

AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

David was the penman of most of the psalms, but some evidently were composed by other writers, and the writers of some are doubtful. But all were written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and no part of the Old Testament is more frequently quoted or referred to in the New. Every psalm either points directly to Christ, in his person, his character, and offices; or may lead the believer's thoughts to Him. And the psalms are the language of the believer's heart, whether mourning for sin, thirsting after God, or rejoicing in Him. Whether burdened with affliction, struggling with temptation, or triumphing in the hope or enjoyment of deliverance; whether admiring the Divine perfections, thanking God for his mercies, meditating on his truths, or delighting in his service; they form a Divinely appointed standard of experience, by which we may judge ourselves. Their value, in this view, is very great, and the use of them will increase with the growth of the power of true religion in the heart. By the psalmist's expressions, the Spirit helps us to pray. If we make the psalms familiar to us, whatever we have to ask at the throne of grace, by way of confession, petition, or thanksgiving, we may be assisted from thence. Whatever devout affection is working in us, holy desire or hope, sorrow or joy, we may here find words to clothe it; sound speech which cannot be condemned. In the language of this Divine book, the prayers and praises of the church have been offered up to the throne of grace from age to age.

PSALM 1

The holiness and happiness of a godly man. (1-3) The sinfulness and misery of a wicked man, The ground and reason of both. (4-6)

Psalm 1:1

Vs. 1-3: To meditate in God's word, is to discourse with ourselves concerning the great things contained in it, with close application of mind and fixedness of thought. We must have constant regard to the word of

God, as the rule of our actions, and the spring of our comforts; and have it in our thoughts night and day. For this purpose no time is amiss.

Psalm 1:4

Vs. 4-6: The ungodly are the reverse of the righteous, both in character and condition. The ungodly are not so, ver. 4; they are led by the counsel of the wicked, in the way of sinners, to the seat of the scornful; they have no delight in the law of God; they bring forth no fruit but what is evil. The righteous are like useful, fruitful trees: the ungodly are like the chaff which the wind drives away: the dust which the owner of the floor desires to have driven away, as not being of any use. They are of no worth in God's account, how highly soever they may value themselves. They are easily driven to and fro by every wind of temptation. The chaff may be, for a while, among the wheat, but He is coming, whose fan is in his hand, and who will thoroughly purge his floor. Those that, by their own sin and folly, make themselves as chaff, will be found so before the whirlwind and fire of Divine wrath. The doom of the ungodly is fixed, but whenever the sinner becomes sensible of this guilt and misery, he may be admitted into the company of the righteous by Christ the living way, and become in Christ a new creature. He has new desires, new pleasures, hopes, fears, sorrows, companions, and employments. His thoughts, words, and actions are changed. He enters on a new state, and bears a new character. Behold, all things are become new by Divine grace, which changes his soul into the image of the Redeemer. How different the character and end of the ungodly!

PSALM 2

Threatenings against the enemies of Christ's kingdom. (1-6)

Promise to Christ as the Head of this kingdom. (7-9) Counsel to all, to espouse its interests. (10-12)

Psalm 2:1

Vs. 1-6: We are here told who would appear as adversaries to Christ. As this world is the kingdom of Satan, unconverted men, of every rank, party, and character, are stirred up by him to oppose the cause of God. But the rulers of the earth generally have been most active. The truths and precepts of Christianity are against ambitious projects and worldly lusts. We are told what they aim at in this opposition. They would break asunder the bands of conscience, and the cords of God's commandments; they will not receive, but cast them away as far as they can. These enemies can show no good cause for opposing so just and holy a government, which, if received by all, would bring a heaven upon earth. They can hope for no success in so opposing so powerful a kingdom. The Lord Jesus has all power both in heaven and in earth, and is Head over all things to the church, notwithstanding the restless endeavors of his enemies. Christ's throne is set up in his church, that is, in the hearts of all believers.

Psalm 2:7

Vs. 7-9: The kingdom of the Messiah is founded upon an eternal decree of God the Father. This our Lord Jesus often referred to, as what he governed himself by. God hath said unto him, Thou art my Son, and it becomes each of us to say to him, Thou art my Lord, my Sovereign'. The Son, in asking the heathen for his inheritance, desires their happiness in him; so that he pleads for them, ever lives to do so, and is able to save to the uttermost, and he shall have multitudes of willing, loyal subjects, among them. Christians are the possession of the Lord Jesus; they are to him for a name and a praise. God the Father gives them to him, when, by his Spirit and grace, he works upon them to submit to the Lord Jesus.

<H20> **Psalm 2:10**

Vs. 10-12: Whatever we rejoice in, in this world, it must always be with trembling, because of the uncertainty of all things in it. To welcome Jesus Christ, and to submit to him, is our wisdom and interest. Let him be very dear and precious; love him above all, love him in sincerity, love him much, as she did, to whom much was forgiven, and, in token of it, kissed his feet, <L173> Luke 7:38. And with a kiss of loyalty take this yoke upon you, and give up yourselves to be governed by his laws, disposed of by his providence, and entirely devoted to his cause. Unbelief is a sin against the remedy. It will be utter destruction to yourselves; lest ye perish in the way of your sins, and from the way of your vain hopes; lest your way perish, lest you prove to have missed the way of happiness. Christ is the way; take heed lest ye be cut off from Him as your way to God. They thought themselves in the way; but neglecting Christ, they perish from it. Blessed will those be in the day of wrath, who, by trusting in Christ, have made him their Refuge.

PSALM 3

*David complains to God of his enemies, and confides in God. (1-3)
He triumphs over his fears, and gives God the glory, and takes to himself the comfort. (4-8)*

Psalm 3:1

Vs. 1-3: An active believer, the more he is beaten off from God, either by the rebukes of providence, or the reproaches of enemies, the faster hold he will take, and the closer will he cleave to him. A child of God startles at the very thought of despairing of help in God. See what God is to his people, what he will be, what they have found him, what David found in him.

1. Safety; a shield for me; which denotes the advantage of that protection.
2. Honor; those whom God owns for his, have true honor put upon them.
3. Joy and deliverance.

If, in the worst of times, God's people can lift up their heads with joy, knowing that all shall work for good to them, they will own God as giving them both cause and hearts to rejoice.

Psalm 3:4

Vs. 4-8: Care and grief do us good, when they engage us to pray to God, as in earnest. David had always found God ready to answer his prayers. Nothing can fix a gulf between the communications of God's grace towards us, and the working of his grace in us; between his favor and our faith. He had always been very safe under the Divine protection. This is applicable to the common mercies of every night, for which we ought to give thanks every morning. Many lie down, and cannot sleep, through pain of body, or anguish of mind, or the continual alarms of fear in the night. But it seems here rather to be meant of the calmness of David's spirit, in the midst of his dangers. The Lord, by his grace and the consolations of his Spirit, made him easy. It is a great mercy, when we are in trouble, to have our minds

stayed upon God. Behold the Son of David composing himself to his rest upon the cross, that bed of sorrows; commending his Spirit into the Father's hands in full confidence of a joyful resurrection. Behold this, O Christian: let faith teach thee how to sleep, and how to die; while it assures thee that as sleep is a short death, so death is only a longer sleep; the same God watches over thee, in thy bed and in thy grave. David's faith became triumphant. He began the psalm with complaints of the strength and malice of his enemies; but concludes with rejoicing in the power and grace of his God, and now sees more with him than against him. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; he has power to save, be the danger ever so great. All that have the Lord for their God, are sure of salvation; for he who is their God, is the God of Salvation.

PSALM 4

The children of men proved, and the happiness of godly people.

(1-5) God's favor is happiness. (6-8)

Psalm 4:1

Vs. 1-5: Hear me for thy mercy-sake, is our best plea. He who will not ask such blessings as pardon, and justifying righteousness, and eternal life, must perish for the want of them. Alas! that so many should make so fearful a choice. The psalmist warns against sin. Keep up holy reverence of the glory and majesty of God. You have a great deal to say to your hearts, they may be spoken with, let it not be unsaid. Examine them by serious self-reflection; let your thoughts fasten upon that which is good, and keep close to it. Consider your ways, and before you turn to sleep at night, examine your consciences with respect to what you have done in the day; particularly what you have done amiss, that you may repent of it. When you awake in the night, meditate upon God, and the things that belong to your peace. Upon a sickbed, particularly, we should consider our ways. Be still. When you have asked conscience a question, be serious, be silent, wait for an answer. Open not the mouth to excuse sin. All confidence must be placed on God's free grace, who justifies the true convert, by faith only: therefore, after commanding the sacrifices of righteousness, the psalmist says, Put your trust in the Lord.

Psalm 4:6

Vs. 6-8: Worldly people inquire for good, not for the chief good; all they want is outward good, present good, partial good, good meat, good drink, a good trade, and a good estate; but what are all these worth? Any good will serve the turn of most men, but a gracious soul will not be put off so. Lord, let us have thy favor, and let us know that we have it, we desire no more; let us be satisfied of thy loving-kindness, and will be satisfied with it. Many inquire after happiness, but David had found it. When God puts grace in the heart, he puts gladness in the heart. Thus comforted, he pitied, but neither envied nor feared the most prosperous sinner. He commits all his affairs to God, and is prepared to welcome his holy will. But salvation is in Christ alone; where will those appear who despise him as their

Mediator, and revile him in his disciples? May they stand in awe, and no longer sin against the only remedy.

PSALM 5

God will certainly hear prayer: David gives to God the glory, and takes to himself the comfort. (1-6) He prayed for himself, that God would guide him, and for all the Lord's people, that God would give them joy, and keep them safe. (7-12)

Psalm 5:1

Vs. 1-6: God is a prayer-hearing God. Such he has always been, and he is still as ready to hear prayer as ever. The most encouraging principle of prayer, and the most powerful plea in prayer, is, to look upon him as our King and our God. David also prays to a sin-hating God. Sin is folly, and sinners are the greatest of all fools; fools of their own making. Wicked people hate God; justly are they hated of him, and this will be their endless misery and ruin. Let us learn the importance of truth and sincerity, in all the affairs of life. Liars and murderers resemble the devil, and are his children, therefore it may well be expected that God should abhor them. These were the characters of David's enemies; and such as these are still the enemies of Christ and his people.

Psalm 5:7

Vs. 7-12: David prayed often alone, yet was very constant in attendance on public worship. The mercy of God should ever be the foundation both of our hope and of our joy, in every thing wherein we have to do with him. Let us learn to pray, not for ourselves only, but for others; grace be with all that love Christ in sincerity. The Divine blessing comes down upon us through Jesus Christ, the righteous or just One, as of old it did upon Israel through David, whom God protected, and placed upon the throne. Thou, O Christ, art the righteous Savior, thou art the King of Israel, thou art the Fountain of blessing to all believers; thy favor is the defense and protection of thy church.

PSALM 6

The psalmist deprecates God's wrath, and begs for the return of his favor. (1-7) He assures himself of an answer of peace. (8-10)

Psalm 6:1

Vs. 1-7: These verses speak the language of a heart truly humbled, of a broken and contrite spirit under great afflictions, sent to awaken conscience and mortify corruption. Sickness brought sin to his remembrance, and he looked upon it as a token of God's displeasure against him. The affliction of his body will be tolerable, if he has comfort in his soul. Christ's sorest complaint, in his sufferings, was of the trouble of his soul, and the want of his Father's smiles. Every page of Scripture proclaims the fact, that salvation is only of the Lord. Man is a sinner, his case can only be reached by mercy; and never is mercy more illustrious than in restoring backsliders. With good reason we may pray, that if it be the will of God, and he has any further work for us or our friends to do in this world, he will yet spare us or them to serve him. To depart and be with Christ is happiest for the saints; but for them to abide in the flesh is more profitable for the church.

Psalm 6:8

Vs. 8-10: What a sudden change is here! Having made his request known to God, the psalmist is confident that his sorrow will be turned into joy. By the workings of God's grace upon his heart, he knew his prayer was accepted, and did not doubt but it would, in due time, be answered. His prayers will be accepted, coming up out of the hands of Christ the Mediator. The word signifies prayer made to God, the righteous Judge, as the God of his righteousness, who would plead his cause, and right his wrongs. A believer, through the blood and righteousness of Christ, can go to God as a righteous God, and plead with him for pardon and cleansing, who is just and faithful to grant both. He prays for the conversion of his enemies, or foretells their ruin.

PSALM 7

The psalmist prays to God to plead his cause, and judge for him.

(1-9) He expresses confidence in God, and will give him the glory of his deliverance. (10-17)

Psalm 7:1

Vs. 1-9: David flees to God for succor. But Christ alone could call on Heaven to attest his uprightness in all things. All His works were wrought in righteousness; and the prince of this world found nothing whereof justly to accuse him. Yet for our sakes, submitting to be charged as guilty, he suffered all evils, but, being innocent, he triumphed over them all. The plea is, “For the righteous God trieth the hearts and the reins.” He knows the secret wickedness of the wicked, and how to bring it to an end; he is witness to the secret sincerity of the just, and has ways of establishing it. When a man has made peace with God about all his sins, upon the terms of grace and mercy, through the sacrifice of the Mediator, he may, in comparison with his enemies, appeal to God’s justice to decide.

Psalm 7:10

Vs. 10-17: David is confident that he shall find God his powerful Savior. The destruction of sinners may be prevented by their conversion; for it is threatened, If he turn not from his evil way, let him expect it will be his ruin. But amidst the threatenings of wrath, we have a gracious offer of mercy. God gives sinners warning of their danger, and space to repent, and prevent it. He is slow to punish, and long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish. The sinner is described, ver. 14-16, as taking more pains to ruin his soul than, if directed aright, would save it. This is true, in a sense, of all sinners. Let us look to the Savior under all our trials. Blessed Lord, give us grace to look to thee in the path of tribulation, going before thy church and people, and marking the way by thine own spotless example. Under all the persecutions which in our lesser trials mark our way, let the looking to Jesus animate our minds and comfort our hearts.

PSALM 8

God is to be glorified, for making known himself to us. (1,2) And for making even the heavenly bodies useful to man, thereby placing him but little lower than the angels. (3-9)

Psalm 8:1

Vs. 1, 2: The psalmist seeks to give unto God the glory due to his name. How bright this glory shines even in this lower world! He is ours, for he made us, protects us, and takes special care of us. The birth, life, preaching, miracles, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus are known through the world. No name is so universal, no power and influence so generally felt, as those of the Savior of mankind. But how much brighter it shines in the upper world! We, on this earth, only hear God's excellencies name, and praise that; the angels and blessed spirits above, see his glory, and praise that; yet he is exalted far above even their blessing and praise. Sometimes the grace of God appears wonderfully in young children. Sometimes the power of God brings to pass great things in his church, by very weak and unlikely instruments, that the excellencies of the power might the more evidently appear to be of God, and not of man. This he does, because of his enemies, that he may put them to silence.

Psalm 8:3

Vs. 3-9: We are to consider the heavens, that man thus may be directed to set his affection on things above. What is man, so mean a creature, that he should be thus honored! so sinful a creature, that he should be thus favored! Man has sovereign dominion over the inferior creatures, under God, and is appointed their Lord. This refers to Christ. In ^{scrib} Hebrews 2:6-8, the apostle, to prove the sovereign dominion of Christ, shows he is that Man, that Son of man, here spoken of, whom God has made to have dominion over the works of his hands. The greatest favor ever showed to the human race, and the greatest honor ever put upon human nature, were exemplified in the Lord Jesus. With good reason does the psalmist conclude as he began, Lord, how excellencies is thy name in all the earth, which has been honored with the presence of the Redeemer, and is still enlightened by his gospel, and governed by his wisdom and power! What

words can reach his praises, who has a right to our obedience as our Redeemer?

PSALM 9

David praises God for protecting his people. (1-10) And for cause to praise him. (11-20)

Psalm 9:1

Vs. 1-10: If we would praise God acceptably, we must praise him in sincerity, with our whole heart. When we give thanks for some one particular mercy, we should remember former mercies. Our joy must not be in the gift, so much as in the Giver. The triumphs of the Redeemer ought to be the triumphs of the redeemed. The almighty power of God is that which the strongest and stoutest of his enemies are no way able to stand before. We are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, and that with him there is no unrighteousness. His people may, by faith, flee to him as their Refuge, and may depend on his power and promise for their safety, so that no real hurt shall be done to them. Those who know him to be a God of truth and faithfulness, will rejoice in his word of promise, and rest upon that. Those who know him to be an everlasting Father, will trust him with their souls as their main care, and trust in him at all times, even to the end; and by constant care seek to approve themselves to him in the whole course of their lives. Who is there that would not seek him, who never hath forsaken those that seek Him?

Psalm 9:11

Vs. 11-20: Those who believe that God is greatly to be praised, not only desire to praise him better themselves, but desire that others may join with them. There is a day coming, when it will appear that he has not forgotten the cry of the humble; neither the cry of their blood, or the cry of their prayers. We are never brought so low, so near to death, but God can raise us up. If he has saved us from spiritual and eternal death, we may thence hope, that in all our distresses he will be a very present help to us. The overruling providence of God frequently so orders it, that persecutors and oppressors are brought to ruin by the projects they formed to destroy the people of God. Drunkards kill themselves; prodigals beggar themselves; the contentious bring mischief upon themselves: thus men's sins may be read in their punishment, and it becomes plain to all, that the destruction

of sinners is of themselves. All wickedness came originally with the wicked one from hell; and those who continue in sin, must go to that place of torment. The true state, both of nations and of individuals, may be correctly estimated by this one rule, whether in their doings they remember or forget God. David encourages the people of God to wait for his salvation, though it should be long deferred. God will make it appear that he never did forget them: it is not possible he should. Strange that man, dust in his origin, sinful by his fall, continually reminded of both by everything in him and about him, should yet need some sharp affliction, some severe visitation from God, to bring him to the knowledge of himself, and make him feel who and what he is.

PSALM 10

The psalmist complains of the wickedness of the wicked. (1-11) He prays to God to appear for the relief of his people. (12-18)

Psalm 10:1

Vs. 1-11: God's withdrawings are very grievous to his people, especially in times of trouble. We stand afar off from God by our unbelief, and then complain that God stands afar off from us. Passionate words against bad men do more hurt than good; if we speak of their badness, let it be to the Lord in prayer; he can make them better. The sinner proudly glories in his power and success. Wicked people will not seek after God, that is, will not call upon him. They live without prayer, and that is living without God. They have many thoughts, many objects and devices, but think not of the Lord in any of them; they have no submission to his will, nor aim for his glory. The cause of this is pride. Men think it below them to be religious. They could not break all the laws of justice and goodness toward man, if they had not first shaken off all sense of religion.

Psalm 10:12

Vs. 12-18: The psalmist speaks with astonishment, at the wickedness of the wicked, and at the patience and forbearance of God. God prepares the heart for prayer, by kindling holy desires, and strengthening our most holy faith, fixing the thoughts, and raising the affection, and then he graciously accepts the prayer. The preparation of the heart is from the Lord, and we must seek unto him for it. Let the poor, afflicted, persecuted, or tempted believer recollect, that Satan is the prince of this world, and that he is the father of all the ungodly. The children of God cannot expect kindness, truth, or justice from such persons as crucified the Lord of glory. But this once suffering Jesus, now reigns as King over all the earth, and of his dominion there shall be no end. Let us commit ourselves unto him, humbly trusting in his mercy. He will rescue the believer from every temptation, and break the arm of every wicked oppressor, and bruise Satan under our feet shortly. But in heaven alone will all sin and temptation be shut out, though in this life the believer has a foretaste of deliverance.

PSALM 11

David's struggle with, and triumph over a strong temptation to distrust God, and betake himself to indirect means for his own safety, in a time of danger.

Psalm 11:1

Those that truly fear God and serve him, are welcome to put their trust in him. The psalmist, before he gives an account of his temptation to distrust God, records his resolution to trust in Him, as that by which he was resolved to live and die. The believer, though not terrified by his enemies, may be tempted, by the fears of his friends, to desert his post, or neglect his work. They perceive his danger, but not his security; they give him counsel that savors of worldly policy, rather than of heavenly wisdom. The principles of religion are the foundations on which the faith and hope of the righteous are built. We are concerned to hold these fast against all temptations to unbelief; for believers would be undone, if they had not God to go to, God to trust in, and future bliss to hope for. The prosperity of wicked people in their wicked, evil ways, and the straits and distresses which the best men are sometimes brought into, tried David's faith. We need not say, Who shall go up to heaven, to fetch us thence a God to trust in? The word is nigh us, and God in the word; his Spirit is in his saints, those living temples, and the Lord is that Spirit. This God governs the world. We may know what men seem to be, but God knows what they are, as the refiner knows the value of gold when he has tried it. God is said to try with his eyes, because he cannot err, or be imposed upon. If he afflicts good people, it is for their trial, therefore for their good. However persecutors and oppressors may prosper awhile, they will for ever perish. God is a holy God, and therefore hates them. He is a righteous Judge, and will therefore punish them. In what a horrible tempest are the wicked hurried away at death! Every man has the portion of his cup assigned him. Impenitent sinner, mark your doom! The last call to repentance is about to be addressed to you, judgment is at hand; through the gloomy shade of death you pass into the region of eternal wrath. Hasten then, O sinner, to the cross of Christ. How stands the case between God and our souls? Is

Christ our hope, our consolation, our security? Then, not otherwise, will the soul be carried through all its difficulties and conflicts.

PSALM 12

The psalmist begs help of God, because there were none among men whom he durst trust.

Psalm 12:1

This psalm furnishes good thoughts for bad times; a man may comfort himself with such meditations and prayers. Let us see what makes the times bad, and when they may be said to be so. Ask the children of this world, What makes the times bad? they will tell you, Scarcity of money, decay of trade, and the desolations of war, make the times bad: but the Scripture lays the badness of the times on causes of another nature, ² Timothy 3:1, etc.: perilous times shall come, for sin shall abound; and of this David complains. When piety decays times really are bad. He who made man's mouth will call him to an account for his proud, profane, dissembling, or even useless words. When the poor and needy are oppressed, then the times are very bad. God himself takes notice of the oppression of the poor, and the sighing of the needy. When wickedness abounds, and is countenanced by those in authority, then the times are very bad. See with what good things we are here furnished for such bad times; and we cannot tell what times we may be reserved for.

1. We have a God to go to, from whom we may ask and expect the redress of all our grievances.
2. God will certainly punish and restrain false and proud men.
3. God will work deliverance for his oppressed people.

His help is given in the fittest time. Though men are false, God is faithful; though they are not to be trusted, God is. The preciousness of God's word is compared to silver refined to the highest degree. How many proofs have been given of its power and truth! God will secure his chosen remnant, however bad the times are. As long as the world stands, there will be a generation of proud and wicked men. But all God's people are put into the hands of Christ our Savior; there they are in safety, for none can pluck

them thence; being built on Him, the Rock, they are safe, notwithstanding temptation or persecution come with ever so much force upon them.

PSALM 13

The psalmist complains that God had long withdrawn. He earnestly prays for comfort. He assures himself of an answer of peace.

Psalm 13:1

God sometimes hides his face, and leaves his own children in the dark concerning their interest in him: and this they lay to heart more than any outward trouble whatever. But anxious cares are heavy burdens with which believers often load themselves more than they need. The bread of sorrows is sometimes the saint's daily bread; our Master himself was a man of sorrows. It is a common temptation, when trouble lasts long, to think that it will last always. Those who have long been without joy, begin to be without hope. We should never allow ourselves to make any complaints but what drive us to our knees. Nothing is more killing to a soul than the want of God's favor; nothing more reviving than the return of it. The sudden, delightful changes in the book of Psalms, are often very remarkable. We pass from depth of despondency to the height of religious confidence and joy. It is thus, ver. 5. All is gloomy dejection in ver. 4; but here the mind of the despondent worshipper rises above all its distressing fears, and throws itself, without reserve, on the mercy and care of its Divine Redeemer. See the power of faith, and how good it is to draw near to God. If we bring our cares and griefs to the throne of grace, and leave them there, we may go away like Hannah, and our countenances will be no more sad, ^{GEN}1 Samuel 1:18. God's mercy is the support of the psalmist's faith. Finding I have that to trust to, I am comforted, though I have no merit of my own. His faith in God's mercy filled his heart with joy in his salvation; for joy and peace come by believing. He has dealt bountifully with me. By faith he was as confident of salvation, as if it had been completed already. In this way believers pour out their prayers, renouncing all hopes but in the mercy of God through the Saviors blood: and sometimes suddenly, at others gradually, they will find their burdens removed, and their comforts restored; they then allow that their fears and complaints were unnecessary, and acknowledge that the Lord hath dealt bountifully with them.

PSALM 14

A description of the depravity of human nature, and the deplorable corruption of a great part of mankind.

Psalm 14:1

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. The sinner here described is an atheist, one that saith there is no Judge or Governor of the world, no Providence ruling over the affairs of men. He says this in his heart. He cannot satisfy himself that there is none, but wishes there were none, and pleases himself that it is possible there may be none; he is willing to think there is none. This sinner is a fool; he is simple and unwise, and this is evidence of it: he is wicked and profane, and this is the cause. The word of God is a discernor of these thoughts. No man will say, There is no God, till he is so hardened in sin, that it is become his interest that there should be none to call him to an account. The disease of sin has infected the whole race of mankind. They are all gone aside, there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Whatever good is in any of the children of men, or is done by them, it is not of themselves, it is God's work in them. They are gone aside from the right way of their duty, the way that leads to happiness, and are turned into the paths of the destroyer. Let us lament the corruption of our nature, and see what need we have of the grace of God: let us not marvel that we are told we must be born again. And we must not rest in any thing short of union with Christ, and a new creation to holiness by his Spirit. The psalmist endeavors to convince sinners of the evil and danger of their way, while they think themselves very wise, and good, and safe. Their wickedness is described. Those that care not for God's people, for God's poor, care not for God himself. People run into all manner of wickedness, because they do not call upon God for his grace. What good can be expected from those that live without prayer? But those that will not fear God, may be made to fear at the shaking of a leaf. All our knowledge of the depravity of human nature should endear to us salvation out of Zion. But in heaven alone shall the whole company of the redeemed rejoice fully, and for evermore. The world is bad; oh that the Messiah would come and change its character! There is universal corruption; oh for the times of reformation! The triumphs of Zion's King will be the joys of

Zion's children. The second coming of Christ, finally to do away the dominion of sin and Satan, will be the completing of this salvation, which is the hope, and will be the joy of every Israelite indeed. With this assurance we should comfort ourselves and one another, under the sins of sinners and sufferings of saints.

PSALM 15

The way to heaven, if we would be happy, we must be holy. We are encouraged to walk in that way.

Psalm 15:1

Here is a very serious question concerning the character of a citizen of Zion. It is the happiness of glorified saints, that they dwell in the holy hill; they are at home there, they shall be for ever there. It concerns us to make it sure to ourselves that we have a place among them. A very plain and particular answer is here given. Those who desire to know their duty, will find the Scripture a very faithful director, and conscience a faithful monitor. A citizen of Zion is sincere in his religion. He is really what he professes to be, and endeavors to stand complete in all the will of God. He is just both to God and man; and, in speaking to both, speaks the truth in his heart. He scorns and abhors wrong and fraud; he cannot reckon that a good bargain, nor a saving one, which is made with a lie; and knows that he who wrongs his neighbor will prove, in the end, to have most injured himself. He is very careful to do hurt to no man. He speaks evil of no man, makes not others' faults the matter of his common talk; he makes the best of every body, and the worst of nobody. If an ill-natured story be told him, he will disprove it if he can; if not, it goes no further. He values men by their virtue and piety. Wicked people are vile people, worthless, and good for nothing; so the word signifies. He thinks the worse of no man's piety for his poverty and mean condition. He reckons that serious piety puts honor upon a man, more than wealth, or a great name. He honors such, desires their conversation and an interest in their prayers, is glad to show them respect, or do them a kindness. By this we may judge of ourselves in some measure. Even wise and good men may swear to their own hurt: but see how strong the obligation is, a man must rather suffer loss to himself and his family, than wrong his neighbor. He will not increase his estate by extortion, or by bribery. He will not, for any gain, or hope of it to himself, do any thing to hurt a righteous cause. Every true living member of the church, like the church itself, is built upon a Rock. He that doeth these things shall not be moved for ever. The grace of God shall always be sufficient for him. The union of these tempers and this conduct,

can only spring from repentance for sin, faith in the Savior, and love to him. In these respects let us examine and prove our own selves.

PSALM 16

This psalm begins with expressions of devotion, which may be applied to Christ; but ends with such confidence of a resurrection, as must be applied to Christ, and to him only.

Psalm 16:1

David flees to God's protection, with cheerful, believing confidence. Those who have avowed that the Lord is their Lord, should often put themselves in mind of what they have done, take the comfort of it, and live up to it. He devotes himself to the honor of God, in the service of the saints. Saints on earth we must be, or we shall never be saints in heaven. Those renewed by the grace of God, and devoted to the glory of God, are saints on earth. The saints in the earth are excellencies ones, yet some of them so poor, that they needed to have David's goodness extended to them. David declares his resolution to have no fellowship with the works of darkness; he repeats the solemn choice he had made of God for his portion and happiness, takes to himself the comfort of the choice, and gives God the glory of it. This is the language of a devout and pious soul. Most take the world for their chief good, and place their happiness in the enjoyments of it; but how poor soever my condition is in this world, let me have the love and favor of God, and be accepted of him; let me have a title by promise to life and happiness in the future state; and I have enough. Heaven is an inheritance; we must take that for our home, our rest, our everlasting good, and look upon this world to be no more ours, than the country through which is our road to our Father's house. Those that have God for their portion, have a goodly heritage. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, and look no further. Gracious persons, though they still covet more of God, never covet more than God; but, being satisfied of his loving-kindness, are abundantly satisfied with it: they envy not any their carnal mirth and delights. But so ignorant and foolish are we, that if left to ourselves, we shall forsake our own mercies for lying vanities. God having given David counsel by his word and Spirit, his own thoughts taught him in the night season, and engaged him by faith to live to God. Verses 8-11, are quoted by St. Peter in his first sermon, after the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, ^{<4125>}Acts 2:25-31; he declared that David in them speaks

concerning Christ, and particularly of his resurrection. And Christ being the Head of the body, the church, these verses may be applied to all Christians, guided and animated by the Spirit of Christ; and we may hence learn, that it is our wisdom and duty to set the Lord always before us. And if our eyes are ever toward God, our hearts and tongues may ever rejoice in him. Death destroys the hope of man, but not the hope of a real Christian. Christ's resurrection is an earnest of the believer's resurrection. In this world sorrow is our lot, but in heaven there is joy, a fullness of joy; our pleasures here are for a moment, but those at God's right hand are pleasures for evermore. Through this thy beloved Son, and our dear Savior, thou wilt show us, O Lord, the path of life; thou wilt justify our souls now, and raise our bodies by thy power at the last day; when earthly sorrow shall end in heavenly joy, pain in everlasting happiness.

PSALM 17

David's integrity. (1-7) The character of his enemies. His hope of happiness. (8-15)

Psalm 17:1

Vs. 1-7: This psalm is a prayer. Feigned prayers are fruitless; but if our hearts lead our prayers, God will meet them with his favor. The psalmist had been used to pray, so that it was not his distress and danger that now first brought him to his duty. And he was encouraged by his faith to expect God would notice his prayers. Constant resolution and watchfulness against sins of the tongue, will be a good evidence of our integrity. Aware of man's propensity to wicked works, and of his own peculiar temptations, David had made God's word his preservative from the paths of Satan, which lead to destruction. If we carefully avoid the paths of sin, it will be very comfortable in the reflection, when we are in trouble. Those that are, through grace, going in God's paths, should pray that their goings may be held up in those paths. David prays, Lord, still hold me up. Those who would proceed and persevere in the ways of God, must, by faith and prayer, get daily fresh supplies of grace and strength from him. Show thy marvelous loving-kindness, distinguishing favors, not common mercies, but be gracious to me; do as thou usest to do to those who love thy name.

Psalm 17:8

Vs. 8-15: Being compassed with enemies, David prays to God to keep him in safety. This prayer is a prediction that Christ would be preserved, through all the hardships and difficulties of his humiliation, to the glories and joys of his exalted state, and is a pattern to Christians to commit the keeping of their souls to God, trusting him to preserve them to his heavenly kingdom. Those are our worst enemies, that are enemies to our souls. They are God's sword, which cannot move without him, and which he will sheathe when he has done his work with it. They are his hand, by which he chastises his people. There is no fleeing from God's hand, but by fleeing to it. It is very comfortable, when we are in fear of the power of man, to see it dependent upon, and in subjection to the power of God.

Most men look on the things of this world as the best things; and they look no further, nor show any care to provide for another life. The things of this world are called treasures, they are so accounted; but to the soul, and when compared with eternal blessings, they are trash. The most afflicted Christian need not envy the most prosperous men of the world, who have their portion in this life. Clothed with Christ's righteousness, having through his grace a good heart and a good life, may we by faith behold God's face, and set him always before us. When we awake every morning, may we be satisfied with his likeness set before us in his word, and with his likeness stamped upon us by his renewing grace. Happiness in the other world is prepared only for those that are justified and sanctified: they shall be put in possession of it when the soul awakes, at death, out of its slumber in the body, and when the body awakes, at the resurrection, out of its slumber in the grave. There is no satisfaction for a soul but in God, and in his good will towards us, and his good work in us; yet that satisfaction will not be perfect till we come to heaven.

PSALM 18

David rejoices in the deliverances God wrought for him. (1-19) He takes the comfort of his integrity, which God had cleared up. (20-28) He gives to God the glory of all his mighty deeds. (29-50)

Psalm 18:1

Vs. 1-19: The first words, “I will love thee, O Lord, my strength,” are the scope and contents of the psalm. Those that truly love God, may triumph in him as their Rock and Refuge, and may with confidence call upon him. It is good for us to observe all the circumstances of a mercy which magnify the power of God and his goodness to us in it. David was a praying man, and God was found a prayer-hearing God. If we pray as he did, we shall speed as he did. God’s manifestation of his presence is very fully described, ver. 7-15. Little appeared of man, but much of God, in these deliverances. It is not possible to apply to the history of the son of Jesse those awful, majestic, and stupendous words which are used through this description of the Divine manifestation. Every part of so solemn a scene of terrors tells us, a greater than David is here. God will not only deliver his people out of their troubles in due time, but he will bear them up under their troubles in the mean time. Can we meditate on ver. 18, without directing one thought to Gethsemane and Calvary? Can we forget that it was in the hour of Christ’s deepest calamity, when Judas betrayed, when his friends forsook, when the multitude derided him, and the smiles of his Father’s love were withheld, that the powers of darkness prevented him? The sorrows of death surrounded him, in his distress he prayed,

Hebrews 5:7. God made the earth to shake and tremble, and the rocks to cleave, and brought him out, in his resurrection, because he delighted in him and in his undertaking.

Psalm 18:20

Vs. 20-28: Those that forsake the ways of the Lord, depart from their God. But though conscious to ourselves of many a false step, let there not be a wicked departure from our God. David kept his eye upon the rule of God’s commands. Constant care to keep from that sin, whatever it be, which most easily besets us, proves that we are upright before God. Those

who show mercy to others, even they need mercy. Those who are faithful to God, shall find him all that to them which he has promised to be. The words of the Lord are pure words, very sure to be depended on, and very sweet to be delighted in. Those who resist God, and walk contrary to him, shall find that he will walk contrary to them, ^{<B27>}Leviticus 26:21-24. The gracious recompense of which David spoke, may generally be expected by those who act from right motives. Hence he speaks comfort to the humble, and terror to the proud; “Thou wilt bring down high looks.” And he speaks encouragement to himself; “Thou wilt light my candle:” thou wilt revive and comfort my sorrowful spirit; thou wilt guide my way, that I may avoid the snares laid for me. Thou wilt light my candle to work by, and give me an opportunity of serving thee. Let those that walk in darkness, and labor under discouragements, take courage; God himself will be a Light to them.

^{<B29>}Psalm 18:29

Vs. 29-50: When we praise for one mercy, we must observe the many more, with which we have been compassed all our days. Many things had contributed to David’s advancement, and he owns the hand of God in them all, to teach us to do likewise. In verse 32, and the following verses, are the gifts of God to the spiritual warrior, whereby he is prepared for the contest, after the example of his victorious Leader. Learn that we must seek release out of trouble through Christ. The prayer put up, without reconciliation being made through Christ, shall be rejected. In David the type, we behold Jesus our Redeemer, conflicting with enemies, compassed with sorrows and with floods of ungodly men, enduring not only the pains of death, but the wrath of God for us; yet calling upon the Father with strong cries and tears; rescued from the grave; proceeding to reconcile, or to put under his feet all other enemies, till death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed. We should love the Lord, our Strength, and our Salvation; we should call on him in every trouble, and praise him for every deliverance; we should aim to walk with him in all righteousness and true holiness, keeping from sin. If we belong to him, he conquers and reigns for us, and we shall conquer and reign through him, and partake of the mercy of our anointed King, which is promised to all his seed for evermore. Amen.

PSALM 19

The glory of God's works. (1-6) His holiness and grace as shown in his word. (7-10) Prayer for the benefit of them. (11-14)

Psalm 19:1

Vs. 1-6: The heavens so declare the glory of God, and proclaim his wisdom, power, and goodness, that all ungodly men are left without excuse. They speak themselves to be works of God's hands; for they must have a Creator who is eternal, infinitely wise, powerful, and good. The counter-changing of day and night is a great proof of the power of God, and calls us to observe, that, as in the kingdom of nature, so in that of providence, he forms the light, and creates the darkness, ²³⁸⁷Isaiah 45:7, and sets the one against the other. The sun in the firmament is an emblem of the Sun of righteousness, the Bridegroom of the church, and the Light of the world, diffusing Divine light and salvation by his gospel to the nations of the earth. He delights to bless his church, which he has espoused to himself; and his course will be unwearied as that of the sun, till the whole earth is filled with his light and salvation. Let us pray for the time when he shall enlighten, cheer, and make fruitful every nation on earth, with the blessed salvation. They have no speech or language, so some read it, and yet their voice is heard. All people may hear these preachers speak in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. Let us give God the glory of all the comfort and benefit we have by the lights of heaven, still looking above and beyond them to the Sun of righteousness.

