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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON
PSALMS

by Adam Clarke.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

HOLY BIBLE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF PSALMS

SECTION 1.—ON THE NAMES GIVEN TO HIS BOOK

THIS book is termed in Hebrew $\mu\lambda\text{ ht rps}$ *Sepher Tehillim*, which some learned men derive from $l\text{ h}$ *hal* or $l\text{ l h}$ *halal*, to *move briskly, irradiate, shine*; and translate, The Book of the Shinings forth, Irradiations, Manifestations, or Displays, namely, of Divine wisdom and love exhibited in God's dealing with his chosen people, or with particular persons, as *figures, for the time being*, of what should be accomplished either in the person of Christ, or in his mystical body the Church. But as *halal* signifies also *to praise*, and praise arises from a sense of gratitude, is the expression of inward joy, and was often exhibited by brisk notes, sprightly music, &c., it may be well denominated *The Book of Praises*, as the major part of the Psalms have for their subject the praises of the Lord.

That the Psalms were sung in the Jewish service, and frequently accompanied by musical instruments, there is no doubt, for the fact is repeatedly mentioned; and hence the most ancient translation we have of the Psalms, viz., the Septuagint, as it stands in what is called the Codex Alexandrinus, is called $\Psi\alpha\lambda\tau\eta\rho\iota\omicron\nu$, *The Psaltery*, which is a species of musical instrument resembling the *harp*, according to the accounts given of it by some of the ancients. From this term came the *Psalterium* of the *Vulgate*, and our word *Psalter*, all of which are deduced from the verb $\psi\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega$, *to sing*, as the voice no doubt always accompanied this instrument, and by it the key was preserved and the voice sustained.

A *Psalm* is called in Hebrew rwmzm *mizmor*, from rmz *zamar*, *to cut off*, because in singing each word was separated into its component syllables, each syllable answering to a note in the music.

SECTION 2. GENERAL DIVISION OF THE BOOK

The Hebrews divide the Psalms into *five books*, and this division is noticed by several of the primitive fathers. The origin of this division is not easily ascertained; but as it was considered a book of great excellence, and compared for its importance to the Pentateuch itself, it was probably divided into five books, as the law was contained in so many volumes. But where the divisions should take place the ancients are not agreed; and some

of them divide into *three fifties* rather than into *five parts*; and for all these divisions they assign certain allegorical reasons which merit little attention.

The division of the Hebrews is as follows:—

Book I. From Psalm 1. to Psalm 12. inclusive.

Book II. From Psalm 13. to Psalm 22. inclusive.

Book III. From Psalm 23. to Psalm 89. inclusive.

Book IV. From Psalm 90. to Psalm 106. inclusive.

Book V. From Psalm 107. to Psalm 150. inclusive.

The *First, Second, and Third* Books end with *Amen and Amen*; the *Fourth*, with *Amen and Hallelujah*; the *Fifth*, with *Hallelujah*.

But the Psalms themselves are differently divided in all the VERSIONS, and in many MSS. This is often very embarrassing to the reader, not only in consulting the Polyglots, but also in referring to theological works, whether of the Greek or Latin Church, where the Psalms are quoted; the Greek ecclesiastical writers following the *Septuagint*; and those of the Latin Church, the *Vulgate*. I shall lay a proper table of these variations before the reader, remarking first, that though they differ so much in the division of the Psalms, they all agree in the *number one hundred and fifty*.

A Table of the Differences in dividing the Psalms between the *Hebrew* text and the ancient VERSIONS, *Syriac, Septuagint, Chaldee, Arabic, Æthiopic, and Vulgate*.

In the above versions Psalm 9. and 10. make only Psalm 9. Hence *there* is one Psalm less in the reckoning as you proceed to

Psalm 114., 115., which make Psalm 113. in all those versions. Hence two Psalms are *lost* in the reckoning.

Psalm 116. is divided at verse 9, the versions beginning Psalm cxv. at verse 10. Hence one Psalm is *gained* on the above reckoning.

Psalm 119. makes Psalm 118. in all the versions.

Psalm 147. they divide at verse 11, and begin Psalm 147. with verse 12. Here then the reckoning becomes equal, and all end alike with Psalm 150.

In the Syriac, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic, there is what they call an *extra-numeral* Psalm, said to have been composed by David after his

victory over Goliath. A translation of this will be found at the close of these notes.

The Hebrew MSS. agree often with the *versions* in uniting Psalms which the common *Hebrew* text has separated, and thus often support the ancient *versions*. These things shall be considered in the course of the notes.

