebound God's glory when it falls upon us. This is a great skill. The soul should have nothing but whereby God might be honored. Any sinful course blemishes God's glory; any priding of a man's self furthers not God's glory, but the soul should desire that in all, God might be acknowledged and glorified.

When does the soul do this?

When the soul labors, that in all things something more than human excellence may appear. For if anything of a man's own is discerned, we fall short of God's name in every action. Such should be our dispositions, that something more may be seen than a base and mean shadow. This is a skill in preaching and praying; there should be more in all than human discovered, as parts, gifts, and the like. If nothing appears but self, the name of God is deprived of what it should have. As Paul said, Do I speak as a man?[Rom 3.5] But he demonstrated the Spirit in him; it should be discovered what I do, that God works in it, that he might have all the honor of it. God the Author of all should have the glory of all. We talk of this and that, and say, let him be glorified, but we do it not in our conversations.

What are the several works of the heart in doing this, that it may appear God is the Author of all, and the honor is due to him?

The acts of the heart are two, whereby it sets forth the glory of God.

First, in all services a man should not be quiet in his [17] affections and endeavors till he comes to the highest pitch, that is, God's glory. All actions are in the way one towards another, as a pair of stairs, one goes from another and above the other. A man should go higher and higher till God's glory mounts and surmounts them all. As a minister first studies to teach the people, that they may be informed; but why [be] informed? That they may appear to be Christ's, and that God's grace may appear in their conversations: the soul never rests till it is here. A man goes to prayer in his family, and why so? That he may show God in his courses. The servant fends for his wages, and so is gone, and where is God all this while? This should be our desire, that in all our actions, God may be discovered to be the Author, and to have the honor of all.

Secondly, the soul must be sure not to go beyond God's glory. As thus: (1) a minister preaches that the people may be instructed, and he be honored as well as God; this is to be above God; (2) a man prays to honor God, and that it may be known he is a glorious professor thus. A man is above God just as a bird steps from one bough to another, till it comes to the highest, and then it flies away. So [if] we step up to God's glory and go beyond it, we would have God glorified to glorify us. But this is hypocrisy, to have God honored that we may be secretly base. This is the deepest dishonor to God, and he will be revenged of them one day, and pluck his praise out of their bowels. The three wise men would not stay till the star stood and went no further. [18] So where the star of God's glory goes, let us go, and not stay till we come there; and when we are there, go no further. This is the carriage of the heart, Phil 1.20, that in life and death God may be honored and exalted. Look as it is with a workman that makes a piece of curious[11] work. We do not give honor to the tool, but to the workman. So God should receive the honor of all, and from all.

Secondly, as the soul should make God discovered by himself, so he should desire that God

might be acknowledged by others as we ourselves express it; and that appears in two particulars.

First, that they might embrace the excellency of God. Let your light so shine before men. [Mat 5.16] Why so? Not that they may see you, but that they may see your good works – that is, God in your good works – and glorify him. Do not think I would have others see my good parts, gifts, and the life, but only that they may see God in them. The Fisher desires that the fish would see the bait, not him. So he that angles for the souls of other, does not desire that others may see him, but the grace of God. An apprentice does not stand in the shop to call over others to look at himself, his person, properties and the like, but to see his Master's wares. And so we desire that God may lift us up, but that is not the rule that men may see our good works, but God in them. A child or servant should so walk that others may admire God's grace in him; we are god's workmanship.

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Secondly, we should have hearts enlarged to bless God, that he has been pleased to reveal himself to us.

This much for the first Petition.

Petition 2: Thy Kingdom come

Why is this added immediately to the former?

Because it is a special means whereby the heart is fitted and the glory of God advanced. The first was to hallow God's name, and to that end the kingdom of Christ must be set up. For no natural man can glorify God, because so long as sin and corruption prevails, it will never be. Therefore the power of Christ's Spirit must do it, and by it we must be swayed unto it.

What is the scope of this petition?

The main scope of it is this much: that the government of God by Christ might be set up and prevail everywhere. As before God's name was highest, so here the power and government of Christ is to be universal. That is the general [scope].

Now we come to the particulars, and here consider the sense of the words.

First, what is this kingdom?

Secondly, the carriage of the heart in putting up this petition.

Thirdly, what is the coming of this kingdom?

By kingdom is meant that rule that Christ has set up in the hearts of his [people]. For the general providence of God, I take it, is not so much aimed at in this [20] place, or that ordinary providence of God over the creatures. This is set forth in the fourth petition (Give us this day our daily bread), but it is the rule of Christ that is set up in his church.

How manifold is it?

It is two-fold: which are these:

Of grace

Of glory

Both aimed at here.

What is the kingdom of grace?

It is that whereby Christ by his Spirit and grace, by the ministry of the Word, takes place in the hearts of his [people], and this he does two ways.

First, by overpowering & casting down all other things which are opposite thereunto, all the power of sin and Satan, which are opposite to him.

Secondly, he sets up that frame of Spirit whereby it is subject to grace, and it takes place two ways:

First by the cutting down and killing of every sin.

Secondly, the soul takes the stamp of every condition, and is ruled by it.

What is the kingdom of glory?

God's immediate ruling in the hearts of the glorified saints.

How do the kingdom of grace and glory differ?

Here in the kingdom of grace, God rules.

First, by his Spirit.

Secondly, by the Word and Ordinances.

Thirdly, by the ministry of the Word.

But in heaven he rules immediately. No more words and means, but Christ fills the soul fully. And then he [21] rules gloriously, when the understanding, will, and affections are full of Christ, and are fully and wholly subject to him. Here in the vale of tears[12] we meet with many rubs and oppositions. But then Christ shall shine fully and immediately. In all his ordinances we seek a Christ, but then we shall have all of him so that we that have the Spirit have a glimpse of heaven. Therefore ashamed should we be to be weary of God; let us be weary of sin. I tell you, it is a heaven to live here with God upon earth, and if it be a glorious thing to have a glimpse of God here, how much more to be filled with God hereafter in his kingdom?

How is this kingdom said to come?

The coming of the kingdom implies three things.

First, that the Word may be revealed in these places, where it has not been, That the day-spring from on high, may visit them that sit in darkness, Luk 1.78-79 that the Sun of righteousness might visit them that want it, that the banquet of the Gospel might be set up. Mat 24, If any man says he is in the wilderness, do not go out; for where the carcass is, there the eagles will resort. This is the first thing. A kingdom is said to come when a king rules in a place where he did not before; so it is here. Let all people praise you, says David. Psa 67.3 He desires not that some tongues only, but that all tongues and languages should do this.

Secondly, wherever the Gospel shines, we desire that it should discover[13] itself more fully, and spread itself wherever it comes; we desire the King's government should enlarge the territories more [22] and more. So we desire not only that Christ should be revealed, but that more and more should be gathered, that God may be taken in everywhere, and that every knee may bow to Christ, and lick the dust, that so there may be an addition made to the Church, that every man in every kind may come to Christ, and that God would cast his skirt over him that more may be caught in his net, that the Jew and Gentile may be gathered into one sheep-fold, and have one Shepherd.

Thirdly, that the power of it may be more and more settled, as the house of David grew stronger and stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker,[2Sam 3.1] so when Christ sets up his candlestick,[14] that the seed that is sown there may take deep root. When a king has erected castles, then he has his kingdom. So we desire God may entrench himself, and rear castles of defense against his enemies, which would remove him; that he would set himself up strongly; that every traitor may be crushed, and every base lust; that God would slay them, and none but his laws take place. In a word, the issue returns to this much: we beseech Christ that his Gospel may spread and be strong, and these days of sin may be wasted, and the he may come in the clouds, and then come Lord Jesus, come quickly[Rev 22.20] – that he would accomplish the number of his elect, and gather those that belong to his glory, and that they be everlastingly with him.

What is the carriage of the soul in putting up their petition? [23]

It appears in three things.

First, the soul desires and so labors to be subject to the good pleasure of the Lord. The heart says, Oh that I might be so disposed, that I might be subject to the pleasure of the Lord. We desire that all those things that are set up in our hearts, that are contrary to the good pleasure and will of the Lord, might be subdued. Psalm 119.4, You have commanded us to keep your commandments; but, oh Lord, that my soul were so, you have enjoined me to do so. Oh that I could do so, the Spirit should be as wax the seal, and ink to the paper, that the soul might take the impression of every rule that God would set up in our souls. Thus the soul should be disposed to wish that the Lord would put this frame into us; this is a heart worth gold. You have said, seek me; oh, says the soul, that I could seek your face, and echo, behold Lord, your face I seek, to submit wholly without any contending – not that the Lord should force us, but that we should take up our yoke, put our necks to the yoke, let the Word of the Lord bear the balance. When Mary wanted wine, and our Savior checked her, and Martha encumbered with too much business was reproved, you are troubled with many things, etc., they submitted presently,[15] not a word more. So what the Lord commands, let us do without any quarrelling; let the least inkling of the Word bear the balance. When our Savior sent his disciples for the ass's colt, they might have said, 'but haply[16] the man will not let him go, how then?' I tell them, says our Savior, the Master has need of him, and then [24] they will not deny him. That is enough. Do but speak and it is done; this the soul should labor to attain to.

Secondly, the soul carries itself with an inward opposition to whatever is opposite to the government of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the utmost of our power. It is vain to say, 'It were well if it were so, and I would it were so,' and yet to stand still and not to set to our hands.[17] But we must join sides with the Lord, and as he spoke of Meroz, Cursed are you, because you will not help the Lord against the mighty. [Jdg 5.23] So truly the Lord Jesus is coming to our towns, to our families; therefore we should step out and help the Lord against those mighty mountains of pride and stubbornness of heart. When a proud heart stirs, do you join sides with it, or cry out

and say, 'Good Lord help down with that proud heart, and stubborn spirit,' and the like? The Lord says it, and does your heart yield? But if you say, 'Come pride, and you and I will join sides together, and if the Word can remove us, let it, but we will join forces' – is this calling for the kingdom of Christ to come? No, no, you are traitors and conspirators, and not subjects. Therefore stop your mouths; this is not submitting but conspiring. When Jezebel looked out of the window with her painted face, Jehu says, Who is on my side, fling her out! So the Lord says, Will you have pride, or me? If you are on my side, fling down that proud heart which hinders the Lord Jesus Christ from taking place in your souls. You paint yourselves in a sturdy humor, but if you are on God's side, fling down those painted strumpets.[18] You must [25] not only oppose great sins, but every sin. We must not fodder[19] and side with any secret sin, although it be but with the appearance of evil. You must abstain from it.[1Pet 2.11] You know what Moses said of losing not a hoof; another said he would start a hair's breadth from God's commandments in any particular. So let us subdue all, not leave an inch, not a stamp, not so much as two nails of the Dagon of our cursed lusts to rule in us. Thus it should be with the soul.

Thirdly, though the soul cannot be as it should, yet it does desire the Lord that neither sin nor self-will may rule in us – lay all flat down under the government of Christ. When the heart finds a great deal of outwardness and power of sin, then it says, 'Lord, your kingdom should prevail.' But the sons of Zeruiah[20] are too strong in me. Therefore take power to yourself, and pluck away whatever does oppose you. It was a good speech of a good Christian that he desired the Lord to rule whether he would or not. Thus the soul should be disposed to entreat the Lord, that he would break open the door. When the Lord comes and we will not open, we desire the Lord would come in by violence. The white horse in conquering conquered. So the soul desires the Lord to conquer, to break in and make way into the soul, and to take possession wholly in the soul. Now when the soul is loath this should be, it is a wretched spirit that when the Lord will take sin, whether we will or not, we are loath it should be. Do we then pray Christ's kingdom should come, when we are not able to bear a commandment? [26] No, no, the soul will labor to oppose sin, and pray the Lord for power against corruption.