Psalm 19:7

Vs. 7-10: The Holy Scripture is of much greater benefit to us than day or night, than the air we breathe, or the light of the sun. To recover man out of his villainy state, there is need of the word of God. The word translated "law," may be rendered doctrine, and be understood as meaning all that teaches us true religion. The whole is perfect; its tendency is to convert or turn the soul from sin and the world, to God and holiness. It shows our sinfulness and misery in departing from God, and the necessity of our return to him. This testimony is sure, to be fully depended on: the ignorant and unlearned believing what God saith, become wise unto salvation. It is a

sure direction in the way of duty. It is a sure fountain of living comforts, and a sure foundation of lasting hopes. The statutes of the Lord are right, just as they should be; and, because they are right, they rejoice the heart. The commandments of the Lord are pure, holy, just, and good. By them we discover our need of a Savior; and then learn how to adorn his gospel. They are the means which the Holy Spirit uses in enlightening the eyes; they bring us to a sight and sense of our sin and misery, and direct us in the way of duty. The fear of the Lord, that is, true religion and godliness, is clean, it will cleanse our way; and it endureth for ever. The ceremonial law is long since done away, but the law concerning the fear of God is ever the same. The judgments of the Lord, his precepts, are true; they are righteous, and they are so altogether; there is no unrighteousness in any of them. Gold is only for the body, and the concerns of time; but grace is for the soul, and the concerns of eternity. The word of God, received by faith, is more precious than gold; it is sweet to the soul, sweeter than honey. The pleasure of sense soon surfeit, yet never satisfy; but those of religion are substantial and satisfying; there is no danger of excess.

Psalm 19:11

Vs. 11-14: God's word warns the wicked not to go on in his wicked way, and warns the righteous not to turn from his good way. There is a reward, not only after keeping, but in keeping God's commandments. Religion makes our comforts sweet, and our crosses easy, life truly valuable, and death itself truly desirable. David not only desired to be pardoned and cleansed from the sins he had discovered and confessed, but from those he had forgotten or overlooked. All discoveries of sin made to us by the law, should drive us to the throne of grace, there to pray. His dependence was the same with that of every Christian who says, Surely in the Lord Jesus have I righteousness and strength. No prayer can be acceptable before God which is not offered in the strength of our Redeemer or Divine Kinsman, through Him who took our nature upon him, that he might redeem us unto God, and restore the long-lost inheritance. May our hearts be much affected with the excellencies of the word of God; and much affected with the evil of sin, and the danger we are in of it, and the danger we are in by it.

PSALM 20

*This psalm is a prayer for the kings of Israel,
but with relation to Christ.*

Psalm 20:1

Even the greatest of men may be much in trouble. Neither the crown on the king's head, nor the grace in his heart, would make him free from trouble. Even the greatest of men must be much in prayer. Let none expect benefit by the prayers of the church, or their friends, who are capable of praying for themselves, yet neglect it. Pray that God would protect his person, and preserve his life. That God would enable him to go on in his undertakings for the public good. We may know that God accepts our spiritual sacrifices, if by his Spirit he kindles in our souls a holy fire of piety and love to God. Also, that the Lord would crown his enterprises with success. Our first step to victory in spiritual warfare is to trust only in the mercy and grace of God; all who trust in themselves will soon be cast down. Believers triumph in God, and his revelation of himself to them, by which they distinguish themselves from those that live without God in the world. Those who make God and his name their praise, may make God and his name their trust. This was the case when the pride and power of Jewish unbelief, and pagan idolatry, fell before the sermons and lives of the humble believers in Jesus. This is the case in every conflict with our spiritual enemies, when we engage them in the name, the spirit, and the power of Christ; and this will be the case at the last day, when the world, with the prince of it, shall be brought down and fall; but believers, risen-from the dead, through the resurrection of the Lord, shall stand, and sing his praises in heaven. In Christ's salvation let us rejoice; and set up our banners in the name of the Lord our God, assured that by the saving strength of his right hand we shall be conquerors over every enemy.

PSALM 21

Thanksgiving for victory. (1-6) Confidence of further success. (7-13)

Psalm 21:1

Vs. 1-6: Happy the people whose king makes God's strength his confidence, and God's salvation his joy; who is pleased with all the advancements of God kingdom, and trusts God to support him in all he does for the service of it. All our blessings are blessings of goodness, and are owing, not to any merit of ours, but only to God's goodness. But when God's blessings come sooner, and prove richer than we imagine; when they are given before we prayed for them, before we were ready for them, nay, when we feared the contrary; then it may be truly said that he prevented, or went before us, with them. Nothing indeed prevented, or went before Christ, but to mankind never was any favor more preventing than our redemption by Christ. Thou hast made him to be a universal, everlasting blessing to the world, in whom the families of the earth are, and shall be blessed; and so thou hast made him exceeding glad with the countenance thou hast given to his undertaking, and to him in the prosecution of it. The Spirit of prophecy rises from what related to the king, to that which is peculiar to Christ; none other is blessed for ever, much less a blessing for ever.

Psalm 21:7

Vs. 7-13: The psalmist teaches to look forward with faith, and hope, and prayer upon what God would further do. The success with which God blessed David, was a type of the total overthrow of all Christ's enemies. Those who might have had Christ to rule and save them, but rejected him and fought against him, shall find the remembrance of it a worm that dies not. God makes sinners willing by his grace, receives them to his favor, and delivers them from the wrath to come. May he exalt himself, by his all-powerful grace, in our hearts, destroying all the strong-holds of sin and Satan. How great should be our joy and praise to behold our Brother and Friend upon the throne, and for all the blessings we may expect from him!

yet he delights in his exalted state, as enabling him to confer happiness and glory on poor sinners, who are taught to love and trust in him.

PSALM 22

Complaints of discouragement. (1-10) With prayer for deliverance. (11-21) Praises for mercies and redemption. (22-31)

Psalm 22:1


Vs. 1-10: The Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, testifies in this psalm, clearly and fully, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. We have a sorrowful complaint of God's withdrawings. This may be applied to any child of God, pressed down, overwhelmed with grief and terror. Spiritual desertions are the saints' sorest afflictions; but even their complaint of these burdens is a sign of spiritual life, and spiritual senses exercised. To cry out, My God, why am I sick? why am I poor? savors of discontent and worldliness. But, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" is the language of a heart binding up its happiness in God's favor. This must be applied to Christ. In the first words of this complaint, he poured out his soul before God when he was upon the cross, ¹⁰⁷⁴ Matthew 27:46. Being truly man, Christ felt a natural unwillingness to pass through such great sorrows, yet his zeal and love prevailed. Christ declared the holiness of God, his heavenly Father, in his sharpest sufferings; nay, declared them to be a proof of it, for which he would be continually praised by his Israel, more than for all other deliverances they received. Never any that hoped in thee, were made ashamed of their hope; never any that sought thee, sought thee in vain. Here is a complaint of the contempt and reproach of men. The Savior here spoke of the abject state to which he was reduced. The history of Christ's sufferings, and of his birth, explains this prophecy.

Psalm 22:11

Vs. 11-21: In these verses we have Christ suffering, and Christ praying; by which we are directed to look for crosses, and to look up to God under them. The very manner of Christ's death is described, though not in use among the Jews. They pierced his hands and his feet, which were nailed to the accursed tree, and his whole body was left so to hang as to suffer the most severe pain and torture. His natural force failed, being wasted by the fire of Divine wrath preying upon his spirits. Who then can stand before God's anger? or who knows the power of it? The life of the sinner was

forfeited, and the life of the Sacrifice must be the ransom for it. Our Lord Jesus was stripped, when he was crucified, that he might clothe us with the robe of his righteousness. Thus it was written, therefore thus it behooved Christ to suffer. Let all this confirm our faith in him as the true Messiah, and excite our love to him as the best of friends, who loved us, and suffered all this for us. Christ in his agony prayed, prayed earnestly, prayed that the cup might pass from him. When we cannot rejoice in God as our song, yet let us stay ourselves upon him as our strength; and take the comfort of spiritual supports, when we cannot have spiritual delights. He prays to be delivered from the Divine wrath. He that has delivered, doth deliver, and will do so. We should think upon the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, till we feel in our souls the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings.

Psalm 22:22

Vs. 22-31: The Savior now speaks as risen from the dead. The first words of the complaint were used by Christ himself upon the cross; the first words of the triumph are expressly applied to him,  Hebrews 2:12. All our praises must refer to the work of redemption. The suffering of the Redeemer was graciously accepted as a full satisfaction for sin. Though it was offered for sinful men, the Father did not despise or abhor it for our sakes. This ought to be the matter of our thanksgiving. All humble, gracious souls should have a full satisfaction and happiness in him. Those that hunger and thirst after righteousness in Christ, shall not labor for that which satisfies not. Those that are much in praying, will be much in thanksgiving. Those that turn to God, will make conscience of worshipping before him. Let every tongue confess that he is Lord. High and low, rich and poor, bond and free, meet in Christ. Seeing we cannot keep alive our own souls, it is our wisdom, by obedient faith, to commit our souls to Christ, who is able to save and keep them alive for ever. A seed shall serve him. God will have a church in the world to the end of time. They shall be accounted to him for a generation; he will be the same to them that he was to those who went before them. His righteousness, and not any of their own, they shall declare to be the foundation of all their hopes, and the fountain of all their joys. Redemption by Christ is the Lord's own doing. Here we see the free love and compassion of God the Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, for us wretched sinners, as the source

of all grace and consolation; the example we are to follow, the treatment as Christians we are to expect, and the conduct under it we are to adopt. Every lesson may here be learned that can profit the humbled soul. Let those who go about to establish their own righteousness inquire, why the beloved Son of God should thus suffer, if their own doings could atone for sin? Let the ungodly professor consider whether the Savior thus honored the Divine law, to purchase him the privilege of despising it. Let the careless take warning to flee from the wrath to come, and the trembling rest their hopes upon this merciful Redeemer. Let the tempted and distressed believer cheerfully expect a happy end of every trial.

PSALM 23

Confidence in God's grace and care.

Psalm 23:1

“The Lord is my shepherd.” In these words, the believer is taught to express his satisfaction in the care of the great Pastor of the universe, the Redeemer and Preserver of men. With joy he reflects that he has a shepherd, and that shepherd is Jehovah. A flock of sheep, gentle and harmless, feeding in verdant pastures, under the care of a skillful, watchful, and tender shepherd, forms an emblem of believers brought back to the Shepherd of their souls. The greatest abundance is but a dry pasture to a wicked man, who relishes in it only what pleases the senses; but to a godly man, who by faith tastes the goodness of God in all his enjoyments, though he has but little of the world, it is a green pasture. The Lord gives quiet and contentment in the mind, whatever the lot is. Are we blessed with the green pastures of the ordinances, let us not think it enough to pass through them, but let us abide in them. The consolations of the Holy Spirit are the still waters by which the saints are led; the streams which flow from the Fountain of living waters. Those only are led by the still waters of comfort, who walk in the paths of righteousness. The way of duty is the truly pleasant way. The work of righteousness in peace. In these paths we cannot walk, unless God lead us into them, and lead us on in them. Discontent and distrust proceed from unbelief; an unsteady walk is the consequence: let us then simply trust our Shepherd's care, and hearken to his voice. The valley of the shadow of death may denote the most severe and terrible affliction, or dark dispensation of providence, that the psalmist ever could come under. Between the part of the flock on earth and that which is gone to heaven, death lies like a dark valley that must be passed in going from one to the other. But even in this there are words which lessen the terror. It is but the shadow of death: the shadow of a serpent will not sting, nor the shadow of a sword kill. It is a valley, deep indeed, and dark, and miry; but valleys are often fruitful, and so is death itself fruitful of comforts to God's people. It is a walk through it: they shall not be lost in this valley, but get safe to the mountain on the other side. Death is a king of terrors, but not to the sheep of Christ. When they

come to die, God will rebuke the enemy; he will guide them with his rod, and sustain them with his staff. There is enough in the gospel to comfort the saints when dying, and underneath them are the everlasting arms. The Lord's people feast at his table, upon the provisions of his love. Satan and wicked men are not able to destroy their comforts, while they are anointed with the Holy Spirit, and drink of the cup of salvation which is ever full. Past experience teaches believers to trust that the goodness and mercy of God will follow them all the days of their lives, and it is their desire and determination, to seek their happiness in the service of God here, and they hope to enjoy his love for ever in heaven. While here, the Lord can make any situation pleasant, by the anointing of his Spirit and the joys of his salvation. But those that would be satisfied with the blessings of his house, must keep close to the duties of it.

PSALM 24

Concerning the kingdom of Christ, and the subjects of that kingdom. (1-6) Concerning the King of that kingdom. (7-10)

Psalm 24:1

Vs. 1-6: We ourselves are not our own; our bodies, our souls, are not. Even those of the children of men are God's, who know him not, nor own their relation to him. A soul that knows and considers its own nature, and that it must live for ever, when it has viewed the earth and the fullness thereof, will sit down unsatisfied. It will think of ascending toward God, and will ask, What shall I do, that I may abide in that happy, holy place, where he makes his people holy and happy? We make nothing of religion, if we do not make heart-work of it. We can only be cleansed from our sins, and renewed unto holiness, by the blood of Christ and the washing of the Holy Ghost. Thus we become his people; thus we receive blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation. God's peculiar people shall be made truly and for ever happy. Where God gives righteousness, he designs salvation. Those that are made meet for heaven, shall be brought safe to heaven, and will find what they have been seeking.

Psalm 24:7

Vs. 7-10: The splendid entry here described, refers to the solemn bringing in of the ark into the tent David pitched for it, or the temple Solomon built for it. We may also apply it to the ascension of Christ into heaven, and the welcome given to him there. Our Redeemer found the gates of heaven shut, but having by his blood made atonement for sin, as one having authority, he demanded entrance. The angels were to worship him, ^{Hebrews 1:6:} they ask with wonder, Who is he? It is answered, that he is strong and mighty; mighty in battle to save his people, and to subdue his and their enemies. We may apply it to Christ's entrance into the souls of men by his word and Spirit, that they may be his temples. Behold, he stands at the door, and knocks, ^{Revelation 3:20.} The gates and doors of the heart are to be opened to him, as possession is delivered to the rightful owner. We may apply it to his second coming with glorious power. Lord, open the everlasting door of our souls by thy grace, that we may now receive thee,

and be wholly thine; and that, at length, we may be numbered with thy saints in glory.

PSALM 25

Confidence in prayer. (1-7) Prayer for remission of sins. (8-14) For help in affliction. (15-22)

Psalm 25:1

Vs. 1-7: In worshipping God, we must lift up our souls to him. It is certain that none who, by a believing attendance, wait on God, and, by a believing hope, wait for him, shall be ashamed of it. The most advanced believer both needs and desires to be taught of God. If we sincerely desire to know our duty, with resolution to do it, we may be sure that God will direct us in it. The psalmist is earnest for the pardon of his sins. When God pardons sin, he is said to remember it no more, which denotes full remission. It is God's goodness, and not ours, his mercy, and not our merit, that must be our plea for the pardon of sin, and all the good we need. This plea we must rely upon, feeling our own unworthiness, and satisfied of the riches of God's mercy and grace. How boundless is that mercy which covers for ever the sins and follies of a youth spent without God and without hope! Blessed be the Lord, the blood of the great Sacrifice can wash away every stain.

Psalm 25:8

Vs. 8-14: We are all sinners; and Christ came into the world to save sinners, to teach sinners, to call sinners to repentance. We value a promise by the character of him that makes it; we therefore depend upon God's promises. All the paths of the Lord, that is, all his promises and all his providences, are mercy and truth. In all God's dealings his people may see his mercy displayed, and his word fulfilled, whatever afflictions they are now exercised with. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth; and so it will appear when they come to their journey's end. Those that are humble, that distrust themselves, and desire to be taught and to follow Divine guidance, these he will guide in judgment, that is, by the rule of the written word, to find rest for their souls in the Savior. Even when the body is sick, and in pain, the soul may be at ease in God.

Psalm 25:15

Vs. 15-22: The psalmist concludes, as he began, with expressing dependence upon God, and desire toward him. It is good thus to hope, and quietly to wait for the salvation of the Lord. And if God turns to us, no matter who turns from us. He pleads his own integrity. Though guilty before God, yet, as to his enemies, he had the testimony of conscience that he had done them no wrong. God would, at length, give Israel rest from all their enemies round about. In heaven, God's Israel will be perfectly redeemed from all troubles. Blessed Savior, thou hast graciously taught us that without thee we can do nothing. Do thou teach us how to pray, how to appear before thee in the way which thou shalt choose, and how to lift up our whole hearts and desires after thee, for thou art the Lord our righteousness.

PSALM 26

David, in this psalm, appeals to God touching his integrity.

Psalm 26:1

David here, by the Spirit of prophecy, speaks of himself as a type of Christ, of whom what he here says of his spotless innocence was fully and eminently true, and of Christ only, and to Him we may apply it. We are complete in him. The man that walks in his integrity, yet trusting wholly in the grace of God, is in a state of acceptance, according to the covenant of which Jesus was the Mediator, in virtue of his spotless obedience even unto death. This man desires to have his inmost soul searched and proved by the Lord. He is aware of the deceitfulness of his own heart; he desires to detect and mortify every sin; and he longs to be satisfied of his being a true believer, and to practice the holy commands of God. Great care to avoid bad company, is both a good evidence of our integrity, and a good means to keep us in it. Hypocrites and dissemblers may be found attending on God's ordinances; but it is a good sign of sincerity, if we attend upon them, as the psalmist here tells us he did, in the exercise of repentance and conscientious obedience. He feels his ground firm under him; and, as he delights in blessing the Lord with his congregations on earth, he trusts that shortly he shall join the great assembly in heaven, in singing praises to God and to the Lamb for evermore.

PSALM 27

The psalmist's faith. (1-6) His desire toward God, and expectation from him. (7-14)

Psalm 27:1

Vs. 1-6: The Lord, who is the believer's light, is the strength of his life; not only by whom, but in whom he lives and moves. In God let us strengthen ourselves. The gracious presence of God, his power, his promise, his readiness to hear prayer, the witness of his Spirit in the hearts of his people; these are the secret of his tabernacle, and in these the saints find cause for that holy security and peace of mind in which they dwell at ease. The psalmist prays for constant communion with God in holy ordinances. All God's children desire to dwell in their Father's house. Not to sojourn there as a wayfaring man, to tarry but for a night; or to dwell there for a time only, as the servant that abides not in the house for ever; but to dwell there all the days of their life, as children with a father. Do we hope that the praising of God will be the blessedness of our eternity? Surely then we ought to make it the business of our time. This he had at heart more than any thing. Whatever the Christian is as to this life, he considers the favor and service of God as the one thing needful. This he desires, prays for and seeks after, and in it he rejoices.

Psalm 27:7

Vs. 7-14: Wherever the believer is, he can find a way to the throne of grace by prayer. God calls us by his Spirit, by his word, by his worship, and by special providences, merciful and afflicting. When we are foolishly making court to lying vanities, God is, in love to us, calling us to seek our own mercies in him. The call is general, "Seek ye my face;" but we must apply it to ourselves, "I will seek it." The word does us no good, when we do not ourselves accept the exhortation: a gracious heart readily answers to the call of a gracious God, being made willing in the day of his power. The psalmist requests the favor of the Lord; the continuance of his presence with him; the benefit of Divine guidance, and the benefit of Divine protection. God's time to help those that trust in him, is, when all other helpers fail. He is a surer and better Friend than earthly parents are, or can

be. What was the belief which supported the psalmist? That he should see the goodness of the Lord. There is nothing like the believing hope of eternal life, the foresights of that glory, and foretastes of those pleasures, to keep us from fainting under all calamities. In the mean time he should be strengthened to bear up under his burdens. Let us look unto the suffering Savior, and pray in faith, not to be delivered into the hands of our enemies. Let us encourage each other to wait on the Lord, with patient expectation, and fervent prayer.

PSALM 28

A prayer in distress. (1-5) Thanksgiving for deliverance. (6-9)

Psalm 28:1

Vs. 1-5: David is very earnest in prayer. Observe his faith in prayer; God is my rock, on whom I build my hope. Believers should not rest till they have received some token that their prayers are heard. He prays that he may not be numbered with the wicked. Save me from being entangled in the snares they have laid for me. Save me from being infected with their sins, and from doing as they do. Lord, never leave me to use such arts of deceit and treachery for my safety, as they use for my ruin. Believers dread the way of sinners; the best are sensible of the danger they are in of being drawn aside: we should all pray earnestly to God for his grace to keep us. Those who are careful not to partake with sinners in their sins, have reason to hope that they shall not receive their plagues. He speaks of the just judgments of the Lord on the workers of iniquity, ver. 4. This is not the language of passion or revenge. It is a prophecy that there will certainly come a day, when God will punish every man who persists in his evil deeds. Sinners shall be reckoned with, not only for the mischief they have done, but for the mischief they designed, and did what they could to effect. Disregard of the works of the Lord, is the cause of the sin of sinners, and becomes the cause of their ruin.

Psalm 28:6

Vs. 6-9: Has God heard our supplications? Let us then bless his name. The Lord is my strength, to support me, and carry me on through all my services and sufferings. The heart that truly believes, shall in due time greatly rejoice: we are to expect joy and peace in believing. God shall have the praise of it: thus must we express our gratitude. The saints rejoice in others' comfort as well as their own: we have the less benefit from the light of the sun, nor from the light of God's countenance, for others' sharing therein. The psalmist concludes with a short, but comprehensive prayer. God's people are his inheritance, and precious in his eyes. He prays that God would save them; that he would bless them with all good, especially the plenty of his ordinances, which are food to the soul. And

direct their actions and overrule their affairs for good. Also, lift them up for ever; not only those of that age, but his people in every age to come; lift them up as high as heaven. There, and there only, will saints be lifted up for ever, never more to sink, or be depressed. Save us, Lord Jesus, from our sins; bless us, thou Son of Abraham, with the blessing of righteousness; feed us, thou good Shepherd of the sheep, and lift us up for ever from the dust, O thou, who art the Resurrection and the Life.

PSALM 29

Exhortation to give glory to God.

Psalm 29:1

The mighty and honorable of the earth are especially bound to honor and worship him; but, alas, few attempt to worship him in the beauty of holiness. When we come before him as the Redeemer of sinners, in repentance, faith, and love, he will accept our defective services, pardon the sin that cleaves to them, and approve of that measure of holiness which the Holy Spirit enables us to exercise. We have here the nature of religious worship; it is giving to the Lord the glory due to his name. We must be holy in all our religious services, devoted to God, and to his will and glory. There is a beauty in holiness, and that puts beauty upon all acts of worship. The psalmist here sets forth God's dominion in the kingdom of nature. In the thunder, and lightning, and storm, we may see and hear his glory. Let our hearts be thereby filled with great, and high, and honorable thoughts of God, in the holy adoring of whom, the power of godliness so much consists. O Lord our God, thou art very great! The power of the lightning equals the terror of the thunder. The fear caused by these effects of the Divine power, should remind us of the mighty power of God, of man's weakness, and of the defenseless and desperate condition of the wicked in the day of judgment. But the effects of the Divine word upon the souls of men, under the power of the Holy Spirit, are far greater than those of thunder storms in the nature world. Thereby the stoutest are made to tremble, the proudest are cast down, the secrets of the heart are brought to light, sinners are converted, the savage, sensual, and unequalled, become harmless, gentle, and pure. If we have heard God's voice, and have fled for refuge to the hope set before us, let us remember that children need not fear their Father's voice, when he speaks in anger to his enemies. While those tremble who are without shelter, let those who abide in his appointed refuge bless him for their security, looking forward to the day of judgment without dismay, safe as Noah in the ark.

PSALM 30

Praise to God for deliverance. (1-5) Others encouraged by his example. (6-12)

Psalm 30:1

Vs. 1-5: The great things the Lord has done for us, both by his providence and by his grace, bind us in gratitude to do all we can to advance his kingdom among men, though the most we can do is but little. God's saints in heaven sing to him; why should not those on earth do the same? Not one of all God's perfections carries in it more terror to the wicked, or more comfort to the godly, than his holiness. It is a good sign that we are in some measure partakers of his holiness, if we can heartily rejoice at the remembrance of it. Our happiness is bound up in the Divine favor; if we have that, we have enough, whatever else we want; but as long as God's anger continues, so long the saints' weeping continues.

Psalm 30:6

Vs. 6-12: When things are well with us, we are very apt to think that they will always be so. When we see our mistake, it becomes us to think with shame upon our carnal security as our folly. If God hide his face, a good man is troubled, though no other calamity befall him. But if God, in wisdom and justice, turn from us, it will be the greatest folly if we turn from him. No; let us learn to pray in the dark. The sanctified spirit, which returns to God, shall praise him, shall be still praising him; but the services of God's house cannot be performed by the dust; it cannot praise him; there is none of that device or working in the grave, for it is the land of silence. We ask aright for life, when we do so that we may live to praise him. In due time God delivered the psalmist out of his troubles. Our tongue is our glory, and never more so than when employed in praising God. He would persevere to the end in praise, hoping that he should shortly be where this would be the everlasting work. But let all beware of carnal security. Neither outward prosperity, nor inward peace, here, are sure and lasting. The Lord, in his favor, has fixed the believer's safety firm as the deep-rooted mountains, but he must expect to meet with

temptations and afflictions. When we grow careless, we fall into sin, the Lord hides his face, our comforts droop, and troubles assail us.

PSALM 31

Confidence in God. (1-8) Prayer in trouble. (9-18) Praise for God's goodness. (19-24)

Psalm 31:1

Vs. 1-8: Faith and prayer must go together, for the prayer of faith is the prevailing prayer. David gave up his soul in a special manner to God. And with the words, ver. 5, our Lord Jesus yielded up his last breath on the cross, and made his soul a free-will offering for sin, laying down his life as a ransom. But David is here as a man in distress and trouble. And his great care is about his soul, his spirit, his better part. Many think that while perplexed about their worldly affairs, and their cares multiply, they may be excused if they neglect their souls; but we are the more concerned to look to our souls, that, though the outward man perish, the inward man may suffer no damage. The redemption of the soul is so precious, that it must have ceased for ever, if Christ had not undertaken it. Having relied on God's mercy, he will be glad and rejoice in it. God looks upon our souls, when we are in trouble, to see whether they are humbled for sin, and made better by the affliction. Every believer will meet with such dangers and deliverances, until he is delivered from death, his last enemy.

Psalm 31:9

Vs. 9-18: David's troubles made him a man of sorrows. Herein he was a type of Christ, who was acquainted with grief. David acknowledged that his afflictions were merited by his own sins, but Christ suffered for ours. David's friends durst not give him any assistance. Let us not think it strange if thus deserted, but make sure of a Friend in heaven who will not fail. God will be sure to order and dispose all for the best, to all those who commit their spirits also into his hand. The time of life is in God's hands, to lengthen or shorten, make bitter or sweet, according to the counsel of his will. The way of man is not in himself, nor in our friend's hands, nor in our enemies' hands, but in God's. In this faith and confidence he prays that the Lord would save him for his mercy's sake, and not for any merit of his own. He prophesies the silencing of those that reproach and speak evil of the people of God. There is a day coming, when the Lord will execute

judgment upon them. In the mean time, we should engage ourselves by well-doing, if possible, to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

 **Psalm 31:19**

Vs. 19-24: Instead of yielding to impatience or despondency under our troubles, we should turn our thoughts to the goodness of the Lord towards those who fear and trust in Him. All comes to sinners through the wondrous gift of the only-begotten Son of God, to be the atonement for their sins. Let not any yield to unbelief, or think, under discouraging circumstances, that they are cut off from before the eyes of the Lord, and left to the pride of men. Lord, pardon our complaints and fears; increase our faith, patience, love, and gratitude; teach us to rejoice in tribulation and in hope. The deliverance of Christ, with the destruction of his enemies, ought to strengthen and comfort the hearts of believers under all their afflictions here below, that having suffered courageously with their Master, they may triumphantly enter into his joy and glory.

PSALM 32

The happiness of a pardoned sinner. (1,2) The misery that went before, and the comfort that followed the confession of sins. (3-7) Sinners instructed, believers encouraged. (8-11)

Psalm 32:1

Vs. 1, 2: Sin is the cause of our misery; but the true believer's transgressions of the Divine law are all forgiven, being covered with the atonement. Christ bare his sins, therefore they are not imputed to him. The righteousness of Christ being reckoned to us, and we being made the righteousness of God in him, our iniquity is not imputed, God having laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and made him a sin-offering for us. Not to impute sin, is God's act, for he is the Judge. It is God that justifies. Notice the character of him whose sins are pardoned; he is sincere, and seeks sanctification by the power of the Holy Ghost. He does not profess to repent, with an intention to indulge in sin, because the Lord is ready to forgive. He will not abuse the doctrine of free grace. And to the man whose iniquity is forgiven, all manner of blessings are promised.

Psalm 32:3

Vs. 3-7: It is very difficult to bring sinful man humbly to accept free mercy, with a full confession of his sins and self-condemnation. But the true and only way to peace of conscience, is, to confess our sins, that they may be forgiven; to declare them that we may be justified. Although repentance and confession do not merit the pardon of transgression, they are needful to the real enjoyment of forgiving mercy. And what tongue can tell the happiness of that hour, when the soul, oppressed by sin, is enabled freely to pour forth its sorrows before God, and to take hold of his covenanted mercy in Christ Jesus! Those that would speed in prayer, must seek the Lord, when, by his providence, he calls them to seek him, and, by his Spirit, stirs them up to seek him. In a time of finding, when the heart is softened with grief, and burdened with guilt; when all human refuge fails; when no rest can be found to the troubled mind, then it is that God applies the healing balm by his Spirit.

Psalm 32:8

Vs. 8-11: God teaches by his word, and guides with the secret intimations of his will. David gives a word of caution to sinners. The reason for this caution is, that the way of sin will certainly end in sorrow. Here is a word of comfort to saints. They may see that a life of communion with God is far the most pleasant and comfortable. Let us rejoice, O Lord Jesus, in thee, and in thy salvation; so shall we rejoice indeed.

PSALM 33

God to be praised. (1-11) His people encouraged by his power. (12-22)

Psalm 33:1

Vs. 1-11: Holy joy is the heart and soul of praise, and that is here pressed upon the righteous. Thankful praise is the breath and language of holy joy. Religious songs are proper expressions of thankful praise. Every endowment we possess, should be employed with all our skill and earnestness in God's service. His promises are all wise and good. His word is right, and therefore we are only in the right when we agree with it. His works are all done in truth. He is the righteous Lord, therefore loveth righteousness. What a pity it is that this earth, which is so full of the proofs and instances of God's goodness, should be so empty of his praises; and that of the multitudes who live upon his bounty, there are so few who live to his glory! What the Lord does, he does to purpose; it stands fast. He overrules all the counsels of men, and makes them serve his counsels; even that is fulfilled, which to us is most surprising, the eternal counsel of God, nor can any thing prevent its coming to pass.

Psalm 33:12

Vs. 12-22: All the motions and operations of the souls of men, which no mortals know but themselves, God knows better than they do. Their hearts, as well as their times, are all in his hand; he formed the spirit of each man within him. All the powers of the creature depend upon him, and are of no account, of no avail at all, without him. If we make God's favor sure towards us, then we need not fear whatever is against us. We are to give to him the glory of his special grace. All human devices for the salvation of our souls are vain; but the Lord's watchful eye is over those whose conscientious fear of his name proceeds from a believing hope in his mercy. In difficulties they shall be helped; in dangers they shall not receive any real damage. Those that fear God and his wrath, must hope in God and his mercy; for there is no flying from him, but by flying to him. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us; let us always have the comfort and benefit, not according to our merits, but according to the promise which thou hast

in thy word given to us, and according to the faith thou hast by thy Spirit and grace wrought in us.

PSALM 34

David praises God, and encourages to trust him. (1-10) He exhorts to fear. (11-22)

Psalm 34:1

Vs. 1-10: If we hope to spend eternity in praising God, it is fit that we should spend much of our time here in this work. He never said to any one, Seek ye me in vain. David's prayers helped to silence his fears; many besides him have looked unto the Lord by faith and prayer, and it has wonderfully revived and comforted them. When we look to the world, we are perplexed, and at a loss. But on looking to Christ depends our whole salvation, and all things needful thereunto do so also. This poor man, whom no man looked upon with any respect, or looked after with any concern, was yet welcome to the throne of grace; the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The holy angels minister to the saints, and stand for them against the powers of darkness. All the glory be to the Lord of the angels. By taste and sight we both make discoveries, and have enjoyment; Taste and see God's goodness; take notice of it, and take the comfort of it. He makes all truly blessed that trust in him. As to the things of the other world, they shall have grace sufficient for the support of spiritual life. And as to this life, they shall have what is necessary from the hand of God. Paul had all, and abounded, because he was content,

Philippians 4:11-18. Those who trust to themselves, and think their own efforts sufficient for them, shall want; but they shall be fed who trust in the Lord. Those shall not want, who with quietness work, and mind their own business.

Psalm 34:11

Vs. 11-22: Let young persons set out in life with learning the fear of the Lord, if they desire true comfort here, and eternal happiness hereafter. Those will be most happy who begin the soonest to serve so good a Master. All aim to be happy. Surely this must look further than the present world; for man's life on earth consists but of few days, and those full of trouble. What man is he that would see the good of that where all bliss is perfect? Alas! few have this good in their thoughts. That religion

promises best which creates watchfulness over the heart and over the tongue. It is not enough not to do hurt, we must study to be useful, and to live to some purpose; we must seek peace and pursue it; be willing to deny ourselves a great deal for peace' sake. It is the constant practice of real believers, when in distress, to cry unto God, and it is their constant comfort that he hears them. The righteous are humbled for sin, and are low in their own eyes. Nothing is more needful to true godliness than a contrite heart, broken off from every self-confidence. In this soil every grace will flourish, and nothing can encourage such a one but the free, rich grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The righteous are taken under the special protection of the Lord, yet they have their share of crosses in this world, and there are those that hate them. Both from the mercy of Heaven, and the malice of hell, the afflictions of the righteous must be many. But whatever troubles befall them, shall not hurt their souls, for God keeps them from sinning in troubles. No man is desolate, but he whom God has forsaken.

PSALM 35

*David prays for safety. (1-10) He complains of his enemies. (11-16)
And calls upon God to support him. (17-28)*

Psalm 35:1

Vs. 1-10: It is no new thing for the most righteous men, and the most righteous cause, to meet with enemies. This is a fruit of the old enmity in the seed of the serpent against the Seed of the woman. David in his afflictions, Christ in his sufferings, the church under persecution, and the Christian in the hour temptation, all beseech the Almighty to appear in their behalf, and to vindicate their cause. We are apt to justify uneasiness at the injuries men do us, by our never having given them cause to use us so ill; but this should make us easy, for then we may the more expect that God will plead our cause. David prayed to God to manifest himself in his trial. Let me have inward comfort under all outward troubles, to support my soul. If God, by his Spirit, witness to our spirits that he is our salvation, we need desire no more to make us happy. If God is our Friend, no matter who is our enemy. By the Spirit of prophecy, David foretells the just judgments of God that would come upon his enemies for their great wickedness. These are predictions, they look forward, and show the doom of the enemies of Christ and his kingdom. We must not desire or pray for the ruin of any enemies, except our lusts and the evil spirits that would compass our destruction. A traveler benighted in a bad road, is an expressive emblem of a sinner walking in the slippery and dangerous ways of temptation. But David having committed his cause to God, did not doubt of his own deliverance. The bones are the strongest parts of the body. The psalmist here proposes to serve and glorify God with all his strength. If such language may be applied to outward salvation, how much more will it apply to heavenly things in Christ Jesus!

Psalm 35:11

Vs. 11-16: Call a man ungrateful, and you can call him no worse: this was the character of David's enemies. Herein he was a type of Christ. David shows how tenderly he had behaved towards them in afflictions. We ought to mourn for the sins of those who do not mourn for themselves. We shall

not lose by the good offices we do to any, how ungrateful soever they may be. Let us learn to possess our souls in patience and meekness like David, or rather after Christ's example.

Psalm 35:17

Vs. 17-28: Though the people of God are, and study to be, quiet, yet it has been common for their enemies to devise deceitful matters against them. David prays, My soul is in danger, Lord, rescue it; it belongs to thee the Father of spirits, therefore claim thine own; it is thine, save it! Lord, be not far from me, as if I were a stranger. He who exalted the once suffering Redeemer, will appear for all his people: the roaring lion shall not destroy their souls, any more than he could that of Christ, their Surety. They trust their souls in his hands, they are one with him by faith, are precious in his sight, and shall be rescued from destruction, that they may give thanks in heaven.

PSALM 36

The bad state of the wicked. (1-4) The goodness of God. (5-12)

Psalm 36:1

Vs. 1-4: From this psalm our hearts should be duly affected with hatred of sin, and seek satisfaction in God's loving-kindness. Here is the root of bitterness, from which all the wickedness of wicked men comes. It takes rise from contempt of God, and the want of due regard to him. Also from the deceit they put upon their own souls. Let us daily beg of God to preserve us from self-flattery. Sin is very hurtful to the sinner himself, and therefore ought to be hateful; but it is not so. It is no marvel, if those that deceive themselves, seek to deceive all mankind; to whom will they be true, who are false to their own souls? It is bad to do mischief, but worse to devise it, to do it with plot and management. If we willingly banish holy meditations in our solitary hours, Satan will soon occupy our minds with sinful imaginations. Hardened sinners stand to what they have done, as though they could justify it before God himself.