SECTION III.—ON THE COMPILATION OF THE BOOK, AND THE AUTHORS TO WHOM THE PSALMS HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED

After having said so much on the *name* and ancient *divisions* of this important book, it may be necessary to say something in answer to the question, “Who was the author of the Book of Psalms?” If we were to follow the popular opinion, we should rather be surprised at the question, and immediately answer, DAVID, king of Israel! That many of them were composed by *him*, there is no doubt; that several were written long after his time, there is internal evidence to prove; and that many of them were written even by his *contemporaries*, there is much reason to believe.

That the *collection*, as it now stands, was made long after David’s death, is a general opinion among learned men; and that Ezra was the collector and compiler is commonly believed. Indeed all antiquity is nearly unanimous in giving Ezra the honour of collecting the different writings of Moses and the prophets, and reducing them into that form in which they are now found in the Holy Bible, and consequently the *Psalms* among the rest. See this subject treated at large in the *preface to Ezra*, &c.

In making this collection it does not appear that the compiler paid any attention to *chronological* arrangement. As he was an inspired man, he could judge of the pieces which came by Divine inspiration, and were proper for the general edification of the Church of God.

The writer of the SYNOPSIS, attributed to St. *Athanasius*, says that the friends of King Hezekiah chose *one hundred and fifty* Psalms out of the number of *three thousand* which David had composed, and that they suppressed the rest: he says farther, that this is written in the *Chronicles*; but it is not found in the *Chronicles* which we now have, though it might have been in other *Chronicles* which that author had seen.

That some Scriptural collections were made under the influence and by the order of Hezekiah, we learn from ^{<1250>}**Proverbs 25:1**: “These are also

proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out." But whether these were employed on the writings of the *father*, as they were on those of the *son*, we cannot tell. The above authority is too slender to support any building of magnitude.

The only method we have of judging is from the internal evidence afforded by several of the Psalms themselves, and from the *inscriptions* which many of them bear. As far as *time* and *facts* are concerned, many of them can be traced to the days of David, and the *transactions* which then occurred, and in which he bore so eminent a part. But there are others in which we find no *note* of *time*, and no reference to the *transactions* of David's reign.

As to the *inscriptions*, they are of slender authority; several of them do not agree with the subject of the Psalm to which they are prefixed, and not a few of them appear to be out of their places.

In one of the prologues attributed to St. *Jerome*, but probably of Eusebius, at the end of Vol. II. of St Jerome's Works by *Martinay*, we find a *table* in which the whole Book of Psalms is dissected, showing those which have *inscriptions*, those which have *none*, and those to which the name of a particular *person*, as author, is prefixed. I shall give these in gross, and then in detail: Psalms without any name prefixed, 17; Psalms with an inscription, 133; in all 150.

These are afterwards divided into those which bear *different kinds* of *titles*, *without names*; and those which have *names* prefixed. I shall give these from the *Quincuplex Psalterium*, fol. *Paris*, 1513, as being more correct than in the edition of Jerome, by *Martinay*.

Psalms which have no inscription of any kind: Psa. 1., 2., 32., 42., 70., 90., 92., 93., 94., 95., 96., 97., 98., 99., 103., 115., 136., 147 — 18

Psalms to which David's name is prefixed: Psa. 3., 4., 5., 6., 7., 8., 9., 10., 11., 12., 13., 14., 15., 16., 17., 18., 19., 20., 21., 22., 23., 24., 25., 26., 27., 28., 29., 30., 31., 33., 34., 35., 36., 37., 38., 39., 40., 50., 51., 52.; 53., 54., 55., 56., 57., 58., 59., 60., 61., 62., 63., 64., 67., 68., 69., 85., 100., 102., 107., 108., 109., 133., 137., 138., 139., 140., 141., 142., 143., 144 — 70

Psalms attributed to Solomon: Psa. 71., 126 — 2

Psalms attributed to the sons of Korah: Psa. 41., 43., 44., 45., 46., 47., 48., 83., 84., 86. — 10

Psalms with the name of Asaph prefixed: Psa. 49., 72., 73., 74., 75., 76., 77., 78., 79., 80., 81., 82 — 12

A Psalm to which the name of Heman is prefixed: Psa. 87. — 1

A Psalm to which the name of Ethan is prefixed: Psa. 88. — 1

A Psalm to which the name of Moses is prefixed: Psa. 89. — 1

Psalms with titles without any name specified: A Song or Psalm, 65. A Song or Psalm, 66. A Psalm or Song, 91. A Prayer of the Afflicted, 101. — 4

Hallelujah Psalms: Psa. 104., 105., 106., 110., 111., 112., 113., 114., 116., 117., 118., 134., 135., 145., 146., 148., 149., 150. — 18

Psalms or Songs of Degrees: Psa. 119., 120., 121., 122., 123., 124., 125., 127., 128., 129., 130., 131., 132. — 13

Sum total of all kinds: Psalms having no inscription, 18. David's, 70. Solomon's, 2. Sons of Korah, 10. Asaph, 12. Heman, 1. Ethan, 1. Moses, 1. Psalms and Songs, 3. Prayer, 1.