Petition 3: Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.

This is the third Petition, and in it are three things observable.

First, the order, it is in the third place.

Secondly, the sense and meaning of the words.

Thirdly, the frame of the heart in putting up this Petition.

First, for the order. The reason of it is because the two former [petitions] make way for this third. He that glorifies God in all things, and has his power set up in him, he only does what he commands. For naturally there is no ability in man to do the will of God. But when the Spirit works within, then we are able to frame our hearts to God's will. David was a man after God's own heart, and then he did his will; this is the reason of the order of the Petition. From the ground, observe two grounds of direction.

First, he that thinks out of his own power to do God's will, it is impossible that he should do it – no, he will never do it.

Secondly, we must first submit to the kingdom of Christ before we can do his will; be under the government of God's grace, and then go on cheerfully. We fail before we have submitted. We would be doing, but first Christ must do terrible[21] things to the heart before it yields obedience.

Now for the words. [27]

What is the will of God?

It is the purpose of the Almighty touching the accomplishment of anything; there is nothing done, but the Lord does it. Whatsoever is brought to pass, that God wills in general. Eph 1.

How many kinds of will are there? Or, how manifold is the will of God?

It is two-fold; not in regard of itself, but in regard of us.

First, the revealed will of God.

Secondly, the secret will of God.

What is the secret will of God?

It is that secret purpose he has in himself before all worlds, and has not discovered[22] it to the creature. Eph 1.9, Having made known to us the mystery of his will according to his own good pleasure which he has purposed to himself. The Gospel was hidden in the bosom of the Almighty, not observable by man or any creature under heaven, but now it is revealed. This is the secret will of God which was hidden in himself before all worlds. 1Cor 2.16, Who has known the mind of God? The deep things of God none knows but the Spirit of God; and as it is not

made known, so we have nothing to do with it in this place.

What is the revealed will of God?

It is the purpose of God that he has made known to us by his Word, and revealed to us in his works; whatever is done in heaven or earth is the will of God. I did not know God would destroy Bohemia and the Palatinate [23] before I saw it. This is [28] the will here meant. I did not know of such a friend's death before he died, and then we must say, Your will be done. Whatever God has made known, either by works or words, that we pray to have done.

What is this doing of the will of God?

It consists in and implies two things:

First, that whatever God makes known to be his will to bring upon us, we should willingly submit and yield to it. If God would have me poor, when it is done, we should approve of the accomplishment of God's will. It is the breach of many commandments, that when God thwarts our desire, we are unwilling it should be done. The wife is unwilling her husband should die, and the husband that the wife should die, never lost a man such a wife as I. This is professedly against this petition. We must imitate that of the good prophet David. Psa 39, I held my tongue and said nothing. Will the Lord have it, not a word more? – then his spirit yields presently, takes the stroke, [and] does not thwart the good will of the Lord. This is the practice of David, Eli, [and] Hezekiah: It is the Lord; let him do what he will. No, our blessed Savior himself says, Not my will, but your will be done. But this is the folly of our hearts: we take up arms against God's will. God would have us to be poor, and we will be rich. This is not to do the will of God. Though God forces us to do it, yet that is no thanks to us. Thus we sin desperately.

Secondly, the heart is not only content with what God will have us suffer, whether loss of life, [29] friends, liberty, and the like, but there is another will [that] must be done by us. What God reveals to be a duty must be discharged by us. If there is a truth to be made known to us, we must acquaint ourselves with the will of the Lord, and then with all diligence practice it. Make my heart one with yours, that I may ever fear your name. Let your will be mine. 'Oh,' says the soul, 'that I might ever fear your name' – this is to do the will of God. We do no say, let it be spoken of and considered of by me, but let it be done; let it be accomplished by me. We must not lift at it, and give God good words and talk, and leave it undone – but labor to do it. It is not enough for the child to say, 'I what my father commands, but I must do what I list.' [24] Such hearts cannot pray to expect anything at the hand of the Lord; now and then to look at a duty, etc., and to say, 'I would it were so, [but it] will not serve the turn.' Away with that sluggishness, to wish the will of God were done, and yet you have your own wills.

To this precept belongs, that we should set on others to do God's pleasure. In vain do we wish it to be done, and yet do not provoke on others to do it. When Paul and Agrippa were grappling together, Agrippa says 'You have persuaded me almost to be a Christian.' 'Not almost,' says Paul, 'but I would have you altogether as I am, except these bonds.' I would have you fettered as I am, but enlarged in heart to do God's will. So that of Joshua, I and my house will serve the Lord. Jos 24.15 He that not only neglects God's will himself, but hinders [30] others, that man does not pray this petition aright. He that says, Your will be done, and in the meantime withdraws others by his secret allurements, and says, 'What? Should I be such a fool to be at other men's bow and beck, to sit howling in a corner as you do?' No, no, well be it known to you, you that will not do God's will here, the Lord will have his will be done on you one day to your cost. He that will not do God's will here, God will send him packing to hell; and there he will execute his will upon him whether he will have it or not.

How must we do the will of God? We do now and then stumble at a duty, and now and then take up a service, and are neither whores nor thieves. But yet we are now and then peevish and wayward, etc. Is not this enough?

No, no, you must do it in earth as it is in heaven; not now to be something, and then to be nothing; now a saint, and then a devil; but you must do the will of God as it is in heaven.

But can a man do the will of God on earth, as the blessed angels do it in heaven?

A man cannot do it in that measure the angels do it. But we may do it as they do, and perform equal obedience with them, though not in quantity, yet in quality. A child follows the father, though it cannot run so fast as the father. A scholar may imitate the copy, and write after it, though not write so fast and well. So the servants of the Lord cannot do the will of God here so, in that the angels do it in heaven, but in quality like them. Let their obedience be [31] our pattern, not in the measure, but in the manner of it.

In what things must it be done, and how can we express any action like theirs?

This resemblance is in four particulars.

First, they do it readily; they are prest, [25] and ready at hand to do the good will of the Lord upon all occasions. They do not withdraw themselves, but presently upon every occasion do what the Lord requires. We read in Job 1, that the sons of God appeared before him; they are ever in his sight to give attendance upon him, as the handmaid is ever at the hand of her mistress. So that of Isaiah, the text says, they cover their faces before the Mercy Seat; they cover their faces in token of awfulness and reverence, and cry Holy, Holy. They are ever before him as a dutiful servant is ever at his Master's beck. They are at hand in this readiness of theirs to do the will of

the Lord. We should imitate them, to be ever prepared and at hand to do the will of God – not to have our affections straggling, but with Ananias we must say, Here Lord; with Abraham, Behold your servant is at hand. Thus it should be with the soul. The Lord says, 'You must not have this sin, and that corruption;' we must reply, Thy will be done, Lord. We must not say as Moses said when the Lord commanded him to go to Pharaoh, Who am I Lord? Send another. No, it should not be thus with us; we should be ready at hand: Here Lord; Speak Lord, for your servant hears. Acts 9, Go to Paul, says the Lord to [32] Ananias, and he went though he had been a persecutor.

Contrariwise, Jonah will go to Tarshish rather than to Nineveh. We should not do thus, but as angels, and as Cornelius – when he sent for Peter, Acts 10, he says, We are all here before you to take notice of whatsoever it shall please God to reveal to us by you. Let our lamps be alight and prepared, that whether the Bridegroom comes at midnight, or at any other time, [Mat 25.1-13]all may be in readiness at a push, that we may go when the Lord calls. When the Lord says, here is a sin to be sorrowed for, 'Here Lord,' says the soul. We must not let God stay for us, nor be hailed as a bear to the stake in any duty. No, but we must attend the will of God, neither must we shout it out, 'I will be wicked, and I will walk in my own way, etc.' So you may, and perish; and so you may, and be damned, and go to hell too when you have done. It is nothing what a man hails out, whether he will or not; that is nothing. This is not to do the will of God as it is in heaven. But we must always be fitted and ready to do what God requires. The angels came before God, and the text says, the devil by force, full sore against his will, came also. So wicked men dare not but leave some sins; but it is perforce they are either constrained to it by the laws of men, or by the horror of conscience, and the like – not with ready cheerfulness and willingness. But we should have our lamps alight.

Secondly, the angels do the will of the Lord speedily; they are not delaying, but are willing and [33] prest in the performances of God's will. If the Lord does but beck, they are gone. The angels are said to have diverse wings, [Isa 6.2] some to cover their face in token of humility; some to cover their feet, to show their prestness and readiness to do the will of God, and with all speed and haste to do what God at any time shall enjoin and command. Thus we should do it as they do; we must shake off all lingering and stiffness of spirit when we see God's will should be done, and that God requires it. But naturally, we are marvelously lazy in our Christian course. When a man comes as a bear to the stake, is that to do the will of our heavenly Father as the angels do? Do they thus? No, nor we should not, if we do it rightly. We must imitate that of David. He will praise the Lord with his best abilities, and run the ways of God's commandments. [Psa 119.32] Thus should we do: make haste and do not delay. As when the prophet Elisha sent his servant post-haste to the woman's son, he bade him, Salute no man; make no stay by the way. [2Kgs 4.29] This marvelous care should be in us. We should pray for our lives, and run on in a Christian course for our lives – not trifle, but go with all speed till we come to our journey's end; not sluggishly, as if a man cared not whether he did it or not; but a man should pray for his life. If profit or pleasure would be tampering with us, salute them not; we should take up our resolutions to reject them. If honor or profit would be hanging about us, fling them off; let us not regard them, but ride post-haste. When our Savior sent his [34] disciples to preach, he bade them carry neither scrip nor staff to hinder them in their course. When Paul was converted, the text says, he never consulted with flesh and blood; he advised not with

carnal reasoning; but what God commands, he did. So when God calls for duty, we should not reason with profit, pleasures, and honors, to pull off our caps, and ask them leave[26] to take up this duty and these performances. If the holy Apostle had done this, it would have hindered him; but he consulted not with flesh and blood. So we should do whatever God commands. It matters not what men would have of us, but let us have an eye to God's command.

Thirdly, the angels in heaven do the will of God faithfully, and their faithfulness is in this, that they perform the whole will of God. They fail not, but do it to a hair's breadth. He is a faithful servant that does his Master's will and command fully; so should a saint do. Now faithfulness appears in two things:

First, we must do it all as they do.

Secondly, we must do it in the right manner, not only the thing, but in the right manner God requires it.

This is faithfulness: the angels do not accomplish what message they will, but God sets it down, and his good pleasure takes place (Psa 104). They fulfill the good pleasure of the Lord; they start not at any service, no crossness they stand at;[27] God's commands, they do. And because [35] he commands it. So it ought to be with the hearts of the people of the Lord. We must not pick and choose, and do it in an aguish fit, when we list.[28] It is said of David, he did all the will of God, a man after God's own heart. It was the charge Mary gave, whatever he bids, do it. It is sufficient [that] God commands [it], though it is tedious; the angels do not care, though all the devils in hell rage. So the saints of God should do; be it tedious, that [matters] not; our care must be that we may finish our course with comfort. A saint does not pick and choose, but fears every sin, and takes up every duty; if all the devils in hell oppose, yet the people of God will do his will.