Psalm 36:5

Vs. 5-12: Men may shut up their compassion, yet, with God we shall find mercy. This is great comfort to all believers, plainly to be seen, and not to be taken away. God does all wisely and well; but what he does we know not now, it is time enough to know hereafter. God's loving-kindness is precious to the saints. They put themselves under his protection, and then are safe and easy. Gracious souls, though still desiring more of God, never desire more than God. The gifts of Providence so far satisfy them, that they are content with such things as they have. The benefit of holy ordinances is sweet to a sanctified soul, and strengthening to the spiritual and Divine life. But full satisfaction is reserved for the future state. Their joys shall be constant. God not only works in them a gracious desire for these pleasures, but by his Spirit fills their souls with joy and peace in believing. He quickens whom he will; and whoever will, may come, and take from him of the waters of life freely. May we know, and love, and uprightly serve the Lord; then no proud enemy, on earth or from hell, shall separate us from his love. Faith calleth things that are not, as though they

were. It carries us forward to the end of time; it shows us the Lord, on his throne of judgment; the empire of sin villainy to rise no more.

PSALM 37

David persuades to patience and confidence in God, by the state of the godly and of the wicked.

Psalm 37:1

Vs. 1-6: When we look abroad we see the world full of evil-doers, that flourish and live in ease. So it was seen of old, therefore let us not marvel at the matter. We are tempted to fret at this, to think them the only happy people, and so we are prone to do like them: but this we are warned against. Outward prosperity is fading. When we look forward, with an eye of faith, we shall see no reason to envy the wicked. Their weeping and wailing will be everlasting. The life of religion is a believing trust in the Lord, and diligent care to serve him according to his will. It is not trusting God, but tempting him, if we do not make conscience of our duty to him. A man's life consists not in abundance, but, Thou shalt have food convenient for thee. This is more than we deserve, and it is enough for one that is going to heaven. To delight in God is as much a privilege as a duty. He has not promised to gratify the appetites of the body, and the humors of the fancy, but the desires of the renewed, sanctified soul. What is the desire of the heart of a good man? It is this, to know, and love, and serve God. Commit thy way unto the Lord; roll thy way upon the Lord, so the margin reads it. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, the burden of thy care. We must roll it off ourselves, not afflict and perplex ourselves with thoughts about future events, but refer them to God. By prayer spread thy case and all thy cares before the Lord, and trust in him. We must do our duty, and then leave the event with God. The promise is very sweet: He shall bring that to pass, whatever it is, which thou has committed to him.

Psalm 37:7

Vs. 7-20: Let us be satisfied that God will make all to work for good to us. Let us not discompose ourselves at what we see in this world. A fretful, discontented spirit is open to many temptations. For, in all respects, the little which is allotted to the righteous, is more comfortable and more profitable than the ill-gotten and abused riches of ungodly men. It comes from a hand of special love. God provides plentifully and well, not only

for his working servants, but for his waiting servants. They have that which is better than wealth, peace of mind, peace with God, and then peace in God; that peace which the world cannot give, and which the world cannot have. God knows the believer's days. Not one day's work shall go unrewarded. Their time on earth is reckoned by days, which will soon be numbered; but heavenly happiness shall be for ever. This will be a real support to believers in evil times. Those that rest on the Rock of ages, have no reason to envy the wicked the support of their broken reeds.

Psalm 37:21

Vs. 21-33: The Lord our God requires that we do justly, and render to all their due. It is a great sin for those that are able, to deny the payment of just debts; it is a great misery not to be able to pay them. He that is truly merciful, will be ever merciful. We must leave our sins; learn to do well, and cleave to it. This is true religion. The blessing of God is the spring, sweetness, and security of all earthly enjoyments. And if we are sure of this, we are sure not to want any thing good for us in this world. By his grace and Holy Spirit, he directs the thoughts, affection, and designs of good men. By his providence he overrules events, so as to make their way plain. He does not always show them his way for a distance, but leads them step by step, as children are led. God will keep them from being ruined by their falls, either into sin or into trouble, though such as fall into sin will be sorely hurt. Few, if any, have known the consistent believer, or his children, reduced to abject, friendless want. God forsakes not his saints in affliction; and in heaven only the righteous shall dwell for ever; that will be their everlasting habitation. A good man may fall into the hands of a messenger of Satan, and be sorely buffeted, but God will not leave him in his enemy's hands.

Psalm 37:34

Vs. 34-40: Duty is ours, and we must mind it; but events are God's, we must refer the disposal of them to him. What a striking picture is in ver. 35,36, of many a prosperous enemy of God! But God remarkably blights the projects of the prosperous wicked, especially persecutors. None are perfect in themselves, but believers are so in Christ Jesus. If all the saint's days continue dark and cloudy, his dying day may prove comfortable, and his sun set bright; or, if it should set under a cloud, yet his future state will

be everlasting peace. The salvation of the righteous will be the Lord's doing. He will help them to do their duties, to bear their burdens; help them to bear their troubles well, and get good by them, and, in due time, will deliver them out of their troubles. Let sinners then depart from evil, and do good; repent of and forsake sin, and trust in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ. Let them take his yoke upon them, and learn of him, that they may dwell for evermore in heaven. Let us mark the closing scenes of different characters, and always depend on God's mercy.

PSALM 38

God's displeasure at sin. (1-11) The psalmist's sufferings and prayers. (12-22)

Psalm 38:1

Vs. 1-11: Nothing will disquiet the heart of a good man so much as the sense of God's anger. The way to keep the heart quiet, is to keep ourselves in the love of God. But a sense of guilt is too heavy to bear; and would sink men into despair and ruin, unless removed by the pardoning mercy of God. If there were not sin in our souls, there would be no pain in our bones, no illness in our bodies. The guilt of sin is a burden to the whole creation, which groans under it. It will be a burden to the sinners themselves, when they are heavy-laden under it, or a burden of ruin, when it sinks them to hell. When we perceive our true condition, the Good Physician will be valued, sought, and obeyed. Yet many let their wounds rankle, because they delay to go to their merciful Friend. When, at any time, we are distempered in our bodies, we ought to remember how God has been dishonored in and by our bodies. The groanings which cannot be uttered, are not hid from Him that searches the heart, and knows the mind of the Spirit. David, in his troubles, was a type of Christ in his agonies, of Christ on his cross, suffering and deserted.

Psalm 38:12

Vs. 12-22: Wicked men hate goodness, even when they benefit by it. David, in the complaints he makes of his enemies, seems to refer to Christ. But our enemies do us real mischief only when they drive us from God and our duty. The true believer's trouble will be made useful; he will learn to wait for his God, and will not seek relief from the world or himself. The less we notice the unkindness and injuries that are done us, the more we consult the quiet of our own minds. David's troubles were the chastisement and the consequence of his transgressions, whilst Christ suffered for our sins and ours only. What right can a sinner have to yield to impatience or anger, when mercifully corrected for his sins? David was very sensible of the present workings of corruption in him. Good men, by setting their sorrow continually before them, have been ready to fall; but

by setting God always before them, they have kept their standing. If we are truly penitent for sin, that will make us patient under affliction. Nothing goes nearer to the heart of a believer when in affliction, than to be under the apprehension of God's deserting him; nor does any thing come more feelingly from his heart than this prayer, "Be not far from me." The Lord will hasten to help those who trust in him as their salvation.

PSALM 39

David meditates on man's frailty. (1-6) He applies for pardon and deliverance. (7-13)

Psalm 39:1

Vs. 1-6: If an evil thought should arise in the mind, suppress it. Watchfulness in the habit, is the bridle upon the head; watchfulness in acts, is the hand upon the bridle. When not able to separate from wicked men, we should remember they will watch our words, and turn them, if they can, to our disadvantage. Sometimes it may be necessary to keep silence, even from good words; but in general we are wrong when backward to engage in edifying discourse. Impatience is a sin that has its cause within ourselves, and that is, musing; and its ill effects upon ourselves, and that is no less than burning. In our greatest health and prosperity, every man is altogether vanity, he cannot live long; he may die soon. This is an undoubted truth, but we are very unwilling to believe it. Therefore let us pray that God would enlighten our minds by his Holy Spirit, and fill our hearts with his grace, that we may be ready for death every day and hour.

Psalm 39:7

Vs. 7-13: There is no solid satisfaction to be had in the creature; but it is to be found in the Lord, and in communion with him; to him we should be driven by our disappointments. If the world be nothing but vanity, may God deliver us from having or seeking our portion in it. When creature-confidences fail, it is our comfort that we have a God to go to, a God to trust in. We may see a good God doing all, and ordering all events concerning us; and a good man, for that reason, says nothing against it. He desires the pardoning of his sin, and the preventing of his shame. We must both watch and pray against sin. When under the correcting hand of the Lord, we must look to God himself for relief, not to any other. Our ways and our doings bring us into trouble, and we are beaten with a rod of our own making. What a poor thing is beauty! and what fools are those that are proud of it, when it will certainly, and may quickly, be consumed! The body of man is as a garment to the soul. In this garment sin has lodged a moth, which wears away, first the beauty, then the strength, and finally

the substance of its parts. Whoever has watched the progress of a lingering distemper, or the work of time alone, in the human frame, will feel at once the force of this comparison, and that, surely every man is vanity.

Afflictions are sent to stir up prayer. If they have that effect, we may hope that God will hear our prayer. The believer expects weariness and ill treatment on his way to heaven; but he shall not stay here long: walking with God by faith, he goes forward on his journey, not diverted from his course, nor cast down by the difficulties he meets. How blessed it is to sit loose from things here below, that while going home to our Father's house, we may use the world as not abusing it! May we always look for that city, whose Builder and Maker is God.

PSALM 40

Confidence for deliverance. (1-5) Christ's work of redemption. (6-10) Prayer for mercy and grace. (11-17)

Psalm 40:1

Vs. 1-5: Doubts and fears about the eternal state, are a horrible pit and miry clay, and have been so to many a dear child of God. There is power enough in God to help the weakest, and grace enough to help the unworthiest of all that trust in him. The psalmist waited patiently; he continued believing, hoping, and praying. This is applicable to Christ. His agony, in the garden and on the cross, was a horrible pit and miry clay. But those that wait patiently for God do not wait in vain. Those that have been under religious melancholy, and by the grace of God have been relieved, may apply ver. 2 very feelingly to themselves; they are brought up out of a horrible pit. Christ is the Rock on which a poor soul can alone stand fast. Where God has given steadfast hope, he expects there should be a steady, regular walk and conduct. God filled the psalmist with joy, as well as peace in believing. Multitudes, by faith beholding the sufferings and glory of Christ, have learned to fear the justice and trust in the mercy of God through Him. Many are the benefits with which we are daily loaded, both by the providence and by the grace of God.

Psalm 40:6

Vs. 6-10: The psalmist foretells that work of wonder, redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ. The Substance must come, which is Christ, who must bring that glory to God, and that grace to man, which it was impossible the sacrifices should ever do. Observe the setting apart of our Lord Jesus to the work and office of Mediator. In the volume, or roll, of the book it was written of him. In the close rolls of the Divine decrees and counsel, the covenant of redemption was recorded. Also, in all the volumes of the Old Testament something was written of him, **John 19:28**. Now the purchase of our salvation is made, the proclamation is sent forth, calling us to come and accept it. It was preached freely and openly. Whoever undertook to preach the gospel of Christ, would be under great temptation to conceal it; but Christ, and those he calls to that work, are carried on in

it. May we believe his testimony, trust his promise, and submit to his authority.

 **Psalm 40:11**

Vs. 11-17: The best saints see themselves undone, unless continually preserved by the grace of God. But see the frightful view the psalmist had of sin. This made the discovery of a Redeemer so welcome. In all his reflections upon each step of his life, he discovered something amiss. The sight and sense of our sins in their own colors, must distract us, if we have not at the same time some sight of a Savior. If Christ has triumphed over our spiritual enemies, then we, through him, shall be more than conquerors. This may encourage all that seek God and love his salvation, to rejoice in him, and to praise him. No griefs nor poverty can render those miserable who fear the Lord. Their God, and all that he has or does, is the ground of their joy. The prayer of faith can unlock his fullness, which is adapted to all their wants. The promises are sure, the moment of fulfillment hastens forward. He who once came in great humility, shall come again in glorious majesty.

PSALM 41

God's care for his people. (1-4) The treachery of David's enemies. (5-13)

Psalm 41:1

Vs. 1-4: The people of God are not free from poverty, sickness, or outward affliction, but the Lord will consider their case, and send due supplies. From his Lord's example the believer learns to consider his poor and afflicted brethren. This branch of godliness is usually recompense with temporal blessings. But nothing is so distressing to the contrite believer, as a fear or sense of the Divine displeasure, or of sin in his heart. Sin is the sickness of the soul; pardoning mercy heals it, renewing grace heals it, and for this spiritual healing we should be more earnest than for bodily health.

Psalm 41:5

Vs. 5-13: We complain, and justly, of the want of sincerity, and that there is scarcely any true friendship to be found among men; but the former days were no better. One particularly, in whom David had reposed great confidence, took part with his enemies. And let us not think it strange, if we receive evil from those we suppose to be friends. Have not we ourselves thus broken our words toward God? We eat of his bread daily, yet lift up the heel against him. But though we may not take pleasure in the fall of our enemies, we may take pleasure in the making vain their designs. When we can discern the Lord's favor in any mercy, personal or public, that doubles it. If the grace of God did not take constant care of us, we should not be upheld. But let us, while on earth, give heartfelt assent to those praises which the redeemed on earth and in heaven render to their God and Savior.

PSALM 42

The conflict in the soul of a believer.

Psalm 42:1

Vs. 1-5: The psalmist looked to the Lord as his chief good, and set his heart upon him accordingly; casting anchor thus at first, he rides out the storm. A gracious soul can take little satisfaction in God's courts, if it do not meet with God himself there. Living souls never can take up their rest any where short of a living God. To appear before the Lord is the desire of the upright, as it is the dread of the hypocrite. Nothing is more grievous to a gracious soul, than what is intended to shake its confidence in the Lord. It was not the remembrance of the pleasures of his court that afflicted David; but the remembrance of the free access he formerly had to God's house, and his pleasure in attending there. Those that commune much with their own hearts, will often have to chide them. See the cure of sorrow. When the soul rests on itself, it sinks; if it catches hold on the power and promise of God, the head is kept above the billows. And what is our support under present woes but this, that we shall have comfort in Him. We have great cause to mourn for sin; but being cast down springs from unbelief and a rebellious will; we should therefore strive and pray against it.

Psalm 42:6

Vs. 6-11: The way to forget our miseries, is to remember the God of our mercies. David saw troubles coming from God's wrath, and that discouraged him. But if one trouble follow hard after another, if all seem to combine for our ruin, let us remember they are all appointed and overruled by the Lord. David regards the Divine favor as the fountain of all the good he looked for. In the Savors name let us hope and pray. One word from him will calm every storm, and turn midnight darkness into the light of noon, the bitterest complaints into joyful praises. Our believing expectation of mercy must quicken our prayers for it. At length, is faith came off conqueror, by encouraging him to trust in the name of the Lord, and to stay himself upon his God. He adds, And my God; this thought enabled him to triumph over all his griefs and fears. Let us never think that

the God of our life, and the Rock of our salvation, has forgotten us, if we have made his mercy, truth, and power, our refuge. Thus the psalmist strove against his despondency: at last his faith and hope obtained the victory. Let us learn to check all unbelieving doubts and fears. Apply the promise first to ourselves, and then plead it to God.

PSALM 43

*David endeavors to still his spirit, with hope
and confidence in God.*

Psalm 43:1

As to the quarrel God had with David for sin, he prays, Enter not into judgment with me, if Thou doest so I shall be condemned; but as to the quarrel his enemies had with him, he prays, Lord, judge me, and in thy providence appear on my behalf. If we cannot comfort ourselves in God, we may stay ourselves upon him, and may have spiritual supports, when we want spiritual delights. He never cast off any that trusted in him, whatever fears they may have had of their own state. We need desire no more to make us happy, than the good that flows from God's favor, and is unequalled in his promise. Those whom God leads, he leads to his holy hill; those, therefore, who pretend to be led by the Spirit, and yet turn their backs upon ordinance, deceive themselves. We are still to pray for the Spirit of light and truth, who supplies the want of Christ's bodily presence, to guide us in the way to heaven. Whatever we rejoice or triumph in, the Lord must be the joy of it. David applies to God as his never-failing hope. Let us pray earnestly, that the Lord would send forth the truth of his word, and the light of his Spirit, to guide us into the way of holiness, peace, and salvation. The desire of the Christian, like that of the prophet in distress, is to be saved from sin as well as sorrow; to be taught in the way of righteousness by the light of heavenly wisdom, shining in Jesus Christ, and to be led by this light and truth to the New Jerusalem.

PSALM 44

A petition for succor and relief.

◀941▶ Psalm 44:1

Vs. 1-8: Former experiences of God's power and goodness are strong supports to faith, and powerful pleas in prayer under present calamities. The many victories Israel obtained, were not by their own strength or merit, but by God's favor and free grace. The less praise this allows us, the more comfort it affords, that we may see all as coming from the favor of God. He fought for Israel, else they had fought in vain. This is applicable to the planting of the Christian church in the world, which was not by any human policy or power. Christ, by his Spirit, went forth conquering and to conquer; and he that planted a church for himself in the world, will support it by the same power and goodness. They trusted and triumphed in and through him. Let him that glories, glory in the Lord. But if they have the comfort of his name, let them give unto him the glory due unto it.

◀941▶ Psalm 44:9

Vs. 9-16: The believer must have times of temptation, affliction, and discouragement; the church must have seasons of persecution. At such times the people of God will be ready to fear that he has cast them off, and that his name and truth will be dishonored. But they should look above the instruments of their trouble, to God, well knowing that their worst enemies have no power against them, but what is permitted from above.

◀941▶ Psalm 44:17

Vs. 17-26: In afflictions, we must not seek relief by any sinful compliance; but should continually meditate on the truth, purity, and knowledge of our heart-searching God. Heart sins and secret sins are known to God, and must be reckoned for. He knows the secret of the heart, therefore judges of the words and actions. While our troubles do not drive us from our duty to God, we should not suffer them to drive us from our comfort in God. Let us take care that prosperity and ease do not render us careless and lukewarm. The church of God cannot be prevailed on by persecution to

forget God; the believer's heart does not turn back from God. The Spirit of prophecy had reference to those who suffered unto death, for the testimony of Christ. Observe the pleas used, ver. 25,26. Not their own merit and righteousness, but the poor sinner's pleas. None that belong to Christ shall be cast off, but every one of them shall be saved, and that for ever. The mercy of God, purchased, promised, and constantly flowing forth, and offered to believers, does away every doubt arising from our sins; while we pray in faith, Redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

PSALM 45

This psalm is a prophecy of Messiah the Prince, and points to him as a Bridegroom espousing the church to himself, and as a King ruling in it, and for it.

Psalm 45:1

Vs. 1-5: The psalmist's tongue was guided by the Spirit of God, as the pen is by the hand of a ready writer. This psalm is touching the King Jesus, his kingdom and government. It is a shame that this good matter is not more the subject of our discourse. There is more in Christ to engage our love, than there is or can be in any creature. This world and its charms are ready to draw away our hearts from Christ; therefore we are concerned to understand how much more worthy he is of our love. By his word, his promise, his gospel, the good will of God is made known to us, and the good work of God is begun and carried on in us. The psalmist, ver. 3-5, joyfully foretells the progress and success of the Messiah. The arrows of conviction are very terrible in the hearts of sinners, till they are humbled and reconciled; but the arrows of vengeance will be more so to his enemies who refuse to submit. All who have seen his glory and tasted his grace, rejoice to see him, by his word and Spirit, bring enemies and strangers under his dominion.

Psalm 45:6

Vs. 6-9: The throne of this almighty King is established for ever. While the Holy Spirit leads Christ's people to look to his cross, he teaches them to see the evil of sin and the beauty of holiness; so that none of them can feel encouragement to continue in sin. The Mediator is God, else he had been neither able to do the Mediator's work, nor fit to wear the Mediator's crown. God the Father, as his God in respect to his human nature and mediatorial offices, has given to him the Holy Spirit without measure. Thus anointed to be a Prophet, Priest, and King, Christ has pre-eminence in the gladdening gifts and graces of the spirit, and from his fullness communicates them to his brethren in human nature. The Spirit is called the oil of gladness, because of the delight wherewith Christ was filled, in carrying on his undertaking. The salvation of sinners is the joy of angels,

much more of the Son. And in proportion as we are conformed to his holy image, we may expect the gladdening influences of the Comforter. The excellencies of the Messiah, the suitableness of his offices, and the sufficiency of his grace, seem to be intended by the fragrance of his garments. The church formed of true believers, is here compared to the queen, whom, by an everlasting covenant, the Lord Jesus has betrothed to himself. This is the bride, the Lamb's wife, whose graces are compared to fine linen, for their purity; to gold, for their costliness: for as we owe our redemption, so we owe our adorning, to the precious blood of the Son of God.

Psalm 45:10

Vs. 10-17: If we desire to share these blessings, we must hearken to Christ's word. We must forget our carnal and sinful attachments and pursuits. He must be our Lord as well as our Savior; all idols must be thrown away, that we may give him our whole heart. And here is good encouragement, thus to break off from former alliances. The beauty of holiness, both on the church and on particular believers, is, in the sight of Christ, of great price, and very amiable. The work of grace is the workmanship of the Spirit, it is the image of Christ upon the soul, a partaking of the Divine nature. It is clear of all sin, there is none in it, nor any comes from it. There is nothing glorious in the old man or corrupt nature; but in the new man, or work of grace upon the soul, every thing is glorious. The robe of Christ's righteousness, which he has wrought out for his church, the Father imputes unto her, and bestows upon her. None are brought to Christ, but those whom the Father brings. This notes the conversion of souls to him. The robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, the change of raiment Christ has put upon her. Such as strictly cleave to Christ, loving him in singleness of heart, are companions of the bride, who partake of the very same grace, enjoy the same privileges, and share in one common salvation. These, every one, shall be brought to the King; not one lost or left behind. Instead of the Old Testament church, there shall be a New Testament church, a Gentile church. In the believing hope of our everlasting happiness in the other world, let us always keep up the remembrance of Christ, as our only way thither; and transmit the remembrance of him to succeeding generations, that his name may endure for ever.

PSALM 46

Confidence in God. (1-5) An exhortation to behold it. (6-11)

Psalm 46:1

Vs. 1-5: This psalm encourages to hope and trust in God; in his power and providence, and his gracious presence with his church in the worst of times. We may apply it to spiritual enemies, and the encouragement we have that, through Christ, we shall be conquerors over them. He is a Help, a present Help, a Help found, one whom we have found to be so; a Help at hand, one that is always near; we cannot desire a better, nor shall we ever find the like in any creature. Let those be troubled at the troubling of the waters, who build their confidence on a floating foundation; but let not those be alarmed who are led to the Rock, and there find firm footing. Here is joy to the church, even in sorrowful times. The river alludes to the graces and consolations of the Holy Spirit, which flow through every part of the church, and through God's sacred ordinances, gladdening the heart of every believer. It is promised that the church shall not be moved. If God be in our hearts, by his word dwelling richly in us, we shall be established, we shall be helped; let us trust and not be afraid.

Psalm 46:6

Vs. 6-11: Come and see the effects of desolating judgments, and stand in awe of God. This shows the perfect security of the church, and is an assurance of lasting peace. Let us pray for the speedy approach of these glorious days, and in silent submission let us worship and trust in our almighty Sovereign. Let all believers triumph in this, that the Lord of hosts, the God of Jacob, has been, is, and will be with us; and will be our Refuge. Mark this, take the comfort, and say, If God be for us, who can be against us? With this, through life and in death, let us answer every fear.

PSALM 47

The people exhorted to praise God.

Psalm 47:1

Vs. 1-4: The God with whom we have to do, is a God of awful majesty. The universal and absolute sovereignty of a holy God would be too terrible for us even to think of, were it not exercised by his Son from a mercy-seat; but now it is only terrible to the workers of iniquity. While his people express confidence and joy, and animate each other in serving him, let sinners submit to his authority, and accept his salvation. Jesus Christ shall subdue the Gentiles; he shall bring them as sheep into the fold, not for slaughter, but for preservation. He shall subdue their affection, and make them a willing people in the day of his power. Also it speaks of his giving them rest and settlement. Apply this spiritually; the Lord himself has undertaken to be the inheritance of his people. It shows the faith and submission of the saints. This is the language of every gracious soul, The Lord shall choose my inheritance for me; he knows what is good for me better than I do.

Psalm 47:5

Vs. 5-9: Praise is a duty in which we ought to be frequent and abundant. But here is a needful rule; Sing ye praises with understanding. As those that understand why and for what reasons they praise God, and what is the meaning of the service. It is not an acceptable service, if it is not a reasonable service. We are never to forget the end of Messiah's exaltation, so continually do the prophets dwell upon the conversion of the nations to the gospel of Christ. Why do we vainly fancy that we belong to him, unless the Spirit reign in our hearts by faith? Lord, is it not thy glory and delight to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, now that thou art exalted as a Prince and a Savior? Set up thy kingdom in our hearts. Bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And so sweetly constrain all the powers and faculties of the souls of thy redeemed, into holy love, fear, and delight in thee, that praise with the understanding may rise from every heart, both here and for ever, to Thee, our God.

PSALM 48

The glories of the church of Christ.

◀PRL Psalm 48:1

Vs. 1-7: Jerusalem is the city of our God: none on earth render him due honor except the citizens of the spiritual Jerusalem. Happy the kingdom, the city, the family, the heart, in which God is great, in which he is all. There God is known. The clearer discoveries are made to us of the Lord and his greatness, the more it is expected that we should abound in his praises. The earth is, by sin, covered with deformity, therefore justly might that spot of ground, which was beautified with holiness, be called the joy of the whole earth; that which the whole earth has reason to rejoice in, that God would thus in very deed dwell with man upon the earth. The kings of the earth were afraid of it. Nothing in nature can more fitly represent the overthrow of heathenism by the Spirit of the gospel, than the wreck of a fleet in a storm. Both are by the mighty power of the Lord.

◀PRL Psalm 48:8

Vs. 8-14: We have here the improvement which the people of God are to make of his glorious and gracious appearances for them. Let our faith in the word of God be hereby confirmed. Let our hope of the stability of the church be encouraged. Let our minds be filled with good thoughts of God. All the streams of mercy that flow down to us, must be traced to the fountain of His loving-kindness. Let us give to God the glory of the great things he has done for us. Let all the members of the church take comfort from what the Lord does for his church. Let us observe the beauty, strength, and safety of the church. Consider its strength; see it founded on Christ the Rock, fortified by the Divine power, guarded by Him who neither slumbers nor sleeps. See what precious ordinances are its palaces, what precious promises are its bulwarks, that you may be encouraged to join yourselves to it: and tell this to others. This God, who has now done such great things for us, is unchangeable in his love to us, and his care for us. If he is our God, he will lead and keep us even to the last. He will so guide us, as to set us above the reach of death, so that it shall not do us

any real hurt. He will lead us to a life in which there shall be no more death.

PSALM 49

A call for attention. (1-5) Folly of worldliness. (6-14) Against fear of death. (15-20)

Psalm 49:1

Vs. 1-5: We seldom meet with a more solemn introduction: there is no truth of greater importance. Let all hear this with application to ourselves. The poor are in danger from undue desire toward the wealth of the world, as rich people from undue delight in it. The psalmist begins with applying it to himself, and that is the right method in which to treat of Divine things. Before he sets down the folly of carnal security, he lays down, from his own experience, the benefit and comfort of a holy, gracious security, which they enjoy who trust in God, and not in their worldly wealth. In the day of judgment, the iniquity of our heels, or of our steps, our past sins, will compass us. In those days, worldly, wicked people will be afraid; but wherefore should a man fear death who has God with him?

Psalm 49:6

Vs. 6-14: Here is a description of the spirit and way of worldly people. A man may have wealth, and may have his heart enlarged in love, thankfulness, and obedience, and may do good with it. Therefore it is not men's having riches that proves them to be worldly, but their setting their hearts upon them as the best things. Worldly men have only some floating thoughts of the things of God, while their fixed thoughts, their inward thoughts, are about the world; that lies nearest the heart. But with all their wealth they cannot save the life of the dearest friend they have. This looks further, to the eternal redemption to be wrought out by the Messiah. The redemption of the soul shall cost very dear; but, being once wrought, it shall never need to be repeated. And he, the Redeemer, shall rise again before he sees corruption, and then shall live for evermore, Revelations 1:18. This likewise shows the folly of worldly people, who sell their souls for that which will never buy them. With all their wealth they cannot secure themselves from the stroke of death. Yet one generation after another applaud their maxims; and the character of a fool, as drawn by heavenly Wisdom itself, ^(12:16) Luke 12:16-21, continues to be followed even

among professed Christians. Death will ask the proud sinner, Where is thy wealth, thy pomp? And in the morning of the resurrection, when all that sleep in the dust shall awake, the upright shall be advanced to the highest honor, when the wicked shall be filled with everlasting shame and contempt, ²⁷¹¹¹Daniel 12:2. Let us now judge of things as they will appear in that day. The beauty of holiness is that alone which the grave cannot touch, or damage.

¹⁹⁰⁵Psalm 49:15

Vs. 15-20: Believers should not fear death. The distinction of men's outward conditions, how great soever in life, makes none at death; but the difference of men's spiritual states, though in this life it may seem of small account, yet at and after death is very great. The soul is often put for the life. The God of life, who was its Creator at first, can and will be its Redeemer at last. It unequalled the salvation of the soul from eternal ruin. Believers will be under strong temptation to envy the prosperity of sinners. Men will praise thee, and cry thee up, as having done well for thyself in raising an estate and family. But what will it avail to be approved of men, if God condemn us? Those that are rich in the graces and comforts of the Spirit, have something of which death cannot strip them, nay, which death will improve; but as for worldly possessions, as we brought nothing into the world, so it is certain that we shall carry nothing out; we must leave all to others. The sum of the whole matter is, that it can profit a man nothing to gain the whole world, to become possessed of all its wealth and all its power, if he lose his own soul, and is cast away for want of that holy and heavenly wisdom which distinguishes man from the brutes, in his life and at his death. And are there men who can prefer the lot of the rich sinner to that of poor Lazarus, in life and death, and to eternity? Assuredly there are. What need then we have of the teaching of the Holy Ghost; when, with all our boasted powers, we are prone to such folly in the most important of all concerns!

PSALM 50

*The glory of God. (1-6) Sacrifices to be changed for prayers. (7-15)
Sincere obedience required. (16-23)*

Psalm 50:1

Vs. 1-6: This psalm is a psalm of instruction. It tells of the coming of Christ and the day of judgment, in which God will call men to account; and the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of judgment. All the children of men are concerned to know the right way of worshipping the Lord, in spirit and in truth. In the great day, our God shall come, and make those hear his judgment who would not hearken to his law. Happy are those who come into the covenant of grace, by faith in the Redeemer's atoning sacrifice, and show the sincerity of their love by fruits of righteousness. When God rejects the services of those who rest in outside performances, he will graciously accept those who seek him aright. It is only by sacrifice, by Christ, the great Sacrifice, from whom the sacrifices of the law derived what value they had, that we can be accepted of God. True and righteous are his judgments; even sinners' own consciences will be forced to acknowledge the righteousness of God.

Psalm 50:7

Vs. 7-15: To obey is better than sacrifice, and to love God and our neighbor better than all burnt-offerings. We are here warned not to rest in these performances. And let us beware of resting in any form. God demands the heart, and how can human inventions please him, when repentance, faith, and holiness are neglected? In the day of distress we must apply to the Lord by fervent prayer. Our troubles, though we see them coming from God's hand, must drive us to him, not drive us from him. We must acknowledge him in all our ways, depend upon his wisdom, power, and goodness, and refer ourselves wholly to him, and so give him glory. Thus must we keep up communion with God; meeting him with prayers under trials, and with praises in deliverances. A believing supplicant shall not only be graciously answered as to his petition, and so have cause for praising God, but shall also have grace to praise him.

Psalm 50:16

Vs. 16-23: Hypocrisy is wickedness, which God will judge. And it is too common, for those who declare the Lord's statutes to others, to live in disobedience to them themselves. This delusion arises from the abuse of God's long-suffering, and a willful mistake of his character and the intention of his gospel. The sins of sinners will be fully proved on them in the judgment of the great day. The day is coming when God will set their sins in order, sins of childhood and youth, of riper age and old age, to their everlasting shame and terror. Let those hitherto forgetful of God, given up to wickedness, or in any way negligent of salvation, consider their urgent danger. The patience of the Lord is very great. It is the more wonderful, because sinners make such ill use of it; but if they turn not, they shall be made to see their error when it is too late. Those that forget God, forget themselves; and it will never be right with them till they consider. Man's chief end is to glorify God: whoso offers praise, glorifies him, and his spiritual sacrifices shall be accepted. We must praise God, sacrifice praise, put it into the hands of the Priest, our Lord Jesus, who is also the altar: we must be fervent in spirit, praising the Lord. Let us thankfully accept God's mercy, and endeavor to glorify him in word and deed.

PSALM 51

The psalmist prays for mercy, humbly confessing and lamenting his sins. (1-6) He pleads for pardon, that he may promote the glory of God and the conversion of sinners. (7-15) God is pleased with a contrite heart, A prayer for the prosperity of Zion. (16-19)

Psalm 51:1

Vs. 1-6: David, being convinced of his sin, poured out his soul to God in prayer for mercy and grace. Whither should backsliding children return, but to the Lord their God, who alone can heal them? He drew up, by Divine teaching, an account of the workings of his heart toward God. Those that truly repent of their sins, will not be ashamed to own their repentance. Also, he instructs others what to do, and what to say. David had not only done much, but suffered much in the cause of God; yet he flees to God's infinite mercy, and depends upon that alone for pardon and peace. He begs the pardon of sin. The blood of Christ, sprinkled upon the conscience, blots out the transgression, and, having reconciled us to God, reconciles us to ourselves. The believer longs to have the whole debt of his sins blotted out, and every stain cleansed; he would be thoroughly washed from all his sins; but the hypocrite always has some secret reserve, and would have some favorite lust spared. David had such a deep sense of his sin, that he was continually thinking of it, with sorrow and shame. His sin was committed against God, whose truth we deny by willful sin; with him we deal deceitfully. And the truly penitent will ever trace back the streams of actual sin to the fountain of original depravity. He confesses his original corruption. This is that foolishness which is bound in the heart of a child, that proneness to evil, and that backwardness to good, which is the burden of the regenerate, and the ruin of the unregenerate. He is encouraged, in his repentance, to hope that God would graciously accept him. Thou desirest truth in the inward part; to this God looks, in a returning sinner. Where there is truth, God will give wisdom. Those who sincerely endeavor to do their duty shall be taught their duty; but they will expect good only from Divine grace overcoming their corrupt nature.

<51:7> **Psalm 51:7**

Vs. 7-15: Purge me with hyssop, with the blood of Christ applied to my soul by a lively faith, as the water of purification was sprinkled with a bunch of hyssop. The blood of Christ is called the blood of sprinkling, <812> Hebrews 12:24. If this blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, cleanse us from our sin, then we shall be clean indeed, <810> Hebrews 10:2. He asks not to be comforted, till he is first cleansed; if sin, the bitter root of sorrow, be taken away, he can pray in faith, Let me have a well-grounded peace, of thy creating, so that the bones broken by convictions may rejoice, may be comforted. Hide thy face from my sins; blot out all mine iniquities out of thy book; blot them out, as a cloud is blotted out and dispelled by the beams of the sun. And the believer desires renewal to holiness as much as the joy of salvation. David now saw, more than ever, what an unequaled heart he had, and sadly laments it; but he sees it is not in his own power to amend it, and therefore begs God would create in him a clean heart. When the sinner feels this change is necessary, and reads the promise of God to that purpose, he begins to ask it. He knew he had by his sin grieved the Holy Spirit, and provoked him to withdraw. This he dreads more than anything. He prays that Divine comforts may be restored to him. When we give ourselves cause to doubt our interest in salvation, how can we expect the joy of it? This had made him weak; he prays, I am ready to fall, either into sin or into despair, therefore uphold me with thy Spirit. Thy Spirit is a free Spirit, a free Agent himself, working freely. And the more cheerful we are in our duty, the more constant we shall be to it. What is this but the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free, which is contrasted with the yoke of bondage? <811> Galatians 5:1. It is the Spirit of adoption spoken to the heart. Those to whom God is the God of salvation, he will deliver from guilt; for the salvation he is the God of, is salvation from sin. We may therefore plead with him, Lord, thou art the God of my salvation, therefore deliver me from the dominion of sin. And when the lips are opened, what should they speak but the praises of God for his forgiving mercy?

<51:16> **Psalm 51:16**

Vs. 16-19: Those who are thoroughly convinced of their misery and danger by sin, would spare no cost to obtain the remission of it. But as they

cannot make satisfaction for sin, so God cannot take any satisfaction in them, otherwise than as expressing love and duty to him. The good work wrought in every true penitent, is a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, and sorrow for sin. It is a heart that is tender, and pliable to God's word. Oh that there were such a heart in every one of us! God is graciously pleased to accept this; it is instead of all burnt-offering and sacrifice. The broken heart is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ; there is no true repentance without faith in him. Men despise that which is broken, but God will not. He will not overlook it, he will not refuse or reject it; though it makes God no satisfaction for the wrong done to him by sin. Those who have been in spiritual troubles, know how to pity and pray for others afflicted in like manner. David was afraid lest his sin should bring judgments upon the city and kingdom. No personal fears or troubles of conscience can make the soul, which has received grace, careless about the interests of the church of God. And let this be the continued joy of all the redeemed, that they have redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.

