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That God in all

things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—Peter.

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Religious.

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

BY THE REV. JAMES HAMILTON, OF LONDON.

The last and most important part of family worship is united prayer. By prayer, I mean the outpouring of an earnest heart in the name of Jesus. It is not prayer when you merely read or repeat a heartless form. You do not ask a blessing on your daily bread, when you merely mutter over it a charm—a few inarticulate words for custom's sake. Nor do you pray when you bend the knee, and read or say a few petitions which you do not feel, and which you forget as soon as you have uttered. It is prayer, when you ask from God blessings which you are really anxious to obtain, and when, in a conviction of your own unworthiness, you ask them for the sake of Him who indeed is worthy, the well-beloved Son of God. It is prayer, when you ask so earnestly that you remember afterwards what you sought, and so believingly, that, looking up, you expect an answer. Be earnest. Better no prayer, than give your family a falsest at prayer, by your dullness and formality. Be honest. Deal truly with the God of Truth. Do not mock the Searcher of hearts. Give yourself to the Lord—then set up his worship. Go to the Lord Jesus with you, and then seek to bring your children with you.

In family prayer you may be more minute and specific than it is possible to be in more public services. If you have a deep reverence of God upon your mind, there is no fear that particularity will degenerate into an unholiness of familiarity. If any of your children are in affliction, pray for them. If your children are at school, or at a Sabbath-class, pray for their teachers. Pray for your brethren in church-fellowship, that the beauty of the Lord may be upon them, and that they may dwell in love. Pray for the officers-bearers of your Church, pray for your minister. Endeavour to interest your family in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and pray for faithful ministers and missionaries, especially in those places in which you feel most interested. Every morning commit your way to God. Bespeak his presence in all the duties and temptations of the day—his blessing on your intercourse; and especially on any means of grace which you hope to enjoy. Every night commend yourselves to his watchful keeping, that you may sleep and wake with him. Pray over the scriptures you have read. And abound in thanksgiving. Cultivate a cheerful and grateful spirit; think if there be any mercies you have lately received, and acknowledge them. Has any one arrived from a journey safe and well? Is a sick member of the family restored? Have you heard good news from the far country, tidings from the absent brother? Were you at church or at the prayer-meeting this evening? and did you find it refreshing? Have you read in your "Missionary Magazine" the conversion of a Heathen or a Jew? Have you heard that God is pouring out his Spirit on some corner of our own country? Have you got an answer to a former prayer? Praise the Lord, for it is pleasant.

It will depend on the age of your family and the amount of your leisure, how long the service should be. Some hurry it over in a way which shows that they have no heart in it themselves. Others prolong it so, that every one else is wearied. Ten minutes of a formal service will look longer than twice the time when the whole soul is in it. Be consistent. Behave yourself wisely in a perfect way. Walk within your house with a perfect heart. If you be devout in prayer, and holy in practice; if you be heavenly-minded at the hour of worship, and frivolous, or proud, or passionate all the day; if you teach your children in the morning, "Be not conformed to this world," and if half the day's lessons be designed to conform them to the world as nearly as possible; if you pray for your household that you may be all meek, and gentle, and kindly-affectioned one to another, and then treat your servants as laughably as if they were your slaves or your enemies; your contradictory prayers and practices will be a terrible stumbling-block in their way to the kingdom. God may convert them; but your conduct will make that miracle of grace more surprising still.

Reader, I do not know whether by this time you are almost persuaded, or have actually determined to begin. When I think what you are losing who are strangers to this delightful exercise, and when I further think on the blessed results which might flow from your now beginning it, I am loth to leave off—though it is time we were done. Do you still hesitate? What is your excuse? "I never saw the advantages you describe. It has always been a dull service wherever I have seen it." But you need not make it dull. Throw your whole heart and soul into it, and it will be lively enough. It is often dull because it is a mere form. Do you make it a living service, and it will not be dull. It is often dull because it is tedious. Do not spin it out. Better one paragraph of Scripture, feelingly and intelligently read, than a whole chapter listlessly droned over. Better a prayer no longer than the psalmist's, if the whole soul be in it, than a weary form without feeling. Be fervent, and you will not be dull. Family prayer has often been so conducted, that instead of wearying at it, children felt it a punishment to be excluded. It was once told of a cottage patriarch who was born in those days when Scotland had a Church in almost every house. There was one in his father's dwelling; and when he pitched a tent for himself he builded an altar. Round that altar a goodly number of olive plants grew up, but, one by one, they were either planted out in families of

their own, or God took them, till he and his old partner found themselves, just as at their first outset in life, alone. But their family worship continued as of old. At last his fellow-traveller left him. Still he carried on the worship by himself. So sweet was the memory of it in his father's house, and so pleasant had he found it in his own, that he could not give it up. But as he sat in his silent habitation, morning and evening, his quivering voice was overheard singing the old psalm-tune, reading aloud the chapter, and praying as if others still worshipped by his side. He had not found it dull.