The text says that Caleb and Joshua followed God fully in the day of Massah and Meribah in times of trouble. Exo 17.7 There is an angel-like spirit, to go thorough-stitch[29] with the works; though father and mother were against them, yet they would go on. Luk 14.26 The contrary was the sin of Sardis, which God reproves sharply: I have not found your work full. Rev 3.2 It is not enough to do some of God's will; but we must do it all, or else the Lord will not regard [it]. The devil will do well sometimes for his own ends, if he is pleased; but that is nothing. You must do God's will, pleased or not pleased, or else you have a satanic spirit. We must not say, the days are troublesome, etc. Eph 5.16, but go thorough-stitch with it as the angels do.

Thirdly, as we must do the will of God, so we must do it after the right manner, as God requires. Thus Abraham did when he was commanded to go [36] offer his son Isaac; he went early in the

morning, as God required. If he had been to offer an ox, it had been nothing; but Abraham must offer his only son Isaac, the son of the promise, and he must be the sacrifice. So, for us not to be drunk, and [not] to commit outrageous sins, that all the crows cry out [about] – that's nothing. But your secret lusts, your beloved Isaac's, they must be sacrificed and abandoned; else you do no more than the devil. Thus you must do the will of God, not as you will, to sacrifice half a Sabbath, but on God's terms, or else it is nothing.

Fourthly, the angels do the will of God constantly; where they were, they are. Matthew 18.10, They are daily before the face of God; they hold out and persevere to do God's will. This should be our practice; though we cannot do it in that manner, and so much as they, yet endeavor for it. Continue to the death, says the text, and what then? I will give you the crown of life. [Rev 2.10] Our reward shall be forever; let our labor be so; hold it out with constancy. A saint should be four-square, the same forever. The fruits of righteousness are according to the parts of the year, spring and harvest, autumn and winter. And the first fruit is fatness: not to fall back, to be good in good company – with professors, profess; and with swearers, curse; and with drunkards, be drunkards; and with devils, be devils. The blessed angels do not thus. The Lord commends the good steward, Happy shall that servant be, that when his Master shall come, shall find so doing. [Mat 24.46] When the Lord [37] shall come and find a saint persevere to the end, he shall be blessed indeed. The angels will out-bid us in the measure of performances of God's will, but yet we should be speedy, and ready, and faithful, and constant as they. Our hearts are holy in uprightness, although not in that measure of exactness, as theirs are.

What is the frame of the heart in putting up this Petition?

It appears in two things.

First, it is willing to do it itself.

Secondly, it is willing and desires to help and stir up others to the utmost of its power, to do the will of God.

First, the soul ought to be forward to know the will of God, and to labor to do it itself; and this appears in four particulars.

First, the heart is willing to do the will of God in laying down its own will, so far as it may be a hindrance from doing God's will, for oftentimes our will and the will of God are contrary. There is naturally a sturdy toughness that lifts up itself above the Lord; this must be removed. Not my will, says our Savior, but your will be done. [Luk 22.42] If our will and God's will cannot stand, we must lay down ours; but sometimes we say desperately (as they did), We will walk in our own ways, etc. and We will have a king as other nations; [1Sam 8, 5] we will have our base lusts to sway and rule us. But so long as this is in us, we cannot do the will of the Lord. We cannot serve two masters. I came not, says our Savior, to do [38] my own will, but my father's that sent me. [Joh 6.38] It is often times with our will, and the will of God, as with two buckets: the letting down of one is the lifting up of the other; and the lifting up of the other is the letting down of that. So

when we let down our own wills, we lift up God's; but the lifting up of our own wills is the letting down of the good will of the Lord. Now the cause why we stick in service, and cannot come off, is because we would have our pleasures; we would be this and that; so that the will of God is jostled against the wall and shut out of doors. But let this distemper be crushed, and then the will of God will take place. When we have done this, then we musts repair to the Lord to know what his pleasure is; take his warrant before we set upon the works. Conscionable attendance of God's will should be the root and spring of all our actions – not to go without it, but to have our spirits curried by it. This is as a master-comptroller that sways the balance, and bears all before him. Tell me not [that] I cannot do it for my liberty's sake, etc., but I have no warrant of God's will. Unless the good will of the Lord goes before me, I dare do nothing. Eph 5.10-11, Proving what is acceptable to the Lord. As a goldsmith lays the gold to the touch-stone, so prove yourselves, and find out what is acceptable to the Lord. In the name of the old law, they put on the linen ephod, and went to inquire of the Lord whether the men of Kedar would come up. So should we come to the Lord (that is, the touch-stone) and see what the Lord will have us to do [39] and not to go to a company of carnal counselors, to consult with honor, ease, wife and family, etc. whether I shall suffer? Says the soul; says honor, if you do thus, I am laid in the dust; says ease and profit, for my part, if you take this course, I am utterly undone and lost; then says the soul, if it is thus, I will not do it, let all sink and swim. Thus they do not God's will, but their own. But those that do the will of God, let them inquire what his will is. Let honor, and profit, and ease, and world and all say what it will, but they will do the Lord's will. We must not master conscience (as it was the speech of a wicked wretch), one of his companions being in horror of conscience, he bade him master it as he did; for before that, he could never live quietly – but now he was not at all troubled with it. Mastering of conscience, in English, is fearing of conscience; but that must master you, and lead you to the performance of duty.

Thirdly, when this will of God is revealed, we must yield to it, without any quarreling against it, or questioning of it. But let the soul be delivered up to the will of God. As David says, let my will be done with yours. Psa 143.10 When the Lord calls, seek my face, we should echo, your face Lord I seek. Psa 27.8 We should be prepared for the Lord, so to have our affections strike as the Lord sets them. And then we should have hearts like God; then we should do his will aright; then would it be in our hearts to do the will of the Lord, as David says, Psa 40.8. [40]

Fourthly, we should have a courageous constant resolution to go on with that work, and in that way God has revealed to us, and has laid open before us. So that the soul should say, not my will, but give me a heart that may do your will. Thus we should have a constant resolution to go on – not to do it by fits and starts, but as the Apostle says, fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold of eternal life. 1Tim 6.12 And except a man have this, he prays not this Petition aright, but out of hypocrisy; it is his own will he seeks, not the will of the Lord.

Now we must come to the second thing. As we should do the will of God ourselves, so we should further on others, and that appears in two particulars.

First, we should further on others in the discharge of duty.

Secondly, we should join sides with others in the performing of duty.

First. For the first, we must further on others. That is a pregnant place. Heb 10.24, Provoke one another to love and good works. We must not only stand by and look at others, but provoke and egg others on, to stir them up to do the will of the Lord. In 2Cor 9.2-3, the Lord commends them, because they gave a good example to their brethren. It is good to have a stirring heart. Satan sets on others to sin. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.[1Cor 5.6] A man [does not get] drunk alone, but draws on others with him. If Satan and his instruments are so, how much more ought we to do the contrary? There is [41] not a duty that more promotes God's glory than this: wicked men, as infectious persons, labor to infect others. So should we be forward to help others. These are as stewards; they provoke their fellow-servants, go about reproving, and exhorting one another. Thus a Christian should set on every man, and spur on others to do the will of God, not only to take a lecture ourselves, but call on others to it.

Secondly, we should labor to join sides with them to do God's will. It was the practice of the scribes and Pharisees to lay heavy loads and burdens upon others, [Mat 23.4] but not stir up themselves. But we should join sides and lend a helping hand in the performance of duty. When a cart is at a set, it is not enough for a man to stand by and say, I would it were out, etc. and yet never lend a helping hand – but he must join with others to help it out; and if one team will not get it out, on another to it. So when a time of troubles comes, we should be at the cannons mouth at a dead list. When another is not able to get out, by reason of temptation, then we must join sides with them, and pray and mourn with them. [Zec 12.10]Let us go to the House of the Lord, and we will go also. [Psa 122.1] So it is not enough to profess ourselves God's servants, but we must pray also for others, and suffer also, if necessity requires. As it was David's speech, Psa 33.2, Let us praise the Lord together, at a list.[30] So if we would do God's will, it is God's will, as to pray ourselves. So we should say to others, let us pray and study together, [42] that the will of God may be done. It is not enough to wish that God's will might be done, and we stand by with our hands in our pockets, and do not provoke others, and lay reproaches on them, 'What? You pray?' etc. This heart is professedly against the will of God. These are foremen in the Devil's shops, and scholars of the highest form in Satan's school. But if we desire to have God's will done, let us set to our shoulders to the burden, and help others.

This much for the third Petition, Thy will be done, etc.

Petition 4: Give us this day our daily bread.

We come now to the other three Petitions, and they concern ourselves merely. The first is concerning spiritual gifts; and it consists partly in justification, and partly in sanctification.

But first for the order: Why do we beg for the things of this life before spiritual mercies? Our daily bread before our spiritual?

Because in nature a man must have an outward being before we have a better. This life is the time of our trading, and after this life there is no grace to be had. Therefore we must have this life before we can live everlastingly with God hereafter. No man can get God by the means that does not live. [43] Therefore, though the other is more necessary, yet a man, except he have this, he cannot have the other – that living here bodily, we may live spiritually hereafter.

Now for the sense of the words.

First, what is meant by giving?

Secondly, what is meant by bread with all the circumstances: daily bread, and our daily bread? etc.

First, for the word giving implies three things:

First, that the Lord out of his goodness and wise bounty would provide what may be profitable for us, and which we stand in need of; in a word, what we want, he would supply.

Secondly, that he would preserve and continue these good things that he has bestowed upon us, that he would graciously continue that lot and portion unto us. Psa 16.5, You maintain my lot. The Lord not only gives patrimony to his children, but preserves and continues that which is needful for them, to them.

Thirdly, that the Lord would be pleased to send in the sweet of his blessing upon all the blessings and mercies he has been pleased to bestow on us. The blessing of the Lord is the staff of bread. It is not enough to have these things. For bread may choke us, [and] the houses we inhabit may fall upon our heads, if they are not blessed to us. The covetous man is as if he had nothing, if the Lord lets in but a secret curse and vein of vengeance into his soul. A man may have many outward blessings, [44] and yet have all the sweet taken from him. Indeed, many times all that a man has may be a torment to him; the Lord can take off all the sweet. Therefore we pray and entreat that the Lord would give us the sweet of them, that they may be comfortable to us, as they are in themselves – that the Lord would give all, bless all, and preserve all, and sanctify all to us, that they may be all to us as they are in themselves.

What is meant by bread?

Under this word bread are included all necessary helps and comforts of this life, whatever concerns our lives, good name, and estate – all things belonging to these is bread.

Because bread is the staff of life – most especially useful for life – other things are necessary, but we cannot be without this bread. Therefore the Lord puts a part for the whole, and therefore we pray that the Lord would give, and continue, and bless all things that are necessary for us, to us.

What kind of bread must it be?

Our bread – not that we can procure or purchase it, but the word our implies two things:

First, that we may a right and title to all these things in Christ, that we may have a tenure of them. For all these things are not the wicked man's properly. He usurps them, and he shall answer for them; he sits at a rack-rent;[31] he shall be plagued for them. Now we pray that they may be ours fee-simple[32] – not that we must pay for them, but that [45] we may have the right and tenure of them; that we may claim them in Christ; that we may not answer for them, but that they may be ours.[33]

Secondly, they may be ours in a way of policy between man and man, that we may not have them by violence[34] – not to have another man's riches and honor, but that we may have a political right [to our own]. This a wicked man may have by a political right. To have it by the sweat of our brows, now this we crave also. Now the difference between the political right of a natural man and spiritual man, is this: the Lord only leases out by his political right these things to the wicked; but they sit at a rack-rent. But they are not so to the godly; they have them for their fee-simple by a political right between man and man. Both these ways we beg that they may be ours, that they may be ours in Christ, and that we may have our own, not other's – to pluck it from others – but that it may be ours by our labor, means, patrimony, etc.