PSALM 52

The enemies of the truth and the church described, Their destruction. (1-5) The righteous rejoice. (6-9)

Psalm 52:1

Vs. 1-5: Those that glory in sin, glory in their shame. The patience and forbearance of God are abused by sinners, to the hardening of their hearts in their wicked ways. But the enemies in vain boast in their mischief, while we have God's mercy to trust in. It will not save us from the guilt of lying, to be able to say, there was some truth in what we said, if we make it appear otherwise than it was. The more there is of craft and contrivance in any wickedness, the more there is of Satan in it. When good men die, they are transplanted from the land of the living on earth, to heaven, the garden of the Lord, where they shall take root for ever; but when wicked men die, they are rooted out, to perish for ever. The believer sees that God will destroy those who make not him their strength.

Psalm 52:6

Vs. 6-9: Those wretchedly deceive themselves, who think to support themselves in power and wealth without God. The wicked man trusted in the abundance of his riches; he thought his wickedness would help him to keep his wealth. Right or wrong, he would get what he could, and keep what he had, and ruin any one that stood in his way; this he thought would strengthen him; but see what it comes to! Those who by faith and love dwell in the house of God, shall be like green olive-trees there. And that we may be as green olive-trees, we must live a life of faith and holy confidence in God and his grace. It adds much to the beauty of our profession, and to fruitfulness in every grace, to be much in praising God; and we never can want matter for praise. His name alone can be our refuge and strong tower. It is very good for us to wait on that saving name; there is nothing better to calm and quiet our spirits, when disturbed, and to keep us in the way of duty, when tempted to use any crooked courses for our relief, than to hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. None ever followed his guidance but it ended well.

PSALM 53

The corruption of man by nature.

◀531 Psalm 53:1

This psalm is almost the same as the 14th. The scope of it is to convince us of our sins. God, by the psalmist, here shows us how bad we are, and proves this by his own certain knowledge. He speaks terror to persecutors, the worst of sinners. He speaks encouragement to God's persecuted people. How comes it that men are so bad? Because there is no fear of God before their eyes. Men's bad practices flow from their bad principles; if they profess to know God, yet in works, because in thoughts, they deny him. See the folly of sin; he is a fool, in the account of God, whose judgment we are sure is right, that harbors such corrupt thoughts. And see the fruit of sin; to what it brings men, when their hearts are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. See also the faith of the saints, and their hope and power as to the cure of this great evil. There will come a Savior, a great salvation, a salvation from sin. God will save his church from its enemies. He will save all believers from their own sins, that they may not be led captive by them, which will be everlasting joy to them. From this work the Redeemer had his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins, ▶532 Matthew 1:21.

PSALM 54

David complains of the malice of his enemies. (1-3) Assurance of the Divine favor and protection. (4-7)

Psalm 54:1

Vs. 1-3: God is faithful, though men are not to be trusted, and it is well for us it is so. David has no other plea to depend upon than God's name, no other power to depend upon than God's strength, and these he makes his refuge and confidence. This would be the effectual answer to his prayers. Looking unto David, betrayed by the men of Judah, and to Jesus, betrayed by one of his apostles, what can we expect from any who have not set God before them, save ingratitude, treachery, malice, and cruelty? What bonds of nature, or friendship, or gratitude, or covenant, will hold those that have broken through the fear of God? Selah; Mark this. Let us set God before us at all times; for if we do not, we are in danger of despair.

Psalm 54:4

Vs. 4-7: Behold, God is mine Helper. If we are for him, he is for us; and if he is for us, we need not fear. Every creature is that to us, and no more, which God makes it to be. The Lord will in due time save his people, and in the mean time he sustains them, and bears them up, so that the spirit he has made shall not fail. There is truth in God's threatenings, as well as in his promises; sinners that repent not, will find it so to their cost. David's present deliverance was an earnest of further deliverance. He speaks of the completion of his deliverance as a thing done, though he had as yet many troubles before him; because, having God's promise for it, he was as sure of it as if it was done already. The Lord would deliver him out of all his troubles. May he help us to bear our cross without repining, and at length bring us to share his victories and glory. Christians never should suffer the voice of praise and thanksgiving to cease in the church of the redeemed.

PSALM 55

Prayer to God to manifest his favor. (1-8) The great wickedness and treachery of his enemies. (9-15) He is sure that God would in due time appear for him. (16-23)

Psalm 55:1

Vs. 1-8: In these verses we have,

1. David praying. Prayer is a salve for every sore, and a relief to the spirit under every burden.
2. David weeping. Grievances are thus, in some measure, lessened, while those increase that have no vent given them.

David in great alarm. We may well suppose him to be so, upon the breaking out of Absalom's conspiracy, and the falling away of the people. Horror overwhelmed him. Probably the remembrance of his sin in the matter of Uriah added much to the terror. When under a guilty conscience we must mourn in our complaint, and even strong believers have for a time been filled with horror. But none ever was so overwhelmed as the holy Jesus, when it pleased the Lord to put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for our sins. In his agony he prayed more earnestly, and was heard and delivered; trusting in him, and following him, we shall be supported under, and carried through all trials. See how David was weary of the treachery and ingratitude of men, and the cares and disappointments of his high station: he longed to hide himself in some desert from the fury and fickleness of his people. He aimed not at victory, but rest; a barren wilderness, so that he might be quiet. The wisest and best of men most earnestly covet peace and quietness, and the more when vexed and wearied with noise and clamor. This makes death desirable to a child of God, that it is a final escape from all the storms and tempests of this world, to perfect and everlasting rest.

Psalm 55:9

Vs. 9-15: No wickedness so distresses the believer, as that which he witnesses in those who profess to be of the church of God. Let us not be

surprised at the corruptions and disorders of the church on earth, but long to see the New Jerusalem. He complains of one that had been very industrious against him. God often destroys the enemies of the church by dividing them. And an interest divided against itself cannot long stand. The true Christian must expect trials from professed friends, from those with whom he has been united; this will be very painful; but by looking unto Jesus we shall be enabled to bear it. Christ was betrayed by a companion, a disciple, an apostle, who resembled Ahithophel in his crimes and doom. Both were speedily overtaken by Divine vengeance. And this prayer is a prophecy of the utter, the everlasting ruin, of all who oppose and rebel against the Messiah.

Psalm 55:16

Vs. 16-23: In every trial let us call upon the Lord, and he will save us. He shall hear us, and not blame us for coming too often; the oftener the more welcome. David had thought all were against him; but now he sees there were many with him, more than he supposed; and the glory of this he gives to God, for it is he that raises us up friends, and makes them faithful to us. There are more true Christians, and believers have more real friends, than in their gloomy hours they suppose. His enemies should be reckoned with, and brought down; they could not ease themselves of their fears, as David could, by faith in God. Mortal men, though ever so high and strong, will easily be crushed by an eternal God. Those who are not reclaimed by the rod of affliction, will certainly be brought down to the pit of destruction. The burden of afflictions is very heavy, especially when attended with the temptations of Satan; there is also the burden of sin and corruption. The only relief under it is, to look to Christ, who bore it. Whatever it is that thou desirest God should give thee, leave it to him to give it in his own way and time. Care is a burden, it makes the heart stoop. We must commit our ways and works to the Lord; let him do as seemeth him good, and let us be satisfied. To cast our burden upon God, is to rest upon his providence and promise. And if we do so, he will carry us in the arms of his power, as a nurse carries a child; and will strengthen our spirits by his Spirit, so that they shall sustain the trial. He will never suffer the righteous to be moved; to be so shaken by any troubles, as to quit their duty to God, or their comfort in him. He will not suffer them to be utterly cast down. He, who bore the burden of our sorrows, desires us to leave to

him to bear the burden of our cares, that, as he knows what is best for us, he may provide it accordingly. Why do not we trust Christ to govern the world which he redeemed?

PSALM 56

David seeks mercy from God, amidst the malice of his enemies.

(1-7) He rests his faith on God's promises, and declares his obligation to praise him for mercies. (8-13)

Psalm 56:1

Vs. 1-7: Be merciful unto me, O God. This petition unequaled all the good for which we come to the throne of grace. If we obtain mercy there, we need no more to make us happy. It implies likewise our best plea, not our merit, but God's mercy, his free, rich mercy. We may flee to, and trust the mercy of God, when surrounded on all sides by difficulties and dangers. His enemies were too hard for him, if God did not help him. He resolves to make God's promises the matter of his praises, and so we have reason to make them. As we must not trust an arm of flesh when engaged for us, so we must not be afraid of an arm of flesh when stretched out against us. The sin of sinners will never be their security. Who knows the power of God's anger; how high it can reach, how forcibly it can strike?

Psalm 56:8

Vs. 8-13: The heavy and continued trials through which many of the Lord's people have passed, should teach us to be silent and patient under lighter crosses. Yet we are often tempted to repine and despond under small sorrows. For this we should check ourselves. David comforts himself, in his distress and fear, that God noticed all his grievances and all his griefs. God has a bottle and a book for his people's tears, both the tears for their sins, and those for their afflictions. He observes them with tender concern. Every true believer may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and then I will not fear what man shall do unto me; for man has no power but what is given him from above. Thy vows are upon me, O Lord; not as a burden, but as that by which I am known to be thy servant; as a bridle that restrains me from what would be hurtful, and directs me in the way of my duty. And vows of thankfulness properly accompany prayers for mercy. If God deliver us from sin, either from doing it, or by his pardoning mercy, he has delivered our souls from death, which is the wages of sin. Where the Lord has begun a good work he will carry it on and perfect it. David hopes

that God would keep him even from the appearance of sin. We should aim in all our desires and expectations of deliverance, both from sin and trouble, that we may do the better service to the Lord; that we may serve him without fear. If his grace has delivered our souls from the death of sin, he will bring us to heaven, to walk before him for ever in light.

PSALM 57

David begins with prayer and complaint. (1-6) He concludes with joy and praise. (7-11)

Psalm 57:1

Vs. 1-6: All David's dependence is upon God. The most eminent believers need often repeat the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But if our souls trust in the Lord, this may assure us, in our utmost dangers, that our calamities will at length be overpast, and in the mean time, by faith and prayer, we must make him our refuge. Though God be most high, yet he condescends so low, as to take care that all things are made to work for good to his people. This is a good reason why we should pray earnestly. Look which way we will on this earth, refuge fails, no help appears; but we may look for it from heaven. If we have fled from the wrath to come, unto Jesus Christ, he that performed all things needful to purchase the salvation of his people, will do for us and in us all things needful for our enjoyment of it. It made David droop to think there should be those that bore him so much ill-will. But the mischief they designed against him, returned on themselves. And when David was in the greatest distress and disgrace, he did not pray, Lord, exalt me, but, Lord, exalt thine own name. Our best encouragement in prayer, is taken from the glory of God, and to that, more than to our own comfort, we should have regard in all our petitions for mercy.

Psalm 57:7

Vs. 7-11: By lively faith, David's prayers and complaints are at once turned into praises. His heart is fixed; it is prepared for every event, being stayed upon God. If by the grace of God we are brought into this even, composed frame of mind, we have great reason to be thankful. Nothing is done to purpose, in religion, unless it is done with the heart. The heart must be fixed for the duty, put in frame for it; fixed in the duty by close attention. Our tongue is our glory, and never more so than when praising God; dull and sleepy devotions will never be acceptable to God. Let us awake early in the morning, to begin the day with God; early in the beginning of a mercy. When God comes toward us with his favors, let us

go forth to meet him with our praises. David desired to bring others to join in praising God; and in his psalms, he is still praising God among the people, singing to Him among the nations. Let us seek to have our hearts fixed to praise his boundless mercy and unfailing faithfulness; and to glorify him with body, soul, and spirit, which are his. Let us earnestly pray that the blessings of the gospel may be sent through every land.

PSALM 58

Wicked judges described and reprov'd. (1-5) A prayer that they may be disabled, and their ruin predicted. (6-11)

Psalm 58:1

Vs. 1-5: When wrong is done under the form of law, it is worse than any other; especially it is grievous to behold those who profess to be children of God, joining together against any of his people. We should thank the Lord for merciful restraints; we should be more earnest in seeking renewing grace, more watchful over ourselves, and more patient under the effects of villainy nature in others. The corruption of their nature was the root of bitterness. We may see in children the wickedness of the world beginning. They go astray from God and their duty as soon as possibly they can. And how soon will little children tell lies! It is our duty to take pains to teach them, and above all, earnestly to pray for converting grace to make our children new creatures. Though the poison be within, much of it may be kept from breaking forth to injure others. When the Savors words are duly regarded, the serpent becomes harmless. But those who refuse to hear heavenly wisdom, must perish miserably, for ever.

Psalm 58:6

Vs. 6-11: David prayed that the enemies of God's church and people might be disabled to do further mischief. We may, in faith, pray against the designs of the enemies of the church. He foretells their ruin. And who knows the power of God's anger? The victories of the Just One, in his own person and that of his servants, over the enemies of man's salvation, produce a joy which springs not from revenge, but from a view of the Divine mercy, justice, and truth, shown in the redemption of the elect, the punishment of the ungodly, and the fulfillment of the promises. Whoever duly considers these things, will diligently seek the reward of righteousness, and adore the Providence which orders all thing aright in heaven and in earth.

PSALM 59

David prays for deliverance from his enemies. (1-7) He foresees their destruction. (8-17)

Psalm 59:1

Vs. 1-7: In these words we hear the voice of David when a prisoner in his own house; the voice of Christ when surrounded by his merciless enemies; the voice of the church when under bondage in the world; and the voice of the Christian when under temptation, affliction, and persecution. And thus earnestly should we pray daily, to be defended and delivered from our spiritual enemies, the temptations of Satan, and the corruptions of our own hearts. We should fear suffering as evil-doers, but not be ashamed of the hatred of workers of iniquity. It is not strange, if those regard not what they themselves say, who have made themselves believe that God regards not what they say. And where there is no fear of God, there is nothing to secure proper regard to man.

Psalm 59:8

Vs. 8-17: It is our wisdom and duty, in times of danger and difficulty, to wait upon God; for he is our defense, in whom we shall be safe. It is very comfortable to us, in prayer, to look to God as the God of our mercy, the Author of all good in us, and the Giver of all good to us. The wicked can never be satisfied, which is the greatest misery in a poor condition. A contented man, if he has not what he would have, yet he does not quarrel with Providence, nor fret within himself. It is not poverty, but discontent that makes a man unhappy. David would praise God because he had many times, and all along, found Him his refuge in the day of trouble. He that is all this to us, is certainly worthy of our best affection, praises, and services. The trials of his people will end in joy and praise. When the night of affliction is over, they will sing of the Lord's power and mercy in the morning. Let believers now, in assured faith and hope, praise Him for those mercies, for which they will rejoice and praise him for ever.

PSALM 60

*David prays for the deliverance of Israel from their enemies. (1-5)
He entreats God to carry on and complete their victories. (6-12)*

Psalm 60:1

Vs. 1-5: David owns God's displeasure to be the cause of all the hardships he had undergone. And when God is turning his hand in our favor, it is good to remember our former troubles. In God's displeasure their troubles began, therefore in his favor their prosperity must begin. Those breaches and divisions which the folly and corruption of man make, nothing but the wisdom and grace of God can repair, by pouring out a spirit of love and peace, by which only a kingdom is saved from ruin. The anger of God against sin, is the only cause of all misery, private or public, that has been, is, or shall be. In all these cases there is no remedy, but by returning to the Lord with repentance, faith, and prayer; beseeching him to return to us. Christ, the Son of David, is given for a banner to those that fear God; in him they are gathered together in one, and take courage. In his name and strength they wage war with the powers of darkness.

Psalm 60:6

Vs. 6-12: If Christ be ours, all things, one way or another, shall be for our eternal good. The man who is a new creature in Christ, may rejoice in all the precious promises God has spoken in his holiness. His present privileges, and the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, are sure earnest of heavenly glory. David rejoices in conquering the neighboring nations, which had been enemies to Israel. The Israel of God are through Christ more than conquerors. Though sometimes they think that the Lord has cast them off, yet he will bring them into the strong city at last. Faith in the promise will assure us that it is our Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom: But we are not yet made complete conquerors, and no true believer will abuse these truths to indulge sloth, or vain confidence. Hope in God is the best principle of true courage, for what need those fear who have God on their side? All our victories are from him, and while those who willingly submit to our anointed King shall share his glories, all his foes shall be put under his feet.

PSALM 61

David seeks God upon former experience. (1-4) He vows to serve God. (5-8)

Psalm 61:1

Vs. 1-4: David begins with prayers and tears, but ends with praise. Thus the soul, being lifted up to God, returns to the enjoyment of itself. Wherever we are, we have liberty to draw near to God, and may find a way open to the throne of grace. And that which separates us from other comforts, should drive us nearer to God, the fountain of all comfort. Though the heart is overwhelmed, yet it may be lifted up to God in prayer. Nay, I will cry unto thee, for by that means it will be supported and relieved. Weeping must quicken praying, and not deaden it. God's power and promise are a rock that is higher than we are. This rock is Christ. On the Divine mercy, as on a rock, David desired to rest his soul; but he was like a ship-wrecked sailor, exposed to the billows at the bottom of a rock too high for him to climb without help. David found that he could not be fixed on the Rock of salvation, unless the Lord placed him upon it. As there is safety in Him, and none in ourselves, let us pray to be led to and fixed upon Christ our Rock. The service of God shall be his constant work and business: all must make it so who expect to find God their shelter and strong tower. The grace of God shall be his constant comfort.

Psalm 61:5

Vs. 5-8: There is a people in the world that fear God's name. There is a heritage peculiar to that people; present comforts in the soul, earnestness of future bliss. Those that fear God have enough in him, and must not complain. We need desire no better heritage than that of those who fear God. Those abide to good purpose in this world, who abide before God, serve him, and walk in his fear; those who do so, shall abide before him for ever. And these words are to be applied to Him of whom the angel said, the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and of his kingdom there shall be no end, ^{<4013>} Luke 1:32. God's promises, and our faith in them, are not to do away, but to encourage prayer. We need not desire to be better secured than under the protection of God's mercy and truth.

And if we partake of that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, we may praise him, whatever be our outward circumstances. But renewed experience of God's mercy and truth towards his people in Christ, is the main matter of our joy in him, and our praise unto him.

PSALM 62

David's confidence in God. (1-7) No trust to be put in worldly things. (8-12)

Psalm 62:1

Vs. 1-7: We are in the way both of duty and comfort, when our souls wait upon God; when we cheerfully give up ourselves, and all our affairs, to his will and wisdom; when we leave ourselves to all the ways of his providence, and patiently expect the event, with full satisfaction in his goodness. See the ground and reason of this dependence. By his grace he has supported me, and by his providence delivered me. He only can be my Rock and my salvation; creatures are nothing without him, therefore I will look above them to him. Trusting in God, the heart is fixed. If God be for us, we need not fear what man can do against us. David having put his confidence in God, foresees the overthrow of his enemies. We have found it good to wait upon the Lord, and should charge our souls to have such constant dependence upon him, as may make us always easy. If God will save my soul, I may well leave every thing else to his disposal, knowing all shall turn to my salvation. And as David's faith in God advances to an unshaken steadfast, so his joy in God improves into a holy triumph. Meditation and prayer are blessed means of strengthening faith and hope.

Psalm 62:8

Vs. 8-12: Those who have found the comfort of the ways of God themselves, will invite others into those ways; we shall never have the less for others sharing with us. The good counsel given is, to trust wholly in God. We must so trust in him at all times, as not at any time to put that trust in ourselves, or in any creature, which is to be put in him only. Trust in him to guide us when in doubt, to protect us when in danger, to supply us when in want, to strengthen us for every good word and work. We must lay out wants and our wishes before him, and then patiently submit our wills to his: this is pouring out our hearts. God is a refuge for all, even for as many as will take shelter in him. The psalmist warns against trusting in men. The multitude, those of low degree, are changeable as the wind. The rich and noble seem to have much in their power, and lavish promises; but

those that depend on them, are disappointed. Weighed in the balance of Scripture, all that man can do to make us happy is lighter than vanity itself. It is hard to have riches, and not to trust in them if they increase, though by lawful and honest means; but we must take heed, lest we set our affection unduly upon them. A smiling world is the most likely to draw the heart from God, on whom alone it should be set. The consistent believer receives all from God as a trust; and he seeks to use it to his glory, as a steward who must render an account. God hath spoken as it were once for all, that power belongs to him alone. He can punish and destroy. Mercy also belongs to him; and his recompense the imperfect services of those that believe in him, blotting out their transgressions for the Redeemer's sake, is a proof of abundant mercy, and encourages us to trust in him. Let us trust in his mercy and grace, and abound in his work, expecting mercies from him alone.

PSALM 63

*David's desire toward God. (1, 2) His satisfaction in God. (3-6)
His dependence upon God, and assurance of safety. (7-11)*

Psalm 63:1

Vs. 1, 2: Early will I seek thee. The true Christian devotes to God the morning hour. He opens the eyes of his understanding with those of his body, and awakes each morning to righteousness. He arises with a thirst after those comforts which the world cannot give, and has immediate recourse by prayer to the Fountain of the water of life. The true believer is convinced, that nothing in this sinful world can satisfy the wants and desires of his immortal soul; he expects his happiness from God, as his portion. When faith and hope are most in exercise, the world appears a weary desert, and the believer longs for the joys of heaven, of which he has some foretastes in the ordinances of God upon earth.

Psalm 63:3

Vs. 3-6: Even in affliction we need not want matter for praise. When this is the regular frame of a believer's mind, he values the loving-kindness of God more than life. God's loving-kindness is our spiritual life, and that is better than temporal life. We must praise God with joyful lips; we must address ourselves to the duties of religion with cheerfulness, and speak forth the praises of God from a principle of holy joy. Praising lips must be joyful lips. David was in continual danger; care and fear held his eyes waking, and gave him wearisome nights; but he comforted himself with thoughts of God. The mercies of God, when called to mind in the night watches, support the soul, making darkness cheerful. How happy will be that last morning, when the believer, awaking up after the Divine likeness, shall be satisfied with all the fullness of God, and praise him with joyful lips, where there is no night, and where sorrow and sighing flee away!

Psalm 63:7

Vs. 7-11: True Christians can, in some measure, and at some times, make use of the strong language of David, but too commonly our souls cleave to

the dust. Having committed ourselves to God, we must be easy and pleased, and quiet from the fear of evil. Those that follow hard after God, would soon fail, if God's right hand did not uphold them. It is he that strengthens us and comforts us. The psalmist doubts not but that though now sowing in tears, he should reap in joy. Messiah the Prince shall rejoice in God; he is already entered into the joy set before him, and his glory will be completed at his second coming. Blessed Lord, let our desire towards thee increase every hour; let our love be always upon thee; let all our enjoyment be in thee, and all our satisfaction from thee. Be thou all in all to us while we remain in the present wilderness state, and bring us home to the everlasting enjoyment of thee for ever.

PSALM 64

Prayer for deliverance. (1-6) The destruction of the wicked, encouragement to the righteous. (7-10)

Psalm 64:1

Vs. 1-6: The psalmist earnestly begs of God to preserve him from disquieting fear. The tongue is a little member, but it boasts great things. The upright man is the mark at which the wicked aim, they cannot speak peaceably either of him or to him. There is no guard against a false tongue. It is bad to do wrong, but worse to encourage ourselves and one another in it. It is a sign that the heart is hardened to the greatest degree, when it is thus fully set to do evil. A practical disbelief of God's knowledge of all things, is at the bottom of every wickedness. The benefit of a good cause and a good conscience, appears most when nothing can help a man against his enemies, save God alone, who is always a present help.

Psalm 64:7

Vs. 7-10: When God brings upon men the mischiefs they have desired on others, it is weight enough to sink a man to the lowest hell. Those who love cursing, it shall come upon them. Those who behold this shall understand, and observe God's hand in all; unless we do so, we are not likely to profit by the dispensations of Providence. The righteous shall be glad in the Lord; not glad of the misery and ruin of their fellow-creatures, but glad that God is glorified, and his word fulfilled, and the cause of injured innocence pleaded effectually. They rejoice not in men, nor in themselves, nor in any creature, or creature enjoyments, nor in their wisdom, strength, riches, or righteousness; but in Christ, in whom all the seed of Israel are justified and glory, and in what he is to them, and has done for them.

PSALM 65

God is to be praised in the kingdom of grace. (1-5) In the kingdom of providence. (6-13)

Psalm 65:1

Vs. 1-5: All the praise the Lord receives from this earth is from Zion, being the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, and acceptable through him. Praise is silent unto thee, as wanting words to express the great goodness of God. He reveals himself upon a mercy-seat, ready to hear and answer the prayers of all who come unto him by faith in Jesus Christ. Our sins prevail against us; we cannot pretend to balance them with any righteousness of our own: yet, as for our transgressions, of thine own free mercy, and for the sake of a righteousness of thine own providing, we shall not come into condemnation for them. Observe what it is to come into communion with God in order to blessedness. It is to converse with him as one we love and value; it is to apply ourselves closely to religion as to the business of our dwelling-place. Observe how we come into communion with God; only by God's free choice. There is abundance of goodness in God's house, and what is satisfying to the soul; there is enough for all, enough for each: it is always ready; and all without money and without price. By faith and prayer we may keep up communion with God, and bring in comfort from him, wherever we are. But it is only through that blessed One, who approaches the Father as our Advocate and Surety, that sinners may expect or can find this happiness.

Psalm 65:6

Vs. 6-13: That Almighty strength which sets fast the mountains, upholds the believer. That word which stills the stormy ocean, and speaks it into a calm, can silence our enemies. How contrary soever light and darkness are to each other, it is hard to say which is most welcome. Does the watchman wait for the morning? so does the laborer earnestly desire the shades of evening. Some understand it of the morning and evening sacrifices. We are to look upon daily worship, both alone and with our families, to be the most needful of our daily occupations, the most delightful of our daily comforts. How much the fruitfulness of this lower part of the creation

depends upon the influence of the upper, is easy to observe; every good and perfect gift is from above. He who enriches the earth, which is filled with man's sins, by his abundant and varied bounty, can neither want power nor will to feed the souls of his people. Temporal mercies to us unworthy creatures, shadow forth more important blessings. The rising of the Sun of righteousness, and the pouring forth of the influences of the Holy Spirit, that river of God, full of the waters of life and salvation, render the hard, barren, worthless hearts of sinners fruitful in every good work, and change the face of nations more than the sun and rain change the face of nature. Wherever the Lord passes, by his preached gospel, attended by his Holy Spirit, his paths drop fatness, and numbers are taught to rejoice in and praise him. They will descend upon the pastures of the wilderness, all the earth shall hear and embrace the gospel, and bring forth abundantly the fruits of righteousness which are, through Jesus Christ, to the glory of the Father. Manifold and marvelous, O Lord, are thy works, whether of nature or of grace; surely in loving-kindness hast thou made them all.

PSALM 66

Praise for God's sovereign power in the creation. (1-7) For his favor to his church. (8-12) And the psalmist's praise for his experience of God's goodness. (13-20)

Psalm 66:1

Vs. 1-7: The holy church throughout all the world lifts up her voice, to laud that Name which is above every name, to make the praise of Jesus glorious, both by word and deed; that others may be led to glorify him also. But nothing can bring men to do this aright, unless his effectual grace create their hearts anew unto holiness; and in the redemption by the death of Christ, and the glorious deliverances it effects, are more wondrous works than Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

Psalm 66:8

Vs. 8-12: The Lord not only preserves our temporal life, but maintains the spiritual life which he has given to believers. By afflictions we are proved, as silver in the fire. The troubles of the church will certainly end well. Through various conflicts and troubles, the slave of Satan escapes from his yoke, and obtains joy and peace in believing: through much tribulation the believer must enter into the kingdom of God.

Psalm 66:13

Vs. 13-20: We should declare unto those that fear God, what he has done for our souls, and how he has heard and answered our prayers, inviting them to join us in prayer and praise; this will turn to our mutual comfort, and to the glory of God. We cannot share these spiritual privileges, if we retain the love of sin in our hearts, though we refrain from the gross practice, Sin, regarded in the heart, will spoil the comfort and success of prayer; for the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination of the Lord. But if the feeling of sin in the heart causes desires to be rid of it; if it be the presence of one urging a demand we know we must not, cannot comply with, this is an argument of sincerity. And when we pray in simplicity and godly sincerity, our prayers will be answered. This will excite gratitude to

Him who hath not turned away our prayer nor his mercy from us. It was not prayer that fetched the deliverance, but his mercy that sent it. That is the foundation of our hopes, the fountain of our comforts; and ought to be the matter of our praises.

PSALM 67

A prayer for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom.

Psalm 67:1

All our happiness comes from God's mercy; therefore the first thing prayed for is, God be merciful to us, to us sinners, and pardon our sins. Pardon is conveyed by God's blessing, and secured in that. If we, by faith, walk with God, we may hope that his face will shine on us. The psalmist passes on to a prayer for the conversion of the Gentiles, which shows that the Old Testament saints desired that their advantages might also be enjoyed by others. And many Scripture prophecies and promises are wrapped up in prayers: the answer to the prayer of the church is as sure as the performance of God's promises. The joy wished to the nations, is holy joy. Let them be glad that by his providence the Lord will overrule the affairs of kingdoms; that even the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of the Lord, and of his Christ. Then is declared a joyful prospect of all good when God shall do this. The success of the gospel brings outward mercies with it; righteousness exalts a nation. The blessing of the Lord sweetens all our creature-comforts to us, and makes them comforts indeed. All the world shall be brought to worship Him. When the gospel begins to spread, it shall go forward more and more, till it reaches to the ends of the earth. It is good to cast in our lot with those that are the blessed of the Lord. If nothing had been spoken in Scripture respecting the conversion of the heathen, we might think it vain to attempt so hopeless a work. But when we see with what confidence it is declared in the Scriptures, we may engage in missionary labors, assured that God will fulfill his own word. And shall we be backward to make known to the heathen the knowledge with which we are favored, and the salvation we profess to glory in? They cannot learn unless they are taught. Then let us go forward in the strength of the Lord, and look to him to accompany the word with the Holy Ghost; then Satan's kingdom shall be destroyed, and the kingdom of our Redeemer established.

PSALM 68

A prayer-- The greatness and goodness of God. (1-6) The wonderful works God wrought for his people. (7-14) The presence of God in his church. (15-21) The victories of Christ. (22-28) Enlargement of the church. (29-31) The glory and grace of God. (32-35)

Psalm 68:1

Vs. 1-6: None ever hardened his heart against God, and prospered. God is the joy of his people, then let them rejoice when they come before him. He who derives his being from none, but gives being to all, is engaged by promise and covenant to bless his people. He is to be praised as a God of mercy and tender compassion. He ever careth for the afflicted and oppressed: repenting sinners, who are helpless and exposed more than any fatherless children, are admitted into his family, and share all their blessings.

Psalm 68:7

Vs. 7-14: Fresh mercies should put us in mind of former mercies. If God bring his people into a wilderness, he will be sure to go before them in it, and to bring them out of it. He provided for them, both in the wilderness and in Canaan. The daily manna seems here meant. And it looks to the spiritual provision for God's Israel. The Spirit of grace and the gospel of grace are the plentiful rain, with which God confirms his inheritance, and from which their fruit is found. Christ shall come as showers that water the earth. The account of Israel's victories is to be applied to the victories over death and hell, by the exalted Redeemer, for those that are his. Israel in Egypt among the kilns appeared wretched, but possessed of Canaan, during the reigns of David and Solomon, appeared glorious. Thus the slaves of Satan, when converted to Christ, when justified and sanctified by him, look honorable. When they reach heaven, all remains of their sinful state disappear, they shall be as the wings of the dove, covered with silver, and her feathers as gold. Full salvation will render those white as snow, who were vile and loathsome through the guilt and defilement of sin.

Psalm 68:15

Vs. 15-21: The ascension of Christ must here be meant, and thereto it is applied, ^{<600>}Ephesians 4:8. He received as the purchase of his death, the gifts needful for the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of believers. These he continually bestows, even on rebellious men, that the Lord God might dwell among them, as their Friend and Father. He gave gifts to men. Having received power to give eternal life, the Lord Jesus bestows it on as many as were given him, ^{<617>}John 17:2. Christ came to a rebellious world, not to condemn it, but that through him it might be saved. The glory of Zion's King is, that he is a Savior and Benefactor to all his willing people, and a consuming fire to all that persist in rebellion against him. So many, so weighty are the gifts of God's bounty, that he may be truly said to load us with them. He will not put us off with present things for a portion, but will be the God of our salvation. The Lord Jesus has authority and power to rescue his people from the dominion of death, by taking away the sting of it from them when they die, and giving them complete victory over it when they rise again. The crown of the head, the chief pride and glory of the enemy, shall be smitten; Christ shall crush the head of the serpent.

Psalm 68:22

Vs. 22-28: The victories with which God blessed David over the enemies of Israel, are types of Christ's victory, for himself and for all believers. Those who take him for theirs, may see him acting as their God, as their King, for their good, and in answer to their prayers; especially in and by his word and ordinances. The kingdom of the Messiah shall be submitted to by all the rulers and learned in the world. The people seem to address the king, ver. 28. But the words are applicable to the Redeemer, to his church, and every true believer. We pray, that thou, O God the Son, wilt complete thine undertaking for us, by finishing thy good work in us.

Psalm 68:29

Vs. 29-31: A powerful invitation is given to those that are without, to join the church. Some shall submit from fear; overcome by their consciences, and the checks of Providence, they are brought to make peace with the church. Others will submit willingly, ver. 29,31. There is that beauty and

benefit in the service of God, and in the gospel of Christ which went forth from Jerusalem, which is enough to invite sinners out of all nations.

 **Psalm 68:32**

Vs. 32-35: God is to be admired and adored with reverence and godly fear, by all that attend in his holy places. The God of Israel gives strength and power unto his people. Through Christ strengthening us we can do all things, not otherwise; therefore he must have the glory of all we do, with our humble thanks for enabling us to do it, and for accepting the work of his hands in us.

PSALM 69

David complains of great distress. (1-12) And begs for succor. (13-21) He declares the judgments of God. (22-29) He concludes with joy and praise. (30-36)

Psalm 69:1

Vs. 1-12: We should frequently consider the person of the Sufferer here spoken of, and ask why, as well as what he suffered, that, meditating thereon, we may be more humbled for sin, and more convinced of our danger, so that we may feel more gratitude and love, constraining us to live to His glory who died for our salvation. Hence we learn, when in affliction, to commit the keeping of our souls to God, that we may not be soured with discontent, or sink into despair. David was hated wrongfully, but the words far more fully apply to Christ. In a world where unrighteousness reigns so much, we must not wonder if we meet with those that are our enemies wrongfully. Let us take care that we never do wrong; then if we receive wrong, we may the better bear it. By the satisfaction Christ made to God for our sin by his blood, he restored that which he took not away, he paid our debt, suffered for our offenses. Even when we can plead Not guilty, as to men's unjust accusations, yet before God we must acknowledge ourselves to deserve all that is brought upon us. All our sins take rise from our foolishness. They are all done in God's sight. David complains of the unkindness of friends and relations. This was fulfilled in Christ, whose brethren did not believe on him, and who was forsaken by his disciples. Christ made satisfaction for us, not only by putting off the honors due to God, but by submitting to the greatest dishonors that could be done to any man. We need not be discouraged if our zeal for the truths, precepts, and worship of God, should provoke some, and cause others to mock our godly sorrow and deadness to the world.

Psalm 69:13

Vs. 13-21: Whatever deep waters of affliction or temptation we sink into, whatever floods of trouble or ungodly men seem ready to overwhelm us, let us persevere in prayer to our Lord to save us. The tokens of God's favor to us are enough to keep our spirits from sinking in the deepest

outward troubles. If we think well of God, and continue to do so under the greatest hardships, we need not fear but he will do well for us. And if at any time we are called on to suffer reproach and shame, for Christ's sake, this may be our comfort, that he knows it. It bears hard on one that knows the worth of a good name, to be oppressed with a bad one; but when we consider what a favor it is to be accounted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus, we shall see that there is no reason why it should be heart-breaking to us. The sufferings of Christ were here particularly foretold, which proves the Scripture to be the word of God; and how exactly these predictions were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, which proves him to be the true Messiah. The vinegar and the gall given to him, were a faint emblem of that bitter cup which he drank up, that we might drink the cup of salvation. We cannot expect too little from men, miserable comforters are they all; nor can we expect too much from the God of all comfort and consolation.

Psalm 69:22

Vs. 22-29: These are prophecies of the destruction of Christ's persecutors. Verses 22, 23, are applied to the judgments of God upon the unbelieving Jews, in **Romans 11:9, 10**. When the supports of life and delights of sense, through the corruption of our nature, are made the food and fuel of sin, then our table is a snare. Their sin was, that they would not see, but shut their eyes against the light, loving darkness rather; their punishment was, that they should not see, but should be given up to their own hearts' lusts which hardened them. Those who reject God's great salvation proffered to them, may justly fear that his indignation will be poured out upon them. If men will sin, the Lord will reckon for it. But those that have multiplied to sin, may yet find mercy, through the righteousness of the Mediator. God shuts not out any from that righteousness; the gospel excludes none who do not, by unbelief, shut themselves out. But those who are proud and self-willed, so that they will not come in to God's righteousness, shall have their doom accordingly; they themselves decide it. Let those not expect any benefit thereby, who are not glad to be beholden to it. It is better to be poor and sorrowful, with the blessing of the Lord, than rich and jovial, and under his curse. This may be applied to Christ. He was, when on earth, a man of sorrows that had not where to lay his head; but God exalted him. Let us call upon the Lord,

and though poor and sorrowful, guilty and defiled, his salvation will set us up on high.

