

of our prayer for divine help. Many people never get beyond this stage. It is a vital stage, but the Christian must go past it into the next two.

The second verse of the blessing takes us a step higher: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The expression is definitely in the spiritual realm, and involves a more personal relationship with God, but is still rather general in nature. The Lord causes the rain to fall upon the just and the unjust. The Lord shows His countenance to all the world. Here the prayer is that the Lord's face shall shine upon the one who is blessed, and that he shall be the recipient of favor from the Almighty. We might say that this verse is fulfilled most truly through the death of Christ on Calvary's cross, where God showed forth His love to a world lost in sin, where the shining of the face of our wonderful God was most clearly made manifest, and where He showed favor to all who believe in the name of Christ. This second verse, then, marks the step into distinctive Christianity.

The third verse goes yet a step higher: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. The word that both AV and RV render here as countenance is exactly the same as the word which they translate face in the previous verse.

This third verse has a specific individual reference: 'The Lord lift up His face upon you.' Not merely that the face of the Lord shine out upon all the world and show it favor, and that you be included in that upon which it shines, but that He very specifically lit up His face toward you, and give particular attention to your individual welfare. If there be question as to this interpretation of the first part of the verse, there can be no question as to the meaning of its latter half, and give thee peace. The word here translated 'give' is not the