What is meant by daily?

The word in the original signifies super-substantial bread; that is, we crave all these things, and the right and title to them. And for the measure, not barely so much food and clothes as will keep the life and soul together, and no more, but that we may have to our lawful delight, and as one spoke, so much as will keep even at the year's end, and a knot at the end to our lawful society.

Why ‘this’ day?

It implies three things: [46]

First, it implies a daily need of succor that we have from the Lord. We do not say, give us this month or this quarter, but give us this day – as who should say, we stand in need of a daily succor from the Lord. The Lord would not have a Christian have too much, that he might be secure as the rich man in the Gospel, ‘Soul, take your ease, etc.’ Luk 12.19. But the Lord would have us come for our breakfast, dinner, supper, and all from him.

Secondly, it shows a man must be content with his allowance; his desire should not be catching after future things. We do not beg for our monthly and quarterly bread, but daily bread – enough for the present time.

Thirdly, it implies that we must pray for this daily bread, every day. A man must be daily begging of the Lord. This is the meaning of this day. Gather up everything, then, and the sum returns this much. We in this Petition beseech the Lord that all good things that concern life, good name, or food, may be supplied to us. And that we may have a spiritual right to them in Christ, and a political right to them between man and man, so that we may have more than barely enough, not to wring from others, to be content with the least pittance, and to daily and continually beg for these things we want and stand in need of.

What is the frame of the heart in putting up this Petition?

It appears in three particulars: [47]

First, a man’s careful painfulness in his course and calling [that] God calls him to and sets him in.

Secondly, a humble dependence on God.

Thirdly, a quiet contentedness with what God allows.

For the first, he must be painful. No man says, ‘Give me this day my daily bread,’ unless he is painful in his place. If we expect anything otherwise, it is a mocking of God. We must be faithful and painful in our places. If we expect anything, honor, goods, good name, and do not labor for it, we do not pray aright. It was the command God gave, Gen 3.19, In the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread all the days of your life. There is no allowance for idleness and carelessness. The Lord sets Adam to till the ground, so that if we will have anything necessary for us, we must labor for it. For says the Apostle, He that will not labor shall not eat. The diligent hand makes rich. But God makes rich, you will say. It is true, yet it is by a diligent hand. A

scholar must labor if he will have learning, etc. Look it is as with a man that has promised a man so much, at such a time, and at such a place, if he will come for it; now if the man does not come for it, he loses it. Even so it is here; the Lord promises success to our labor; the Lord will give the plowman by his plow, the tradesman by his trade, and the scholar by his study – and unless we are painful in our places, we can expect nothing. The Lord gives us our daily bread while we walk [48] with him. So that a man hinders himself more by idleness than he profits himself by prayer without diligence.

Secondly, the soul must dependence upon God, when it has done what it can. It must look for a breathing on them. A man should be so painful in the use of the means, as though they could do all; and yet so depend upon god above all means, as though all outward means could do any good without the Lord. We must not catch it out of God's hands, but look to God in the way he has chalked out before us, and the expect of him what we want. It is the Lord that gives a man substance. Psa 127.2, In vain it is to rise early in the morning, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness – except the Lord bless all, all is in vain. Let us look therefore to him for all we stand in need of. It is the phrase of the wise man, the blessing of the Lord makes rich. Prov 10.22 It is not policy, and craft, and outward means that make rich, but the blessing of the Lord; from that expect all. Though the plowman plows, though the gardener manures, and cuts, and prunes – yet nothing thrives unless the dew of heaven falls. So it is here in our course: all our labor, pains, means, and cost, though it be much and great, yet it will not thrive unless the Lord blesses. The Spirit of the Lord moved on the waters. Let us therefore look to his blessings upon all. A scholar may labor and take many pains, and yet shall never attain his end. Either he shall not have it at all; or if he does, [49] it shall be as Uriah's Letter, choke him at the last. So that except we depend on God, all labor and pains are nothing.

Thirdly, there must be a quiet contentedness: to be content with what God bestows and we receive, else we cross ourselves. We crave for bread, and [we] will have what we list. We do not pray for delicacies [35] and costly apparel, but for bread – that pittance the Lord shall be pleased to bestow upon us. Now if nothing but delicacies and curiosities will serve us,[36] it is more than the Lord allows, and we can expect it to be bestowed upon us. If we have meat and clothing, we must not look to quantity – not for a month, or a quarter, but go to the Lord as to a market. Let him dispose it, or else we beg one thing and desire another. The Lord will be content to give us bread, not pearls; not to cocker[37] us, but to give us what we stand in need of. That of Agur should be our prayer, Give me not too much, lest I be proud; nor too little, lest I put forth my hand to wickedness; but give me food conveniently. Prov 30.8 It is better to be at God's allowance than our own. A child would happily have a coat four or five yards too long, and [would tire himself, or be burned by fire; but a father will not have it too long for him, nor tire him, nor have fire to burn him.] So it is with our heavenly Father. We would overflow our measures, and outrun our portions too beyond our need. It is with us as it is with diets: sick men would have hot wines, and fat meats, and eat excessively. But the Physician orders his entire diet; for [50] if he were to have his fill, it would kill him. A full body and a full stomach would increase the humor.[38] So the Lord is a marvelous, skillful Physician. We have proud hearts and would have our delicacies. And if we should have riches as we would, God would lose his honor which he now has by keeping us under hatches. Therefore the Lord diets us. Diverse creatures are kept in sugar, for

otherwise it would stink. Nothing would serve some if the Lord were not to diet them; but they would be as proud and as fancy as ever they could be. Therefore the Lord is compelled to diet them. Thus we should be content with the least pittance that the Lord sees fitting for us; and he that is thus, the Lord will give him enough for his baits in this pilgrimage.

And this much for this Petition.

Petition 5: And forgive us our trespasses, etc.

This is the fifth Petition touching the good of man.

There are three Petitions concerning God, and three concerning us, this life, and a better life. The first we have handled, and those that concern our spiritual being follow:

First, for the order.

Secondly, the sense and meaning of the words.

Thirdly, the frame of the heart in putting up this Petition.

[51]

First, for the order: why is it thus placed? Justification before sanctification? The reason is, because sanctification flows from justification. Being justified, we are sanctified. First we are acquitted of our sins, of which we stand guilty before him, and then he sanctifies us. First this, then the other. The other are sprigs, and this the main branch. We beg for faith, etc., but they are included in this.

Secondly, for the sense of the words.

First, here is the Petition: Forgive us our trespasses.

Secondly, the reason: As we forgive others, or, For we forgive others that trespass against us, so Lord forgive us; this is the argument whereby we win the favor of the Lord.

What is meant by debts?

By debts are meant all sins, all failings of all kinds, of omission or commission; now they are called debts, because we owe all obedience to God, to love him above all, and our neighbors as

ourselves; and these being the articles of agreement, the slighting and neglect of this brings us into debt with God.

For first, we are bound to these

Secondly, by breaking these we deserve the punishment due to the breach of it. Now when we omit anything, we forfeit and are cast behind hand.[39]

And Thirdly, we a liable to the execution of the punishment due to us in the breach of this; [52] thus sins are debts, and debts sins, of omission or commission.

What is it to forgive?

To forgive is this: we beg that the Lord would be pleased not to take advantage of us because of our debts; nor yet to proceed in the rigor of this law, to do what it requires. Now, our sins require that we should be condemned and executed. A malefactor's forfeiting his bond is cast in his cause,[40] and then cast into the prison, and execution sued out for the satisfaction of this debt. Now we beg of the Lord, that he would not condemn us in the Court of conscience, or execute his justice on us. This is to forgive, and this proceeds from mercy.

But how can God do this? Will this stand with the justice of God, not be satisfied for our faults, to pardon without satisfaction?

No. But though the party does not satisfy, yet if the surety does, it is sufficient. So though he does forgive us, yet he looks for it at the surety's hand. As the creditor does not require the debt at the debtor's hand, but at his hand that is bound to make satisfaction for the debt, so the Lord does not require satisfaction of us as he might, to exact the utmost farthing: because you sin, you shall die. Rom 8.10 The Lord will not exact this of us, but he requires this satisfaction of the Lord Jesus. So that God the Father is satisfied, though not by us; mercy to me, and justice to Christ; mercy on my part, and justice on Christ's part. Thus we see what it is to forgive us; that is, that the Lord [53] would not arrest us, but the surety; that he would not exact from us, but take all from Christ.

Whether are a man's sins forgiven at once, or at sundry times?

At the first time. When a man believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, at that time all his sins past, present, or to come, are remitted. The sins he commits after believing are all pardoned. Justification does not increase or decrease, but sin is pardoned at the first act of believing. Though sanctification may have degrees – one may be more sanctified than another; this [one] has none – [yet] he is fully justified, and all his sins past, present, or to come, are pardoned to him in Christ. All phrases in Scripture imply this much, I will pardon their sins, and remember them no more. Jer 31.34 I will blot them out of my remembrance.

Now the argument is this: I will conclude in diverse proportions.

First, our Savior by once suffering, suffered for the sins of the elect, past, present, and to come. The infinite wrath of the God the Father fell on him for my sins. Now this wrath is all one in him. And being all one and infinite, and our Savior suffering this whole and infinite wrath of God the Father, if he had suffered for 10,000 worlds, he could have suffered no more. God's wrath could only be infinite; so were his sufferings. He might have applied his suffering to many thousands more if he would, and yet have suffered no more. Adam's sin was [54] enough to infect a thousand worlds; and our Savior's merits are sufficient for a thousand worlds.

Secondly, those sufferings that he suffered for my sins past are sufficient for him to suffer and satisfy for my sins present and to come.

Thirdly, the sinner stands justified not for anything in himself, but by the mercies of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now then gather up all and the thing is clear: if our Savior suffered for all sins; and this being infinite, is sufficient to pacify all [God's] wrath due to my sins past, present, or to come; and if a man is not justified of, or by anything of his own, but from Christ; then from this I argue, 'By what death is my sin remitted?' By the death of Christ. And have I not the whole death of our Savior to satisfy? Yes, for that death that suffered for my sins past, [also] suffered for my sins present or to come; the death Christ suffered for all sins. Now this death of Christ is applied to the soul at the first act of believing in the Lord Christ; therefore my sins past, present, or to come, are remitted at the first act of believing.

That remission of sins, which leaves no condemnation to the offending party, is the remission of all sins. For if there were any sin remaining, a man is still in the state of condemnation; but justification leaves no condemnation. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ (Rom 8.1). Thus it is evident [that] there is no condemnation to those that are in Christ; therefore there is full remission of all sins, past, present, or to come, to the soul at the first act of believing. [55]

If the remission of all sins is not at once, it is either because my faith cannot lay hold on it, or because there are some hindrances. But a man by the hand of faith can lay hold on all the merits of Christ; the Word can reveal all; the Sacraments seal and confirm the pardon of all; and then there is no inconvenience, for it makes the soul more careful of a command. Psa 130.3-4, If you should enter into judgment with sin, who would be able to abide it? But there is mercy with you, that you may be feared. Forgiveness makes a man yield faithful obedience; then it is clear that the forgiveness of all sins, past, present, or to come, is made to the soul at once, at the first act of believing.