 **Psalm 69:30**

Vs. 30-36: The psalmist concludes the psalm with holy joy and praise, which he began with complaints of his grief. It is a great comfort to us, that humble and thankful praises are more pleasing to God than the most costly, pompous sacrifices. The humble shall look to him, and be glad; those that seek him through Christ shall live and be comforted. God will do great things for the gospel church, in which let all who wish well to it rejoice. A seed shall serve him on earth, and his servants shall inherit his heavenly kingdom. Those that love his name shall dwell before him for ever. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Arise, thou great Restorer of the ancient places to dwell in, and turn away ungodliness from thy people.

PSALM 70

*The speedy destruction of the wicked,
and the preservation of the godly.*

Psalm 70:1

This psalm is almost the same as the last five verses of Psalms 40. While here we behold Jesus Christ set forth in poverty and distress, we also see him denouncing just and fearful punishment on his Jewish, heathen, and antichristian enemies; and pleading for the joy and happiness of his friends, to his Father's honor. Let us apply these things to our own troubled circumstances, and in a believing manner bring them, and the sinful causes thereof, to our remembrance. Urgent trials should always awake fervent prayers.

PSALM 71

Prayers that God would deliver and save. (1-13) Believing praises. (14-24)

Psalm 71:1

Vs. 1-13: David prays that he might never be made ashamed of dependence upon God. With this petition every true believer may come boldly to the throne of grace. The gracious care of Divine providence in our birth and infancy, should engage us to early piety. He that was our Help from our birth, ought to be our Hope from our youth. Let none expect ease or comfort from the world. Those who love the Lord, often are hated and persecuted; men wondered at for their principles and conduct; but the Lord has been their strong refuge. The faithful servants of God may be assured that he will not cast them off in old age, nor forsake them when their strength fails.

Psalm 71:14

Vs. 14-24: The psalmist declares that the righteousness of Christ, and the great salvation obtained thereby, shall be the chosen subject of his discourse. Not on a Sabbath only, but on every day of the week, of the year, of his life. Not merely at stated returns of solemn devotion, but on every occasion, all the day long. Why will he always dwell on this? Because he knew not the numbers thereof. It is impossible to measure the value or the fullness of these blessings. The righteousness is unspeakable, the salvation everlasting. God will not cast off his gray-headed servants when no longer capable of laboring as they have done. The Lord often strengthens his people in their souls, when nature is sinking into decay. And it is a debt which the old disciples of Christ owe to succeeding generations, to leave behind them a solemn testimony to the advantage of religion, and the truth of God's promises; and especially to the everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer. Assured of deliverance and victory, let us spend our days, while waiting the approach of death, in praising the Holy One of Israel with all our powers. And while speaking of his righteousness, and singing his praises, we shall rise above fears and infirmities, and have earnestness of the joys of heaven. The work of

redemption ought, above all God's works, to be spoken of by us in our praises. The Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God, is worthy of all blessing and praise.

PSALM 72

David begins with a prayer for Solomon. (1) He passes into a prophecy of the glories of his reign, and of Christ's kingdom. (2-17) Praise to God. (18-20)

Psalm 72:1

Vs. 1: This psalm belongs to Solomon in part, but to Christ more fully and clearly. Solomon was both the king and the king's son, and his pious father desired that the wisdom of God might be in him, that his reign might be a remembrance of the kingdom of the Messiah. It is the prayer of a father for his child; a dying blessing. The best we can ask of God for our children is, that God would give them wisdom and grace to know and to do their duty.

Psalm 72:2

Vs. 2-17: This is a prophecy of the kingdom of Christ; many passages in it cannot be applied to the reign of Solomon. There were righteousness and peace at first in the administration of his government; but, before the end of his reign, there were troubles and unrighteousness. The kingdom here spoken of is to last as long as the sun, but Solomon's was soon at an end. Even the Jewish expositors understood it of the kingdom of the Messiah. Observe many great and precious promises here made, which were to have full accomplishment only in the kingdom of Christ. As far as his kingdom is set up, discord and contentions cease, in families, churches, and nations. The law of Christ, written in the heart, disposes men to be honest and just, and to render to all their due; it likewise disposes men to live in love, and so produces abundance of peace. Holiness and love shall be lasting in Christ's kingdom. Through all the changes of the world, and all the changes of life, Christ's kingdom will support itself. And he shall, by the graces and comforts of his Spirit, come down like rain upon the mown grass; not on that cut down, but that which is left growing, that it may spring again. His gospel has been, or shall be, preached to all nations. Though he needs not the services of any, yet he must be served with the best. Those that have the wealth of this world, must serve Christ with it, do good with it. Prayer shall be made through him, or for his sake; whatever we ask of the Father, should be in his name. Praises shall be offered to him: we are under

the highest obligations to him. Christ only shall be feared throughout all generations. To the end of time, and to eternity, his name shall be praised. All nations shall call HIM blessed.

Psalm 72:18

Vs. 18-20: We are taught to bless God in Christ, for all he has done for us by him. David is earnest in prayer for the fulfillment of this prophecy and promise. It is sad to think how empty the earth is of the glory of God, how little service and honor he has from a world to which he is so bountiful. May we, like David, submit to Christ's authority, and partake of his righteousness and peace. May we bless him for the wonders of redeeming love. May we spend our days, and end our lives, praying for the spread of his gospel.

PSALM 73

The psalmist's temptation. (1-14) How he gained a victory over it. (15-20) How he profited by it. (21-28)

Psalm 73:1

Vs. 1-14: The psalmist was strongly tempted to envy the prosperity of the wicked; a common temptation, which has tried the graces of many saints. But he lays down the great principle by which he resolved to abide. It is the goodness of God. This is a truth which cannot be shaken. Good thoughts of God will fortify against Satan's temptations. The faith even of strong believers may be sorely shaken, and ready to fail. There are storms that will try the firmest anchors. Foolish and wicked people have sometimes a great share of outward prosperity. They seem to have the least share of the troubles of this life; and they seem to have the greatest share of its comforts. They live without the fear of God, yet they prosper, and get on in the world. Wicked men often spend their lives without much sickness, and end them without great pain; while many godly persons scarcely know what health is, and die with great sufferings. Often the wicked are not frightened, either by the remembrance of their sins, or the prospect of their misery, but they die without terror. We cannot judge men's state beyond death, by what passes at their death. He looked abroad, and saw many of God's people greatly at a loss. Because the wicked are so very daring, therefore his people return hither; they know not what to say to it, and the rather, because they drink deep of the bitter cup of affliction. He spoke feelingly when he spoke of his own troubles; there is no disputing against sense, except by faith. From all this arose a strong temptation to cast off religion. But let us learn that the true course of sanctification consists in cleansing a man from all pollution both of soul and body. The heart is cleansed by the blood of Christ laid hold upon by faith; and by the begun works of the Lord's Spirit, manifested in the hearty resolution, purpose, and study of holiness, and a blameless course of life and actions, the hands are cleansed. It is not in vain to serve God and keep his ordinances.

Psalm 73:15

Vs. 15-20: The psalmist having shown the progress of his temptation, shows how faith and grace prevailed. He kept up respect for God's people, and with that he restrained himself from speaking what he had thought amiss. It is a sign that we repent of the evil thoughts of the heart, if we suppress them. Nothing gives more offense to God's children, than to say it is vain to serve God; for there is nothing more contrary to their universal experience. He prayed to God to make this matter plain to him; and he understood the wretched end of wicked people; even in the height of their prosperity they were but ripening for ruin. The sanctuary must be the resort of a tempted soul. The righteous man's afflictions end in peace, therefore he is happy; the wicked man's enjoyments end in destruction, therefore he is miserable. The prosperity of the wicked is short and uncertain, slippery places. See what their prosperity is; it is but a vain show, it is only a corrupt imagination, not substance, but a mere shadow; it is as a dream, which may please us a little while we are slumbering, yet even then it disturbs our repose.

Psalm 73:21

Vs. 21-28: God would not suffer his people to be tempted, if his grace were not sufficient, not only to save them from harm, but to make them gainers by it. This temptation, the working of envy and discontent, is very painful. In reflecting upon it, the psalmist owns it was his folly and ignorance thus to vex himself. If good men, at any time, through the surprise and strength of temptation, think, or speak, or act amiss, they will reflect upon it with sorrow and shame. We must ascribe our safety in temptation, and our victory, not to our own wisdom, but to the gracious presence of God with us, and Christ's intercession for us. All who commit themselves to God, shall be guided with the counsel both of his word and of his Spirit, the best counselors here, and shall be received to his glory in another world; the believing hopes and prospects of which will reconcile us to all dark providences. And the psalmist was hereby quickened to cleave the closer to God. Heaven itself could not make us happy without the presence and love of our God. The world and all its glory vanishes. The body will fail by sickness, age, and death; when the flesh fails, the conduct, courage, and comfort fail. But Christ Jesus, our Lord, offers to be

all in all to every poor sinner, who renounces all other portions and confidences. By sin we are all far from God. And a profession of Christ, if we go on in sin, will increase our condemnation. May we draw near, and keep near, to our God, by faith and prayer, and find it good to do so. Those that with an upright heart put their trust in God, shall never want matter for thanksgiving to him. Blessed Lord, who hast so graciously promised to become our portion in the next world, prevent us from choosing any other in this.

PSALM 74

The desolations of the sanctuary. (1-11) Please for encouraging faith. (12-17) Petitions for deliverances. (18-23)

Psalm 74:1

Vs. 1-11: This psalm appears to describe the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Chaldeans. The deplorable case of the people of God, at the time, is spread before the Lord, and left with him. They plead the great things God had done for them. If the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt was encouragement to hope that he would not cast them off, much more reason have we to believe, that God will not cast off any whom Christ has redeemed with his own blood. Infidels and persecutors may silence faithful ministers, and shut up places of worship, and say they will destroy the people of God and their religion together. For a long time they may prosper in these attempts, and God's oppressed servants may see no prospect of deliverance; but there is a remnant of believers, the seed of a future harvest, and the despised church has survived those who once triumphed over her. When the power of enemies is most threatening, it is comfortable to flee to the power of God by earnest prayer.

Psalm 74:12

Vs. 12-17: The church silences her own complaints. What God had done for his people, as their King of old, encouraged them to depend on him. It was the Lord's doing, none besides could do it. This providence was food to faith and hope, to support and encourage in difficulties. The God of Israel is the God of nature. He that is faithful to his covenant about the day and the night, will never cast off those whom he has chosen. We have as much reason to expect affliction, as to expect night and winter. But we have no more reason to despair of the return of comfort, than to despair of day and summer. And in the world above we shall have no more changes.

Psalm 74:18

Vs. 18-23: The psalmist begs that God would appear for the church against their enemies. The folly of such as revile his gospel and his

servants will be plain to all. Let us call upon our God to enlighten the dark nations of the earth; and to rescue his people, that the poor and needy may praise his name. Blessed Savior, thou art the same yesterday, today, and for ever. Make thy people more than conquerors. Be thou, Lord, all in all to them in every situation and circumstances; for then thy poor and needy people will praise thy name.

PSALM 75

*The psalmist declares his resolution of executing judgment. (1-5)
He rebukes the wicked, and concludes with resolutions to praise
God. (6-10)*

Psalm 75:1

Vs. 1-5: We often pray for mercy, when in pursuit of it; and shall we only once or twice give thanks, when we obtain it? God shows that he is nigh to us in what we call upon him for. Public trusts are to be managed uprightly. This may well be applied to Christ and his government. Man's sin threatened to destroy the whole creation; but Christ saved the world from utter ruin. He who is made of God to us wisdom, bids us be wise. To the proud, daring sinners he says, Boast not of your power, persist not in contempt. All the present hopes and future happiness of the human race spring from the Son of God.

Psalm 75:6

Vs. 6-10: No second causes will raise men to preferment without the First Cause. It comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. He mentions not the north; the same word that signifies the north, signifies the secret place; and from the secret of God's counsel it does come. From God alone all must receive their doom. There are mixtures of mercy and grace in the cup of affliction, when it is put into the hands of God's people; mixtures of the curse, when it is put into the hands of the wicked. God's people have their share in common calamities, but the dregs of the cup are for the wicked. The exaltation of the Son of David will be the subject of the saints' everlasting praises. Then let sinners submit to the King of righteousness, and let believers rejoice in and obey him.

PSALM 76

The psalmist speaks of God's power. (1-6) All have to fear and to trust in him. (7-12)

Psalm 76:1

Vs. 1-6: Happy people are those who have their land filled with the knowledge of God! happy persons that have their hearts filled with that knowledge! It is the glory and happiness of a people to have God among them by his ordinances. Wherein the enemies of the church deal proudly, it will appear that God is above them. See the power of God's rebukes. With pleasure may Christians apply this to the advantages bestowed by the Redeemer.

Psalm 76:7

Vs. 7-12: God's people are the meek of the earth, the quiet in the land, that suffer wrong, but do none. The righteous God seems to keep silence long, yet, sooner or later, he will make judgment to be heard. We live in an angry, provoking world; we often feel much, and are apt to fear more, from the wrath of man. What will not turn to his praise, shall not be suffered to break out. He can set bounds to the wrath of man, as he does to the raging sea; hitherto it shall come, and no further. Let all submit to God. Our prayers and praises, and especially our hearts, are the presents we should bring to the Lord. His name is glorious, and he is the proper object of our fear. He shall cut off the spirit of princes; he shall slip it off easily, as we slip off a flower from the stalk, or a bunch of grapes from the vine; so the word signifies. He can dispirit the most daring: since there is no contending with God, it is our wisdom, as it is our duty, to submit to him. Let us seek his favor as our portion, and commit all our concerns to him.

PSALM 77

The psalmist's troubles and temptation. (1-10) He encourages himself by the remembrance of God's help of his people. (11-20)

Psalm 77:1

Vs. 1-10: Days of trouble must be days of prayer; when God seems to have withdrawn from us, we must seek him till we find him. In the day of his trouble the psalmist did not seek for the diversion of business or amusement, but he sought God, and his favor and grace. Those that are under trouble of mind, must pray it away. He pored upon the trouble; the methods that should have relieved him did but increase his grief. When he remembered God, it was only the Divine justice and wrath. His spirit was overwhelmed, and sank under the load. But let not the remembrance of the comforts we have lost, make us unthankful for those that are left. Particularly he called to remembrance the comforts with which he supported himself in former sorrows. Here is the language of a sorrowful, deserted soul, walking in darkness; a common case even among those that fear the Lord, ^{<2810>} Isaiah 50:10. Nothing wounds and pierces like the thought of God's being angry. God's own people, in a cloudy and dark day, may be tempted to make wrong conclusions about their spiritual state, and that of God's kingdom in the world. But we must not give way to such fears. Let faith answer them from the Scripture. The troubled fountain will work itself clear again; and the recollection of former times of joyful experience often raises a hope, tending to relief. Doubts and fears proceed from the want and weakness of faith. Despondency and distrust under affliction, are too often the infirmities of believers, and, as such, are to be thought upon by us with sorrow and shame. When, unbelief is working in us, we must thus suppress its risings.

Psalm 77:11

Vs. 11-20: The remembrance of the works of God, will be a powerful remedy against distrust of his promise and goodness; for he is God, and changes not. God's way is in the sanctuary. We are sure that God is holy in all his works. God's ways are like the deep waters, which cannot be fathomed; like the way of a ship, which cannot be tracked. God brought

Israel out of Egypt. This was typical of the great redemption to be wrought out in the fullness of time, both by price and power. If we have harbored doubtful thoughts, we should, without delay, turn our minds to meditate on that God, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, that with him, he might freely give us all things.

PSALM 78

Attention called for. (1-8) The history of Israel. (9-39) Their settlement in Canaan. (40-55) The mercies of God to Israel contrasted with their ingratitude. (56-72)

Psalm 78:1

Vs. 1-8: These are called dark and deep sayings, because they are carefully to be looked into. The law of God was given with a particular charge to teach it diligently to their children, that the church may abide for ever. Also, that the providences of God, both in mercy and in judgment, might encourage them to conform to the will of God. The works of God much strengthen our resolution to keep his commandments. Hypocrisy is the high road to apostasy; those that do not set their hearts right, will not be steadfast with God. Many parents, by negligence and wickedness, become murderers of their children. But young persons, though they are bound to submit in all things lawful, must not obey sinful orders, or copy sinful examples.

Psalm 78:9

Vs. 9-39: Sin dispirits men, and takes away the heart. Forgetfulness of God's works is the cause of disobedience to his laws. This narrative relates a struggle between God's goodness and man's badness. The Lord hears all our murmurings and distrusts, and is much displeased. Those that will not believe the power of God's mercy, shall feel the fire of his indignation. Those cannot be said to trust in God's salvation as their happiness at last, who can not trust his providence in the way to it. To all that by faith and prayer, ask, seek, and knock, these doors of heaven shall at any time be opened; and our distrust of God is a great aggravation of our sins. He expressed his resentment of their provocation; not in denying what they sinfully lusted after, but in granting it to them. Lust is contented with nothing. Those that indulge their lust, will never be estranged from it. Those hearts are hard indeed, that will neither be melted by the mercies of the Lord, nor broken by his judgments. Those that sin still, must expect to be in trouble still. And the reason why we live with so little comfort, and to so little purpose, is, because we do not live by faith. Under these

rebukes they professed repentance, but they were not sincere, for they were not constant. In Israel's history we have a picture of our own hearts and lives. God's patience, and warnings, and mercies, embolden them to harden their hearts against his word. And the history of kingdoms is much the same. Judgments and mercies have been little attended to, until the measure of their sins has been full. And higher advantages have not kept churches from declining from the commandments of God. Even true believers recollect, that for many a year they abused the kindness of Providence. When they come to heaven, how will they admire the Lord's patience and mercy in bringing them to his kingdom!

Psalm 78:40

Vs. 40-55: Let not those that receive mercy from God, be thereby made bold to sin, for the mercies they receive will hasten its punishment; yet let not those who are under Divine rebukes for sin, be discouraged from repentance. The Holy One of Israel will do what is most for his own glory, and what is most for their good. Their forgetting former favors, led them to limit God for the future. God made his own people to go forth like sheep; and guided them in the wilderness, as a shepherd his flock, with all care and tenderness. Thus the true Joshua, even Jesus, brings his church out of the wilderness; but no earthly Canaan, no worldly advantages, should make us forget that the church is in the wilderness while in this world, and that there remaineth a far more glorious rest for the people of God.

Psalm 78:56

Vs. 56-72: After the Israelites were settled in Canaan, the children were like their fathers. God gave them his testimonies, but they turned back. Presumptuous sins render even Israelites hateful to God's holiness, and exposed to his justice. Those whom the Lord forsakes become an easy prey to the destroyer. And sooner or later, God will disgrace his enemies. He set a good government over his people; a monarch after his own heart. With good reason does the psalmist make this finishing, crowning instance of God's favor to Israel; for David was a type of Christ, the great and good Shepherd, who was humbled first, and then exalted; and of whom it was foretold, that he should be filled with the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. On the uprightness of his heart, and the skillfulness of his hands, all his subjects may rely; and of the increase of his government and

peace there shall be no end. Every trial of human nature hitherto, confirms the testimony of Scripture, that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and nothing but being created anew by the Holy Ghost can cure the ungodliness of any.

PSALM 79

The deplorable condition of the people of God. (1-5) A petition for relief. (6-13)

Psalm 79:1

Vs. 1-5: God is complained to: whither should children go but to a Father able and willing to help them? See what a change sin made in the holy city, when the heathen were suffered to pour in upon them. God's own people defiled it by their sins, therefore he suffered their enemies to defile it by their insolence. They desired that God would be reconciled. Those who desire God's favor as better than life, cannot but dread his wrath as worse than death. In every affliction we should first beseech the Lord to cleanse away the guilt of our sins; then he will visit us with his tender mercies.

Psalm 79:6

Vs. 6-13: Those who persist in ignorance of God, and neglect of prayer, are the ungodly. How unrighteous soever men were, the Lord was righteous in permitting them to do what they did. Deliverances from trouble are mercies indeed, when grounded upon the pardon of sin; we should therefore be more earnest in prayer for the removal of our sins than for the removal of afflictions. They had no hopes but from God's mercies, his tender mercies. They plead no merit, they pretend to none, but, Help us for the glory of thy name; pardon us for thy name's sake. The Christian forgets not that he is often bound in the chain of his sins. The world to him is a prison; sentence of death is passed upon him, and he knows not how soon it may be executed. How fervently should he at all times pray, O let the sighing of a prisoner come before thee, according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die! How glorious will the day be, when, triumphant over sin and sorrow, the church beholds the adversary disarmed for ever! while that church shall, from age to age, sing the praises of her great Shepherd and Bishop, her King and her God.

PSALM 80

The psalmist complains of the miseries of the church. (1-7) Its former prosperity and present desolation. (8-16) A prayer for mercy. (17-19)

Psalm 80:1

Vs. 1-7: He that dwelleth upon the mercy-seat, is the good Shepherd of his people. But we can neither expect the comfort of his love, nor the protection of his arm, unless we partake of his converting grace. If he is really angry at the prayers of his people, it is because, although they pray, their ends are not right, or there is some secret sin indulged in them, or he will try their patience and perseverance in prayer. When God is displeased with his people, we must expect to see them in tears, and their enemies in triumph. There is no salvation but from God's favor; there is no conversion to God but by his own grace.

Psalm 80:8

Vs. 8-16: The church is represented as a vine and a vineyard. The root of this vine is Christ, the branches are believers. The church is like a vine, needing support, but spreading and fruitful. If a vine do not bring forth fruit, no tree is so worthless. And are not we planted as in a well-cultivated garden, with every means of being fruitful in works of righteousness? But the useless leaves of profession, and the empty boughs of notions and forms, abound far more than real piety. It was wasted and ruined. There was a good reason for this change in God's way toward them. And it is well or ill with us, according as we are under God's smiles or frowns. When we consider the state of the purest part of the visible church, we cannot wonder that it is visited with sharp corrections. They request that God would help the vine. Lord, it is formed by thyself, and for thyself, therefore it may, with humble confidence, be committed to thyself.

Psalm 80:17

Vs. 17-19: The Messiah, the Protector and Savior of the church, is the Man of God's right hand; he is the Arm of the Lord, for all power is given to him. In him is our strength, by which we are enabled to persevere to the end. The vine, therefore, cannot be ruined, nor can any fruitful branch perish; but the unfruitful will be cut off and cast into the fire. The end of our redemption is, that we should serve Him who hath redeemed us, and not go back to our old sins.

PSALM 81

God is praised for what he has done for his people. (1-7) Their obligations to him. (8-16)

Psalm 81:1

Vs. 1-7: All the worship we can render to the Lord is beneath his excellencies, and our obligations to him, especially in our redemption from sin and wrath. What God had done on Israel's behalf, was kept in remembrance by public solemnities. To make a deliverance appear more gracious, more glorious, it is good to observe all that makes the trouble we are delivered from appear more grievous. We ought never to forget the base and ruinous drudgery to which Satan, our oppressor, brought us. But when, in distress of conscience, we are led to cry for deliverance, the Lord answers our prayers, and sets us at liberty. Convictions of sin, and trials by affliction, prove his regard to his people. If the Jews, on their solemn feast-days, were thus to call to mind their redemption out of Egypt, much more ought we, on the Christian Sabbath, to call to mind a more glorious redemption, wrought out for us by our Lord Jesus Christ, from worse bondage.

Psalm 81:8

Vs. 8-16: We cannot look for too little from the creature, nor too much from the Creator. We may have enough from God, if we pray for it in faith. All the wickedness of the world is owing to man's willfulness. People are not religious, because they will not be so. God is not the Author of their sin, he leaves them to the lusts of their own hearts, and the counsels of their own heads; if they do not well, the blame must be upon themselves. The Lord is unwilling that any should perish. What enemies sinners are to themselves! It is sin that makes our troubles long, and our salvation slow. Upon the same conditions of faith and obedience, do Christians hold those spiritual and eternal good things, which the pleasant fields and fertile hills of Canaan showed forth. Christ is the Bread of life; he is the Rock of salvation, and his promises are as honey to pious minds. But those who reject him as their Lord and Master, must also lose him as their Savior and their reward.

PSALM 82

An exhortation to judges. (1-5) The doom of evil rulers. (6-8)

Psalm 82:1

Vs. 1-5: Magistrates are the mighty in authority for the public good. Magistrates are the ministers of God's providence, for keeping up order and peace, and particularly in punishing evil-doers, and protecting those that do well. Good princes and good judges, who mean well, are under Divine direction; and bad ones, who mean ill, are under Divine restraint. The authority of God is to be submitted to, in those governors whom his providence places over us. But when justice is turned from what is right, no good can be expected. The evil actions of public persons are public mischiefs.

Psalm 82:6

Vs. 6-8: It is hard for men to have honor put upon them, and not to be proud of it. But all the rulers of the earth shall die, and all their honor shall be laid in the dust. God governs the world. There is a righteous God to whom we may go, and on whom we may depend. This also has respect to the kingdom of the Messiah. Considering the state of affairs in the world, we have need to pray that the Lord Jesus would speedily rule over all nations, in truth, righteousness, and peace.

PSALM 83

The designs of the enemies of Israel. (1-8) Earnest prayer for their defeat. (9-18)

Psalm 83:1

Vs. 1-8: Sometimes God seems not to be concerned at the unjust treatment of his people. But then we may call upon him, as the psalmist here. All wicked people are God's enemies, especially wicked persecutors. The Lord's people are his hidden one; the world knows them not. He takes them under his special protection. Do the enemies of the church act with one consent to destroy it, and shall not the friends of the church be united? Wicked men wish that there might be no religion among mankind. They would gladly see all its restraints shaken off, and all that preach, profess, or practice it, cut off. This they would bring to pass if it were in their power. The enemies of God's church have always been many: this magnifies the power of the Lord in preserving to himself a church in the world.

Psalm 83:9

Vs. 9-18: All who oppose the kingdom of Christ may here read their doom. God is the same still that ever he was; the same to his people, and the same against his and their enemies. God would make their enemies like a wheel; unsettled in all their counsels and resolves. Not only let them be driven away as stubble, but burnt as stubble. And this will be the end of wicked men. Let them be made to fear thy name, and perhaps that will bring them to seek thy name. We should desire no confusion to our enemies and persecutors but what may forward their conversion. The stormy tempest of Divine vengeance will overtake them, unless they repent and seek the pardoning mercy of their offended Lord. God's triumphs over his enemies, clearly prove that he is, according to his name JEHOVAH, an almighty Being, who has all power and perfection in himself. May we fear his wrath, and yield ourselves to be his willing servants. And let us seek deliverance by the destruction of our fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

PSALM 84

*The psalmist expresses his affection to the ordinances of God. (1-7)
His desire towards the God of the ordinances. (8-12)*

Psalm 84:1

Vs. 1-7: The ordinances of God are the believer's solace in this evil world; in them he enjoys the presence of the living God: this causes him to regret his absence from them. They are to his soul as the nest to the bird. Yet they are only an earnest of the happiness of heaven; but how can men desire to enter that holy habitation, who complain of Divine ordinances as wearisome? Those are truly happy, who go forth, and go on in the exercise of religion, in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, from whom all our sufficiency is. The pilgrims to the heavenly city may have to pass through many a valley of weeping, and many a thirsty desert; but wells of salvation shall be opened for them, and consolations sent for their support. Those that press forward in their Christian course, shall find God add grace to their graces. And those who grow in grace, shall be perfect in glory.

Psalm 84:8

Vs. 8-12: In all our addresses to God, we must desire that he would look on Christ, his Anointed One, and accept us for his sake: we must look to Him with faith, and then God will with favor look upon the face of the Anointed: we, without him, dare not show our faces. The psalmist pleads love to God's ordinances. Let us account one day in God's courts better than a thousand spent elsewhere; and deem the meanest place in his service preferable to the highest earthly preferment. We are here in darkness, but if God be our God, he will be to us a Sun, to enlighten and enliven us, to guide and direct us. We are here in danger, but he will be to us a Shield, to secure us from the fiery darts that fly thick about us. Through he has not promised to give riches and dignities, he has promised to give grace and glory to all that seek them in his appointed way. And what is grace, but heaven begun below, in the knowledge, love, and service of God? What is glory, but the completion of this happiness, in being made like to him, and in fully enjoying him for ever? Let it be our care to walk uprightly, and

then let us trust God to give us every thing that is good for us. If we cannot go to the house of the Lord, we may go by faith to the Lord of the house; in him we shall be happy, and may be easy. That man is really happy, whatever his outward circumstances may be, who trusts in the Lord of hosts, the God of Jacob.

PSALM 85

Prayers for the continuance of former mercies. (1-7) Trust in God's goodness. (8-13)

Psalm 85:1

Vs. 1-7: The sense of present afflictions should not do away the remembrance of former mercies. The favor of God is the fountain of happiness to nations, as well as to particular persons. When God forgives sin, he covers it; and when he covers the sin of his people, he covers it all. See what the pardon of sin is. In compassion to us, when Christ our Intercessor has stood before thee, thou hast turned away thine anger. When we are reconciled to God, then, and not till then, we may expect the comfort of his being reconciled to us. He shows mercy to those to whom he grants salvation; for salvation is of mere mercy. The Lord's people may expect sharp and tedious afflictions when they commit sin; but when they return to him with humble prayer, he will make them again to rejoice in him.

Psalm 85:8

Vs. 8-13: Sooner or later, God will speak peace to his people. If he do not command outward peace, yet he will suggest inward peace; speaking to their hearts by his Spirit. Peace is spoken only to those who turn from sin. All sin is folly, especially backsliding; it is the greatest folly to return to sin. Surely God's salvation is nigh, whatever our difficulties and distresses are. Also, his honor is secured, that glory may dwell in our land. And the truth of the promises is shown by the Divine mercy in sending the Redeemer. The Divine justice is now satisfied by the great atonement. Christ, the way, truth, and life, sprang out of the earth when he took our nature upon him, and Divine justice looked upon him well pleased and satisfied. For his sake all good things, especially his Holy Spirit, are given to those who ask him. Through Christ, the pardoned sinner becomes fruitful in good works, and by looking to and trusting in the Saviors righteousness, finds his feet set in the way of his steps. Righteousness is a sure guide, both in meeting God, and in following him

PSALM 86

The psalmist pleads his earnestness, and the mercy of God, as reasons why his prayer should be heard. (1-7) He renews his requests for help and comfort. (8-17)

Psalm 86:1

Vs. 1-7: Our poverty and wretchedness, when felt, powerfully plead in our behalf at the throne of grace. The best self-preservation is to commit ourselves to God's keeping. I am one whom thou favorest, hast set apart for thyself, and made partaker of sanctifying grace. It is a great encouragement to prayer, to feel that we have received the converting grace of God, have learned to trust in him, and to be his servants. We may expect comfort from God, when we keep up our communion with God. God's goodness appears in two things, in giving and forgiving. Whatever others do, let us call upon God, and commit our case to him; we shall not seek in vain.

Psalm 86:8

Vs. 8-17: Our God alone possesses almighty power and infinite love. Christ is the way and the truth. And the believing soul will be more desirous to be taught the way and the truth of God, in order to walk therein, than to be delivered out of earthly distress. Those who set not the Lord before them, seek after believers' souls; but the compassion, mercy, and truth of God, will be their refuge and consolation. And those whose parents were the servants of the Lord, may urge this as a plea why he should hear and help them. In considering David's experience, and that of the believer, we must not lose sight of Him, who though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.

PSALM 87

The glory of the church. (1-3) It is filled with the Divine blessing. (4-7)

Psalm 87:1

Vs. 1-3: Christ himself is the Foundation of the church, which God has laid. Holiness is the strength and firmness of the church. Let us not be ashamed of the church of Christ in its meanest condition, nor of those that belong to it, since such glorious things are spoken of it. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, even Jesus Christ. The glorious things spoken of Zion by the Spirit, were all typical of Christ, and his work and offices; of the gospel church, its privileges and members; of heaven, its glory and perfect happiness.

Psalm 87:4

Vs. 4-7: The church of Christ is more glorious and excellencies than the nations of the earth. In the records of heaven, the meanest of those who are born again stand registered. When God renders to every man according to his works, he shall observe who enjoyed the privileges of his sanctuary. To them much was given, and of them much will be required. Let those that dwell in Zion, mark this, and live up to their profession. Zion's songs shall be sung with joy and triumph. The springs of the joy of a carnal worldliness are in wealth and pleasure; but of a gracious soul, in the word of God and prayer. All grace and consolation are derived from Christ, through his ordinances, to the souls of believers.

PSALM 88

The psalmist pours out his soul to God in lamentation. (1-9) He wrestles by faith, in his prayer to God for comfort. (10-18)

Psalm 88:1

Vs. 1-9: The first words of the psalmist are the only words of comfort and support in this psalm. Thus greatly may good men be afflicted, and such dismal thoughts may they have about their afflictions, and such dark conclusions may they make about their end, through the power of melancholy and the weakness of faith. He complained most of God's displeasure. Even the children of God's love may sometimes think themselves children of wrath and no outward trouble can be so hard upon them as that. Probably the psalmist described his own case, yet he leads to Christ. Thus are we called to look unto Jesus, wounded and bruised for our iniquities. But the wrath of God poured the greatest bitterness into his cup. This weighed him down into darkness and the deep.

Psalm 88:10

Vs. 10-18: Departed souls may declare God's faithfulness, justice, and lovingkindness; but deceased bodies can neither receive God's favors in comfort, nor return them in praise. The psalmist resolved to continue in prayer, and the more so, because deliverance did not come speedily. Though our prayers are not soon answered, yet we must not give over praying. The greater our troubles, the more earnest and serious we should be in prayer. Nothing grieves a child of God so much as losing sight of him; nor is there any thing he so much dreads as God's casting off his soul. If the sun be clouded, that darkens the earth; but if the sun should leave the earth, what a dungeon would it be! Even those designed for God's favors, may for a time suffer his terrors. See how deep those terrors wounded the psalmist. If friends are put far from us by providences, or death, we have reason to look upon it as affliction. Such was the calamitous state of a good man. But the pleas here used were peculiarly suited to Christ. And we are not to think that the holy Jesus suffered for us only at Gethsemane and on Calvary. His whole life was labor and sorrow; he was afflicted as never man was, from his youth up. He was prepared for that death of

which he tasted through life. No man could share in the sufferings by which other men were to be redeemed. All forsook him, and fled. Oftentimes, blessed Jesus, do we forsake thee; but do not forsake us, O take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

PSALM 89

God's mercy and truth, and his covenant. (1-4) The glory and perfection of God. (5-14) The happiness of those in communion with him. (15-18) God's covenant with David, as a type of Christ. (19-37) A calamitous state lamented, Prayer for redress. (38-52)

Psalm 89:1

Vs. 1-4: Though our expectations may be disappointed, yet God's promises are established in the heavens, in his eternal counsels; they are out of the reach of opposers in hell and earth. And faith in the boundless mercy and everlasting truth of God, may bring comfort even in the deepest trials.

Psalm 89:5

Vs. 5-14: The more God's works are known, the more they are admired. And to praise the Lord, is to acknowledge him to be such a one that there is none like him. Surely then we should feel and express reverence when we worship God. But how little of this appears in our congregations, and how much cause have we to humble ourselves on this account! That almighty power which smote Egypt, will scatter the enemies of the church, while all who trust in God's mercy will rejoice in his name; for mercy and truth direct all he does. His counsels from eternity, and their consequences to eternity, are all justice and judgment.

Psalm 89:15

Vs. 15-18: Happy are those who so know the joyful sound of the gospel as to obey it; who experience its power upon their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives. Though believers are nothing in themselves, yet having all in Christ Jesus, they may rejoice in his name. May the Lord enable us to do so. The joy of the Lord is the strength of his people; whereas unbelief dispirits ourselves and discourages others. Though it steals upon us under a semblance of humility, yet it is the very essence of pride. Christ is the Holy One of Israel; and in him was that peculiar people more blessed than in any other blessing.

Psalm 89:19

Vs. 19-37: The Lord anointed David with the holy oil, not only as an emblem of the graces and gifts he received, but as a type of Christ, the King Priest, and Prophet, anointed with the Holy Ghost without measure. David after his anointing, was persecuted, but none could gain advantage against him. Yet all this was a faint shadow of the Redeemer's sufferings, deliverance, glory, and authority, in whom alone these predictions and promises are fully brought to pass. He is the mighty God. This is the Redeemer appointed for us, who alone is able to complete the work of our salvation. Let us seek an interest in these blessings, by the witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. As the Lord corrected the posterity of David for their transgressions, so his people shall be corrected for their sins. Yet it is but a rod, not a sword; it is to correct, not to destroy. It is a rod in the hand of God, who is wise, and knows what he does; gracious, and will do what is best. It is a rod which they shall never feel, but when there is need. As the sun and moon remain in heaven, whatever changes there seem to be in them, and again appear in due season; so the covenant of grace made in Christ, whatever alteration seems to come to it, should not be questioned.

Psalm 89:38

Vs. 38-52: Sometimes it is not easy to reconcile God's providences with his promises, yet we are sure that God's works fulfill his word. When the great Anointed One, Christ himself, was upon the cross, God seemed to have cast him off, yet did not make void his covenant, for that was established for ever. The honor of the house of David was lost. Thrones and crowns are often laid in the dust; but there is a crown of glory reserved for Christ's spiritual seed, which fadeth not away. From all this complaint learn what work sin makes with families, noble families, with families in which religion has appeared. They plead with God for mercy. God's unchangeableness and faithfulness assure us that He will not cast off those whom he has chosen and covenanted with. They were reproached for serving him. The scoffers of the latter days, in like manner, reproach the footsteps of the Messiah when they ask, Where is the promise of his coming? ² Peter 3:3,4. The records of the Lord's dealings with the family of David, show us his dealings with his church, and with believers. Their afflictions and distresses may be grievous, but he will not finally cast

them off. Self-deceivers abuse this doctrine, and others by a careless walk bring themselves into darkness and distress; yet let the true believer rely on it for encouragement in the path of duty, and in bearing the cross. The psalm ends with praise, even after this sad complaint. Those who give God thanks for what he has done, may give him thanks for what he will do. God will follow those with his mercies, who follow him with praises.