Hallelujah, 18. Psalms of Degrees, 13. —

Grand total — 150

Supposing that the *persons* already mentioned are the authors of those Psalms to which their names are prefixed, there are still *fifty-three*, which, as bearing *no proper name*, must be attributed to uncertain authors, though it is very probable that several of them were made by David.

The reader will observe that as the preceding enumeration is taken from the *Vulgate*, consequently it is not exactly the same with ours: but the rules already given at page 200, will enable him to accommodate this division to that in our common Bibles, which is the same with that in the *Hebrew* text.

In order to make the preceding table as correct as possible, I have carefully collated that in the Benedictine edition of St. Jerome's *WORKS*, with professedly the same table in the Quincuplex Psalter, in both of which there are several errors. In the *Works*, though all the numbers are given at large, as *primus, decimus, centesimus, &c.*, yet the sum total, under each head, rarely agrees with the items above it. This was so notoriously the case in the table in Jerome's *Works*, that I thought best to follow that in the *Psalter* above mentioned, which had been carefully corrected by Henry Stephens.

After all, this table gives but small satisfaction, when we come to collate it with the Psalms in the Hebrew text, or as they stand in our common English Bibles. That nothing might be wanting, I have made an analysis of the whole from our present text, collating this with the Hebrew where I was in doubt; and by this the reader will see how greatly these tables differ from each other; and that many Psalms must now come under a different arrangement, because of their different titles, from that which they had in St. Jerome's time. For instance, in St. Jerome's time there were *seventy*, or, as in some copies, *seventy-two* Psalms that had the name of David in the inscriptions; at present there are *seventy-three* thus inscribed in the Hebrew text.

SECTION 4.—CLASSIFICATION OF THE PSALMS AS THEY STAND IN OUR COMMON VERSION

Jerome gave two editions of the Latin Psalter, one from the Hebrew, and the other corrected from the Septuagint. Both of these may be found in his WORKS, and in the Quincuplex Psalter mentioned above. I shall now add a table, on a similar plan with the above, taken from our present authorized text.

A Classified Table of the Psalms taken from the text in common use

Psalms which have no inscription of any kind: Psa. 1., 2., 10., 33., 43., 71., 91., 93., 94., 95., 96., 97., 99., 104., 105., 107., 114., 115., 116., 117., 118., 119., 136., 137. — 24

Psalms to which David's name is prefixed: Psa. 3., 4., 5., 6., 7., 8., 9., 11., 12., 13., 14., 15., 16., 17., 18., 19., 20., 21., 22., 23., 24., 25., 26., 27., 28., 29., 30., 31., 32., 34., 35., 36., 37., 38., 39., 40., 41., 51., 52., 53., 54., 55., 56., 57., 58., 59., 60., 61., 62., 63., 64., 65., 68., 69., 70., 86., 101., 103., 108., 109., 110., 122., 124., 131., 133., 138., 139., 140., 141., 142., 143., 144., 145. — 73

Psalms attributed to Solomon: Psa. 72., 127. — 2

Psalms attributed to the sons of Korah: Psa. 42., 44., 45., 46., 47., 48., 49., 84., 85., 87. — 10

Psalms with the name of Asaph prefixed: Psa. 50., 73., 74., 75., 76., 77., 78., 79., 80., 81., 82., 83. — 12

A Psalm to which the name of Heman is prefixed: Psa. 89. — 1

A Psalm to which the name of Ethan is prefixed: Psa. 89. — 1

A Psalm to which the name of Moses is prefixed: Psa. 90. — 1

Psalms with titles without any name specified: A Song or Psalm, 66. A Psalm or Song, 67. A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath day, 92. A Psalm or Song, 98. A Psalm or Song, 100. A Prayer of the Afflicted, 102. — 6

Hallelujah Psalms: Psa. 106., 111., 112., 113., 135., 146., 147., 148., 149., 150. — 10

Psalms or Songs of Degrees: Psa. 120., 121., 122., 125., 126., 128., 129., 130., 132., 134. — 10

Sum total of all kinds: Psalms having no inscription, 24. Psalms having David's name prefixed, 73. Psalms having Solomon's name, 2. Ditto, sons of Korah, 10. Ditto, Asaph, 12. Ditto, Heman, 1. Ditto, Ethan, 1. Psalms and Songs, 6. Hallelujah Psalms, 10. Psalms of Degrees, 10. —

Grand total 150 — 150

After all that has been done to assign each Psalm to its author, there are few of which we can say positively, *These were composed by David.*

Most commentators, as well as historians of the life and reign of David, have taken great pains to throw some light upon this subject, particularly *Calmet*, *Delaney*, *Chandler*, and *Venema*. The former has made *seven divisions* of them, to ascertain the order of time in which they were written. I shall adopt this plan, and accommodate it to the Psalms as they stand in our present authorized version, after simply remarking that there are several Psalms which appear to be ill-divided, some making *two* or *three*, which in all probability made originally but one; and others, which formerly made *two* or more, now improperly connected.