First, because Christ died for all, and that is all applied at once.

Secondly, justification leaves a man without condemnation.

Thirdly, there are no hindrances; for my faith is able to lay hold on all the merits of Christ, and the Sacraments are able to confirm all; therefore all the sins of the elect, whether past or present, or to come, are pardoned at once in Christ.

But then why do we pray for daily forgiveness of sins? It seems needless to do this; if they are pardoned already, what need we pray daily for the forgiveness of them?

This is one of Bellarmine's[41] chief holds. But I answer,

First, if a man believes, yet he prays for more faith. [56]

Secondly, we entreat the Lord that he would be pleased to renew this repentance, write over and renew this, our evidence of the remission of our sins, and more and more confirm it to ourselves; this a man does though he has faith.

Thirdly, that he would be pleased to continue this, his evidence.

Fourthly, that he would make it increase and be stronger. This a faithful man craves. Lord, says the soul, [I crave] that my sins may not only be pardoned, and the evidence of it sealed to my soul, but that the evidence may be more and more increased.

Whether this act of believing leaves any frame, or puts any disposition into the soul.

First, our justification, which we call forgiveness, finds nothing in us, or anything done by us, by which we come to be justified when we are said to be justified by faith – or are not said to be justified for faith (which is popery[42]). But by faith we lay hold on Christ by whose merits we are justified, just as a man is said to live by his hands – not that he eats them, but by the labor of his hands he gets money, which buys meat, which nourishes him. So a man's sins are not forgiven by virtue of believing, but only thus: because faith like a hand lays hold on this. As a man gets prey by his hand, so we get this prey by the hand of faith. Faith does not make a man just before God, for God might condemn us for the imperfection and weakness of our faith; but it lays hold on him who justifies. [57]

Secondly, forgiveness or justification leaves no gracious frame upon the soul, but it is only a legal and judicial forgiving of a man, a pronouncing of the soul being acquitted. As a man that is arrested, the surety paying all the debt, the law is frustrated, and has nothing against that man; and he is pronounced acquitted by the law. But this acquitting does not make a man any more honest. Thus the Proverb, He that justifies the wicked, and he that condemns the righteous,

they both are an abomination to the Lord. Prov 17.15 It does not make a man more honest than he was, but to account him so, and justify him when he is not. You see then, this leaves no stamp upon the soul. This cuts the throat of many a man's comforts. Here is the main difference between justification and sanctification: justification is not for anything in a man's self, nor does it leave any stamp; but sanctification proceeds from some ability in the soul, and leaves him holy.

Thirdly, though the act of believing does not put grace into the soul, yet wherever this is, there will be another work, bringing grace into the soul.

For we forgive others.

This is made an argument to prevail with God; we beseech God to forgive us because we forgive others, as though saying, if we forgive others, forgive us; but we forgive others, therefore Lord forgive us. It is as though first we could [58] forgive others before God forgives us. Hence the question draws on; namely,

Whether the soul is able to forgive trespasses to others before the Lord forgives its [own] trespasses?

No, our forgiving others does not go before our own forgiveness. God must first forgive us before we can forgive others, because it is a work of grace to do this as God requires,[43] and it comes from a gracious disposition of soul which God must put into us before we can do it. But now sanctification follows justification, a man would say, as a tree brings forth fruit from the sap in the root.

But this is used as a cause, for we forgive others: because we forgive others, therefore forgive us, It seems then to be a cause of our justification.

No, it is a fruit and effect to make way for the conveyance of the assurance of it. It does not make us to be just, but declares us to be just. Every reason propounded by the word "because" does not imply a cause; as I prove fire is fire thus: that which burns is fire, but that burns, therefore it is fire. Now burning is not the cause of fire, but an effect of it. It is not a cause, for first there must be fire before [something] can burn. So too it is a tree because it has apples; now, apples are not the cause of the tree, but the tree [is the cause] of the fruit.

What is it to forgive the trespass of our fellow brethren, and how far may it be done?

In the trespasses of a brother, three things are to be considered.

First, the sin itself. [59]

Secondly, the guilt of the sin.

Thirdly, the punishment due to that sin.

First, we must know that we cannot forgive properly; it cannot be done by us. For who can forgive sins but God only? It is one of God's prerogatives to forgive sins, and that no creature can do.

Secondly, as the guilt has a respect to God, so it has a respect to us; for as he is injured, so are we. When a man steals, it is not only a wrong to the Law of God, but also a wrong to me. So far as the sin respects God, he pardons it; and as it concerns me, I forgive him. And this is done when the heart is willingly content to do all the good to a brother, as though he had never sinned against him. We say we forgive him, but not forget him; only remember this, that a man sins in some kind, so that the Lord does not require that a man should forgive him. As when a man flatters me to my face and backbites me; I am not bound to trust him again. He that bears fire in one hand, and water in another, if he sins against me a second time, and I forgive him, God forgives him and me. When a man cheats me, I will never trust him again till I see good; and yet I forgive him when I am as willing to do him good as [60] though he had never offended me; and with that, I entreat the Lord to pardon him. If he has a portion in Christ, seek the pardon of those sins whereby he has done us wrong. This our Savior did: Father forgive them, they know not what they do. So also Stephen, Act 7.60. This we should do so far as it concerns us.

Whether a man is bound to forgive punishment to another? As when one has stolen anything from us, should we not follow the law on him? How far must a man go in this case in taking punishment on the one offending?

A man may, no it may be so that a man is bound not to forgive it, but to punish it, and a man should sin deeply in the neglect of it. If one has murdered another, a man is bound to follow the law on him, and to give him the punishment due to the fact.

How far may a man go in this case?

It appears in these particulars:

First, when all things are considered, and a man sees it may do good, then a man is bound to give punishment. When nothing but a bridewell[44] will do a servant good, give it to him. When a child is stubborn, give him correction and do not spare him; it is as good as his food. If a wretch belches out his malice, and if a man can reform him by punishment, give it to him. For who knows if it may be the best medicine he ever had? And to let him go unpunished in such a case, makes the forgiving man guilty of his sin, because he might have reformed [the offender] by this means. [61]

Secondly, if this is a way and means to bind a man's hands, and to hinder him from the practice of some sin. As if a persecutor intends to persecute another, then if a man has a suit of law against him, he is bound to cast [the persecutor] into prison, for it keeps him from persecuting the saints of the Lord, and so from sinning deeply. It is a work of mercy to take a knife from a mad man, so as to bind such a man's hands. If God puts forth an opportunity into a man's hand [to prevent harm], he is bound to take the law, and it is mercy to [the offender] to do this.

Thirdly, when a man cannot otherwise maintain his own honor, or life, or some other particular good, for correcting his own wrong, a man is bound in justice to take punishment on such a one as this. If he raises a false report on a man, it is not a work of tyranny but a work of mercy: he ought to right his own wrong that is done to him, by punishment. When it cannot otherwise be maintained, we are bound to take this course. Why? My own honor, life, and estate are to be preferred before others.

Fourthly, when this course being just will maintain the goodness of a man's profession and God's glory, this should be done. When a man's profession lies at the stake, a man is not bound to be mealy-mouthed, but to make those black-mouthed wretches known to others, that they may not dare to bring a scandal upon the glorious Gospel of Christ, nor on the professors of it. This a man must do, and yet forgive a man for all this; if his good [62] or mine, or the profession of the Gospel may be furthered hereby, this should be [done]. And thus a man may go to law in these cases, and the like.

Now we come to the force of the argument.

How is this an argument to prevail with God to forgive us: because we forgive others? Where does the force of the argument lie? What virtue is there in this?

It lies in three particulars. And it is a special means to obtain mercy: Lord I forgive others; therefore forgive me.

First, all the mercy I have, is not firstly in myself;

It is but a river and spring coming from the Sea;

But mercy is firstly in Thyself,

The fountain and sea of mercy is in Thee.

Now Lord, if I have but some bowels of mercy, and some drops of that Ocean of mercy, and yet can forgive others, much more then you, the Fountain of Mercy, can forgive me. When two servants fell out, the one pulled the other by the throat and said, 'Pay me what you owe me.' Now when the Master of that servant heard of it, he said, 'Oh you wretch! Do you deal thus with him when I deal so favorably with you?' Mat 18.28-33 And if a sinner must forgive his fellow brother seventy seven times, how much more the Lord, the God of mercy? Mat 18.22 If he that has but some mercy, received from the Fountain, then much more has the Lord, the Fountain itself.

Secondly, as we have not from ourselves, but from God, so also what we have is mixed with a great deal of spleen.[45] Though some compassion, yet [62] mingled with a great deal of envy; though some mercy, yet mingled with a great deal of cruelty; and a great deal of darkness with the little starlight. But the Lord has all love without any hatred; all mercy without any cruelty. There is no hindrance in the Lord to hinder him. Now the soul says, 'Lord, if I that have a great deal of malice can forgive my brethren, then how much more you, that have all mercy and no spleen (if men humble their souls before you), will forgive?'

Thirdly, the mercy that is in us is but a little; but it is infinite in the Lord. What we can do is but the first fruit, a drop, a grain, a mustard-seed – but abundant in the Lord. Then the soul says, 'Lord, you are boundless and bottomless in mercy; how much more will you forgive? True Lord, the talents and debt whereby we are engaged to you are many and great. But if we poor creatures that have but from the Fountain, and what we have is mingled with a great deal of malice, and that but a drop, and yet we can forgive, then how much more you, that have all first from yourself, and purely, without any mixture of envy, and in an infinite abundance – how much more can you forgive whom you will? Therefore Lord, forgive us, for we forgive others.

How ought the soul be framed in putting up this Petition?

It appears in four particulars:

First, the soul must see and acknowledge itself guilty of those sins that appear in this life. We [64] must see ourselves stand in need of forgiveness. Now we cannot do this till we see ourselves faulty. He that owes nothing, what need does he have to crave forgiveness? So forgiveness of sins implies that we are guilty of sin and liable to the punishment due to sin. They that confess sin, and forsake it, shall find mercy, Prov 28.13. First find out your sins, then find God's mercy. 1Cor 11.31, If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. He that would have God forgive him, must not forgive himself; if we judge ourselves, God will not judge us. As a malefactor that sticks to his own innocence, and will not acknowledge any guilt, in vain he desires to be forgiven. So a sinner or malefactor before God's throne, if he will not confess his sin, he shall never find mercy at the hand of the Lord. Therefore I cannot see how a papist can beg this, when he thinks he can satisfy God's justice himself.

Secondly, we must labor to have the heart see its own inability to satisfy for sin, or to bear God's

indictment which he shall pass upon the soul that is guilty. The soul acknowledges itself unable to answer one of a thousand. Behold, says the Psalmist, Lord, if you were to enter into judgment, who would be able to abide it? But there is mercy with you that you may be feared. Psa 130.3-4 We are bankrupts; we cannot answer the debt, nor bear the suit. If the debtor is able to answer the debt or pay the money, he cares for no kindness.[46] The sinner is the debtor, and if he can satisfy God's [65] justice, what need he care? If I can abide it, what need do I have to crave favor? But when it comes to this, who can abide it? Then the Lord will pardon whatever is amiss. Wherever the sinner goes, he cannot avoid the suit. He needs no pursevant[47] to follow him, conscience is arresting, the Devil accusing; therefore he falls down and cries mercy, mercy to pardon the suit; the soul is not able to bear the suit. This the Church complains of, Behold, our righteousness is as a menstruous cloth, Isa 64.6 and they judge themselves worthy to be condemned, Ezek 36.31. Now in that I say forgive, I imply that I cannot satisfy for sin myself.