PSALM 90

The eternity of God, the frailty of man. (1-6) Submission to Divine chastisements. (7-11) Prayer for mercy and grace. (12-17)

Psalm 90:1

Vs. 1-6: It is supposed that this psalm refers to the sentence passed on Israel in the wilderness, ^{CHAP} Numbers 14. The favor and protection of God are the only sure rest and comfort of the soul in this evil world. Christ Jesus is the refuge and dwelling-place to which we may repair. We are dying creatures, all our comforts in the world are dying comforts, but God is an ever-living God, and believers find him so. When God, by sickness, or other afflictions, turns men to destruction, he thereby calls men to return unto him to repent of their sins, and live a new life. A thousand years are nothing to God's eternity: between a minute and a million of years there is some proportion; between time and eternity there is none. All the events of a thousand years, whether past or to come, are more present to the Eternal Mind, than what was done in the last hour is to us. And in the resurrection, the body and soul shall both return and be united again. Time passes unobserved by us, as with men asleep; and when it is past, it is as nothing. It is a short and quickly-passing life, as the waters of a flood. Man does but flourish as the grass, which, when the winter of old age comes, will wither; but he may be mown down by disease or disaster.

Psalm 90:7

Vs. 7-11: The afflictions of the saints often come from God's love; but the rebukes of sinners, and of believers for their sins, must be seen coming from the displeasure of God. Secret sins are known to God, and shall be reckoned for. See the folly of those who go about to cover their sins, for they cannot do so. Our years, when gone, can no more be recalled than the words that we have spoken. Our whole life is toilsome and troublesome; and perhaps, in the midst of the years we count upon, it is cut off. We are taught by all this to stand in awe. The angels that sinned know the power of God's anger; sinners in hell know it; but which of us can fully describe it? Few seriously consider it as they ought. Those who make a mock at

sin, and make light of Christ, surely do not know the power of God's anger. Who among us can dwell with that devouring fire?

 **Psalm 90:12**

Vs. 12-17: Those who would learn true wisdom, must pray for Divine instruction, must beg to be taught by the Holy Spirit; and for comfort and joy in the returns of God's favor. They pray for the mercy of God, for they pretend not to plead any merit of their own. His favor would be a full fountain of future joys. It would be a sufficient balance to former griefs. Let the grace of God in us produce the light of good works. And let Divine consolations put gladness into our hearts, and a lustre upon our countenances. The work of our hands, establish thou it; and, in order to that, establish us in it. Instead of wasting our precious, fleeting days in pursuing fancies, which leave the possessors for ever poor, let us seek the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance in heaven. Let us pray that the work of the Holy Spirit may appear in converting our hearts, and that the beauty of holiness may be seen in our conduct.

PSALM 91

The safety of those who have God for their refuge. (1-8) Their favor with Him. (9-16)

Psalm 91:1

Vs. 1-8: He that by faith chooses God for his protector, shall find all in him that he needs or can desire. And those who have found the comfort of making the Lord their refuge, cannot but desire that others may do so. The spiritual life is protected by Divine grace from the temptations of Satan, which are as the snares of the fowler, and from the contagion of sin, which is a noisome pestilence. Great security is promised to believers in the midst of danger. Wisdom shall keep them from being afraid without cause, and faith shall keep them from being unduly afraid. Whatever is done, our heavenly Father's will is done; and we have no reason to fear. God's people shall see, not only God's promises fulfilled, but his threatenings. Then let sinners come unto the Lord upon his mercy-seat, through the Redeemer's name; and encourage others to trust in him also.

Psalm 91:9

Vs. 9-16: Whatever happens, nothing shall hurt the believer; though trouble and affliction befall, it shall come, not for his hurt, but for good, though for the present it be not joyous but grievous. Those who rightly know God, will set their love upon him. They by prayer constantly call upon him. His promise is, that he will in due time deliver the believer out of trouble, and in the mean time be with him in trouble. The Lord will manage all his worldly concerns, and preserve his life on earth, so long as it shall be good for him. For encouragement in this he looks unto Jesus. He shall live long enough; till he has done the work he was sent into this world for, and is ready for heaven. Who would wish to live a day longer than God has some work to do, either by him or upon him? A man may die young, yet be satisfied with living. But a wicked man is not satisfied even with long life. At length the believer's conflict ends; he has done for ever with trouble, sin, and temptation.

PSALM 92

Praise is the business of the Sabbath. (1-6) The wicked shall perish, but God's people shall be exalted. (7-15)

Psalm 92:1

Vs. 1-6: It is a privilege that we are admitted to praise the Lord, and hope to be accepted in the morning, and every night; not only on Sabbath days, but every day; not only in public, but in private, and in our families. Let us give thanks every morning for the mercies of the night, and every night for the mercies of the day; going out, and coming in, let us bless God. As He makes us glad, through the works of his providence for us, and of his grace in us, and both through the great work of redemption, let us hence be encouraged. As there are many who know not the designs of Providence, nor care to know them, those who through grace do so, have the more reason to be thankful. And if distant views of the great Deliverer so animated believers of old, how should we abound in love and praise!

Psalm 92:7

Vs. 7-15: God sometimes grants prosperity to wicked men in displeasure; yet they flourish but for a moment. Let us seek for ourselves the salvation and grace of the gospel, that being daily anointed by the Holy Spirit, we may behold and share the Redeemer's glory. It is from his grace, by his word and Spirit, that believers receive all the virtue that keeps them alive, and makes them fruitful. Other trees, when old, leave off bearing, but in God's trees the strength of grace does not fail with the strength of nature. The last days of the saints are sometimes their best days, and their last work their best work: perseverance is sure evidence of sincerity. And may every Sabbath, while it shows forth the Divine faithfulness, find our souls resting more and more upon the Lord our righteousness.

PSALM 93

The majesty, power, and holiness of Christ's kingdom.

Psalm 93:1

The Lord might have displayed only his justice, holiness, and awful power, in his dealings with villainy men; but he has been pleased to display the riches of his mercy, and the power of his renewing grace. In this great work, the Father has given all power to his Son, the Lord from heaven, who has made atonement for our sins. He not only can pardon, but deliver and protect all who trust in him. His word is past, and all the saints may rely upon it. Whatever was foretold concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, must be fulfilled in due time. All his people ought to be very strictly pure. God's church is his house; it is a holy house, cleansed from sin, and employed in his service. Where there is purity, there shall be peace. Let all carefully look if this kingdom is set up in their hearts.

PSALM 94

The danger and folly of persecutors. (1-11) Comfort and peace to the persecuted. (12-23)

Psalm 94:1

Vs. 1-11: We may with boldness appeal to God; for he is the almighty Judge by whom every man is judged. Let this encourage those who suffer wrong, to bear it with silence, committing themselves to Him who judges righteously. These prayers are prophecies, which speak terror to the sons of violence. There will come a day of reckoning for all the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against God, his truths, and ways, and people. It would hardly be believed, if we did not witness it, that millions of rational creatures should live, move, speak, hear, understand, and do what they purpose, yet act as if they believed that God would not punish the abuse of his gifts. As all knowledge is from God, no doubt he knows all the thoughts of the children of men, and knows that the imaginations of the thoughts of men's hearts are only evil, and that continually. Even in good thoughts there is a want of being fixed, which may be called vanity. It concerns us to keep a strict watch over our thoughts, because God takes particular notice of them. Thoughts are words to God.

Psalm 94:12

Vs. 12-23: That man is blessed, who, under the chastening of the Lord, is taught his will and his truths, from his holy word, and by the Holy Spirit. He should see mercy through his sufferings. There is a rest remaining for the people of God after the days of their adversity, which shall not last always. He that sends the trouble, will send the rest. The psalmist found succor and relief only in the Lord, when all earthly friends failed. We are beholden, not only to God's power, but to his pity, for spiritual supports; and if we have been kept from falling into sin, or shrinking from our duty, we should give him the glory, and encourage our brethren. The psalmist had many troubled thoughts concerning the case he was in, concerning the course he should take, and what was likely to be the end of it. The indulgence of such contrivances and fears, adds to care and distrust, and renders our views more gloomy and confused. Good men sometimes have

perplexed and distressed thoughts concerning God. But let them look to the great and precious promises of the gospel. The world's comforts give little delight to the soul, when hurried with melancholy thoughts; but God's comforts bring that peace and pleasure which the smiles of the world cannot give, and which the frowns of the world cannot take away. God is his people's Refuge, to whom they may flee, in whom they are safe, and may be secure. And he will reckon with the wicked. A man cannot be more miserable than his own wickedness will make him, if the Lord visit it upon him.

PSALM 95

An exhortation to praise God. (1-7 part) A warning not to tempt Him. (7-11)

Psalm 95:1

Vs. 1-7: Whenever we come into God's presence, we must come with thanksgiving. The Lord is to be praised; we do not want matter, it were well if we did not want a heart. How great is that God, whose the whole earth is, and the fullness thereof; who directs and disposes of all! The Lord Jesus, whom we are here taught to praise, is a great God; the mighty God is one of his titles, and God over all, blessed for evermore. To him all power is given, both in heaven and earth. He is our God, and we should praise him. He is our Savior, and the Author of our blessedness. The gospel church is his flock, Christ is the great and good Shepherd of believers; he sought them when lost, and brought them to his fold.

Psalm 95:7

Vs. 7-11: Christ calls upon his people to hear his voice. You call him Master, or Lord; then be his willing, obedient people. Hear the voice of his doctrine, of his law, and in both, of his Spirit: hear and heed; hear and yield. Christ's voice must be heard today. This day of opportunity will not last always; improve it while it is called today. Hearing the voice of Christ is the same with believing. Hardness of heart is at the bottom of all distrust of the Lord. The sins of others ought to be warnings to us not to tread in their steps. The murmurings of Israel were written for our admonition. God is not subject to such passions as we are; but he is very angry at sin and sinners. That certainly is evil, which deserves such a recompense; and his threatenings are as sure as his promises. Let us be aware of the evils of our hearts, which lead us to wander from the Lord. There is a rest ordained for believers, the rest of everlasting refreshment, begun in this life, and perfected in the life to come. This is the rest which God calls his rest.

PSALM 96

A call to all people to praise God. (1-9) God's government and judgment. (10-13)

Psalm 96:1

Vs. 1-9: When Christ finished his work on earth, and was received into his glory in heaven, the church began to sing a new song unto him, and to bless his name. His apostles and evangelists showed forth his salvation among the heathen, his wonders among all people. All the earth is here summoned to worship the Lord. We must worship him in the beauty of holiness, as God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. Glorious things are said of him, both as motives to praise and matter of praise.

Psalm 96:10

Vs. 10-13: We are to hope and pray for that time, when Christ shall reign in righteousness over all nations. He shall rule in the hearts of men, by the power of truth, and the Spirit of righteousness. His coming draws nigh; this King, this Judge standeth before the door, but he is not yet come. The Lord will accept the praises of all who seek to promote the kingdom of Christ. The sea can but roar, and how the trees of the wood can show that they rejoice we know not; but He that searches the heart knows what is the mind of the Spirit, and understands the words, the broken language of the weakest. Christ will come to judge the earth, to execute just vengeance on his enemies, and to fulfill his largest promises to his people. What then are we? Would that day be welcome to us? If this be not our case, let us now begin to prepare to meet our God, by seeking the pardon of our sins, and the renewal of our souls to holiness.

PSALM 97

The Lord Jesus reigns in power that cannot be resisted. (1-7) His care of his people, and his provision for them. (8-12)

Psalm 97:1

Vs. 1-7 Though many have been made happy in Christ, still there is room. And all have reason to rejoice in Christ's government. There is a depth in his counsels, which we must not pretend to fathom; but still righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Christ's government, though it might be matter of joy to all, will yet be matter of terror to some; but it is their own fault that it is so. The most resolute and daring opposition will be baffled at the presence of the Lord. And the Lord Jesus will ere long come, and put an end to idol worship of every kind.

Psalm 97:8

Vs. 8-12 The faithful servants of God may well rejoice and be glad, because he is glorified; and whatever tends to his honor, is his people's pleasure. Care is taken for their safety. But something more is meant than their lives. The Lord will preserve the souls of his saints from sin, from apostasy, and despair, under their greatest trials. He will deliver them out of the hands of the wicked one, and preserve them safe to his heavenly kingdom. And those that rejoice in Christ Jesus, and in his exaltation, have fountains of joy prepared for them. Those that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. Gladness is sure to the upright in heart; the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment. Sinners tremble, but saints rejoice at God's holiness. As he hates sin, yet freely loves the person of the repentant sinner who believes in Christ, he will make a final separation between the person he loves and the sin he hates, and sanctify his people wholly, body, soul, and spirit.

PSALM 98

The glory of the Redeemer. (1-3) The joy of the Redeemer. (4-9)

Psalm 98:1

Vs. 1-3: A song of praise for redeeming love is a new song, a mystery hidden from ages and generations. Converts sing a new song, very different from what they had sung. If the grace of God put a new heart into our breasts, it will put a new song into our mouths. Let this new song be sung to the praise of God, in consideration of the wonders he has wrought. The Redeemer has overcome all difficulties in the way of our redemption, and was not discouraged by the services or sufferings appointed him. Let us praise him for the discoveries made to the world of the work of redemption; his salvation and his righteousness fulfilling the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament. In pursuance of this design, God raised up his Son Jesus to be not only a Light to lighten the Gentiles, but the glory of his people Israel. Surely it behooves us to inquire whether his holy arm hath gotten the victory in our hearts, over the power of Satan, unbelief, and sin? If this be our happy case, we shall exchange all light songs of vanity for songs of joy and thanksgiving; our lives will celebrate the Redeemer's praise.

Psalm 98:4

Vs. 4-9: Let all the children of men rejoice in the setting up the kingdom of Christ, for all may benefit by it. The different orders of rational creatures in the universe, seem to be described in figurative language in the reign of the great Messiah. The kingdom of Christ will be a blessing to the whole creation. We expect his second coming to begin his glorious reign. Then shall heaven and earth rejoice, and the joy of the redeemed shall be full. But sin and its dreadful effects will not be utterly done away, till the Lord come to judge the world in righteousness. Seeing then that we look for such things, let us give diligence that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

PSALM 99

The happy government God's people are under. (1-5) Its happy administration. (6-9)

Psalm 99:1

Vs. 1-5: God governs the world by his providence, governs the church by his grace, and both by his Son. The inhabitants of the earth have cause to tremble, but the Redeemer still waits to be gracious. Let all who hear, take warning, and seek his mercy. The more we humble ourselves before God, the more we exalt him; and let us be thus reverent, for he is holy.

Psalm 99:6

Vs. 6-9: The happiness of Israel is made out by referring to the most useful governors of that people. They in every thing made God's word and law their rule, knowing that they could not else expect that their prayers should be answered. They all wonderfully prevailed with God in prayer; miracles were wrought at their request. They pleaded for the people, and obtained answers of peace. Our Prophet and High Priest, of infinitely greater dignity than Moses, Aaron, or Samuel, has received and declared to us the will of the Father. Let us not only exalt the Lord with our lips, but give him the throne in our heart; and while we worship him upon his mercy-seat, let us never forget that he is holy.

PSALM 100

An exhortation to praise God, and rejoice in him.

Psalm 100:1

This song of praise should be considered as a prophecy, and even used as a prayer, for the coming of that time when all people shall know that the Lord he is God, and shall become his worshippers, and the sheep of his pasture. Great encouragement is given us, in worshipping God, to do it cheerfully. If, when we strayed like wandering sheep, he has brought us again to his fold, we have indeed abundant cause to bless his name. The matter of praise, and the motives to it, are very important. Know ye what God is in himself, and what he is to you. Know it; consider and apply it, then you will be more close and constant, more inward and serious, in his worship. The covenant of grace set down in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, with so many rich promises, to strengthen the faith of every weak believer, makes the matter of God's praise and of his people's joys so sure, that how sad soever our spirits may be when we look to ourselves, yet we shall have reason to praise the Lord when we look to his goodness and mercy, and to what he has said in his word for our comfort.

PSALM 101

David's vow and profession of godliness.

Psalm 101:1

In this psalm we have David declaring how he intended to regulate his household, and to govern his kingdom, that he might stop wickedness, and encourage godliness. It is also applicable to private families, and is the householder's psalm. It teaches all that have any power, whether more or less, to use it so as to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. The chosen subject of the psalm is God's mercy and judgment. The Lord's providences concerning his people are commonly mixed; mercy and judgment. God has set the one over against the other, both to do good, like showers and sunshine. When, in his providence, he exercises us with the mixture of mercy and judgment, we must make suitable acknowledgments to him for both. Family mercies and family afflictions are both calls to family religion. Those who are in public stations are not thereby excused from care in governing their families; they are the more concerned to set a good example of ruling their own houses well. Whenever a man has a house of his own, let him seek to have God to dwell with him; and those may expect his presence, who walk with a perfect heart, in a perfect way. David resolves to practice no evil himself. He further resolves not to keep bad servants, nor to employ those about him that are wicked. He will not admit them into his family, lest they spread the infection of sin. A forward heart, one that delights to be cross and perverse, is not fit for society, the bond of which is Christian love. Nor will he countenance slanderers, those who take pleasure in wounding their neighbor's reputation. Also, God resists the proud, and false, deceitful people, who scruple not to tell lies, or commit frauds. Let every one be zealous and diligent to reform his own heart and ways, and to do this early; ever mindful of that future, most awful morning, when the King of righteousness shall cut off all wicked doers from the heavenly Jerusalem.

PSALM 102

A sorrowful complaint of great afflictions. (1-11) Encouragement by expecting the performances of God's promises to his church. (12-22) The unchangeableness of God. (23-28)

Psalm 102:1

Vs. 1-11: The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; but here, as often elsewhere, the Holy Ghost has put words into our mouths. Here is a prayer put into the hands of the afflicted; let them present it to God. Even good men may be almost overwhelmed with afflictions. It is our duty and interest to pray; and it is comfort to an afflicted spirit to unburden itself, by a humble representation of its griefs. We must say, Blessed be the name of the Lord, who both gives and takes away. The psalmist looked upon himself as a dying man; My days are like a shadow.

Psalm 102:12

Vs. 12-22: We are dying creatures, but God is an everlasting God, the protector of his church; we may be confident that it will not be neglected. When we consider our own vileness, our darkness and deadness, and the manifold defects in our prayers, we have cause to fear that they will not be received in heaven; but we are here assured of the contrary, for we have an Advocate with the Father, and are under grace, not under the law. Redemption is the subject of praise in the Christian church; and that great work is described by the temporal deliverance and restoration of Israel. Look down upon us, Lord Jesus; and bring us into the glorious liberty of thy children, that we may bless and praise thy name.

Psalm 102:23

Vs. 23-28: Bodily distempers soon weaken our strength, then what can we expect but that our months should be cut off in the midst; and what should we do but provide accordingly? We must own God's hand in it; and must reconcile this to his love, for often those that have used their strength well, have it weakened; and those who, as we think, can very ill be spared, have their days shortened. It is very comfortable, in reference to all the changes

and dangers of the church, to remember that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. And in reference to the death of our bodies, and the removal of friends, to remember that God is an everlasting God. Do not let us overlook the assurance this psalm contains of a happy end to all the believer's trials. Though all things are changing, dying, perishing, like a vesture folding up and hastening to decay, yet Jesus lives, and thus all is secure, for he hath said, Because I live ye shall live also.

PSALM 103

An exhortation to bless God for his mercy. (1-5) And to the church and to all men. (6-14) For the constancy of his mercy. (15-18) For the government of the world. (19-22)

Psalm 103:1

Vs. 1-5: By the pardon of sin, that is taken away which kept good things from us, and we are restored to the favor of God, who bestows good things on us. Think of the provocation; it was sin, and yet pardoned: how many the provocations, yet all pardoned! God is still forgiving, as we are still sinning and repenting. The body finds the melancholy consequences of Adam's offense, it is subject to many infirmities, and the soul also. Christ alone forgives all our sins; it is he alone who heals all our infirmities. And the person who finds his sin cured, has a well-grounded assurance that it is forgiven. When God, by the graces and comforts of his Spirit, recovers his people from their decays, and fills them with new life and joy, which is to them an earnest of eternal life and joy, they may then be said to return to the days of their youth, ^{}Job 33:25.

Psalm 103:6

Vs. 6-14: Truly God is good to all: he is in a special manner good to Israel. He has revealed himself and his grace to them. By his ways we may understand his precepts, the ways he requires us to walk in; and his promises and purposes. He always has been full of compassion. How unlike are those to God, who take every occasion to chide, and never know when to cease! What would become of us, if God should deal so with us? The Scripture says a great deal of the mercy of God, and we all have experienced it. The father pities his children that are weak in knowledge, and teaches them; pities them when they are forward, and bears with them; pities them when they are sick, and comforts them; pities them when they are villainy, and helps them to rise; pities them when they have offended, and, upon their submission, forgives them; pities them when wronged, and rights them: thus the Lord pities those that fear him. See why he pities. He considers the frailty of our bodies, and the folly of our souls, how little we can do, how little we can bear; in all which his compassion appears.

Psalm 103:15

Vs. 15-18: How short is man's life, and uncertain! The flower of the garden is commonly more choice, and will last the longer, for being sheltered by the garden-wall, and the gardener's care; but the flower of the field, to which life is here compared, is not only withering in itself, but exposed to the cold blasts, and liable to be cropped and trod on by the beasts of the field. Such is man. God considers this, and pities him; let him consider it himself. God's mercy is better than life, for it will outlive it. His righteousness, the truth of his promise, shall be unto children's children, who tread in the footsteps of their forefathers' piety. Then shall mercy be preserved to them.

Psalm 103:19

Vs. 19-22: He who made all, rules all, and both by a word of power. He disposes all persons and things to his own glory. There is a world of holy angels who are ever praising him. Let all his works praise him. Such would have been our constant delight, if we had not been villainy creatures. Such it will in a measure become, if we are born of God. Such it will be for ever in heaven; nor can we be perfectly happy till we can take unwearied pleasure in perfect obedience to the will of our God. And let the feeling of each redeemed heart be, Bless the Lord, O my soul.

PSALM 104

God's majesty in the heavens, The creation of the sea, and the dry land. (1-9) His provision for all creatures. (10-18) The regular course of day and night, and God's sovereign power over all the creatures. (19-30) A resolution to continue praising God. (31-35)

Psalm 104:1

Vs. 1-9: Every object we behold calls on us to bless and praise the Lord, who is great. His eternal power and Godhead are clearly shown by the things which he hath made. God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. The Lord Jesus, the Son of his love, is the Light of the world.

Psalm 104:10

Vs. 10-18: When we reflect upon the provision made for all creatures, we should also notice the natural worship they render to God. Yet man, forgetful ungrateful man, enjoys the largest measure of his Creator's kindness. the earth, varying in different lands. Nor let us forget spiritual blessings; the fruitfulness of the church through grace, the bread of everlasting life, the cup of salvation, and the oil of gladness. Does God provide for the inferior creatures, and will he not be a refuge to his people?

Psalm 104:19

Vs. 19-30: We are to praise and magnify God for the constant succession of day and night. And see how those are like to the wild beasts, who wait for the twilight, and have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Does God listen to the language of mere nature, even in ravenous creatures, and shall he not much more interpret favorably the language of grace in his own people, though weak and broken groanings which cannot be uttered? There is the work of every day, which is to be done in its day, which man must apply to every morning, and which he must continue in till evening; it will be time enough to rest when the night comes, in which no man can work. The psalmist wonders at the works of God. The works of art, the more closely they are looked upon, the more rough they appear; the works of nature appear more fine and exact. They are all made in wisdom, for

they all answer the end they were designed to serve. Every spring is an emblem of the resurrection, when a new world rises, as it were, out of the ruins of the old one. But man alone lives beyond death. When the Lord takes away his breath, his soul enters on another state, and his body will be raised, either to glory or to misery. May the Lord send forth his Spirit, and new-create our souls to holiness.

<P> **Psalm 104:31**

Vs. 31-35: Man's glory is fading; God's glory is everlasting: creatures change, but with the Creator there is no variableness. And if meditation on the glories of creation be so sweet to the soul, what greater glory appears to the enlightened mind, when contemplating the great work of redemption! There alone can a sinner perceive ground of confidence and joy in God. While he with pleasure upholds all, governs all, and rejoices in all his works, let our souls, touched by his grace, meditate on and praise him.

PSALM 105

A solemn call to praise and serve the Lord. (1-7) His gracious dealings with Israel. (8-23) Their deliverance from Egypt, and their settlement in Canaan. (24-45)

Psalm 105:1

Vs. 1-7: Our devotion is here stirred up, that we may stir up ourselves to praise God. Seek his strength; that is, his grace; the strength of his Spirit to work in us that which is good, which we cannot do but by strength derived from him, for which he will be sought. Seek to have his favor to eternity, therefore continue seeking it while living in this world; for he will not only be found, but he will reward those that diligently seek him.

Psalm 105:8

Vs. 8-23: Let us remember the Redeemer's marvelous works, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth. Though true Christians are few in number, strangers and pilgrims upon earth, yet a far better inheritance than Canaan is made sure to them by the covenant of God; and if we have the anointing of the Holy Spirit, none can do us any harm. Afflictions are among our mercies. They prove our faith and love, they humble our pride, they wean us from the world, and quicken our prayers. Bread is the staff which supports life; when that staff is broken, the body fails and sinks to the earth. The word of God is the staff of spiritual life, the food and support of the soul: the sorest judgment is a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. Such a famine was sore in all lands when Christ appeared in the flesh; whose coming, and the blessed effect of it, are shadowed forth in the history of Joseph. At the appointed time Christ was exalted as Mediator; all the treasures of grace and salvation are at his disposal, perishing sinners come to him, and are relieved by him.

Psalm 105:24

Vs. 24-45: As the believer commonly thrives best in his soul when under the cross; so the church also flourishes most in true holiness, and increases in number, while under persecution. Yet instruments shall be raised up for

their deliverance, and plagues may be expected by persecutors. And see the special care God took of his people in the wilderness. All the benefits bestowed on Israel as a nation, were shadows of spiritual blessings with which we are blessed in Christ Jesus. Having redeemed us with his blood, restored our souls to holiness, and set us at liberty from Satan's bondage, he guides and guards us all the way. He satisfies our souls with the bread of heaven, and the water of life from the Rock of salvation, and will bring us safely to heaven. He redeems his servants from all iniquity, and purifies them unto himself, to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

PSALM 106

The happiness of God's people. (1-5) Israel's sins. (6-12) Their provocations. (13-33) Their rebellions in Canaan. (34-46) Prayer for more complete deliverance. (47,48)

Psalm 106:1

Vs. 1-5: None of our sins or sufferings should prevent our ascribing glory and praise to the Lord. The more unworthy we are, the more is his kindness to be admired. And those who depend on the Redeemer's righteousness will endeavor to copy his example, and by word and deed to show forth his praise. God's people have reason to be cheerful people; and need not envy the children of men their pleasure or pride.

Psalm 106:6

Vs. 6-12: Here begins a confession of sin; for we must acknowledge that the Lord has done right, and we have done wickedly. We are encouraged to hope that though justly corrected, yet we shall not be utterly forsaken. God's afflicted people own themselves guilty before him. God is distrusted because his favors are not remembered. If he did not save us for his own name's sake, and to the praise of his power and grace, we should all perish.

Psalm 106:13

Vs. 13-33: Those that will not wait for God's counsel, shall justly be given up to their own hearts' lusts, to walk in their own counsels. An undue desire, even for lawful things, becomes sinful. God showed his displeasure for this. He filled them with uneasiness of mind, terror of conscience, and self-reproach. Many that fare deliciously every day, and whose bodies are healthful, have leanness in their souls: no love to God, no thankfulness, no appetite for the Bread of life, and then the soul must be lean. Those wretchedly forget themselves, that feast their bodies and starve their souls. Even the true believer will see abundant cause to say, It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed. Often have we set up idols in our hearts, cleaved to some forbidden object; so that if a greater than Moses had not

stood to turn away the anger of the Lord, we should have been destroyed. If God dealt severely with Moses for unadvised words, what do those deserve who speak many proud and wicked words? It is just in God to remove those relations that are blessings to us, when we are peevish and provoking to them, and grieve their spirits.

Psalm 106:34

Vs. 34-48: The conduct of the Israelites in Canaan, and God's dealings with them, show that the way of sin is down-hill; omissions make way for commissions: when they neglected to destroy the heathen, they learned their works. One sin led to many more, and brought the judgments of God on them. Their sin was, in part, their own punishment. Sinners often see themselves ruined by those who led them into evil. Satan, who is a tempter, will be a tormentor. At length, God showed pity to his people for his covenant's sake. The unchangeableness of God's merciful nature and love to his people, makes him change the course of justice into mercy; and no other change is meant by God's repentance. Our case is awful when the outward church is considered. When nations professing Christianity, are so guilty as we are, no wonder if the Lord brings them low for their sins. Unless there is general and deep repentance, there can be no prospect but of increasing calamities. The psalm concludes with prayer for completing the deliverance of God's people, and praise for the beginning and progress of it. May all the people of the earth, ere long, add their Amen.

PSALM 107

God's providential care of the children of men in distresses, in banishment, and dispersion. (1-9) In captivity. (10-16) In sickness. (17-22) Danger at sea. (23-32) God's hand is to be seen by his own people. (33-43)

Psalm 107:1

Vs. 1-9: In these verses there is reference to the deliverance from Egypt, and perhaps that from Babylon: but the circumstances of travelers in those countries are also noted. It is scarcely possible to conceive the horrors suffered by the hapless traveler, when crossing the trackless sands, exposed to the burning rays of the sun. The words describe their case whom the Lord has redeemed from the bondage of Satan; who pass through the world as a dangerous and dreary wilderness, often ready to faint through troubles, fears, and temptations. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, after God, and communion with him, shall be filled with the goodness of his house, both in grace and glory.

Psalm 107:10

Vs. 10-16: This description of prisoners and captives intimates that they are desolate and sorrowful. In the eastern prisons the captives were and are treated with much severity. Afflicting providences must be improved as humbling providences; and we lose the benefit, if our hearts are unhumiliated and unbroken under them. This is a shadow of the sinner's deliverance from a far worse confinement. The awakened sinner discovers his guilt and misery. Having struggled in vain for deliverance, he finds there is no help for him but in the mercy and grace of God. His sin is forgiven by a merciful God, and his pardon is accompanied by deliverance from the power of sin and Satan, and by the sanctifying and comforting influences of God the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 107:17

Vs. 17-22: If we knew no sin, we should know no sickness. Sinners are fools. They hurt their bodily health by intemperance, and endanger their

lives by indulging their appetites. This their way is their folly. The weakness of the body is the effect of sickness. It is by the power and mercy of God that we are recovered from sickness, and it is our duty to be thankful. All Christ's miraculous cures were emblems of his healing diseases of the soul. It is also to be applied to the spiritual cures which the Spirit of grace works. He sends his word, and heals souls; convinces, converts them, makes them holy, and all by the word. Even in common cases of recovery from sickness, God in his providence speaks, and it is done; by his word and Spirit the soul is restored to health and holiness.

 **Psalm 107:23**

Vs. 23-32: Let those who go to sea, consider and adore the Lord. Mariners have their business upon the tempestuous ocean, and there witness deliverances of which others cannot form an idea. How seasonable it is at such a time to pray! This may remind us of the terrors and distress of conscience many experience, and of those deep scenes of trouble which many pass through, in their Christian course. Yet, in answer to their cries, the Lord turns their storm into a calm, and causes their trials to end in gladness.

 **Psalm 107:33**

Vs. 33-43: What surprising changes are often made in the affairs of men! Let the present desolate state of Judea, and of other countries, explain this. If we look abroad in the world, we see many greatly increase, whose beginning was small. We see many who have thus suddenly risen, as suddenly brought to nothing. Worldly wealth is uncertain; often those who are filled with it, ere they are aware, lose it again. God has many ways of making men poor. The righteous shall rejoice. It shall fully convince all those who deny the Divine Providence. When sinners see how justly God takes away the gifts they have abused, they will not have a word to say. It is of great use to us to be fully assured of God's goodness, and duly affected with it. It is our wisdom to mind our duty, and to refer our comfort to him. A truly wise person will treasure in his heart this delightful psalm. From it, he will fully understand the weakness and wretchedness of man, and the power and loving-kindness of God, not for our merit, but for his mercy's sake.

PSALM 108

David gives thanks to God. (1-5) He prays to God for mercies for the land. (6-13) We may usefully select passages from different psalms, as here, Psalms 57; 60, to help our devotions, and enliven our gratitude.

Psalm 108:1

Vs. 1-5: We must learn how to praise God from David's example:

1. With fixed heart.
2. With freeness of expression.
3. With affection — lively, but not carelessly.
4. Publically.
5. With magnification of God's mercy and truth.

Psalm 108:6

Vs. 6-13: We must be public spirited in prayer and bear upon our hearts the concerns of the church of God as well as a burden for its deliverance.

PSALM 109

David complains of his enemies. (1-5) He prophesies their destruction. (6-20) Prayers and praises. (21-31)

Psalm 109:1

Vs. 1-5: It is the unspeakable comfort of all believers, that whoever is against them, God is for them; and to him they may apply as to one pleased to concern himself for them. David's enemies laughed at him for his devotion, but they could not laugh him out of it.

Psalm 109:6

Vs. 6-20: The Lord Jesus may speak here as a Judge, denouncing sentence on some of his enemies, to warn others. When men reject the salvation of Christ, even their prayers are numbered among their sins. See what hurries some to shameful deaths, and brings the families and estates of others to ruin; makes them and theirs despicable and hateful, and brings poverty, shame, and misery upon their posterity: it is sin, that mischievous, destructive thing. And what will be the effect of the sentence, "Go, ye cursed," upon the bodies and souls of the wicked! How it will affect the senses of the body, and the powers of the soul, with pain, anguish, horror, and despair! Think on these things, sinners, tremble and repent.

Psalm 109:21

Vs. 21-31: The psalmist takes God's comforts to himself, but in a very humble manner. He was troubled in mind. His body was wasted, and almost worn away. But it is better to have leanness in the body, while the soul prospers and is in health, than to have leanness in the soul, while the body is feasted. He was ridiculed and reproached by his enemies. But if God bless us, we need not care who curses us; for how can they curse whom God has not cursed; nay, whom he has blessed? He pleads God's glory, and the honor of his name. Save me, not according to my merit, for I pretend to none, but according to thy mercy. He concludes with the joy of faith, in assurance that his present conflicts would end in triumphs. Let all that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls

to him. Jesus, unjustly put to death, and now risen again, is an Advocate and Intercessor for his people, ever ready to appear on their behalf against a corrupt world, and the great accuser.

PSALM 110

Christ's kingdom.

Psalm 110:1

Glorious things are here spoken of Christ. Not only he should be superior to all the kings of the earth, but he then existed in glory as the eternal Son of God. Sitting is a resting posture: after services and sufferings, to give law, to give judgment. It is a remaining posture: he sits like a king for ever. All his enemies are now in a chain, but not yet made his footstool. And his kingdom, being set up, shall be kept up in the world, in despite of all the powers of darkness. Christ's people are a willing people. The power of the Spirit, going with the power of the world, to the people of Christs, is effectual to make them willing. They shall attend him in the beautiful attire of holiness; which becomes his house for ever. And he shall have many devoted to him. The dew of our youth, even in the morning of our days, ought to be consecrated to our Lord Jesus. Christ shall not only be a King, but a Priest. He is God's Minister to us, and our Advocate with the Father, and so is the Mediator between God and man. He is a Priest of the order of Melchizedek, which was before that of Aaron, and on many accounts superior to it, and a more lively representation of Christ's priesthood. Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, speaks as much terror to his enemies as happiness to his people. The effect of this victory shall be the utter ruin of his enemies. We have here the Redeemer saving his friends, and comforting them. He shall be humbled; he shall drink of the brook in the way. The wrath of God, running in the curse of the law, may be considered as the brook in the way of his undertaking. Christ drank of the waters of affliction in his way to the throne of glory. But he shall be exalted. What then are we? Has the gospel of Christ been to us the power of God unto salvation? Has his kingdom been set up in our hearts? Are we his willing subjects? Once we knew not our need of his salvation, and we were not willing that he should reign over us. Are we willing to give up every sin, to turn from a wicked, ensnaring world, and rely only on his merits and mercy, to have him for our Prophet, Priest, and King? and do we desire to be holy? To those who are thus changed, the Savors sacrifice, intercession, and blessing belong.

PSALM 111

The Lord is to be praised for his works.

◀BIB▶ Psalm 111:1

The psalmist resolves to praise God himself. Our exhortations and our examples should agree together. He recommends the works of the Lord, as the proper subject, when we are praising him; and the dealings of his providence toward the world, the church, and particular persons. All the works of the Lord are spoken of as one, it is his work; so admirably do all the dispensations of his providence center in one design. The works of God, humbly and diligently sought into, shall all be found just and holy. God's pardoning sin is the most wonderful of all his works, and ought to be remembered to his glory. He will ever be mindful of his covenant; he has ever been so, and he ever will be so. His works of providence were done according to the truth of the Divine promises and prophecies, and so were verity, or truth; and by him who has a right to dispose of the earth as he pleases, and so are judgment, or righteous: and this holds good of the work of grace upon the heart of man, ver. 7,8. All God's commandments are sure; all have been fulfilled by Christ, and remain with him for a rule of walk and conversation to us. He sent redemption unto his people, out of Egypt at first, and often afterwards; and these were typical of the great redemption, which in the fullness of time was to be wrought out by the Lord Jesus. Here his everlasting righteousness shines forth in union with his boundless mercy. No man is wise who does not fear the Lord; no man acts wisely except as influenced by that fear. This fear will lead to repentance, to faith in Christ, to watchfulness and obedience. Such persons are of a good understanding, however poor, unlearned, or despised.