"I have no time." If you really value time, family prayer is good husbandry of time. What you do with God's blessing is much better and faster done than what you do without it, and is not so likely to need doing over again. You will find it here as Sir Matthew Hale found it with the Sabbath. What you take from God, he can easily take from you. If other things were equal, I should expect far more to be accomplished in a day, by the man whose spirit had been tranquilized, his resolution fortified, and his activity quickened by morning prayer, than from the man who impudently hurried out to do it all without asking God's presence. Philip Henry, who was an excellent economist of time, when early out of bed to hasten the preparations for a day's travel, as he called his children together, used to say to them, "Prayer and provender hinder no man's journey." Try his homely maxim and you will find it true.

"Our family is so small." How many are there of you? Are there two? Then, "Where-soever two." (see Mat. xviii. 20.) John Howard and his valet, as they journeyed from place to place, used to have family worship by themselves, if they could get no one else to join them. "Wherever I have a tent," he would say, "there God shall have an altar." If there be two of you—though it should be but a Ruth and a Naomi, a mother and her daughter, your family is large enough to worship God, and to get the blessing of those who worship him.

"My family is so large. There are so many servants, and often so many visitors, that I have not courage to begin." If your family be large, the obligation to begin is all the greater. Many suffer by your neglect. And if your congregation be numerous, the likelihood that some good will be done is the greater; for there are more to share the blessing, and the more the blessing is spread, the more the blessing is multiplied. The very fact that you are acknowledging God encourages you. "Them that honor me, I will honor." Begin it believingly, and in the very attempt courage will come.

"But I have no gift of prayer. I cannot lead the devotions of my family." Prayer is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Before you begin ask God to give you his Spirit to teach you. I have heard of stammering men who were eloquent in prayer, for the Spirit of God spoke by them. When you pray, remember that God is listening. You have called on him to hearken. You have asked him to lead you on an attentive ear, for you are about to ask mercies for yourself and your dearest friends. Remember that God is listening, and you will forget that men are hearkening. And they, in their turn, when they find that you are really praying, will have no time to criticise—for they will be constrained to join you in your prayer.

But perhaps I have not after all touched your real objection. You refuse to pray in your family, because you know that you do not pray in your closet. You evade it, because you know that your life is such that family worship would, in your case, be a mockery, and would only add hypocrisy to sin. Or you are under the influence of that false shame which will be felt to be the most shameful of all things, when the new affronted son of God comes again in his glory. Is it so? And are you about to throw away this tract with your purpose unaltered? Then I can only say, that the day is coming, when you will wish that you never had any brethren (Luke xvi. 27)—that the Lord had written you childless—that you had been a poor outcast with no roof to shelter you, rather than the ungodly husband and father and master, which you this day are—for then you had been free from blood-guiltiness in the case of other's souls.

The considerations by which I have tried to urge you to a discharge of this duty are, the obligations which you owe to yourselves, to your children, and to God; to yourselves, who will never have the same inward happiness, nor the same satisfaction in your family circle, till once the voice of rejoicing, the melody and praise which are heard in the tabernacles of the righteous, be heard in your own; to your children, who will rise up and call you blessed, if you guide their feet into the way of peace; to God, who offers to become the never-slumbering keeper of you and yours, and to uphold your going out and coming in from this time forth for ever. These are the considerations I have used. Some of you may think that I would have succeeded better, if I had dwelt on the beautiful and picturesque of family religion; if I had carried you back to the time when the glory of domestic piety had her habitation in our land, when villages and towns presented a look of Sabbath quietness at the hour of morning prayer, and when night succeeding night repeated the praises of God from the lonely upland cottage to the hamlet on the plain. I might have done this; and I might have planted you amidst the worshipping household, and invited you to listen to the cordial music of their psalm, and the pathos and fervor of their prayer. But one thing hinders me. I know that all that is beautiful and picturesque in domestic devotion, has not only been witnessed but described by those whose loveliness could never win to an imitation. It is one thing for a heart full

THE SEAT OF WAR. MAP OF TURKEY AND CONTIGUOUS COUNTRIES.