Thirdly, we should seek the free mercy of God and of his grace for what we need; we should acknowledge his free mercy. When the soul sees there is mercy in God for him, then it is fitted to pray this Petition. For should I conceive God were severe, holy, just, etc., though I renounce my sin, yet I could not seek him. God is not extreme and rigorous, but he has mercy in store for those that seek him in truth and sincerity. Therefore we should apprehend two things:

First, that God does not desire to deal rigorously [with us]. We should persuade our hearts that God is desirous to welcome our prayers. Exo 34.6-7, The Lord is ready to succor our infirmities. If we are in misery, the Lord will abound in mercy; therefore the Apostle calls him the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Compassion. 2Cor 1.3 [66] If we have new vexations, he has new compassions; no, God has more good than we can desire. He performs more than he promises. He is abundant in truth, above all that he has revealed himself to be in his word. Isa 55.7, Our God is merciful and abundant in forgiveness. He multiplies pardons; he has pardons in store – mercy to pardon any poor soul. 'But,' asks the soul, 'even my sins committed and continued in?' Mark what he adds, though you cannot comprehend it, yet he can conceive it. His thoughts of mercy are larger in giving, than ours in craving. Eph 3.20, He is able to do above what we can think or ask. It was but a cold comfort that Isaac gave to Esau; he had but one blessing. So if God's mercies come to an end, it would be but a poor comfort when the soul says, 'Lord, give me,' and the Lord should say, 'All is drawn and dry.' But there is enough in God to do us good. What does it avail us if a father has a good heart toward his child, if he has nothing to give it what it asks or stands in need of? But our heavenly Father abounds in goodness.

Secondly, God, as he has an abundance of good, so he is free and ready to bestow it. Isa 55.1, Ho, everyone that thirsts, let him buy milk, and milk without money or price. We would be content to have wine, but we have no money to buy it; therefore God adds, though you are not able to pay for it, yet take it. Mic 7.18, Who is a god, or like our God who pardons sin, because mercy pleases him? The pardoning of our sins is like the overthrowing of Pharaoh in the sea. God does it not because we [67] please him; but because his mercy pleases him, he does it freely.

Fourthly, we must be content to wait for his mercy that we stand in need of. We must both wait for it, and be confidently persuaded of it, else we cross the tenure of forgiveness. Heb 11,[48] God gives mercy to none but those that wait for it. Isa 30.18 In asking pardon, we are resolved to wait for it, for so much is implied. A pardon in law is not authenticated until it is sealed. So God says he will pardon us but this is not authenticated until we have set our seal to it. He says he will give freely; we say we will wait constantly. Psa 37.5, Commit your ways to God, and He will care for you. He that thus begs forgiveness shall undoubtedly obtain it at the hand of the Lord.

Petition 6: And lead us not into temptation.

This is of sanctification both begun here and ended in heaven. Sanctification frees from the power of sin; glorification frees from the presence of sin. Sanctification kills sin; glorification buries sin.

First, for the order. Sanctification flows from justification. When sin is pardoned, we have the Spirit of Christ, which conveys all to us; first justified, then sanctified.

Secondly, for the sense of the words, and here are two things: [68]

First, what God should not do, Lead us not into temptation.

Secondly, what he should do, deliver us from evil.

What is meant by temptation?

A trial, or an assault, whereby a man's strength is tried. Now they are double.

First, the deliverance from evil.

Secondly, to prove the soundness of grace.

The first is especially intended, and by it are understood all the assaults of the soul by sin, Satan, or the world, whereby our faith may be shaken, or may be withdrawn from God to evil. Sometimes there are good temptations, of proving or expressing our grace. These, in some sense, may have a place in this Petition. God tries us in this manner, and we pray that he would try us no more than we are able to bear. 1Cor 10.13

What is it, to be led into temptation?

It appears in three things.

First, when temptations pursue us.

Secondly, when they foil us in assaulting us.

Thirdly, when temptation totally vanquishes us.

Now we pray in this Petition that temptations may not pursue us; or in pursuing us, that they may not foil us; and though we are foiled, yet that we may recover ourselves. We desire that God would not let them besiege us; if they do, yet not foil us; and if they do, yet that we may recover ourselves after our foil. [69]

Can God lead us into temptation?

The Apostle explains it, James 1.13, God cannot tempt to evil. He that is goodness itself cannot provoke a man to sin. The Lord does not put malice into any man's heart. God cannot properly be the cause of drawing a man into sin; there are trials of proof. The Lord may try his [heart], as he did Abraham, Gen 22.1. A man does not hurt his armor if it is good, as when he proves it. So God intends no evil to a man when he thus deals with him. Some add this word, suffer us not to be led; but that is silly, since God tempts no man to sin.

Why does this need prayer?

God may do it. Sin and all other temptations have a double respect.

First, evils are totally and professedly opposite to the Law of God.

Secondly, sins go under the name punishments. Sometimes God punishes one sin with another. Now, as sin has reference to the Law of God, he is not the cause of it; but so far as sin is a punishment, God may be the author of it. We pray then that God would not plague us by a sinful distemper.

In what manner does God lead us into temptation?

He does it three ways.

First, when the Lord does not withdraw those nets that are laid for us. When God does not remove those stumbling-blocks that are cast before us. No, God [70] may put a temptation

before us. Thus a master may lay a bait for his servant by laying money in a corner to try his truth. Now, it is lawful for a man thus to leave his money, to discern whether his servant is faithful or not. He does not desire that he should steal, but that he may try his fidelity. So God justly suggests occasions. There must be heresies for the trial of God's servants. God sends occasions of provocations; for their trial God rains snares, Psa 11.6. They that pitch their net, first let it fall, and then set it up. This is to rain snares. The favor of God is but a bait to a wicked man; his prosperity is but his ruin. It is not with God to deal so, because wicked men desire it. So Judas would willingly have gotten something by the ointment. Joh 12.5 Now it is just with God to send the Pharisees to give him thirty [pieces of silver], and ruin too. Now [Judas'] mind is pleased; he has thirty pieces, and damnation too. Mar 14.10

Secondly, as God lays occasions, so he lets sin and Satan loose. A man's heart would be hankering; now God gives him up. Take him sin and Satan; let him have field room.[49] 1Kgs 22.22, Ahab would willingly go to war; it was a thing not allowed, but he desired it. Therefore God sends the Devil. God asks, who will prevail over Ahab? The Devil says, I will go. Then God says, go and do it. Jdg 9.23, Abimelech and the men of Shechem did very ill; then God sent an evil spirit, that is, he let loose the spirit of contention, and they destroyed him, and he labored to destroy them. So [71] God, Rom 1.24, is said to give them up when they departed from the government of the truth. Says God, 'Will you not be ruled by holiness? Then take uncleanness.' Many a man has a wrathful disposition; take envy, says God. Let him bring blood on others, and so bring ruin on himself. Thus God took away his Spirit from Saul, and gave him up to sinful distempers; of all plagues, there is none like this.

Thirdly, God leaves a man to himself, and does not lend him the assistance of his grace; he allows him and Satan to grapple together, 1Cor 5.5. Thus God dealt with Hezekiah, because he had a lease of his life. He began to be proud, Therefore God left him to himself to try what was in him, 2Chr 32.31. He thought himself a brave man, therefore God leaves him, as a father lets a child go when he will not be held. So says God, 'See what you can do; try your own strength.' Now this leaving is in two passages:

First, God lets in the truth of his Word, not so much as may serve for direction, but for provocation. That of the Romans is observable to this purpose, There is no transgression where there is no law; Rom 4.15 not that the Law brings sin, but it provokes a man's heart, Rom 7.5. The phrases are strange in the fifth verse, The motions of sin which were there by the law. The Law moves a man to sin by opposing it. Says the stubborn heart, 'I will do it because you say so.' Many a man that has lived civilly, and as a good [72] neighbor, etc. and after the Law stirs him up to more exactness, he is more violent against good men. The Law meeting with a proud heart, he opposes [the Law], and would pluck the Law to pieces. All the while men join sides, they are loved; but if God pleases to humble them, then they fly out. There is nothing there that comes in anew except God's grace. But that malice which was there before is now stirred; now there is no fault in a good man, in that he is good. But sin taking occasion by the command slew me, Rom 7.8 says the Apostle. Look as fever that is pretty well past, lies in the bones. And if the one that has it drinks cold water, it grows extreme and hot by force of opposition. So that man that lay lurking before, the Word comes and it lays a man flat, and it slays him utterly. Verse 7.13, Sin by the command became sinful beyond measure. Look, as it is with a dam, the dam

stops, and the stream swells by force of opposition; so the Law stops the stream of sin and corruption; and then it grows exceedingly violent. Therefore those that have been under good means, and brake, are shamelessly out of measure in their sinful proceedings. This dam that stops makes the sin greater. Thus the Law of God is a law to a proud heart. The Law is not to blame, but the heart.

Secondly, the Lord will not allow the soul to have the power and assistance of the Spirit which formerly he has had, but lets sin and it [73] grapple, till he breaks sin all to pieces. Many a time the Lord leaves the soul, and will not let it have that power that formerly it had.

What? Can a soul fall?

No. God does not take away his hand, but yet he shall not feel it. As a man, if he does not stir the wheel, it will not go. His hand is on it all the while, but does not stir it; therefore it does not go. So god leaves a man to himself, though for awhile he does not give him that force whereby he may oppose a temptation. This befell David, Lord, do not take your Holy Spirit from me; Psa 51.11 that is, when God would not help David, but let him make his [own] part good with the temptations. I do not doubt that David had grace enough, if God would have quickened it in him. Hezekiah had wisdom enough, but God left him. Thus the Lord is said justly to lead a man into temptation. Now we pray that he would take away all snares, that he would not allow the Word to provoke us, but to direct us, that we may not be left to our own strength, and that we may overcome all our spiritual enemies.

[74]

But deliver us from evil.

Here observe that though God would do nothing against us, yet we are not able to deliver ourselves from our own corrupt hearts.

What is meant by evil?

Not so much trouble, or punishment, but sin. Now in sin are three things.

First, the breach of the Law.

Secondly, the guilt a man gets by this breach, and so is liable to this punishment.

Thirdly, the vigor of sin, whereby it rules over the soul.

Now the former we pray against in the fifth Petition. Because we stand guilty of the breach of the law, therefore we pray [secondly] that God would not enter into judgment with us. And thirdly, we pray here against the power of sin, and that is in three particulars. Not only in regard of the guilt of it, but that the Lord would keep us from the power of it.

First, sin would be a commander over the soul. It is the king; Satan is the jailer. Sin has a kingly sovereign authority, and it would rule over us. Sin is often compared to a king; his servants are those who obey him. Sin is a master, at least it would be; and it is so in every natural soul; and it would be so in the godly. [75] The law of life, says the Apostle, has freed me from the law of death, Rom 8.2. Sin gives Parliament-Laws to the soul, and edicts, just as the Centurion told one servant to go and he went, and another come and he came – so does sin say. Pride says, 'It is my pleasure that you should be proud; therefore I will have you proud and snappish, etc.' Anger says, 'I will have you splenetic[50] and enraged.' The soul says, 'Then I will, and it shall be done.' Thus sin sets itself up as a supreme sovereign in the soul. Hence a proud heart says, 'I will what I will, let God say what he will; tell me not of laws, it is my mind.' It is your proud heart that sets laws [for you], and you yield to them. Now we pray that God, however sin may be in the soul, yet that he would snub and curb it, that it may be an underling in the soul, and daily subdued.