PSALM 112

The blessedness of the righteous.

Psalm 112:1

We have to praise the Lord that there are a people in the world, who fear him and serve him, and that they are a happy people; which is owing entirely to his grace. Their fear is not that which love casts out, but that which love brings in. It follows and flows from love. It is a fear to offend. This is both fear and trust. The heart touched by the Spirit of God, as the needle touched with the loadstone, turns direct and speedily to God, yet still with trembling, being filled with this holy fear. Blessings are laid up for the faithful and their children's children; and true riches are bestowed on them, with as much of this world's possessions as is profitable for them. In the darkest hours of affliction and trial, the light of hope and peace will spring up within them, and seasonable relief shall turn mourning into joy. From their Lord's example they learn to be kind and full of compassion, as well as just in all their dealings; they use discretion, that they may be liberal in that manner which appears most likely to do good. Envy and slander may for a time hide their true characters here, but they shall be had in everlasting remembrance. They need not fear evil tidings. A good man shall have a settled spirit. And it is the endeavor of true believers to keep their minds stayed upon God, and so to keep them calm and undisturbed; and God has promised them both cause to do so, and grace to do so. Trusting in the Lord is the best and surest way of establishing the heart. The heart of man cannot fix any where with satisfaction, but in the truth of God, and there it finds firm footing. And those whose hearts are established by faith, will patiently wait till they gain their point. Compare all this with the vexation of sinners. The happiness of the saints is the envy of the wicked. The desire of the wicked shall perish; their desire was wholly to the world and the flesh, therefore when these perish, their joy is gone. But the blessings of the gospel are spiritual and eternal, and are conferred upon the members of the Christian church, through Christ their Head, who is the Pattern of all righteousness, and the Giver of all grace.

PSALM 113

An exhortation to praise God.

◀BBI▶ Psalm 113:1

God has praise from his own people. They have most reason to praise him; for those who attend him as his servants, know him best, and receive most of his favors, and it is easy, pleasant work to speak well of their Master. God's name ought to be praised in every place, from east to west. Within this wide space the Lord's name is to be praised; it ought to be so, though it is not. Ere long it will be, when all nations shall come and worship before him. God is exalted above all blessing and praise. We must therefore say, with holy admiration, Who is like unto the Lord our God? How condescending in him to behold the things in the earth! And what amazing condescension was it for the Son of God to come from heaven to earth, and take our nature upon him, that he might seek and save those that were lost! How vast his love in taking upon him the nature of man, to ransom guilty souls! God sometimes makes glorious his own wisdom and power, when, having some great work to do, he employs those least likely, and least thought of for it by themselves or others. The apostles were sent from fishing to be fishers of men. And this is God's constant method in his kingdom of grace. He takes men, by nature beggars, and even traitors, to be his favorites, his children, kings and priests unto him; and numbers them with the princes of his chosen people. He gives us all our comforts, which are generally the more welcome when long delayed, and no longer expected. Let us pray that those lands which are yet barren, may speedily become fruitful, and produce many converts to join in praising the Lord.

PSALM 114

An exhortation to fear God.

◀B01▶ Psalm 114:1

Let us acknowledge God's power and goodness in what he did for Israel, applying it to that much greater work of wonder, our redemption by Christ; and encourage ourselves and others to trust in God in the greatest straits. When Christ comes for the salvation of his people, he redeems them from the power of sin and Satan, separates them from an ungodly world, forms them to be his people, and becomes their King. There is no sea, no Jordan, so deep, so broad, but, when God's time is come, it shall be divided and driven back. Apply this to the planting the Christian church in the world. What ailed Satan and his idolatries, that they trembled as they did? But especially apply it to the work of grace in the heart. What turns the stream in a regenerate soul? What affects the lusts and corruptions, that they fly back; that prejudices are removed, and the whole man becomes new? It is at the presence of God's Spirit. At the presence of the Lord, not only mountains, but the earth itself may well tremble, since it has lain under a curse for man's sin. As the Israelites were protected, so they were provided for by miracles; such was that fountain of waters into which the flinty rock was turned, and that rock was Christ. The Son of God, the Rock of ages, gave himself to death, to open a fountain to wash away sins, and to supply believers with waters of life and consolation; and they need not fear that any blessing is too great to expect from his love. But let sinners fear before their just and holy Judge. Let us now prepare to meet our God, that we may have boldness before him at his coming.

PSALM 115

Glory to be ascribed to God. (1-8) by trusting in him and praising him. (9-18)

Psalm 115:1

Vs. 1-8: Let no opinion of our own merits have any place in our prayers or in our praises. All the good we do, is done by the power of his grace; and all the good we have, is the gift of his mere mercy, and he must have all the praise. Are we in pursuit of any mercy, and wrestling with God for it, we must take encouragement in prayer from God only. Lord, do so for us; not that we may have the credit and comfort of it, but that thy mercy and truth may have the glory of it. The heathen gods are senseless things. They are the works of men's hands: the painter, the carver, the statuary, can put no life into them, therefore no sense. The psalmist hence shows the folly of the worshippers of idols.

Psalm 115:9

Vs. 9-18: It is folly to trust in dead images, but it is wisdom to trust in the living God, for he is a help and a shield to those that trust in him. Wherever there is right fear of God, there may be cheerful faith in him; those who reverence his word, may rely upon it. He is ever found faithful. The greatest need his blessing, and it shall not be denied to the meanest that fear him. God's blessing gives an increase, especially in spiritual blessings. And the Lord is to be praised: his goodness is large, for he has given the earth to the children of men for their use. The souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burdens of the flesh, are still praising him; but the dead body cannot praise God: death puts an end to our glorifying him in this world of trial and conflict. Others are dead, and an end is thereby put to their service, therefore we will seek to do the more for God. We will not only do it ourselves, but will engage others to do it; to praise him when we are gone. Lord, thou art the only object for faith and love. Help us to praise thee while living and when dying, that thy name may be the first and last upon our lips: and let the sweet savor of thy name refresh our souls for ever.

PSALM 116

The psalmist declares his love to the Lord. (1-9) His desire to be thankful. (10-19)

Psalm 116:1

Vs. 1-9: We have many reasons for loving the Lord, but are most affected by his loving-kindness when relieved out of deep distress. When a poor sinner is awakened to a sense of his state, and fears that he must soon sink under the just wrath of God, then he finds trouble and sorrow. But let all such call upon the Lord to deliver their souls, and they will find him gracious and true to his promise. Neither ignorance nor guilt will hinder their salvation, when they put their trust in the Lord. Let us all speak of God as we have found him; and have we ever found him otherwise than just and good? It is of his mercies that we are not consumed. Let those who labor and are heavy laden come to him, that they may find rest to their souls; and if at all drawn from their rest, let them haste to return, remembering how bountifully the Lord has dealt with them. We should deem ourselves bound to walk as in his presence. It is a great mercy to be kept from being swallowed up with over-much sorrow. It is a great mercy for God to hold us by the right hand, so that we are not overcome and overthrown by a temptation. But when we enter the heavenly rest, deliverance from sin and sorrow will be complete; we shall behold the glory of the Lord, and walk in his presence with delight we cannot now conceive.

Psalm 116:10

Vs. 10-19: When troubled, we do best to hold our peace, for we are apt to speak unadvisedly. Yet there may be true faith where there are workings of unbelief; but then faith will prevail; and being humbled for our distrust of God's word, we shall experience his faithfulness to it. What can the pardoned sinner, or what can those who have been delivered from trouble or distress, render to the Lord for his benefits? We cannot in any way profit him. Our best is unworthy of his acceptance; yet we ought to devote ourselves and all we have to his service. I will take the cup of salvation; I will offer the drink-offerings appointed by the law, in token of

thankfulness to God, and rejoice in God's goodness to me. I will receive the cup of affliction; that cup, that bitter cup, which is sanctified to the saints, so that to them it is a cup of salvation; it is a means of spiritual health. The cup of consolation; I will receive the benefits God bestows upon me, as from his hand, and taste his love in them, as the portion not only of mine inheritance in the other world, but of my cup in this. Let others serve what masters they will, truly I am thy servant. Two ways men came to be servants. By birth. Lord, I was born in thy house; I am the son of thine handmaid, and therefore thine. It is a great mercy to be children of godly parents. By redemption. Lord, thou hast loosed my bonds, thou hast discharged me from them, therefore I am thy servant. The bonds thou hast loosed shall tie me faster unto thee. Doing good is sacrifice, with which God is well pleased; and this must accompany giving thanks to his name. Why should we offer that to the Lord which cost us nothing? The psalmist will pay his vows now; he will not delay the payment: publicly, not to make a boast, but to show he is not ashamed of God's service, and to invite others to join him. Such are true saints of God, in whose lives and deaths he will be glorified.

PSALM 117

All people called upon to praise God.

Psalm 117:1

Here is a solemn call to all nations to praise the Lord, and proper matter for that praise is suggested. We are soon weary of well-doing, if we keep not up the pious and devout affection with which the spiritual sacrifice of praise ought to be kindled and kept burning. This is a gospel psalm. The apostle, ^{<B701>}Romans 15:11, quotes it as a proof that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentile nations, and that it would be entertained by them. For many ages, in Judah only was God known, and his name praised; this call was not then given to any Gentiles. But the gospel of Christ is ordered to be preached to all nations, and by him those that were afar off are made nigh. We are among the persons to whom the Holy Spirit here speaks, whom he calls upon to join his ancient people in praising the Lord. Grace has thus abounded to millions of perishing sinners. Let us then listen to the offers of the grace of God, and pray for that time when all nations of the earth shall show forth his praises. And let us bless God for the unsearchable riches of gospel grace.

PSALM 118

It is good to trust in the Lord. (1-18) The coming of Christ in his kingdom. (19-29)

Psalm 118:1

Vs. 1-18: The account the psalmist here gives of his troubles is very applicable to Christ: many hated him without a cause; nay, the Lord himself chastened him sorely, bruised him, and put him to grief, that by his stripes we might be healed. God is sometimes the strength of his people, when he is not their song; they have spiritual supports, though they want spiritual delights. Whether the believer traces back his comfort to the everlasting goodness and mercy of God, or whether he looks forward to the blessing secured to him, he will find abundant cause for joy and praise. Every answer to our prayers is an evidence that the Lord is on our side; and then we need not fear what man can do unto us; we should conscientiously do our duty to all, and trust in him alone to accept and bless us. Let us seek to live to declare the works of God, and to encourage others to serve him and trust in him. Such were the triumphs of the Son of David, in the assurance that the good pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand.

Psalm 118:19

Vs. 19-29: Those who saw Christ's day at so great a distance, saw cause to praise God for the prospect. The prophecy, ver. 22,23, may refer to David's preferment; but principally to Christ.

1. His humiliation; he is the Stone which the builders refused: they would go on in their building without him. This proved the ruin of those who thus made light of him. Rejecters of Christ are rejected of God.
2. His exaltation; he is the chief Cornerstone in the foundation. He is the chief Top-stone, in whom the building is completed, who must, in all things, have the pre-eminence.

Christ's name is Wonderful; and the redemption he wrought out is the most amazing of all God's wondrous works. We will rejoice and be glad in the Lord's day; not only that such a day is appointed, but in the occasion of it, Christ's becoming the Head. Sabbath days ought to be rejoicing days, then they are to us as the days of heaven. Let this Savior be my Savior, my Ruler. Let my soul prosper and be in health, in that peace and righteousness which his government brings. Let me have victory over the lusts that war against my soul; and let Divine grace subdue my heart. The duty which the Lord has made, brings light with it, true light. The duty this privilege calls for, is here set forth; the sacrifices we are to offer to God in gratitude for redeeming love, are ourselves; not to be slain upon the altar, but living sacrifices, to be bound to the altar; spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, in which our hearts must be engaged. The psalmist praises God, and calls upon all about him to give thanks to God for the glad tidings of great joy to all people, that there is a Redeemer, even Christ the Lord. In him the covenant of grace is made sure and everlasting.

PSALM 119

The general scope and design of this psalm is to magnify the Divine law, and make it honorable. There are ten words by which Divine revelation is called in this psalm, and each expresses what God expects from us, and what we may expect from him.

1. God's law; this is enacted by him as our Sovereign.
2. His way; this is the rule of his providence.
3. His testimonies; they are solemnly declared to the world.
4. His commandments; given with authority.
5. His precepts; not left as indifferent matters to us.
6. His word, or saying; it is the declaration of his mind.
7. His judgments; framed in infinite wisdom.
8. His righteousness; it is the rule and standard of what is right.
9. His statutes; they are always binding.
10. His truth or faithfulness; it is eternal truth, it shall endure for ever.

Psalm 119:1

Vs. 1-8: This psalm may be considered as the statement of a believer's experience. As far as our views, desires, and affection agree with what is here expressed, they come from the influences of the Holy Spirit, and no further. The pardoning mercy of God in Christ, is the only source of a sinner's happiness. And those are most happy, who are preserved most free from the defilement of sin, who simply believe God's testimonies, and depend on his promises. If the heart be divided between him and the world, it is evil. But the saints carefully avoid all sin; they are conscious of much evil that clogs them in the ways of God, but not of that wickedness which draws them out of those ways. The tempter would make men think they are at liberty to follow the word of God or not, as they please. But the desire and prayer of a good man agree with the will and command of

God. If a man expects by obedience in one thing to purchase indulgence for disobedience in others, his hypocrisy will be detected; if he is not ashamed in this world, everlasting shame will be his portion. The psalmist coveted to learn the laws of God, to give God the glory. And believers see that if God forsakes them, the temper will be too hard for them.

Psalm 119:9

Vs. 9-16: To original corruption all have added actual sin. The ruin of the young is either living by no rule at all, or choosing false rules: let them walk by Scripture rules. To doubt of our own wisdom and strength, and to depend upon God, proves the purpose of holiness is sincere. God's word is treasure worth laying up, and there is no laying it up safe but in our hearts, that we may oppose God's precepts to the dominion of sin, his promises to its allurements, and his threatenings to its violence. Let this be our plea with Him to teach us his statutes, that, being partakers of his holiness, we may also partake of his blessedness. And those whose hearts are fed with the bread of life, should with their lips feed many. In the way of God's commandments there is the unsearchable riches of Christ. But we do not meditate on God's precepts to good purpose, unless our good thoughts produce good works. I will not only think of thy statutes, but do them with delight. And it will be well to try the sincerity of our obedience by tracing the spring of it; the reality of our love by cheerfulness in appointed duties.

Psalm 119:17

Vs. 17-24: If God deals in strict justice with us, we all perish. We ought to spend our lives in his service; we shall find true life in keeping his word. Those that would see the wondrous things of God's law and gospel, must beg him to give them understanding, by the light of his Spirit. Believers feel themselves strangers on earth; they fear missing their way, and losing comfort by erring from God's commandments. Every sanctified soul hungers after the word of God, as food which there is no living without. There is something of pride at the bottom of every willful sin. God can silence lying lips; reproach and contempt may humble and do us good, and then they shall be removed. Do we find the weight of the cross is above that we are able to bear? He that bore it for us will enable us to bear it; upheld by him we cannot sink. It is sad when those who should protect

the innocent, are their betrayers. The psalmist went on in duty, and he found comfort in the word of God. The comforts of the word of God are most pleasant to a gracious soul, when other comforts are made bitter; and those that would have God's testimonies to be their delight, must be advised by them. May the Lord direct us in exercising repentance of sin, and faith in Christ.

Psalm 119:25

Vs. 25-32: While the souls of the children of this world cleave to the earth as their portion, the children of light are greatly burdened, because of the remains of carnal affection in their hearts. It is unspeakable comfort to a gracious soul, to think with what tenderness all its complaints are received by a gracious God. We can talk of the wonders of redeeming love, when we understand the way of God's precepts, and walk in that way. The penitent melts in sorrow for sin: even the patient spirit may melt in the sense of affliction, it is then its interest to pour out its soul before God. The way of lying means all false ways by which men deceive themselves and others, or are deceived by Satan and his instruments. Those who know and love the law of the Lord, desire to know it more, and love it better. The way of serious godliness is the way of truth; the only true way to happiness: we must always have actual regard to it. Those who stick to the word of God, may in faith expect and pray for acceptance with God. Lord, never leave me to do that by which I shall shame myself, and do not thou reject my services. Those that are going to heaven, should still press forward. God, by his Spirit, enlarges the hearts of his people when he gives them wisdom. The believer prays to be set free from sin.

Psalm 119:33

Vs. 33-40: Teach me thy statutes, not the mere words, but the way of applying them to myself. God, by his Spirit, gives a right understanding. But the Spirit of revelation in the word will not suffice, unless we have the Spirit of wisdom in the heart. God puts his Spirit within us, causing us to walk in his statutes. The sin here prayed against is covetousness. Those that would have the love of God rooted in them, must get the love of the world rooted out; for the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Quicken me in thy way; to redeem time, and to do every duty with liveliness of spirit. Beholding vanity deadens us, and slackens our pace; a

traveler must not stand gazing upon every object that presents itself to his view. The promises of God's word greatly relate to the preservation of the true believer. When Satan has drawn a child of God into worldly compliances, he will reproach him with the falls into which he led him. Victory must come from the cross of Christ. When we enjoy the sweetness of God's precepts, it will make us long for more acquaintance with them. And where God has wrought to will, he will work to do.

Psalm 119:41

Vs. 41-48: Lord, I have by faith thy mercies in view; let me by prayer prevail to obtain them. And when the salvation of the saints is completed, it will plainly appear that it was not in vain to trust in God's word. We need to pray that we may never be afraid or ashamed to own God's truths and ways before men. And the psalmist resolves to keep God's law, in a constant course of obedience, without backsliding. The service of sin is slavery; the service of God is liberty. There is no full happiness, or perfect liberty, but in keeping God's law. We must never be ashamed or afraid to own our religion. The more delight we take in the service of God, the nearer we come to perfection. Not only consent to his law as good, but take pleasure in it as good for us. Let me put forth all the strength I have, to do it. Something of this mind of Christ is in every true disciple.

Psalm 119:49

Vs. 49-56: Those that make God's promises their portion, may with humble boldness make them their plea. He that by his Spirit works faith in us, will work for us. The word of God speaks comfort in affliction. If, through grace, it makes us holy, there is enough in it to make us easy, in all conditions. Let us be certain we have the Divine law for what we believe, and then let not scoffers prevail upon us to decline from it. God's judgments of old comfort and encourage us, for he is still the same. Sin is horrible in the eyes of all that are sanctified. Ere long the believer will be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. In the mean time, the statutes of the Lord supply subjects for grateful praise. In the season of affliction, and in the silent hours of the night, he remembers the name of the Lord, and is stirred up to keep the law. All who have made religion the first thing, will own that they have been unspeakable gainers by it.

Psalm 119:57

Vs. 57-64: True believers take the Lord for the portion of their inheritance, and nothing less will satisfy them. The psalmist prayed with his whole heart, knowing how to value the blessing he prayed for: he desired the mercy promised, and depended on the promise for it. He turned from by-paths, and returned to God's testimonies. He delayed not. It behooves sinners to hasten to escape; and the believer will be equally in haste to glorify God. No care or grief should take away God's word out of our minds, or hinder the comfort it bestows. There is no situation on earth in which a believer has not cause to be thankful. Let us feel ashamed that others are more willing to keep from sleep to spend the time in sinful pleasures, than we are to praise God. And we should be more earnest in prayer, that our hearts may be filled with his mercy, grace, and peace.

Psalm 119:65

Vs. 65-72: However God has dealt with us, he has dealt with us better than we deserve; and all in love, and for our good. Many have knowledge, but little judgment; those who have both, are fortified against the snares of Satan, and furnished for the service of God. We are most apt to wander from God, when we are easy in the world. We should leave our concerns to the disposal of God, seeing we know not what is good for us. Lord, thou art our bountiful Benefactor; unequaled our hearts to faith and obedience. The psalmist will go on in his duty with constancy and resolution. The proud are full of the world, and its wealth and pleasures; these make them senseless, secure, and stupid. God visits his people with affliction, that they may learn his statutes. Not only God's promises, but even his law, his precepts, though hard to ungodly men, are desirable, and profitable, because they lead us with safety and delight unto eternal life.

Psalm 119:73

Vs. 73-80: God made us to serve him, and enjoy him; but by sin we have made ourselves unfit to serve him, and to enjoy him. We ought, therefore, continually to beseech him, by his Holy Spirit, to give us understanding. The comforts some have in God, should be matter of joy to others. But it is easy to own, that God's judgments are right, until it comes to be our own case. All supports under affliction must come from mercy and

compassion. The mercies of God are tender mercies; the mercies of a father, the compassion of a mother to her son. They come to us when we are not able to go to them. Causeless reproach does not hurt, and should not move us. The psalmist could go on in the way of his duty, and find comfort in it. He valued the good will of saints, and was desirous to keep up his communion with them. Soundness of heart signifies sincerity in dependence on God, and devotedness to him.

Psalm 119:81

Vs. 81-88: The psalmist sought deliverance from his sins, his foes, and his fears. Hope deferred made him faint; his eyes failed by looking out for this expected salvation. But when the eyes fail, yet faith must not. His affliction was great. He was become like a leathern bottle, which, if hung up in the smoke, is dried and shriveled up. We must ever be mindful of God's statutes. The days of the believer's mourning shall be ended; they are but for a moment, compared with eternal happiness. His enemies used craft as well as power for his ruin, in contempt of the law of God. The commandments of God are true and faithful guides in the path of peace and safety. We may best expect help from God when, like our Master, we do well and suffer for it. Wicked men may almost consume the believer upon earth, but he would sooner forsake all than forsake the word of the Lord. We should depend upon the grace of God for strength to do every good work. The surest token of God's goodwill toward us, is his good work in us.

Psalm 119:89

Vs. 89-96: The settling of God's word in heaven, is opposed to the changes and revolutions of the earth. And the engagements of God's covenant are established more firmly than the earth itself. All the creatures answer the ends of their creation: shall man, who alone is endued with reason, be the only unprofitable burden of the earth? We may make the Bible a pleasant companion at any time. But the word, without the grace of God, would not quicken us. See the best help for bad memories, namely, good affection; and though the exact words be lost, if the meaning remain, that is well. I am thine, not my own, not the world's; save me from sin, save me from ruin. The Lord will keep the man in peace, whose mind is stayed on him. It is poor perfection which one sees an end of. Such are all

things in this world, which pass for perfections. The glory of man is but as the flower of the grass. The psalmist had seen the fullness of the word of God, and its sufficiency. The word of the Lord reaches to all cases, to all times. It will take us from all confidence in man, or in our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness. Thus shall we seek comfort and happiness from Christ alone.

Psalm 119:97

Vs. 97-104: What we love, we love to think of. All true wisdom is from God. A good man carries his Bible with him, if not in his hands, yet in his head and in his heart. By meditation on God's testimonies we understand more than our teachers, when we understand our own hearts. The written word is a more sure guide to heaven, than all the fathers, the teachers, and ancients of the church. We cannot, with any comfort or boldness, attend God in holy duties, while under guilt, or in any by-way. It was Divine grace in his heart, that enabled the psalmist to receive these instructions. The soul has its tastes as well as the body. Our relish for the word of God will be greatest, when that for the world and the flesh is least. The way of sin is a wrong way; and the more understanding we get by the precepts of God, the more rooted will be our hatred of sin; and the more ready we are in the Scriptures, the better furnished we are with answers to temptation.

Psalm 119:105

Vs. 105-112: The word of God directs us in our work and way, and a dark place indeed the world would be without it. The commandment is a lamp kept burning with the oil of the Spirit, as a light to direct us in the choice of our way, and the steps we take in that way. The keeping of God's commands here meant, was that of a sinner under a dispensation of mercy, of a believer having part in the covenant of grace. The psalmist is often afflicted; but with longing desires to become more holy, offers up daily prayers for quickening grace. We cannot offer any thing to God, that he will accept but what he is pleased to teach us to do. To have our soul or life continually in our hands, implies constant danger of life; yet he did not forget God's promises nor his precepts. Numberless are the snares laid by the wicked; and happy is that servant of God, whom they have not caused to err from his Master's precepts. Heavenly treasures are a heritage for ever; all the saints accept them as such, therefore they can be content with

little of this world. We must look for comfort only in the way of duty, and that duty must be done. A good man, by the grace of God, brings his heart to his work, then it is done well.

Psalm 119:113

Vs. 113-120: Here is a dread of the risings of sin, and the first beginnings of it. The more we love the law of God, the more watchful we shall be, lest vain thoughts draw us from what we love. Would we make progress in keeping God's commands, we must be separate from evil-doers. The believer could not live without the grace of God; but, supported by his hand, his spiritual life shall be maintained. Our holy security is grounded on Divine supports. All departure from God's statutes is error, and will prove fatal. Their cunning is falsehood. There is a day coming which will put the wicked into everlasting fire, the fit place for the dross. See what comes of sin. Surely we who fall so low in devout affection, should fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into heavenly rest, any of us should be found to come short of it, ^{<300>}Hebrews 4:1.

Psalm 119:121

Vs. 121-128: Happy is the man, who, acting upon gospel principles, does justice to all around. Christ our Surety, having paid our debt and ransom, secures all the blessings of salvation to every true believer. The psalmist expects the word of God's righteousness, and no other salvation than what is secured by that word, which cannot fall to the ground. We deserve no favor from God; we are most easy when we cast ourselves upon God's mercy, and refer ourselves to it. If any man resolve to do God's will as his servant, he shall be made to know his testimonies. We must do what we can for the support of religion, and, after all, must beg of God to take the work into his own hands. It is hypocrisy to say we love God's commandments more than our worldly interests. The way of sin is a false way, being directly contrary to God's precepts, which are right: those that love and esteem God's law, hate sin, and will not be reconciled to it.

Psalm 119:129

Vs. 129-136: The wonders of redeeming love will fix the heart in adoration of them. The Scriptures show us what we were, what we are, and what we shall be. They show us the mercy and the justice of the Lord, the joys of

heaven, and the pains of hell. Thus they give to the simple, in a few days, understanding of those matters, which philosophers for ages sought in vain. The believer, wearied with the cares of life and his conflicts with sin, pants for the consolations conveyed to him by means of the sacred word. And every one may pray, Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me as thou used to do unto those that love thy name. We must beg that the Holy Spirit would order our steps. The dominion of sin is to be dreaded and prayed against by every one. The oppression of men is often more than flesh and blood can bear; and He who knoweth our frame, will not refuse to remove it in answer to the prayers of his people. Whatever obscurity may appear as to the faith of the Old Testament believers, their confidence at the throne of grace can only be explained by their having obtained more distinct views of gospel privileges, through the sacrifices and services of their law, than is generally imagined. Go to the same place, plead the name and merits of Jesus, and you will not, you cannot plead in vain. Commonly, where there is a gracious heart, there is a weeping eye. Accept, O Lord, the tears our blessed Redeemer shed in the days of his flesh, for us who should weep for our brethren or ourselves.

Psalm 119:137

Vs. 137-144: God never did, and never can do wrong to any. The promises are faithfully performed by Him that made them. Zeal against sin should constrain us to do what we can against it, at least to do more in religion ourselves. Our love to the word of God is evidence of our love to God, because it is designed to make us partake his holiness. Men's real excellencies always makes them low in their own eyes. When we are small and despised, we have the more need to remember God's precepts, that we may have them to support us. The law of God is the truth, the standard of holiness, the rule of happiness; but the obedience of Christ alone justifies the believer. Sorrows are often the lot of saints in this vale of tears; they are in heaviness through manifold temptations. There are delights in the word of God, which the saints often most sweetly enjoy when in trouble and anguish. This is life eternal, to know God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, ^{457B}John 17:3. May we live the life of faith and grace here, and be removed to the life of glory hereafter.

Psalm 119:145

Vs. 145-152: Supplications with the whole heart are presented only by those who desire God's salvation, and who love his commandments. Whither should the child go but to his father? Save me from my sins, my corruptions, my temptations, all the hindrances in my way, that I may keep thy testimonies. Christians who enjoy health, should not suffer the early hours of the morning to glide away unimproved. Hope in God's word encourages us to continue in prayer. It is better to take time from sleep, than not to find time for prayer. We have access to God at all hours; and if our first thoughts in the morning are of God, they will help to keep us in his fear all the day long. Make me lively and cheerful. God knows what we need and what is good for us, and will quicken us. If we are employed in God's service, we need not fear those who try to set themselves as far as they can out of the reach of the convictions and commands of his law. When trouble is near, God is near. He is never far to seek. All his commandments are truth. And God's promises will be performed. All that ever trusted in God have found him faithful.

Psalm 119:153

Vs. 153-160: The closer we cleave to the word of God, both as our rule and as our stay, the more assurance we have of deliverance. Christ is the Advocate of his people, their Redeemer. Those who were quickened by his Spirit and grace, when they were dead in trespasses and sins, often need to have the work of grace revived in them, according to the word of promise. The wicked not only do not God's statutes, but they do not even seek them. They flatter themselves that they are going to heaven; but the longer they persist in sin, the further it is from them. God's mercies are tender; they are a fountain that can never be exhausted. The psalmist begs for God's reviving, quickening grace. A man, steady in the way of his duty, though he may have many enemies, needs to fear none. Those that hate sin truly, hate it as sin, as a transgression of the law of God, and a breaking of his word. Our obedience is only pleasing to God, and pleasant to ourselves, when it comes from a principle of love. All, in every age, who receive God's word in faith and love, find every saying in it faithful.

Psalm 119:161

Vs. 161-168: Those whose hearts stand in awe of God's word, will rather endure the wrath of man, than break the law of God. By the word of God we are unspeakable gainers. Every man hates to have a lie told him, but we should more hate telling a lie; by the latter we give an affront to God. The more we see the beauty of truth, the more we shall see the hateful deformity of a lie. We are to praise God even for afflictions; through grace we get good from them. Those that love the world have great vexation, for it does not answer what they expect; those that love God's word have great peace, for it outdoes what they expect. Those in whom this holy love reigns, will not perplex themselves with needless scruples, or take offense at their brethren. A good hope of salvation will engage the heart in doing the commandments. And our love to the word of God must subdue our lusts, and root out carnal affection: we must make heart work of it, or we make nothing of it. We must keep the commandments of God by obedience to them, and his promises by reliance on them. God's eye is on us at all times; this should make us very careful to keep his commandments.

Psalm 119:169

Vs. 169-176: The psalmist desired grace and strength to lift up his prayers, and that the Lord would receive and notice them. He desired to know more of God in Christ; to know more of the doctrines of the word, and the duties of religion. He had a deep sense of unworthiness, and holy fear that his prayer should not come before God; Lord, what I pray for is, what thou hast promised. We have learned nothing to purpose, if we have not learned to praise God. We should always make the word of God the rule of our discourse, so as never to transgress it by sinful speaking, or sinful silence. His own hands are not sufficient, nor can any creature lend him help; therefore he looks up to God, that the hand that had made him may help him. He had made religion his deliberate choice. There is an eternal salvation all the saints long for, and therefore they pray that God would help their way to it. Let thy judgments help me; let all ordinances and all providences, (both are God's judgments,) further me in glorifying God; let them help me for that work. He often looks back with shame and gratitude to his lost estate. He still prays for the tender care of Him who

purchased his flock with his own blood, that he may receive from him the gift of eternal life. Seek me, that is, Find me; for God never seeks in vain. Turn me, and I shall be turned. Let this psalm be a touchstone by which to try our hearts, and our lives. Do our hearts, cleansed in Christ's blood, make these prayers, resolutions and confessions our own? Is God's word the standard of our faith, and the law of our practice? Do we use it as pleas with Christ for what we need? Happy those who live in such delightful exercises.

PSALM 120

The psalmist prays to God to deliver him from false and malicious tongues. (1-4) He complains of wicked neighbors. (5-7)

Psalm 120:1

Vs. 1-4: The psalmist was brought into great distress by a deceitful tongue. May every good man be delivered from lying lips. They forged false charges against him. In this distress, he sought God by fervent prayer. God can bridle their tongues. He obtained a gracious answer to this prayer. Surely sinners durst not act as they do, if they knew, and would be persuaded to think, what will be in the end thereof. The terrors of the Lord are his arrows; and his wrath is compared to burning coals of juniper, which have a fierce heat, and keep fire very long. This is the portion of the false tongue; for all that love and make a lie, shall have their portion in the lake that burns eternally.

Psalm 120:5

Vs. 5-7: It is very grievous to a good man, to be cast into, and kept in the company of the wicked, from whom he hopes to be for ever separated. See here the character of a good man; he is for living peaceably with all men. And let us follow David as he prefigured Christ; in our distress let us cry unto the Lord, and he will hear us. Let us follow after peace and holiness, striving to overcome evil with good.

PSALM 121

The safety of the godly.

Psalm 121:1

We must not rely upon men and means, instruments and second causes. Shall I depend upon the strength of the hills? upon princes and great men? No; my confidence is in God only. Or, we must lift up our eyes above the hills; we must look to God who makes all earthly things to us what they are. We must see all our help in God; from him we must expect it, in his own way and time. This psalm teaches us to comfort ourselves in the Lord, when difficulties and dangers are greatest. It is almighty wisdom that contrives, and almighty power that works the safety of those that put themselves under God's protection. He is a wakeful, watchful Keeper; he is never weary; he not only does not sleep, but he does not so much as slumber. Under this shade they may sit with delight and assurance. He is always near his people for their protection and refreshment. The right hand is the working hand; let them but turn to their duty, and they shall find God ready to give them success. He will take care that his people shall not fall. Thou shalt not be hurt, neither by the open assaults, nor by the secret attempts of thine enemies. The Lord shall prevent the evil thou fearest, and sanctify, remove, or lighten the evil thou feelest. He will preserve the soul, that it be not defiled by sin, and disturbed by affliction; he will preserve it from perishing eternally. He will keep thee in life and death; going out to thy labor in the morning of thy days, and coming home to thy rest when the evening of old age calls thee in. It is a protection for life. The Spirit, who is their Preserver and Comforter, shall abide with them for ever. Let us be found in our work, assured that the blessings promised in this psalm are ours.

PSALM 122

Esteem for Jerusalem. (1-5) Concern for its welfare. (6-9)

Psalm 122:1

Vs. 1-5: The pleasure and profit from means of grace, should make us disregard trouble and fatigue in going to them; and we should quicken one another to what is good. We should desire our Christian friends, when they have any good work in hand, to call for us, and take us with them. With what readiness should we think of the heavenly Jerusalem! How cheerfully should we bear the cross and welcome death, in hopes of a crown of glory! Jerusalem is called the beautiful city. It was a type of the gospel church, which is compact together in holy love and Christian communion, so that it is all as one city. If all the disciples of Christ were of one mind, and kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, their enemies would be deprived of their chief advantages against them. But Satan's maxim always has been, to divide that he may conquer; and few Christians are sufficiently aware of his designs.

Psalm 122:6

Vs. 6-9: Those who can do nothing else for the peace of Jerusalem, may pray for it. Let us consider all who seek the glory of the Redeemer, as our brethren and fellow-travelers, without regarding differences which do not affect our eternal welfare. Blessed Spirit of peace and love, who didst dwell in the soul of the holy Jesus, descend into his church, and fill those who compose it with his heavenly tempers; cause bitter contentions to cease, and make us to be of one mind. Love of the brethren and love to God, ought to stir us up to seek to be like the Lord Jesus in fervent prayer and unwearied labor, for the salvation of men, and the Divine glory.

PSALM 123

Confidence in God under contempt.

Psalm 123:1

Our Lord Jesus has taught us to look unto God in prayer as our Father in heaven. In every prayer a good man lifts up his soul to God; especially when in trouble. We desire mercy from him; we hope he will show us mercy, and we will continue waiting on him till it come. The eyes of a servant are to his master's directing hand, expecting that he will appoint him his work. And also to his supplying hand. Servants look to their master or their mistress for their portion of meat in due season. And to God we must look for daily bread, for grace sufficient; from him we must receive it thankfully. Where can we look for help but to our Master? And, further, to his protecting hand. If the servant is wronged and injured in his work, who should right him, but his master? And to his correcting hand. Whither should sinners turn but to him that smote them? They humble themselves under God's mighty hand. And lastly, to his rewarding hand. Hypocrites look to the world's hand, thence they have their reward; but true Christians look to God as their Master and their Rewarder. God's people find little mercy with men; but this is their comfort, that with the Lord there is mercy. Scorning and contempt have been, are, and are likely to be, the lot of God's people in this world. It is hard to bear; but the servants of God should not complain if they are treated as his beloved Son was. Let us then, when ready to faint under trials, look unto Jesus, and by faith and prayer cast ourselves upon the mercy of God.

PSALM 124

The deliverance of the church. (1-5) Thankfulness for the deliverance. (6-8)

<BGT> Psalm 124:1

Vs. 1-5: God savors the enemies of his people sometimes to prevail very far against them, that his power may be seen the more in their deliverance. Happy the people whose God is Jehovah, a God all-sufficient. Besides applying this to any particular deliverance wrought in our days and the ancient times, we should have in our thoughts the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ, by which believers were rescued from Satan.