This has been already noticed in comparing the differences of the numeration between the *versions* and the *Hebrew* text. See p. 201; see also at the end of the following table.

SECTION 5.—CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE BOOK OF PSALMS

I. PSALMS *which contain no Note or Indication of the Time when written*

Psalm 1. "Blessed is the man," &c. This is generally considered as a *Preface* to the whole book; supposed by some to have been written by

David: but others attribute it to *Ezra*, who collected the book of Psalms.

Psalm 4. "Hear me when I call." The evening prayer of a *pious man*.

Psalm 8. "O Lord our Lord." The *privileges* and *dignity* of man.

Psalm 19. "The heavens declare the glory of God." God's glory in the *creation*. The excellence, perfection, and use of the *Divine law*.

Psalm 81. "Sing aloud unto God." Supposed to be a Psalm usually sung at the *Feast of Trumpets*, or the beginning of the *year*; and at the *Feast of Tabernacles*.

Psalm 91. "He that dwelleth in the secret place." The *happiness* of those who trust in the Lord. This Psalm might be placed during or after the *Captivity*.

Psalm 110. "The Lord said unto my Lord." The advent, birth, passion, priesthood, and kingdom of Christ. Probably composed by *David*.

Psalm 139. "O Lord, thou hast searched me." On the *wisdom* and *providence* of God.

Psalm 145. "I will extol thee, my God, O King." Thanksgiving for the *general benefits* bestowed by God.

In none of these is there any distinct notation of time.

II. PSALMS *composed by David while persecuted by Saul*

Psalm 11. "In the Lord put I my trust." Composed by David when in the court of Saul, his friends exhorting him to escape for his life from the jealousy and cruelty of Saul.

Psalm 31. "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust." Composed when David was proscribed, and obliged to flee from Saul's court.

Psalm 34. "I will bless the Lord at all times." Supposed to have been composed by David, when, by feigning himself to be mad, he escaped from the court of Achish, king of Gath.

Psalm 56. "Be merciful unto me, O God." Composed in the *cave of Adullam*, after his escape from Achish.

Psalm 16. "Preserve me, O God." David persecuted by Saul, and obliged to take refuge among the *Moabites* and *Philistines*.

Psalm 54. "Save me, O God, by thy name." David, betrayed by the *Ziphims*, escapes from the hands of Saul.

Psalm 52. "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief." Composed by David when *Doeg* betrayed him to Saul, who, not finding him, slew the priests at *Nob*.

Psalm 109. "Hold not thy peace, O God." An invective against *Doeg*, and the rest of his *enemies*.

Psalm 17. "Hear the right, O Lord." When Saul carried his persecution to the highest pitch.

Psalm 22. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." *Saul's* persecution of *David* an emblem of the persecutions of *Christ* by the *Jews*.

Psalm 35. "Plead my cause, O Lord." Against *Saul* and his *courtiers*, who plotted his destruction.

Psalm 57. "Be merciful unto me, O God." While shut up in the cave of *En-gedi*; ~~0240~~ **1 Samuel 24:4**.

Psalm 58. "Do ye indeed speak righteousness." Against the wicked *counsellors* of Saul.

Psalm 113. "I cried unto the Lord with my voice." David in the cave of *En-gedi*; ~~0240~~ **1 Samuel 24:4**.

Psalm 140. "Deliver me, O Lord." Under the same persecutions praying for Divine succour.

Psalm 141. "Lord, I cry unto thee." Same as the preceding.

Psalm 7. "O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust." When violently persecuted by Saul.

III. PSALMS *composed after the Commencement of the reign of David, and after the Death of Saul*

Psalm 2. "Why do the heathen rage." Written by David after he had established his throne at Jerusalem, notwithstanding the envy and malice of his enemies. A prophecy of the reign of Christ.

Psalm 9. "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart." Sung by David on bringing the ark from the house of *Obed-edom*.