EXPLANATION.

"Moldavia" is indicated on the map by the letter A; and "Wallachia," by B. These provinces are nominally dependent on Turkey, but have a certain independence of their own. Their invasion, was an invasion of the Turkish Empire; and it is those which the Russians have taken possession of. The present seat of war is near Kalafat (28) on the Danube River. The following are the names of places indicated on the map by figures.

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|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Constantinople. | 21. Varna. | 41. Salonica. |
| 2. Scutari. | 22. Bourgas. | 42. Sepes. |
| 3. Amasrah. | 23. Shumla. | 43. Kuthia. |
| 4. Ridos. | 24. Turtukai. | 44. Smyrna. |
| 5. Anabell. | 25. Bucharest. | 45. Adalia. |
| 6. Scutari. | 26. Niropoli. | 46. Adana. |
| 7. Bala. | 27. Kalerif. | 47. Antioch. |
| 8. Samson. | 28. Widdin. | 48. Aleppo. |
| 9. Unich. | 29. Timar. | 49. Damascus. |
| 10. Trebissonde. | 30. Belgrade. | 50. Acre. |
| 11. Risch. | 31. Vienna. | 51. Jerusalem. |
| 12. Derbent. | 32. Laybach. | 52. Suex. |
| 13. Anapa. | 33. Trieste. | 53. Damietta. |
| 14. Sebastopol. | 34. Zara. | 54. Egypt. |
| 15. Odessa. | 35. Bagdad. | 55. Alexandria. |
| 16. Akerman. | 36. Joazeiro. | 56. Cairo. |
| 17. Idrilia. | 37. Corinth. | 57. Babylon. |
| 18. Matchin. | 38. Athens. | 58. Nineveh. |
| 19. Silistria. | 39. Leresia. | |

The portion of the globe here represented, has been more fruitful of interesting incidents than any other portion of Earth's History. General consent has placed within its limits the location of Eden's garden, where God conversed with Adam, and where man fell; but on that subject, speculation is vain;—the reliable geography of history only commences with the landing on Ararat from the waters of the deluge.

This celebrated mountain is to the North of Nineveh (59) and south of east from the Black Sea. In the neighborhood of this mountain, Noah appears to have spent the remainder of his life; and by emigration from this spot were all the vast regions of the earth populated—the sons of Noah being allotted their several inheritances, and the bounds of their respective habitations.

In the first emigration, they appear to have moved in a body. They left the hill country, and doubtless proceeding down the winding current of the Euphrates River to the land of Shinar, and stopped for a permanent location on the plain in the neighborhood of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers—on the east of the map. And the ruins of Babylon (58) and Nineveh (59) on those rivers, mark the sites of two of the first cities built on the globe. In the former place, attempting the erection of the tower of Babel, the Lord frustrated their impious designs, confounded their speech, and scattered them forth abroad over the face of the earth.

The family of Abraham lived in Ur of the Chaldees, far up on the waters of the Euphrates. From thence the Lord led him into the land of Canaan, which bordered on the east end of the Mediterranean Sea; and there he made an everlasting covenant with him—promising to him and his seed its everlasting possession—extending from the Euphrates to the river of Egypt.

The small lake to the east of the Mediterranean Sea, hardly visible on the map, according to general tradition covers the site of the guilty cities of the plain of Jordan—the fate of which, and the suddenness of their destruction are held up as admonitions for us to be also ready against the day when the Son of man shall be revealed.

Egypt on the south, witnessed the cruel bondage to which the seed of Jacob was subjected, and there the Lord heard their cry. There too is seen the western arm of the Red Sea, between the parted waters and on the dry bed of which Israel journeyed on their way to the promised land. Between the two forks of that sea, is the terrible wilderness where they wandered,—where the Lord miraculously fed them forty long years. And down near their junction stands Sinai, where Israel listened to the voice of Jehovah, and the Law was given to

Moses. And east of there also is the land of Midian, where Moses had before gazed on the burning bush.