Secondly, as sin does and desires to set up a master-like rule and a supreme sovereign Lord-like dominion, so sin carries the soul, and sometimes separates the soul from God. Whereas the command of God should be a guide to us, and take place in our hearts, this rebel takes up arms, resists, stands in defiance against the rule of the Spirit. Hence come all these phrases: they forsook God, resisted God, and turned their backs to his commands. 'What?' says Pride, 'Shall I be a slave, that the Word should awe me, and snub me? I will never yield to it while I [76] live. I will die first.' This is a devil that draws you from God, and will carry you to hell, Rom 7.23. That is the meaning of this passage. Sin carries a man captive, so that when the soul sees itself so ruled by him, a gracious heart would tear itself off if it could. But a natural man is a slave to sin; sin gets head,[51] and so the soul dares not affect any good in another, nor labor for it in itself.

Thirdly, sin leaves a kind of blemish and stain upon the soul, after its commission. There is a kind of jeering to the heart, and a cunning wrong of the soul. Hence the Scripture calls it the excrement of naughtiness, etc. Jas 1.21 Though the act of sin is gone, yet there is a blemish on the soul. Peter, after his denial of Christ, was averted from Christ. So a man after sin shall find himself dull to any good, and prone to any evil. This is the stain of sin. When a man's arm is put out of joint, besides the fall there is a bruise. So after a man has broken the commandments of the Lord, the Lord unjoints him. He is more awake to any good than ever. Gal 6.1, If any man is unjointed by sin. So too in [Corinthians], they wound their own souls. 1Cor 8.12 This is what sin does. Now these we pray against, partly against the power of sin, partly against the authority of sin, partly against the stain of sin. [77]

But deliver us from evil.

To deliver from evil implies three things:

First, we pray that the Lord would prevent all those occasions, and struggles, and distempers of sin that trouble us. These we pray against, to wit, that he would take off these distempers whereby sin would lay siege against the soul; that he would remove those things that remove us from him. This is that wisdom which Prov 6.21 promises, She will keep and walk with those that walk with her, and she will keep him from the way of the wicked woman. Sin is like a harlot; therefore the Lord is pleased to express it in that manner. Now it is the mercy of the Lord that he will turn our eyes from beholding vanity, so that there may not be in us the violence of sin assaulting us. We pray also that we may not come into the battle, if it is possible; and that sin, or pollution, may not come in against us.

Secondly, that the Lord would assist us in the temptation, so that the temptation may not prevail.

It is a mercy not to be tempted. But if we must be, it is a great mercy not to be overcome by temptation. If he will not wholly prevent us by his grace, yet that he will assist us graciously in it. It is a mercy not to be [78] assaulted; and though assaulted, yet that we may be assisted.

Now this assistance of God is two-fold: either extraordinary, or mediate[52] by the means. We do not speak so much of the first, though that is true; but we crave both at the hand of the Lord.

First, sometimes we crave the extraordinary help and assistance of the Lord, to assist us either above means, or in the means. We know the Lord in the time of the martyrs' suffering did help wonderfully; their temptations were grievous, and afflictions great; and yet the Lord did help them extraordinarily. God did let in abundance of sweetness. But we pass this, and come to the other.

Secondly, we pray especially for such means as may help us; and that appears in four particulars:

First, that the Lord would reveal the enemy before he comes; that he would make known to us the engines, and wiles, and depth of Satan, and the subtlety of our own corrupt hearts which are ready on every hand to surprise us; for to be surprised before we are aware is great danger. Therefore we pray that the Lord would give us the Spirit of Revelation, that we may take notice of the engines of Satan, so that he may be revealed to us. The discovery, we know, of an evil is to prevent an evil. And not foreseeing, we cannot [79] prevent. He that does not see an evil before it comes will be overthrown by it when it comes. Many a many perishes by pride, and

does not know what hurts him. Thus corruption blows up the soul. This the Lord promises. Isa 30.21 You shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way.' That God may keep a man from sin, he sends the Spirit of Christ to say, this is the way, walk in it. The text says, 2Cor 2.11, there speaking of the incestuous man, We are not ignorant of the methods of Satan to us, Mat 20. When the great skirmish was to come, our Savior forewarned Peter, and faith, I will smite the Shepherd, etc. and faith, Watch and pray for the hour is come, etc. He gives him this warning-piece. We pray then that God would make known to us the engines of sin and Satan before they come. We know it is a great help in war to know the quarters and orders of enemies, so that a man may order his actions accordingly. So we must know where the Devil and our corruptions lie quartered, and what are the haunts of our wretched hearts; and so to order the help God has put into our hands for resisting them.

Secondly, that the Lord, as it were, would entrench around us. If he will not foretell us of the enemy, that seeing sin, we may prevent it, yet that he would lay some heavy impediment upon us, etc. and build some trench around us, that we may not commit those evils [80] we are tempted to. That though he does not reveal the policy of Satan, yet that he would lay some snares, that we may not commit that sin which otherwise we would do. And this is the marvelous mercy, Gen 20.7, Abimelech took Sarah, as though she had been Abraham's sister, as he himself told him; and no question, he had a purpose to take her to be his wife. But the Lord laid an impediment; the Lord kept Abimelech from Sarah; he took off the edge of his desire, and laid a bar between them. In Hos 2.6-7, the Church was running after her abominations. Now, how did the Lord prevent her? The text says, I will hedge your ways with thorns, and build a wall around you. The lovers were corruptions, and following them is the eager pursuit of them. Now he hedges the ways with thorns; that is, he lays desperate afflictions on them, so that she had no liberty to sin; so that she had enough to do to mind her own miseries. Sometimes a man is addicted to base company, and then the Lord lays sickness to imprison him, and to keep him from sin. This is mercy.

Thirdly, the Lord puts armor and weapons on them to fight against their enemies that are opposite to his grace and children, Eph 6.10-19. Be strengthened in all might, putting on all spiritual abilities, to be strengthened in every good work, Col 1.10-11. God says he covers the heads of his [people].[Psa 140.7] God keeps [81] them by the power of his grace, 1Pet 4.19. God gives his [people] the whole armor, the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, etc. to quench the fiery darts of Satan, and to resist him.

Fourthly, God gives dominion over and conquest against all our enemies, and over all our victorious corruptions he gives a happy result and success. With the fight he gives the issue with the victory. Rev 1.6, he has made us kings; that is, he has given us a kingly authority over all our corruptions. Rom 6.14, Sin shall not have dominion over you. Psa 119.133, so David prays, 'Let no iniquity have dominion over me.' Thus the Lord assists his [people] in trouble.

Thirdly, just as we pray that the Lord would prevent the occasions of evil, and if they come, to

assist us in them, so lastly, if we are foiled and brought under by the temptations of Satan and our own corruptions, that the Lord would rescue us from those that have had too much power over us, and prevailed too much against us. This we know was the request and desire of the prophet David. Psa 39, Restore me to my former health before I do away from here and am seen no more. It is as if to say, my base lusts are too strong for me; these hands were stout, but are now feeble. Therefore Lord, give me that former strength. His sins were like a sickness; David's case was as when a man has been sick, and afterward comes to get up his crumbs, as though he had said, 'I knew the [82] time when I had a broken heart for my sin, but now, hardened. Therefore, O God, spare me a little while before I go from here, and am seen no more, that I may recover my former courage, zeal, and strength before I go from here. Rom 8.2, The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the Law of Sin and Death. Sin makes laws. We then entreat the Lord that he would prevent corruption; that he would assist us in temptation ordinarily, and extraordinarily; that he would reveal the enemy before he comes; that he would entrench around us, and give us armor and weapons to resist it; and give us dominion over our enemies; and that, if we are overcome, he would rescue and recover us out of them. This is the sum of this Petition.

Now we come to the frame of the heart that we should bring before God, so that we may be fit to receive the good we sue for at the hand of God. Now in what does it appear?

The frame of heart and disposition of soul, that best beseems us in putting up this Petition, appears principally in four things.

First, when we desire that the Lord would not let us be drawn aside, nor led into temptation, we must labor to avoid all occasions as may be too strong for us or are likely to prevail over us. In vain, we desire to be delivered from evil, when we rush into evil and into temptations. He that would take pitch into his hand [83] and pray not to be defiled; put fire into his bosom, and pray not to be burnt – it is a slighting of God's mercy, and a provoking of God to wrath, rather than a begging of mercy. We would count it madness for a man to cast himself into the Sea, and desire to be saved, or to make ourselves sick so that God may make us whole again. It is nothing else but as we may say, to make God work, so to run into evil. It is provoking and mocking the Lord. The wise man's rule is memorable here: Prov 23.2, If a man is given to his appetite, let him put his knife to his throat. If you love wind, do not look upon it. For a man that is given to his appetite, it is in vain to pray against it, and yet nourish it. But you must put your knife to your throat, and abstain from that which may provoke it. For if we please our appetite, it will be a temptation to us. Psalm 30 [reveals that] the promises and the providence of the Lord go together. He will succor us and relieve us, but it must be in the way of providence. We must be in the way. He that goes out of the way, and craves God's assistance, shall never have it, but hails evil on himself. Mat 18.8, Our Savior, speaking of offenses, says, If your hand causes you to offend, cut it off; and if your eye causes you to offend, pluck it out. That is, were your sins as near to you as your right hand in regard to profit, or your right eye in regard to pleasure, cut them off, pluck them out, fling [84] them away, rather than be foiled by them. In vain we crave the assistance of the Lord, and in the meantime lay blocks before us. It is presumption; therefore no marvel if many times the Lord leaves a man in the lurch, because he does not do what he prays for. It is enough to cause the Lord to curse us, when we do not avoid occasions of evil. He that will not fall into the pit, let him not come near the brink of it. He that will not be

snared by evil, let him not come near the occasions of evil.

Secondly, if we can be weak of ourselves, and cannot prevent the occasions of evil, yet be careful to seek all such means as may assist and help us, and if we cannot help that these [occasions] surprise us, then let us seek the means that may succor us in our need. The sick man that craves succor of the Lord must use the means the Lord has appointed. Haply you find temptations pressing on in your calling; you cannot avoid it. The more the occasions are, the more [you should] seek the means that may fortify you. He that will be healed, let him seek the Physician; he that is out of the way, and would be set in the right way, let him inquire about it, and not sit still and say, Lord have mercy upon me, etc. – but seek unto God in the use of the means. This is what Joshua did in the seventh chapter. He called upon God, yet the Lord did not help him, but said, Why do you do so? Israel has sinned; look to that. It [85] is in vain to pray that the enemy may not prevail, and not labor to get sin out of the camp; but do that and then the overthrow of the enemies will be far enough from you. Jos 7.10-12

Thirdly, when we have found the means, labor to be content to be ordered by all the means and helps that God has been pleased to ordain for our good. It is madness to crave as Balaam did, Oh that I might died the death of the righteous, Num 23.10 and not live their life – to see the way and not walk in it. Jer 42, they said to the prophet, Inquire at the mouth of the Lord, and whatever he commands, that we will do; but when they heard and knew it, they would not do it. Jer 42.20-22 It is in vain to crave the pardon of sin, when we do not look to the promise: to desire sin to be subdued, and yet not to abide the means that would do it. But if a man says he will not be counseled but will have his proud heart, and will walk in all his own ways, how can he say, deliver me from this proud heart, when he will not take the counsel? When a man is in horror of heart, when conscience flies in his face, it is in vain to whine then, and yet not be ruled by the Word of God, but to be as vain as ever, as aloof as ever, and as idle as ever. You beg one thing, and desire another; and for so long you never put up this Petition.