- Psalm 24. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Sung on the same occasion,
- Psalm 18. "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered." Sung on bringing the ark from *Kirjath-jearim* to Jerusalem.
- Psalm 101. "I will sing of mercy and Judgment." David describes the manner in which he will form his court, his ministers, and confidential servants.
- Psalm 29. "Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty." Composed after the dearth which fell on the land because of Saul's unjust persecution of the *Gibeonites*; ^{<10210>}**2 Samuel 21:1**.
- Psalm 20. "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble." Composed when David was about to march against the *Ammonites* and *Syrians*; ^{<101016>}**2 Samuel 10:16**.
- Psalm 21. "The king shall joy in thy strength." Thanksgiving to God for the victory over the *Ammonites*, &c.; a continuation of the subject in the preceding.
- Psalm 38. "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath." Composed during the time of a grievous *affliction*, after his transgression with *Bath-sheba*. See ^{<19060>}**Psalm 6:1**.
- Psalm 39. "I said, I will take heed to my ways." A continuation of the same subject.
- Psalm 40. "I waited patiently for the Lord." Thanksgiving for his *recovery*.
- Psalm 41. "Blessed is he who considereth the poor." A continuation of the preceding subject.
- Psalm 6. "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger." Supposed to be written in a time of *sickness* after his sin with *Bath-sheba*. See ^{<19801>}**Psalm 38:1**.
- Psalm 51. "Have mercy upon me, O God." Written after he received the reproof by *Nathan* the prophet; ^{<10213>}**2 Samuel 12:13, 22**.
- Psalm 32. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven." Written about the same time, and on the same subject.
- Psalm 33. "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous." A continuation of the preceding Psalm.

IV. PSALMS *composed during the rebellion of Absalom*

Psalm 3. “Lord, how are they increased that trouble me?” When David was driven from Jerusalem by Absalom.

Psalm 4. “Hear me when I call.” Composed at the same time.

Psalm 55. “Give ear to my prayer.” When he was flying from Jerusalem before Absalom.

Psalm 62. “Truly my soul waiteth upon God.” Exercising faith and patience during Absalom’s rebellion.

Psalm 70. “Make haste, O God, to deliver me.” During the same.

Psalm 71. “In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.” Continuation of the preceding.

Psalm 143. “Hear my prayer, O Lord.” Written during the *war* with *Absalom*.

Psalm 144. “Blessed be the Lord my strength.” Written after the overthrow of *Absalom*, *Sheba*, and other rebels.

V. Psalms *written between the Rebellion of Absalom, and the Babylonish Captivity*

Psalm 18. “I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.” Thanksgivings for all the benefits which David had received from God. See ~~<102>~~ **2 Samuel 22:1-51**.

Psalm 30. “I will extol thee, O Lord.” Composed at the dedication of the *threshing-floor* of *Ornan*; ~~<102>~~ **2 Samuel 24:25**.

Psalm 22. “Give the king thy judgments.” Composed by David when he invested *Solomon* with the kingdom.

Psalm 45. “My heart is inditing a good matter.” Written by the sons of *Korah*, for *Solomon’s marriage*.

Psalm 28. “Give ear, O my people.” Sung by the choir of *Asaph*, on the *victory* gained by *Asa* over *Baasha* king of Israel; ~~<1460>~~ **2 Chronicles 16:4**, &c.

Psalm 82. “God standeth in the congregation.” Instructions given to the *judges* in the days of *Jehoshaphat*, king of Judah.

Psalm 83. “Keep not thou silence, O God.” Thanksgiving for the *victories* of *Jehoshaphat*, king of Judah, over the *Ammonites*, *Idumeans*, and others. See ~~<1400>~~ **2 Chronicles 20:1**, &c.

Psalm 76. "In Judah is God known." Sung by the choir of *Asaph* after the victory over *Sennacherib*.

Psalm 74. "O God, why hast thou cast us off?" Lamentation over the temple destroyed by *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Psalm 79. "O God, the heathen are come." On the same subject; composed probably during the captivity.

VI. Psalms *composed during the Captivity*

Psalm 10. "Why standeth thou afar off?" Lamentation of the Jews during the captivity.

Psalm 12. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth." Composed by the captive Jews showing the wickedness of the *Babylonians*.

Psalm 13. "How long wilt thou forget me." Continuation of the preceding.

Psalm 14. "The fool hath said in his heart." A prayer of the poor captives for deliverance from their captivity.

Psalm 53. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." This Psalm is almost verbatim with Psalm xiv., and, like it, describes the wickedness of the *Babylonians*, both having been composed during the captivity.

Psalm 15. "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?" This Psalm was probably intended to point out the *character* of *those* who might expect to return to their own land, and join in the temple service.

Psalm 25. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." A prayer of the captives for deliverance.

Psalm 26. "Judge me, O Lord." Continuation of the same.