<BGT> Psalm 124:6

Vs. 6-8: God is the Author of all our deliverances, and he must have the glory. The enemies lay snares for God's people, to bring them into sin and trouble, and to hold them there. Sometimes they seem to prevail; but in the Lord let us put our trust, and we shall not be put to confusion. The believer will ascribe all the honor of his salvation, to the power, mercy, and truth of God, and look back with wonder and thanksgiving on the way in which the Lord has led him. Let us rejoice that our help for the time to come is in him who made heaven and earth.

PSALM 125

The security of the righteous. (1-3) Prayer for them, The ruin of the wicked. (4,5)

Psalm 125:1

Vs. 1-3: All those minds shall be truly stayed, that are stayed on God. They shall be as Mount Zion, firm as it is; a mountain supported by providence, much more as a holy mountain supported by promise. They cannot be removed from confidence in God. They abide for ever in that grace which is the earnest of their everlasting continuance in glory. Committing themselves to God, they shall be safe from their enemies. Even mountains may molder and come to nothing, and rocks be removed, but God's covenant with his people cannot be broken, nor his care of them cease. Their troubles shall last no longer than their strength will bear them up under them. The rod of the wicked may come, may fall upon the righteous, upon their persons, their estates, their liberties, their families names, on any thing that falls to their lot; only it cannot reach their souls. And though it may come upon their lot, it shall not rest thereon. The Lord will make all work together for their good. The wicked shall only prove a correcting rod, not a destroying sword; even this rod shall not remain upon them, lest they distrust the promise, thinking God has cast them off.

Psalm 125:4

Vs. 4, 5: God's promises should quicken our prayers. The way of holiness is straight; there are no windings or shiftings in it. But the ways of sinners are crooked. They shift from one purpose to another, and turn hither and thither to deceive; but disappointment and misery shall befall them. Those who cleave to the ways of God, though they may have trouble in their way, their end shall be peace. The pleading of their Savior for them, secures to them the upholding power and preserving grace of their God. Lord, number us with them, in time, and to eternity.

PSALM 126

Those returned out of captivity are to be thankful. (1-3) Those yet in captivity are encouraged. (4-6)

Psalm 126:1

Vs. 1-3: It is good to observe how God's deliverances of the church are for us, that we may rejoice in them. And how ought redemption from the wrath to come, from the power of sin and of Satan, to be valued! The sinner convinced of his guilt and danger, when by looking to a crucified Savior he receives peace to his conscience, and power to break off his sins, often can scarcely believe that the prospect which opens to him is a reality.

Psalm 126:4

Vs. 4-6: The beginnings of mercies encourage us to pray for the completion of them. And while we are in this world there will be matter for prayer, even when we are most furnished with matter for praise. Suffering saints are often in tears; they share the calamities of human life, and commonly have a greater share than others. But they sow in tears; they do the duty of an afflicted state. Weeping must not hinder sowing; we must get good from times of affliction. And they that sow, in the tears of godly sorrow, to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting; and that will be a joyful harvest indeed. Blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be for ever comforted. When we mourn for our sins, or suffer for Christ's sake, we are sowing in tears, to reap in joy. And remember that God is not mocked; for whatever a man soweth that shall he reap, ^{<BIB>}Galatians 6:7-9. Here, O disciple of Jesus, behold an emblem of thy present labor and future reward; the day is coming when thou shalt reap in joy, plentiful shall be thy harvest, and great shall be thy joy in the Lord.

PSALM 127

The value of the Divine blessing.

Psalm 127:1

Let us always look to God's providence. In all the affairs and business of a family we must depend upon his blessing.

1. For raising a family. If God be not acknowledged, we have no reason to expect his blessing; and the best-laid plans fail, unless he crowns them with success.
2. For the safety of a family or a city. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen, though they neither slumber nor sleep, wake but in vain; mischief may break out, which even early discoveries may not be able to prevent.
3. For enriching a family. Some are so eager upon the world, that they are continually full of care, which makes their comforts bitter, and their lives a burden. All this is to get money; but all in vain, except God prosper them: while those who love the Lord, using due diligence in their lawful callings, and casting all their care upon him, have needful success, without uneasiness or vexation. Our care must be to keep ourselves in the love of God; then we may be easy, whether we have little or much of this world. But we must use the proper means very diligently.

Children are God's gifts, a heritage, and a reward; and are to be accounted blessings, and not burdens: he who sends mouths, will send meat, if we trust in him. They are a great support and defense to a family. Children who are young, may be directed aright to the mark, God's glory, and the service of their generation; but when they are gone into the world, they are arrows out of the hand, it is too late to direct them then. But these arrows in the hand too often prove arrows in the heart, a grief to godly parents. Yet, if trained according to God's word, they generally prove the best defense in declining years, remembering their obligations to their parents, and taking care of them in old age. All earthly comforts are uncertain, but

the Lord will assuredly comfort and bless those who serve him; and those who seek the conversion of sinners, will find that their spiritual children are their joy and crown in the day of Jesus Christ.

PSALM 128

The blessings of those who fear God.

Psalm 128:1

Only those who are truly holy, are truly happy. In vain do we pretend to be of those that fear God, if we do not make conscience of keeping steadfast to his ways. Blessed is every one that fears the Lord; whether he be high or low, rich or poor in the world. If thou fear him and walk in his ways, all shall be well with thee while thou livest, better when thou diest, best of all in eternity. By the blessing of God, the godly shall get an honest livelihood. Here is a double promise; they shall have something to do, for an idle life is a miserable, uncomfortable life, and shall have health and strength, and power of mind to do it. They shall not be forced to live upon the labors of other people. It is as much a mercy as a duty, with quietness to work and eat our own bread. They and theirs shall enjoy what they get. Such as fear the Lord and walk in his ways, are the only happy persons, whatever their station in life may be. They shall have abundant comfort in their family relations. And they shall have all the good things God has promised, and which they pray for. A good man can have little comfort in seeing his children's children, unless he sees peace upon Israel. Every true believer rejoices in the prosperity of the church. Hereafter we shall see greater things, with the everlasting peace and rest that remain for the Israel of God.

PSALM 129

Thankfulness for former deliverances. (1-4) A believing prospect of the destruction of the enemies of Zion. (5-8)

Psalm 129:1

Vs. 1-4: The enemies of God's people have very barbarously endeavored to wear out the saints of the Most High. But the church has been always graciously delivered. Christ has built his church upon a rock. And the Lord has many ways of disabling wicked men from doing the mischief they design against his church. The Lord is righteous in not suffering Israel to be ruined; he has promised to preserve a people to himself.

Psalm 129:5

Vs. 5-8: While God's people shall flourish as the loaded palm-tree, or the green and fruitful olive, their enemies shall wither as the grass upon the house-tops, which in eastern countries are flat, and what grows there never ripens; so it is with the designs of God's enemies. No wise man will pray the Lord to bless these mowers or reapers. And when we remember how Jesus arose and reigns; how his people have been supported, like the burning but unconsumed bush, we shall not fear.

PSALM 130

The psalmist's hope in prayer. (1-4) His patience in hope. (5-8)

Psalm 130:1

Vs. 1-4: The only way of relief for a sin-entangled soul, is by applying to God alone. Many things present themselves as diversions, many things offer themselves as remedies, but the soul finds that the Lord alone can heal. And until men are sensible of the guilt of sin, and quit all to come at once to God, it is in vain for them to expect any relief. The Holy Ghost gives to such poor souls a fresh sense of their deep necessity, to stir them up in earnest applications, by the prayer of faith, by crying to God. And as they love their souls, as they are concerned for the glory of the Lord, they are not to be wanting in this duty. Why is it that these matters are so long uncertain with them? Is it not from sloth and despondency that they content themselves with common and customary applications to God? Then let us up and be doing; it must be done, and it is attended with safety. We are to humble ourselves before God, as guilty in his sight. Let us acknowledge our sinfulness; we cannot justify ourselves, or plead not guilty. It is our unspeakable comfort that there is forgiveness with him, for that is what we need. Jesus Christ is the great Ransom; he is ever an Advocate for us, and through him we hope to obtain forgiveness. There is forgiveness with thee, not that thou mayest be presumed upon, but that thou mayest be feared. The fear of God often is put for the whole worship of God. The only motive and encouragement for sinners is this, that there is forgiveness with the Lord.

Psalm 130:5

Vs. 5-8: It is for the Lord that my soul waits, for the gifts of his grace, and the working of his power. We must hope for that only which he has promised in his word. Like those who wish to see the dawn, being very desirous that light would come long before day; but still more earnestly does a good man long for the tokens of God's favor, and the visits of his grace. Let all that devote themselves to the Lord, cheerfully stay themselves on him. This redemption is redemption from all sin. Jesus Christ saves his people from their sins, both from the condemning and

from the commanding power of sin. It is plenteous redemption; there is an all-sufficient fullness in the Redeemer, enough for all, enough for each; therefore enough for me, says the believer. Redemption from sin unequaled redemption from all other evils, therefore it is a plenteous redemption, through the atoning blood of Jesus, who shall redeem his people from all their sins. All that wait on God for mercy and grace, are sure to have peace.

PSALM 131

The psalmist's humility. Believers encouraged to trust in God.

Psalm 131:1

The psalmist aimed at nothing high or great, but to be content in every condition God allotted. Humble saints cannot think so well of themselves as others think of them. The love of God reigning in the heart, will subdue self-love. Where there is a proud heart, there is commonly a proud look. To know God and our duty, is learning sufficiently high for us. It is our wisdom not to meddle with that which does not belong to us. He was well reconciled to every condition the Lord placed him in. He had been as humble as a little child about the age of weaning, and as far from aiming at high things; as entirely at God's disposal, as the child at the disposal of the mother or nurse. We must become as little children, ^{<OR>} Matthew 18:3. Our hearts are desirous of worldly things, cry for them, and are fond of them; but, by the grace of God, a soul that is made holy, is weaned from these things. The child is cross and fretful while in the weaning; but in a day or two it cares no longer for milk, and it can bear stronger food. Thus does a converted soul quiet itself under the loss of what it loved, and disappointments in what it hoped for, and is easy whatever happens. When our condition is not to our mind, we must bring our mind to our condition; then we are easy to ourselves and all about us; then our souls are as a weaned child. And thus the psalmist recommends confidence in God, to all the Israel of God, from his own experience. It is good to hope, and quietly to wait for the salvation of the Lord under every trial.

PSALM 132

David's care for the ark. (1-10) The promises of God. (11-18)

Psalm 132:1

Vs. 1-10: David bound himself to find a place for the Lord, for the ark, the token of God's presence. When work is to be done for the Lord, it is good to tie ourselves to a time. It is good in the morning to fix upon work for the day, with submission to Providence, for we know not what a day may bring forth. And we should first, and without delay, seek to have our own hearts made a habitation of God through the Spirit. He prays that God would take up his dwelling in the habitation he had built; that he would give grace to the ministers of the sanctuary to do their duty. David pleads that he was the anointed of the Lord, and this he pleads as a type of Christ, the great Anointed. We have no merit of our own to plead; but, for His sake, in whom there is a fullness of merit, let us find favor. And every true believer in Christ, is an anointed one, and has received from the Holy One the oil of true grace. The request is, that God would not turn away, but hear and answer their petitions for his Son's sake.

Psalm 132:11

Vs. 11-18: The Lord never turns from us when we plead the covenant with his anointed Prophet, Priest, and King. How vast is the love of God to man, that he should speak thus concerning his church! It is his desire to dwell with us; yet how little do we desire to dwell with him! He abode in Zion till the sins of Israel caused him to give them up to the spoilers. Forsake us not, O God, and deliver us not in like manner, sinful though we are. God's people have a special blessing on common enjoyments, and that blessing puts peculiar sweetness into them. Zion's poor have reason to be content with a little of this world, because they have better things prepared for them. God will abundantly bless the nourishment of the new man, and satisfy the poor in spirit with the bread of life. He gives more than we ask, and when he gives salvation, he will give abundant joy. God would bring to nothing every design formed to destroy the house of David, until King Messiah should arise out of it, to sit upon the throne of his Father. In him all the promises center. His enemies, who will not have him

to reign over them, shall at the last day be clothed with shame and confusion for ever.

PSALM 133

The excellencies of brotherly love.

Psalm 133:1

We cannot say too much, it were well if enough could be said, to persuade people to live together in peace. It is good for us, for our honor and comfort; and brings constant delight to those who live in unity. The pleasantness of this is likened to the holy anointing oil. This is the fruit of the Spirit, the proof of our union with Christ, and adorns his gospel. It is profitable as well as pleasing; it brings blessings numerous as the drops of dew. It cools the scorching heat of men's passions, as the dews cool the air and refresh the earth. It moistens the heart, and makes it fit to receive the good seed of the word, and to make it fruitful. See the proof of the excellencies of brotherly love: where brethren dwell together in unity, the Lord commands the blessing. God commands the blessing; man can but beg a blessing. Believers that live in love and peace, shall have the God of love and peace with them now, and they shall shortly be with him for ever, in the world of endless love and peace. May all who love the Lord forbear and forgive one another, as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven them.

PSALM 134

An exhortation to bless the Lord.

Psalm 134:1

We must stir up ourselves to give glory to God, and encourage ourselves to hope for mercy and grace from him. It is an excellencies plan to fill up all our spare minutes with pious meditations, and prayers and praises. No time would then be a burden, nor should we murder our hours by trifling conversation and vain amusements, or by carnal indulgences. We need desire no more to make us happy, than to be blessed of the Lord. We ought to beg spiritual blessings, not only for ourselves, but for others; not only, The Lord bless me, but, The Lord bless thee; thus testifying our belief that there is enough for others as well as for us, and showing our good will to others.

PSALM 135

God to be praised for his mercy. (1-4) For his power and judgments. (5-14) The vanity of idols. (15-21)

Psalm 135:1

Vs. 1-4: The subject-matter of praise, is the blessings of grace flowing from the everlasting love of God. The name of God as a covenant God and Father in Christ, blessing us with all spiritual blessings in him, is to be loved and praised. The Lord chose a people to himself, that they might be unto him for a name and a praise. If they do not praise him for this distinguishing favor, they are the most unworthy and ungrateful of all people.

Psalm 135:5

Vs. 5-14: God is, and will be always, the same to his church, a gracious, faithful, wonder-working God. And his church is, and will be, the same to him, a thankful, praising people: thus his name endures for ever. He will return in ways of mercy to them, and will delight to do them good.

Psalm 135:15

Vs. 15-21: These verses arm believers against idolatry and all false worship, by showing what sort of gods the heathen worshipped. And the more deplorable the condition of the Gentile nations that worship idols, the more are we to be thankful that we know better. Let us pity, and pray for, and seek to benefit benighted heathens and deluded sinners. Let us endeavor to glorify his name, and recommend his truth, not only with our lips, but by holy lives, copying the example of Christ's goodness and truth.

PSALM 136

God to be praised as the Creator of the world. (1-9) As Israel's God and Savior. (10-22) For his blessings to all. (23-26)

<H01> Psalm 136:1

Vs. 1-9: Forgetful as we are, things must be often repeated to us. By “mercy” we understand the Lord’s disposition to save those whom sin has rendered miserable and vile, and all the provision he has made for the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ. The counsels of this mercy have been from everlasting, and the effects of it will endure for ever, to all who are interested in it. The Lord continues equally ready to show mercy to all who seek for it, and this is the source of all our hope and comfort.

<H00> Psalm 136:10

Vs. 10-22: The great things God did for Israel, when he brought them out of Egypt, were mercies which endured long to them; and our redemption by Christ, which was typified thereby, endures for ever. It is good to enter into the history of God’s favors, and in each to observe, and own, that his mercy endureth for ever. He put them in possession of a good land; it was a figure of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<H23> Psalm 136:23

Vs. 23-26: God’s everlasting mercy is here praised for the redemption of his church; in all his glories, and all his gifts. Blessed be God, who has provided and made known to us salvation through his Son. May we know and feel his redeeming power, that we may serve him in righteousness all our days. May He who giveth food to all flesh, feed our souls unto eternal life, and enliven our affection by his grace, that we may give thanks and praise to his holy name, for his mercy endureth for ever. Let us trace up all the favors we receive to this true source, and offer praise continually.

PSALM 137

The Jews bewail their captivity. (1-4) Their affection for Jerusalem. (5-9)

<H3>Psalm 137:1

Vs. 1-4: Their enemies had carried the Jews captive from their own land. To complete their woes, they insulted over them; they required of them mirth and a song. This was very barbarous; also profane, for no songs would serve but the songs of Zion. Scoffers are not to be compiled with. They do not say, How shall we sing, when we are so much in sorrow? but, It is the Lord's song, therefore we dare not sing it among idolaters.

<H3>Psalm 137:5

Vs. 5-9: What we love, we love to think of. Those that rejoice in God, for his sake make Jerusalem their joy. They steadfast resolved to keep up this affection. When suffering, we should recollect with godly sorrow our forfeited mercies, and our sins by which we lost them. If temporal advantages ever render a professor satisfied at a distance from the ordinances of God, or ashamed of his profession, the worst calamity has befallen him. Far be it from us to avenge ourselves; we will leave it to Him who has said, Vengeance is mine. Those that are glad at calamities, especially at the calamities of Jerusalem, shall not go unpunished. We cannot pray for promised success to the church of God without looking to, though we do not utter a prayer for, the ruin of her enemies. But let us call to mind to whose grace and finished salvation alone it is, that we have any hopes of being brought home to the heavenly Jerusalem.

PSALM 138

The psalmist praises God for answering prayer. (1-5) The Lord's dealing with the humble and the proud. (6-8)

<H3>Psalm 138:1

Vs. 1-5: When we can praise God with our whole heart, we need not be unwilling for the whole world to witness our gratitude and joy in him. Those who rely on his loving-kindness and truth through Jesus Christ, will ever find him faithful to his word. If he spared not his own Son, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? If God gives us strength in our souls, to bear the burdens, resist the temptations, and to do the duties of an afflicted state, if he strengthens us to keep hold of himself by faith, and to wait with patience for the event, we are bound to be thankful.

<H3>Psalm 138:6

Vs. 6-8: Though the Lord is high, yet he has respect to every lowly, humbled sinner; but the proud and unbelieving will be banished far from his blissful presence. Divine consolations have enough in them to revive us, even when we walk in the midst of troubles. And God will save his own people that they may be revived by the Holy Spirit, the Giver of life and holiness. If we give to God the glory of his mercy, we may take to ourselves the comfort. This confidence will not do away, but quicken prayer. Whatever good there is in us, it is God works in us both to will and to do. The Lord will perfect the salvation of every true believer, and he will never forsake those whom he has created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works.

PSALM 139

God knows all things. (1-6) He is every where present. (7-16) The psalmist's hatred to sin, and desire to be led aright. (17-24)

Psalm 139:1

Vs. 1-6: God has perfect knowledge of us, and all our thoughts and actions are open before him. It is more profitable to meditate on Divine truths, applying them to our own cases, and with hearts lifted to God in prayer, than with a curious or disputing frame of mind. That God knows all things, is omniscient; that he is every where, is omnipresent; are truths acknowledged by all, yet they are seldom rightly believed in by mankind. God takes strict notice of every step we take, every right step and every by-step. He knows what rule we walk by, what end we walk toward, what company we walk with. When I am withdrawn from all company, thou knowest what I have in my heart. There is not a vain word, not a good word, but thou knowest from what thought it came, and with what design it was uttered. Wherever we are, we are under the eye and hand of God. We cannot by searching find how God searches us out; nor do we know how we are known. Such thoughts should restrain us from sin.

Psalm 139:7

Vs. 7-16: We cannot see God, but he can see us. The psalmist did not desire to go from the Lord. Whither can I go? In the most distant corners of the world, in heaven, or in hell, I cannot go out of thy reach. No veil can hide us from God; not the thickest darkness. No disguise can save any person or action from being seen in the true light by him. Secret haunts of sin are as open before God as the most open villainies. On the other hand, the believer cannot be removed from the supporting, comforting presence of his Almighty Friend. Should the persecutor take his life, his soul will the sooner ascend to heaven. The grave cannot separate his body from the love of his Savior, who will raise it a glorious body. No outward circumstances can separate him from his Lord. While in the path of duty, he may be happy in any situation, by the exercise of faith, hope, and prayer.

Psalm 139:17

Vs. 17-24: God's counsels concerning us and our welfare are deep, such as cannot be known. We cannot think how many mercies we have received from him. It would help to keep us in the fear of the Lord all the day long, if, when we wake in the morning, our first thoughts were of him: and how shall we admire and bless our God for his precious salvation, when we awake in the world of glory! Surely we ought not to use our members and senses, which are so curiously fashioned, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But our immortal and rational souls are a still more noble work and gift of God. Yet if it were not for his precious thoughts of love to us, our reason and our living for ever would, through our sins, prove the occasion of our eternal misery. How should we then delight to meditate on God's love to sinners in Jesus Christ, the sum of which exceeds all reckoning! Sin is hated, and sinners lamented, by all who fear the Lord. Yet while we shun them we should pray for them; with God their conversion and salvation are possible. As the Lord knows us thoroughly, and we are strangers to ourselves, we should earnestly desire and pray to be searched and proved by his word and Spirit. If there be any wicked way in me, let me see it; and do thou root it out of me. The way of godliness is pleasing to God, and profitable to us; and will end in everlasting life. It is the good old way. All the saints desire to be kept and led in this way, that they may not miss it, turn out of it, or tire in it.

PSALM 140

David encourages himself in God. (1-7) He prays for, and prophesies the destruction of, his persecutors. (8-13)

<H01> Psalm 140:1

Vs. 1-7: The more danger appears, the more earnest we should be in prayer to God. All are safe whom the Lord protects. If he be for us, who can be against us? We should especially watch and pray, that the Lord would hold up our goings in his ways, that our footsteps slip not. God is as able to keep his people from secret fraud as from open force; and the experience we have had of his power and care, in dangers of one kind, may encourage us to depend upon him in other dangers.

<H08> Psalm 140:8

Vs. 8-13: Believers may pray that God would not grant the desires of the wicked, nor further their evil devices. False accusers will bring mischief upon themselves, even the burning coals of Divine vengeance. And surely the righteous shall dwell in God's presence, and give him thanks for evermore. This is true thanksgiving, even thanks-living: this use we should make of all our deliverances, we should serve God the more closely and cheerfully. Those who, though evil spoken of and ill-used by men, are righteous in the sight of God, being justified by the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed to them, and received by faith, as the effect of which, they live soberly and righteously; these give thanks to the Lord, for the righteousness whereby they are made righteous, and for every blessing of grace, and mercy of life.

PSALM 141

David prays for God's acceptance and assistance. (1-4) That God would appear for his rescue. (5-10)

Psalm 141:1

Vs. 1-4: Make haste unto me. Those that know how to value God's gracious presence, will be the more fervent in their prayers. When presented through the sacrifice and intercession of the Savior, they will be as acceptable to God as the daily sacrifices and burnings of incense were of old. Prayer is a spiritual sacrifice, it is the offering up the soul and its best affection. Good men know the evil of tongue sins. When enemies are provoking, we are in danger of speaking unadvisedly. While we live in an evil world, and have such evil hearts, we have need to pray that we may neither be drawn nor driven to do any thing sinful. Sinners pretend to find dainties in sin; but those that consider how soon sin will turn into bitterness, will dread such dainties, and pray to God to take them out of their sight, and by his grace to turn their hearts against them. Good men pray against the sweets of sin.

Psalm 141:5

Vs. 5-10: We should be ready to welcome the rebuke of our heavenly Father, and also the reproof of our brethren. It shall not break my head, if it may but help to break my heart: we must show that we take it kindly. Those who slighted the word of God before, will be glad of it when in affliction, for that opens the ear to instruction. When the world is bitter, the word is sweet. Let us lift our prayer unto God. Let us entreat him to rescue us from the snares of Satan, and of all the workers of iniquity. In language like this psalm, O Lord, would we entreat that our poor prayers should set forth our only hope, our only dependence on thee. Grant us thy grace, that we may be prepared for this employment, being clothed with thy righteousness, and having all the gifts of thy Spirit planted in our hearts.

PSALM 142

David's comfort in prayer.

Psalm 142:1

There can be no situation so distressing or dangerous, in which faith will not get comfort from God by prayer. We are apt to show our troubles too much to ourselves, poring upon them, which does us no service; whereas, by showing them to God, we might cast the cares upon him who careth for us, and thereby ease ourselves. Nor should we allow any complaint to ourselves or others, which we cannot make to God. When our spirits are overwhelmed by distress, and filled with discouragement; when we see snares laid for us on every side, while we walk in his way, we may reflect with comfort that the Lord knoweth our path. Those who in sincerity take the Lord for their God, find him all-sufficient, as a Refuge, and as a Portion: every thing else is a refuge of lies, and a portion of no value. In this situation David prayed earnestly to God. We may apply it spiritually; the souls of believers are often straitened by doubts and fears. And it is then their duty and interest to beg of God to set them at liberty, that they may run the way of his commandments. Thus the Lord delivered David from his powerful persecutors, and dealt bountifully with him. Thus he raised the crucified Redeemer to the throne of glory, and made him Head over all things for his church. Thus the convinced sinner cries for help, and is brought to praise the Lord in the company of his redeemed people; and thus all believers will at length be delivered from this evil world, from sin and death, and praise their Savior for ever.

PSALM 143

David complains of his enemies and distresses. (1-6) He prays for comfort, guidance, and deliverance. (7-12)

Psalm 143:1

Vs. 1-6: We have no righteousness of our own to plead, therefore must plead God's righteousness, and the word of promise which he has freely given us, and caused us to hope in. David, before he prays for the removal of his trouble, prays for the pardon of his sin, and depends upon mercy alone for it. He bemoans the weight upon his mind from outward troubles. But he looks back, and remembers God's former appearance for his afflicted people, and for him in particular. He looks round, and notices the works of God. The more we consider the power of God, the less we shall fear the face or force of man. He looks up with earnest desires towards God and his favor. This is the best course we can take, when our spirits are overwhelmed. The believer will not forget, that in his best actions he is a sinner. Meditation and prayer will recover us from distresses; and then the mourning soul strives to return to the Lord as the infant stretches out its hands to the indulgent mother, and thirsts for his consolations as the parched ground for refreshing rain.

Vs. 7-12: David prays that God would be well pleased with him, and let him know that he was so. He pleads the wretchedness of his case, if God withdrew from him. But the night of distress and discouragement shall end in a morning of consolation and praise. He prays that he might be enlightened with the knowledge of God's will; and this is the first work of the Spirit. A good man does not ask the way in which is the most pleasant walking, but what is the right way. Not only show me what thy will is, but teach me how to do it. Those who have the Lord for their God, have his Spirit for their Guide; they are led by the Spirit. He prays that he might be enlivened to do God's will. But we should especially seek the destruction of our sins, our worst enemies, that we may be devotedly God's servants.

PSALM 144

David acknowledges the great goodness of God, and prays for help. (1-8) He prays for the prosperity of his kingdom. (9-15)

Psalm 144:1

Vs. 1-8: When men become eminent for things as to which they have had few advantages, they should be more deeply sensible that God has been their Teacher. Happy those to whom the Lord gives that noblest victory, conquest and dominion over their own spirits. A prayer for further mercy is fitly begun with a thanksgiving for former mercy. There was a special power of God, unequalled the people of Israel to be subject to David; it was typical of the bringing souls into subjection to the Lord Jesus. Man's days have little substance, considering how many thoughts and cares of a never-dying soul are employed about a poor dying body. Man's life is as a shadow that passes away. In their highest earthly exaltation, believers will recollect how mean, sinful, and vile they are in themselves; thus they will be preserved from self-importance and presumption. God's time to help his people is, when they are sinking, and all other helps fail.

Psalm 144:9

Vs. 9-15: Fresh favors call for fresh returns of thanks; we must praise God for the mercies we hope for by his promise, as well as those we have received by his providence. To be saved from the hurtful sword, or from wasting sickness, without deliverance from the dominion of sin and the wrath to come, is but a small advantage. The public prosperity David desired for his people, is stated. It adds much to the comfort and happiness of parents in this world, to see their children likely to do well. To see them as plants, not as weeds, not as thorns; to see them as plants growing, not withered and blasted; to see them likely to bring forth fruit unto God in their day; to see them in their youth growing strong in the Spirit. Plenty is to be desired, that we may be thankful to God, generous to our friends, and charitable to the poor; otherwise, what profit is it to have our garners full? Also, uninterrupted peace. War brings abundance of mischiefs, whether it be to attack others or to defend ourselves. And in proportion as we do not adhere to the worship and service of God, we

cease to be a happy people. The subjects of the Savior, the Son of David, share the blessings of his authority and victories, and are happy because they have the Lord for their God.

PSALM 145

David extols the power, goodness, and mercy of the Lord. (1-9) The glory of God's kingdom, and his care of those that love him. (10-21)

Psalm 145:1

Vs. 1-9: Those who, under troubles and temptations, abound in fervent prayer, shall in due season abound in grateful praise, which is the true language of holy joy. Especially we should speak of God's wondrous work of redemption, while we declare his greatness. For no deliverance of the Israelites, nor the punishment of sinners, so clearly proclaims the justice of God, as the cross of Christ exhibits it to the enlightened mind. It may be truly said of our Lord Jesus Christ, that his words are words of goodness and grace; his works are works of goodness and grace. He is full of compassion; hence he came into the world to save sinners. When on earth, he showed his compassion both to the bodies and souls of men, by healing the one, and making wise the other. He is of great mercy, a merciful High Priest, through whom God is merciful to sinners.

Psalm 145:10

Vs. 10-21: All God's works show forth his praises. He satisfies the desire of every living thing, except the unreasonable children of men, who are satisfied with nothing. He does good to all the children of men; his own people in a special manner. Many children of God, who have been ready to fall into sin, to fall into despair, have tasted his goodness in preventing their falls, or recovering them speedily by his graces and comforts. And with respect to all that are heavy laden under the burden of sin, if they come to Christ by faith, he will ease them, he will raise them. He is very ready to hear and answer the prayers of his people. He is present every where; but in a special way he is nigh to them, as he is not to others. He is in their hearts, and dwells there by faith, and they dwell in him. He is nigh to those that call upon him, to help them in all times of need. He will be nigh to them, that they may have what they ask, and find what they seek, if they call upon him in truth and sincerity. And having taught men to love his name and holy ways, he will save them from the destruction of the

wicked. May we then love his name, and walk in his ways, while we desire that all flesh should bless his holy name for ever and ever.

PSALM 146

Why we should not trust in men. (1-4) Why we should trust in God. (5-10)

Psalm 146:1

Vs. 1-4: If it is our delight to praise the Lord while we live, we shall certainly praise him to all eternity. With this glorious prospect before us, how low do worldly pursuits seem! There is a Son of man in whom there is help, even him who is also the Son of God, who will not fail those that trust in him. But all other sons of men are like the man from whom they sprung, who, being in honor, did not abide. God has given the earth to the children of men, but there is great striving about it. Yet, after a while, no part of the earth will be their own, except that in which their dead bodies are laid. And when man returns to his earth, in that very day all his plans and designs vanish and are gone: what then comes of expectations from him?

Psalm 146:5

Vs. 5-10: The psalmist encourages us to put confidence in God. We must hope in the providence of God for all we need as to this life, and in the grace of God for that which is to come. The God of heaven became a man that he might become our salvation. Though he died on the cross for our sins, and was laid in the grave, yet his thoughts of love to us did not perish; he rose again to fulfill them. When on earth, his miracles were examples of what he is still doing every day. He grants deliverance to captives bound in the chains of sin and Satan. He opens the eyes of the understanding. He feeds with the bread of life those who hunger for salvation; and he is the constant Friend of the poor in spirit, the helpless: with him poor sinners, that are as fatherless, find mercy; and his kingdom shall continue for ever. Then let sinners flee to him, and believers rejoice in him. And as the Lord shall reign for ever, let us stir up each other to praise his holy name.

PSALM 147

The people of God are exhorted to praise him for his mercies and care. (1-11) For the salvation and prosperity of the church. (12-20)

◀HEB▶ Psalm 147:1

Vs. 1-11: Praising God is work that is its own wages. It is comely; it becomes us as reasonable creatures, much more as people in covenant with God. He gathers outcast sinners by his grace, and will bring them into his holy habitation. To those whom God heals with the consolations of his Spirit, he speaks peace, assures them their sins are pardoned. And for this, let others praise him also. Man's knowledge is soon ended; but God's knowledge is a depth that can never be fathomed. And while he telleth the number of the stars, he condescends to hear the broken-hearted sinner. While he feeds the young ravens, he will not leave his praying people destitute. Clouds look dull and melancholy, yet without them we could have no rain, therefore no fruit. Thus afflictions look black and unpleasant; but from clouds of affliction come showers that make the soul to yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The psalmist delights not in things wherein sinners trust and glory; but a serious and suitable regard to God is, in his sight, of very great price. We are not to be in doubt between hope and fear, but to act under the gracious influences of hope and fear united.

◀HEB▶ Psalm 147:12

Vs. 12-20: The church, like Jerusalem of old, built up and preserved by the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, is exhorted to praise him for all the benefits and blessings vouchsafed to her; and these are represented by his favors in the course of nature. The thawing word may represent the gospel of Christ, and the thawing wind the Spirit of Christ; for the Spirit is compared to the wind, ◀ABB▶ John 3:8. Converting grace softens the heart that was hard frozen, and melts it into tears of repentance, and makes good reflections to flow, which before were chilled and stopped up. The change which the thaw makes is very evident, yet how it is done no one can say. Such is the change wrought in the conversion of a soul, when God's word and Spirit are sent to melt it and restore it to itself.

PSALM 148

The creatures placed in the upper world called on to praise the Lord. (1-6) Also the creatures of this lower world, especially his own people. (7-14)

Psalm 148:1

Vs. 1-6: We, in this dark and sinful world, know little of the heavenly world of light. But we know that there is above us a world of blessed angels. They are always praising God, therefore the psalmist shows his desire that God may be praised in the best manner; also we show that we have communion with spirits above, who are still praising him. The heavens, with all contained in them, declare the glory of God. They call on us, that both by word and deed, we glorify with them the Creator and Redeemer of the universe.

Psalm 148:7

Vs. 7-14: Even in this world, dark and bad as it is, God is praised. The powers of nature, be they ever so strong, so stormy, do what God appoints them, and no more. Those that rebel against God's word, show themselves to be more violent than even the stormy winds, yet they fulfill it. View the surface of the earth, mountains and all hills; from the barren tops of some, and the fruitful tops of others, we may fetch matter for praise. And assuredly creatures which have the powers of reason, ought to employ themselves in praising God. Let all manner of persons praise God. Those of every rank, high and low. Let us show that we are his saints by praising his name continually. He is not only our Creator, but our Redeemer; who made us a people near unto him. We may by "the Horn of his people" understand Christ, whom God has exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, who is indeed the defense and the praise of all his saints, and will be so for ever. In redemption, that unspeakable glory is displayed, which forms the source of all our hopes and joys. May the Lord pardon us, and teach our hearts to love him more and praise him better.

PSALM 149

Joy to all the people of God. (1-5) Terror to their enemies. (6-9)

Psalm 149:1

Vs. 1-5: New mercies continually demand new songs of praise, upon earth and in heaven. And the children of Zion have not only to bless the God who made them, but to rejoice in him, as having created them in Christ Jesus unto good works, and formed them saints as well as men. The Lord takes pleasure in his people; they should rejoice in Him. When the Lord has made sinners feel their wants and unworthiness, he will adorn them with the graces of his Spirit, and cause them to bear his image, and rejoice in his happiness for ever. Let his saints employ their waking hours upon their beds in songs of praise. Let them rejoice, even upon the bed of death, assured that they are going to eternal rest and glory.

Psalm 149:6

Vs. 6-9: Some of God's servants of old were appointed to execute vengeance according to his word. They did not do it from personal revenge or earthly politics, but in obedience to God's command. And the honor intended for all the saints of God, consists in their triumphs over the enemies of their salvation. Christ never intended his gospel should be spread by fire and sword, or his righteousness by the wrath of man. But let the high praises of God be in our mouths, while we wield the sword of the word of God, with the shield of faith, in warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil. The saints shall be more than conquerors over the enemies of their souls, through the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony. The completing of this will be in the judgment of the great day. Then shall the judgment be executed. Behold Jesus, and his gospel church, chiefly in her millennial state. He and his people rejoice in each other; by their prayers and efforts they work with him, while he goes forth in the chariots of salvation, conquering sinners by grace, or in chariots of vengeance, to destroy his enemies.

PSALM 150

A psalm of praise.

Psalm 150:1

We are here stirred up to praise God. Praise God for his sanctuary, and the privileges we enjoy by having it among us; praise him because of his power and glory in the firmament. Those who praise the Lord in heaven, behold displays of his power and glory which we cannot now conceive. But the greatest of all his mighty acts is known in his earthly sanctuary. The holiness and the love of our God are more displayed in man's redemption, than in all his other works. Let us praise our God and Savior for it. We need not care to know what instruments of music are mentioned. Hereby is meant that in serving God we should spare no cost or pains. Praise God with strong faith; praise him with holy love and delight; praise him with entire confidence in Christ; praise him with believing triumph over the powers of darkness; praise him by universal respect to all his commands; praise him by cheerful submission to all his disposals; praise him by rejoicing in his love, and comforting ourselves in his goodness; praise him by promoting the interests of the kingdom of his grace; praise him by lively hope and expectation of the kingdom of his glory. Since we must shortly breathe our last, while we have breath let us praise the Lord; then we shall breathe our last with comfort. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord. Such is the very suitable end of a book inspired by the Spirit of God, written for the work of praise; a book which has supplied the songs of the church for more than three thousand years; a book which is quoted more frequently than any other by Christ and his apostles; a book which presents the loftiest ideas of God and his government, which is fitted to every state of human life, which sets forth every state of religious experience, and which bears simple and clear marks of its Divine origin.