On the east of the Mediterranean, in the land of Canaan, Israel found rest from their wanderings, and became in time the flourishing kingdom of David and Solomon. Theirs was the "Pleasant Land," the "Glorious Holy Mountain," the "Goodly Herbage," the "Goodly Mountain," the "Sanctuary of truth" to which the Lord had led them, and from which he cast out the heathen before them. Those hills and valleys were the homes of the prophets, and of the kings whose acts and lives are preserved to us in scriptural history; and there the Saviour came and atoned for the sins of a lost world; and for it was the land which the Lord had chosen from all lands to put his name there. But now it is in subjection to the Gentiles, and is to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

On the Euphrates is Babylon (58), the seat of the first great monarchy which was permitted to tyrannize over captive Israel. To the east of that is seen on the map a section of the Medo-Persian Empire. On the extreme left, is a portion of Italy, the seat of Daniel's nondescript beast, and of the dragon, blasphemous, and scarlet-colored beasts of John. But the main portion of the map comprises the greater portion of Alexander's Empire. While therefore it gives a glimpse of all the four great powers which were in turn to rule over Israel, it is properly a Map of the Third, or Grecian kingdom—that of Alexander and his successors.

All the countries here presented,—which are east of Macedonia, south of Circassia, and north of Arabia,—were subjected by Alexander. A short period subsequent to his death his colossal empire fell to pieces; and the four kingdoms of Thace, Macedonia, Syria, and Egypt came up, as seen on the map, "towards the four winds of heaven." (Dan. 8: 2, 22; and 11: 4.) Of these Macedonia was conquered by Lysimachus and annexed to Thace; and he, in turn, was subjected by Seleucus, who added Nacedon and Thace to Syria. Egypt, in the south, had enlarged itself by the conquest of Cyprus, and Phenicia, and other islands and cities, and was "strong" (Dan. 11: 5); but the other three divisions of Alexander's Empire being in subjection to the king of Syria, this northern king was still "stronger" than he (B.). These two powers denominated "the king of the North" and "the king of the South" are then described with great minuteness in the 11th of Daniel, till the Roman power began its encroachments on the Grecian territory, by the conquest of Macedonia, a. c. 168—symbolized by the little horn of the goat, that "waxed exceeding great." Afterwards inheriting by the will of Attalus what remained of the kingdom of Thace, this Roman horn began to progress towards the south, subjecting Egypt, and towards the east and pleasant land, subjecting Syria and Palestine, so that by a. c. 30, it had "waxed so exceeding great" as to have obtained the control of the four divisions of Alexander's Empire.

In 365 this Eastern Empire was finally and permanently dismembered from Western Rome; and when the latter was overrun by the northern barbarians, it remained the most potent empire on the globe.

In the seventh century there arose in the south the Saracens—the famous Mohammedan Empire, which soon extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the Euphrates—including Egypt—and thus becoming "the king of the South." This "pushed" and sorely wounded the Grecian Empire, but failed to subject it. But the Saracens had, in turn, to give place to the Tartars from the north, who subjected, with many other countries, Syria and Thace, and thus became "the king of the North." These celebrated horsemen, aided by vast armaments, "like a whirlwind," entirely overthrew the Grecian kingdom, and took possession of Constantinople, a. d. 1453.

These are the present occupants of the choicest portion of Alexander's dominion, now known as the "Turkish Empire," as presented on the map before us; and the fate of which the whole civilized world are watching with no little anxiety.

What its fate may be we profess no ability to solve; but no student of prophecy can fail to observe, the present movement of the nations in that locality, with intense interest. It is very clear that the Mohammedan power will continue in some form till the end of the world; for in the final battle,—which follows the second advent,—when "the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies" are gathered together to make war against the King and his army, we read, (Rev. 19: 20,) that "the False Prophet" is taken alive with the beasts and consigned to the lake of fire. Also the power that comes to its end with note to help him (in Dan. 11: 45, is to be in possession of the "holy mountain" as the Turks are now; and when he thus comes to his end, Michael stands up, and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." (Dan. 12: 1, 2.) So that evidence of the near dissolution of the kingdom of the Turks cannot fail to be of thrilling interest to those who "search the Scriptures," in accordance with the Divine injunction.

It would appear from Rev. 19: 19, 20, that the beast and false prophet are allied at the time of their overthrow, both being taken alive together. The "beast" undoubtedly is Western Rome in its divided form; and it is now a singular coincidence, that England and France—the only two effective powers of those divisions—are shoulder to shoulder with the Turks in endeavoring to prolong his dominion.

The present danger apprehended by the Turk, is from Russia and Persia—in the north and east