Psalm 27. "The Lord is my light and my salvation." The *captives* express their confidence in God.

Psalm 28. "Unto thee will I cry." Prayers and thanksgivings of the *captives*.

Psalm 36. "The transgression of the wicked." Complaints of the captives against the *Babylonians*.

Psalm 37. "Fret not thyself." A Psalm of consolation for the *captives*.

Psalm 42. "As the hart panteth." Composed by the sons of *Korah* during the *captivity*.

Psalm 43. "Judge me, O God." Continuation of the same.

Psalm 44. "We have heard with our ears." Same subject.

Psalm 49. "Hear this, all ye people." By the sons of *Korah*: comfort for the *captives*.

Psalm 50. "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken." God's reprehension of the Jews, showing them the *cause* of their *captivity*.

Psalm 60. "O God, thou hast cast us off." The *captives* express their hope of a speedy restoration.

Psalm 64. "Hear my voice, O God." The captives complain of their *oppression* under the *Babylonians*.

Psalm 69. "Save me, O God." The captive *Levites* complain of the *cruelty* of the *Babylonians*.

Psalm 23. "Truly God is good to Israel." *Asaph* warns the captives against the bad *example* of the *Babylonians*, and against being *envious* at the *prosperity* of the *wicked*. Compare this with Psalm 37.

Psalm 75. "Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks." *Asaph* prays for the deliverance of the people.

Psalm 27. "I cried unto God with my voice." *Jeduthun* and *Asaph* complain of the long duration of the *captivity*.

Psalm 80. "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel." *Asaph* prays for the deliverance of the people.

Psalm 84. "How amiable are thy tabernacles." The sons of *Korah* pray for their release.

Psalm 86. "Bow down thine ear." The same subject.

Psalm 88. "O Lord God of my salvation." The same subject.

Psalm 89. "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord." *Ethan* prays for the deliverance of the captive Jews.

Psalm 90. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling." The *Levites*, the *descendants of Moses*, request their return from captivity.

Psalm 92. "It is a good thing to give thanks." The same subject, and by the same persons.

Psalm 93. "The Lord reigneth." The same, by the same persons.

Psalm 95. "O come, let us sing unto the Lord." The same.

Psalm 119. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way." A Psalm supposed to have been made by *Daniel*, or some other *captive prophet*, for the instruction of the people.

Psalm 120. "In my distress I cried." The captives pray for deliverance.

Psalm 121. "I will lift up mine eyes." The same subject.

Psalm 130. "Out of the depths have I cried." The same.

Psalm 131. "Lord, my heart is not haughty." The *heads* of the *people* pray for their return.

Psalm 132. "Lord, remember David." A prayer of the captive Jews in behalf of the *house of David*.

VII. *Psalms written after the Jews were permitted by the edict of Cyrus to return to their own land*

Psalm 122. "I was glad when they said." A Psalm of thanksgiving when they heard of the *edict of Cyrus*, permitting their return.

Psalm 61. "Hear my cry, O God " Thanksgivings when the Jews were about to return to Jerusalem.

Psalm 63. "O God, thou art my God." A Psalm of the people, now on their return to Judea.

Psalm 124. "If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side." On the same subject.

Psalm 23. "The Lord is my shepherd." Thanksgiving to God for their *redemption from captivity*.

Psalm 87. "His foundation is in the holy mountains." Thanksgivings by the sons of Korah for their return from captivity.

Psalm 85. "Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy land." Thanksgivings for their return.

Psalm 46. "God is our refuge and strength." Sung by the sons of *Korah* at the *dedication of the second temple*.

Psalm 47. "O clap your hands, all ye people." The same.

Psalm 48. "Great is the Lord." A continuation of the preceding.

Psalm 96. "O sing unto the Lord a new song." This and the three preceding all sung at the *dedication of the second temple*.

Psalm 97. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." Thanksgivings of the Jews for their deliverance; sung at the *dedication of the second temple*.

Psalm 98. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things." A continuation of the above.