Fourthly, we must rely upon the Lord for a blessing and success in all we pray for or do. [86] We must so use the means, as if there were no promise to help us; and yet so depend on God for it all, as though the means could do nothing. Observe all your occasions, and say, 'Counsel and advice is good, but the Lord must set them on.' Man does not live by bread only, but the blessing of God in the means. Go to the Spirit of the Lord, and see there a greater power than in all the means. 2King 2.9-10, If you can see me taken up, then you shall have my Spirit double on you. The meaning is, if you see the God that takes me up, then he will give you his Spirit. Look to God above all means, and he that is thus disposed prays rightly to be delivered.

For thine is the Kingdom[53]

We are done with the six Petitions: three concerning God, his Name, Kingdom, and Will; three concerning ourselves, concerning things of this life, and of better life, to wit, justification and sanctification. We come now to the conclusion, and consider it in two things.

First, the thanksgiving.

Secondly, the conclusion of faith in the word, Amen.

In the thanksgiving is included both a reason for the Petition, and also a form of thanksgiving, as if to say, we do not presume we can do anything unless you work in us [87] what you require of us; For thine is the Kingdom. It is not in our power to do what we should, or what you require of us; but the kingdom is yours; all comes from you, O Lord, and let all the glory of all be returned to you again. Do we hallow your name, and pray for your kingdom to come, and your will to be done? Why? It is you Lord, that must give the power. We beg all from you, and this is included in the word power. For, it is as if we were to say, 'We have no power to do anything. You do all Lord, and take the glory of all.' So that is the ground for why we beg all of him, and return all to him.

What is meant here by Kingdom?

First, the word kingdom reveals the right and authority of God to give all things that we want. You, Lord, have the disposing of all things. We have no authority, nor any property that is in us. Yours is the kingdom. You have all power to do what you will. The Master does what he will in his family, and the King rules in his realm; so does the Lord rule in the heart of his [people].

Secondly, the Lord not only has authority to do what he will, but full and abundant sufficiency to dispose of all according to his will and pleasure. Kings may want power to do what they would, and the sons of Zeruiah[54] may be too strong for David; but the Lord has title to all. So his arm is long enough; his ability is sufficient enough to do all. There is much infirmity in us, but none at all in you. [88]

And the glory.

The glory of a thing, we know, appears in two things.

First, the excellency of it.

Secondly, in the beauty and splendor of its excellency. This sets forth the glory of a thing, as if to say, if any beauty, excellency, or glory is in the creature, it is yours, oh Lord; for yours is the kingdom, power, and the glory.

Thine.

What does this word ‘thine’ imply?

It implies three particulars.

First, that all authority, sufficiency, and excellency is firstly in the God; all is his by possession and propriety. Anything that we have or enjoy, is only what we have from him; it is but a glimpse and reflection of that glory in God, and it is all firstly in God, and he leases it out. It is my God and my portion; God is the root of all we are or have – all power and sufficiency is in him firstly.

Secondly, so all comes from him. Whatever is in the creature comes from him; all are but tenants and lessees of what they have from the Lord, who is the great possessor of Heaven and Earth.

Thirdly, it implies that we should acknowledge [89] all as belonging to him; give every man his due: whose is this honor and power? The Lord’s. Let him have it then. And this is to put off all ability and sufficiency from ourselves, and to acknowledge that all comes from him. It is as though the soul were to say, ‘Is there anything in me, Lord? It is because you give it. You give to us all our abilities and hearts to pray, and it is you that hears us when we pray. It is free mercy. All abilities are from you. Therefore, Lord, take all, for all is yours.’ Thus the soul disclaims all self.

Forever and ever, etc.

That is, everlasting power is in you, which differs from all other powers. All man's power is from God. But the Kingdom of God, his power and his glory, is forever and ever. We cannot pray always; our abilities fail and our hearts faint. But your power endures forever. The good things of this life, food, drink, clothing, etc. sometimes are gone. Yet your power endures for ever to succor us. When our abilities fail, yet power is forever and ever in you to renew them.

Amen.

The word Amen implies three things:

First, the term of asseveration,[55] and it reveals the truth of a thing. [90]

Secondly, a wish. ‘Oh,’ says the soul, ‘that it might be.’

Thirdly, the voice of a confident faith. It is so; it is done Lord. All these three are implied, but this last is mainly intended here. These things we have prayed for, that according to your will they are truly done. As also, there is a secret looking after the Petition when it is put up. The soul follows the Petition. Now, says the soul, they speed; the Lord grants these petitions, just as a man that shoots an arrow looks after it. So the soul says, ‘Oh that the Lord would speed it.’ So when the Petitions are sent to heaven, the heart follows the blow and looks after them; it sends his Amen. ‘Oh, that it might be found so.’ And then faith says, ‘It is done, undoubtedly.’ As true as the Lord is faithful, so these must be done. The word Amen strikes the match thoroughly. The soul wishes, ‘Oh, that it might be done.’ Faith says, ‘It is done already.’ Prayer is like the key. When a man wants provision, he goes to the treasury and fetches it. So prayer fetches comfort, peace, and assurance, etc. and Amen turns the key. ‘It is mine,’ says the soul. Prayer is like a Golden Key.

FINIS

Notes

[← 1]

“as if to say…”

[←2]

Fain: willingly.

[←3]

‘If there is ever…’

[←4]

This is the wording of the KJV. The Hebrew word translated “hell” is sheol, resting place of the dead.

[←5]

Perhaps a reference to the woman of Tekoa, 2Sam 14, or to Esther's dilemma, Est 4.16 (fasting included prayer).

[←6]

Awfulness here means awesomeness – it makes us gape in awe.

[←7]

Scantling: an upright stud used in house framing.

[←8]

Men of high position.

[←9]

Betide: happen to.

[← 10]

That is, what we say should declare (indite) God's Word.

[← 11]

Curious: unique or exceptional.

[← 12]

“Vale of tears” (Latin valle lacrimarum, from an old church hymn) refers to earthly sorrows; they are left behind when we leave the world and enter heaven. Also called “valley of tears.”

[← 13]

“Discover” means to uncover, or reveal.

[← 14]

Or lamp-stand.

[← 15]

Presently: quickly.

[← 16]

Haply: unfortunately.

[← 17]

‘Not to set to our hands:’ i.e. not to act – as if our unwillingness was some kind of excuse not to obey Christ.

[← 18]

Strumpet: A promiscuous or disreputable woman; he is speaking here about our sinful lusts.

[← 19]

Fodder: to feed.

[←20]

Joab and Abishai, sons of Zeruiah, were strong commanders, and often at odds with David the king (2Sam 19.22).

[←21]

Terrible here means intense or extraordinary things – not evil things.

[←22]

Discovered here means revealed.

[←23]

Refers to the Thirty Years' War which extensively decreased the populace of the German states, Bohemia, the Low Countries and Italy, while bankrupting most of the combatant powers.

[←24]

List: what we are inclined or what we desire to do.

[←25]

Prest: prepared for instant action or use; ready, as in presto.

[←26]

‘To ask leave’ means to ask for permission. Here it means to shamefully consider whether doing our duty to God will gain us profit, pleasure, and honor.

[←27]

That is, they don't balk at any of God's commands, and they don't work at cross-purposes to them.

[←28]

That is, do it in a feverish fit, and only when we're inclined.

[←29]

To go the whole length of any business; fully; completely.

[←30]

At a list: with inclined hearts.

[←31]

An extortionate rent – they are costly.

[←32]

Fee simple is an estate in land that a person has when the lands are given to him and his heirs absolutely, without any end or limit put to his estate.

[←33]

In other words, we have a right and title to eternal life in Christ; and we have a right and title to forgiveness of our sins in Christ. We don't have to earn this blessing, or atone for these sins, but the blessing and the forgiveness are nonetheless ours, because Christ has 'answered' for them, on our behalf.

[←34]

‘By violence’ means ‘by force.’

[←35]

Originally, dainties.

[←36]

That is, if nothing else is available to meet our needs but delicacies and rarities…

[←37]

“Cocker” – treat with excessive indulgence.

[←38]

“Humor” – the fluids in the body whose balance was believed to determine your emotional and physical state.

[←39]

Cast behind hand: remiss in fulfilling an obligation; or “thrown in arrears.”

[←40]

To be cast in your cause, is to be dragged into court.

[←41]

Italian cardinal and theologian (1542-1621) – one of the most important figures in the Counter-Reformation; he essentially taught that God's grace requires inherent righteousness in the believer, which is not grace at all.

[←42]

Popery: papal doctrine as distinguished from biblical authority; Arminianism, like Catholicism, holds that faith is the condition of justification, not merely the instrument of it. Reformed doctrine has always understood that justification can be found only in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the Seed of Abraham to whom the Promise was made (Gal 3.16), and in whom the Promise is fulfilled (Act 13.32-38). Thus justification and righteousness are declared only of those who are united to Christ by faith. Justification is not imparted to believers independent of the person of Christ, for justification is found in Christ alone; and so we yearn to be found in him on That Day, having a righteousness that is not our own (Rom 10.3; Phil 3.9).

[←43]

> “As God requires” distinguishes this forgiveness from the forgiveness which the non-believer exercises. He cannot forgive in response to the justifying work of Christ, but only for his own purposes and motivations.

[←44]

A house of correction - jail or prison.

[←45]

A tendency to become angry quickly.

[←46]

That is, he does not need kindness or mercy, for there is no debt to be relieved of.

[←47]

Pursuivant; a pursuer or messenger; a herald.

[←48]

Hebrews chapter 11 lists those who lived by faith, looking forward to God's fulfillment of His promise, but never seeing it in their lifetime. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

[←49]

Open space; hence, unrestricted opportunity.

[←50]

Splenetic – of the spleen; irritable and easily angered.

[←51]

A reference to riding horses, where the reins are released and the horse is given its own head, or freedom.

[←52]

Mediate (adjective): acting through or dependent on an intervening agency.

[←53]

This conclusion is left out of many modern translations, but continues in the KJV and NKJV. John Gill writes in his commentary, “This conclusion is left out in the Arabic and Vulgate Latin versions, as it is in Luk 11.4. It stands thus in the Jewish prayers (Seder Tephillot, fol. 280. 1. Ed. Basil.), כי המלכות שלך היא, “for the kingdom is thine, and thou shalt reign in glory for ever and ever.” The usual response at the close of prayers, and reading the Shema, instead of “Amen”, was (e) this: “Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom, for ever and ever.” Which bears some resemblance to this concluding expression, which ascribes everlasting kingdom, power, and glory, to God: which may be considered either as a doxology, or an ascription of glory to God, which is his due; and ought be given him in all our prayers to him…

[←54]

Referring to Joab and his brother Abishai, powerful generals (2Sam 2.18; 8.16; 18.2; 23.18).

[←55]

A declaration that is made emphatically (as if no supporting evidence were necessary)