

MEDITATIONS FOR EACH DAY
OF THE WEEK.

MEDITATION FOR THE FIRST DAY.
(SUNDAY.)

“Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto Thee,
O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me ;
There shall no strange god be in thee ;
Neither shalt thou worship any strange god.
I am the Eternal thy God.”

(Ps. lxxxi. 8, 10.)

ON FAITH.

The faith of Israel is great and holy!
It is great and holy by the enlighten-
ment transmitted through the patriarchs,
those heroes in faith and virtue ; through
the divine genius of Moses, the greatest
mind the world has known ; and through
the sacred phalanx of the prophets. It is
great and holy through the truth it
reveals, the virtue it teaches and the hope
it inspires ; and, above all, it is proved to

be great and holy in the glorious struggle, braved for centuries, by the feeble remnant of Israel, that suffered the agony of martyrdom, and resisted the temptations held out of earthly happiness, for the great truth of the Unity of God.

Great and holy faith ! it accords with reason and intelligence, those divine gifts of God. All that my soul adores, my reason comprehends !

Thanks be to thee, O God, for the faith I feel so strong within me. However striking it may appear to my mind, its perception is not due to my weak reason alone. Faith is a gift of Thy divine goodness ; it is the instinctive repose of the heart in Thine eternal presence ; it is the soaring of the soul towards its divine source. I believe in the sublime doctrines propagated from Sinai, and taught by the prophets, I believe in the immutability of Thy law, in Thine eternal providence watching over all Thy creatures.

I confidently await the coming of the Messiah, announced by the prophets, when all mankind will unite for the observance of Thy law, and the universal declaration of Thy unity; and, at my last hour, I shall descend to the grave full of confidence that my soul will live eternally. Faith sheds a soft light over all existence. I pass through this life full of trust and hope: my joys are more serene, my grief less bitter; misfortune becomes even a source of consolation and salvation. It is sweet to follow Thy precepts, I obey them with love; everywhere do I feel guarded by Thee, O heavenly Father, and illumined by Thy regard. I behold Thee in the sun's gorgeous rays, and in the pale light of the stars. I see Thee, O my God, watching each act of mine, and weighing every thought! in Thy presence do I walk, and my eyes are turned constantly towards Thee.

Therefore is my heart filled with joy at the words of the Psalmist: "How great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast

laid up for them that fear Thee." (Ps. xxxi. 19.) Yes; I feel that without faith in God there can be no tranquillity of mind, no consolation in misfortune, no hope in eternity, no foundation for virtue. Without such faith, human virtue is nothing, for it would succumb before any powerful passion or great sacrifice.

But the God of Israel regards no faith unaccompanied by deeds. If virtue without faith is as unproductive seed, faith without virtue is as a tree without fruit. It is not sufficient for us to be convinced of the greatness of our duties towards God and our neighbour, we must practise them. It is not enough that we recognise the Lord's attributes, we must be (as the sages teach us) "benevolent, merciful, easy to pardon, and full of love as He is." (Talmud.)

The Jewish faith, primary source of all morality, of all charity, does not exist in those who nourish hatred and selfishness, who indulge in calumny and revenge; nor is it with those whose hands are im-

pure, practising dishonesty, whose words are deceitful, or who sacrifice the rights of another to their own cupidity, ambition, or sensuality. Holy Writ clearly teaches the conditions whereby salvation is obtained :—

“ Lorn, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle ?
 Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill ?
 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,
 And speaketh the truth in his heart.
 He that backbiteth not with his tongue,
 Nor doeth evil to his neighbour,
 Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour,
 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned ;
 But he honoureth them that fear the Lord.
 He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not.
 He that putteth not out his money to usury,
 Nor taketh reward against the innocent.”

(Ps. xv. 1—5.)

PRAYER.

Grant, O God, that I may think, act, and live but for the sanctification of my faith and the glory of Thy Name, through my sentiments and deeds. May my faith be

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