- Psalm 99. "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble." Sung on the same occasion.
- Psalm 100. "Make a joyful noise." On the same occasion.
- Psalm 102. "Hear my prayer, O Lord." A description of the *sufferings* of the *captives* while in *Babylon*; and thanksgivings for their *deliverance*.
- Psalm 103. "Bless the Lord, O my soul." On the same subject.
- Psalm 104. "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God." On the same.
- Psalm 105. "O give thanks unto the Lord." Thanksgivings for deliverance from *Babylon*.
- Psalm 106. "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord." On the same subject. A recapitulation of what God did for their fathers in *Egypt* and in the *wilderness*.
- Psalm 107. "O give thanks-his mercy endureth for ever." A fine poetical description of the *miseries of the captivity*.
- Psalm 108. "O God, my heart is fixed." The Jews, delivered from captivity, pray for their brethren yet beyond the *Euphrates*.
- Psalm 111. "Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart." Thanksgivings of the Jews *after their captivity*.
- Psalm 112. "Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth." A continuation of the same subject.
- Psalm 113. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants." A continuation of the above.
- Psalm 114. "When Israel went out of *Egypt*." The same subject.
- Psalm 116. "I love the Lord." The same subject.
- Psalm 117. "O praise the Lord, all ye nations." The same subject.
- Psalm 126. "When the Lord turned again our captivity." A prayer for the remnant *still remaining in captivity*.
- Psalm 133. "Behold, how good and how pleasant." Happy union of the *priests* and *Levites* in the service of God, after the *captivity*.
- Psalm 134. "Behold, bless ye the Lord." An exhortation to the *priests* and *Levites* properly to discharge their duties in the temple, after they had returned from their captivity.
- Psalm 135. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord." Same as the preceding.

Psalm 136. "O give thanks unto the Lord." Same as before.

Psalm 137. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down." The Levites on their return, relate how they were insulted in their captivity.

Psalm 148. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens." Thanksgiving for deliverance from the captivity; and an invitation to all creatures to celebrate the praise of the Lord.

Psalm 149. "Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song." On the same subject.

Psalm 150. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary." A continuation of the preceding Psalms.

Psalm 146. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul." Supposed to have been composed by *Haggai*, and *Zechariah*, to comfort the people when the edict of Cyrus was *revoked*. See the notes on this Psalm.

Psalm 147. "Praise ye the Lord: for it is good." Thanksgiving of the same *prophets* after the long *dearth* mentioned by *Haggai*, ^{<370105>}**Haggai 1:5-11**. In the *Vulgate* this Psalm is divided at ver. 12, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem;" and is supposed by *Calmet* to have been sung at the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem. The *whole* Psalm is suitable to the occasions mentioned above.

Psalm 59. "Deliver me from mine enemies." Probably sung about the same time. See ^{<60101>}**Nehemiah 4:1-23**, and following chapters.

Psalm 65. "Praise waiteth for thee, O God." Composed by *Haggai* and *Zechariah*, after the Lord had sent the *rain promised by Haggai*, ^{<370112>}**Haggai 1:12-15**; and when they had begun the *repairs* of the *temple*. See Psalm 147.

Psalm 66. "Make a joyful noise." A continuation of the above.

Psalm 67. "God be merciful unto us." The same subject.

Psalm 118. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good." A song of praise after the death of *Cambyzes*, or probably after the *dedication of the walls of Jerusalem*. Supposed to have been written by *Nehemiah*.

Psalm 125. "They that trust in the Lord." The Jews encouraging each other to resist *Sanballat* and *Tobiah*, and their other enemies.

Psalm 127. "Except the Lord build the house." Composed to encourage the people to labour at the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem; and to put their confidence in the Lord.

Psalm 128. "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord." A continuation of the preceding.

Psalm 129. "Many a time have they afflicted me." A description of the peace and comfort enjoyed by the Jews under the reign of Darius.

Psalm 138. "I will praise thee with my whole heart." A continuation of the same subject.

For the *reasons* of the above *chronological arrangement* the reader may refer to the notes, and see also another table, page 214. This arrangement is better than none; and I hope will in the main be found as correct as can reasonably be expected, and a great help to a proper understanding of the Psalms.

SECTION 6. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE GREAT DIFFERENCE OF CHARACTER BETWEEN THE HEBREW POETS, AND THOSE OF GREECE AND ITALY

The *Hebrew Psalter* is the most ancient collection of poems in the world; and was composed long before those in which ancient Greece and Rome have gloried. Among all the *heathen* nations *Greece* had the honour of producing not only the *first*, but also the most sublime, of poets: but the subjects on which they employed their talents had, in general, but little tendency to meliorate the moral condition of men. Their subjects were either a *fabulous theology*, a *false and ridiculous religion*, *chimerical wars*, *absurd heroism*, *impure love*, *agriculture*, *national sports*, or *hymns in honour of gods* more corrupt than the most profligate of men. Their writings served only to render vice amiable, to honour superstition, to favour the most dangerous and most degrading passions of men, such as impure love, ambition, pride, and impiety. What is said of the *Greek poets* may be spoken with equal truth of their successors and imitators, the *Latin poets*; out of the whole of whose writings it would be difficult to extract even the *common maxims* of a *decent morality*. I am well aware that fine sentiments, strong and terse expressions, and luminous thoughts, may be found in different parts of their writings; but compared with what is of a different kind, it may be well said of these:—

"Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto."

