

ever active, my virtue constant, and my trust make me ready to brave death rather than deny my belief.

Lord God, enlighten and strengthen my reason, so that it may overcome all the evil suggestions of unbelief. Enlighten all men, open their eyes to true wisdom, make them comprehend the eternal truths announced through Thy prophets, so that they may return to Thee, confess Thy name, and proclaim with all Israel, "The Eternal, our God, is One!" Amen.

Then read Psalm xxiv.

MEDITATION FOR MONDAY (THE
SECOND DAY.)

ON THE LOVE OF GOD.

O man, made by the hand of God, and created in His image, love for Thy Maker is the inviolable precept imposed on us by the Author of our being, to lead to

happiness. Ought anything to be easier or more agreeable to us than the fulfilment of this duty? All thoughts, all affections, every moment of life should be devoted to it. Do we not receive all from God? He has given us existence; He sustains us; each day, each joy, is a new blessing from Him. What grace, what favour He shows us each day! Even our ingratitude does not close His paternal hand, or exhaust His divine mercy.

Should it be necessary, then, to command us to love God? Should we not rather adore Him by a spontaneous sentiment of the soul!

To love God with all our heart is to give him all our affection, our constant worship, not for the sake of recompense, nor yet the dread of punishment, but for Himself, His divine attributes, and His inexhaustible mercy. How can we fail to love Him, who alone is perfection, with the whole strength of our being! "Serve the Lord with gladness." (Ps. c. 2.) But

do we love God thus? Some obey Him with indifference, and impatiently bear the yoke of the Law; others serve Him with superstitious fear and ignorance; others, more guilty still, make to themselves idols, to which they render their worship; self-interest, with its sordid views; ambition, with its intrigues; sensuality, with all its vices;—behold, O Israel, the gods thou dost too often adore.

To love God with all our soul is to render homage to His glory, His omnipotence; is to centre in Him all our hopes in this perishable world, all our aspirations towards the world to come; it is to know and proclaim that He is the Creator of the universe, the ruling Providence and Judge.

But, to love God, we must know Him; “Know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind.” (1 Chron. xxviii. 9.) To know Him, we must seek Him in His works, study His Holy Word, and follow His divine will.

To love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might, is to love Him with all our affections, with all our faculties, and with all our substance. No sacrifice can be too great, no labour too difficult, when His service is concerned. For we must show our love in our deeds: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep His charge, and His statutes, and His judgments, and His commandments always." (Deut. xi. 1.) Such is the true, the sincere love of God; but to be content with saying that we love and desire to please Him, without effort, devotion, or sacrifice, is not to love God, "For the Lord is just and loveth justice." (Ps. xi. 7.) He loves charity and equity. To love God is to follow His precepts willingly, and to perform deeds pleasing in His sight.

O man, O Israelite! great or little, rich or poor, happy or unhappy, love the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and only live on this earth to love Him, and become worthy of His love. To whom shall you render

worship? He alone will live eternally, and thus remain to you, when all those earthly affections will have perished, which fill and animate, but can never satisfy your heart. Love, then, the Eternal with all your heart, with all your soul, love him with your latest breath.

PRAYER.

O God, how far removed I feel myself from such love ! Pardon if I have so long mistaken Thy holy precepts. In the future will I love Thee with a new and perfect love, with deeds and not with words ; for Thy love, O God, is revealed to me in Thy works and in Thy blessings.

Then say Psalm xx.