The Hebrew poets, on the contrary, justly boast the highest antiquity: they were men inspired of God, holy in their lives, pure in their hearts, labouring

for the good of mankind; proclaiming by their incomparable compositions the infinite perfections, attributes, and unity of the Divine nature; laying down and illustrating the purest rules of the most refined morality, and the most exalted piety. God, his attributes, his works, and the religion which he has given to man, were the grand subjects of their Divinely inspired muse. By their wonderful art, they not only embellished the history of their own people, because connected intimately with the history of God's providence, but they also, by the light of the Spirit of God that was within them, foretold future events of the most unlikely occurrence, at the distance of many hundreds of years, with such exact circumstantiality as has been the wonder and astonishment of considerate minds in all succeeding generations; a fact which, taken in its connection with the holiness and sublimity of their doctrine; the grandeur, boldness, and truth of their imagery; demonstrates minds under the immediate inspiration of that God whose nature is ineffable, who exists in all points of time, and whose wisdom is infinite.

Some of the greatest both of the Greek and Roman poets, were men obscure in their birth, desperate in their fortunes, and of profligate manners; a fact at once proved both by their history and by their works. But the Hebrew poets were among the greatest men of their nation: and among them were found kings of the highest character, judges of the greatest integrity, heroes the most renowned, and lawgivers whose fame has reached every nation of the earth. By means of these men the lamp of true religion has been lighted in the earth; and wherever there is a ray of truth among the sons of men, it is an emanation immediately taken, or indirectly borrowed, from the prophets, poets, and statesmen, of the sons of Jacob.

The chief of the Hebrew *poets* were *Moses, David, Solomon, Job*, or whoever was the author of the book so called, *Isaiah, Jeremiah*, and most of the *minor prophets*. Solomon himself wrote *one thousand and five* hymns and poems: yet we know not that we have any of his poetical works, except the *Canticles*, though there may be some *Psalms* of his composition in the book before us.

Several of the *fathers*, both Greek and Latin, maintain that David is the author of the *whole book of Psalms*. And although they allow that several of them speak of times most obviously *posterior* to the days of David, yet they assert that he is the author of these also, and that he spoke of those

events by the *spirit of prophecy*! The rabbins assert that the book of Psalms was composed by *ten* different authors, viz. *Adam, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, the sons of Korah, David, Solomon, Asaph, Jeduthun,* and *Ethan*. But this opinion is slenderly supported.

SECTION 7. OBSERVATIONS ON THE MANNER IN WHICH SEVERAL OF THE PSALMS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN COMPOSED

That there were *several authors*, and that the Psalms were composed at *different times*, is sufficiently evident from the compositions themselves. The *occasions* also on which they were written are frequently pointed out by their contents; and these things have been kept constantly in view, in the construction of the preceding table.

There is a difficulty which should not be overlooked, and with which almost every reader is puzzled, viz., How is it that in the *same Psalm* we find so many *different states* of mind and circumstances pointed out? These could not be the experience of *one* and the *same person*, at the *same time*. The answer that is commonly given is this: Such Psalms were composed *after* the full termination of the *events* which they celebrate. For instance, David had fallen into distress-his sorrows became multiplied-he was filled with torturing fears. He called earnestly on the Lord for help; he was heard after a long night and fight of afflictions; and he most feelingly and sublimely praises God for his deliverance. Now all these different circumstances he describes *as if then existing*, though considerably *distant* in point of time; *beginning* the Psalm with the language of the *deepest penitential distress*, almost bordering on despair; and *ending* it with the *strongest confidence in God*, and thanksgiving for his *deliverance*. The thirtieth Psalm is a case in point; to the *notes* on which the reader is referred. Now it is possible that the psalmist, having obtained deliverance from sore and oppressive evils, might sit down to compose a hymn of thanksgiving to celebrate God's mercies; and in order to do this the more effectually, might describe the different circumstances enumerated above, as if he *were then passing through them*.

But I own that, to me, this is not a satisfactory solution. I rather suppose that such Psalms, and perhaps most of those called *acrostic*, were composed from *diaries* or *memoranda*; and in forming a Psalm, materials out of *different days*, having little congruity with each other as to the time in which they happened, would necessarily enter into the composition. This

supposition will, in my opinion, account for all anomalies of this kind, which we perceive in the book of Psalms.

On this rule we can account for apparent contradictions in several Psalms: taken as metrical compositions formed from memoranda of religious experience for different days, they may well express different states; as the state of the author's mind was not likely to be precisely the same in all those times on which he made the memoranda. I can illustrate what I mean by the following extract from the *Spiritual Diary of Doctor John Rutty*:—

“*Seventh month, 1768, 3d day: Amidst our palpable desolations, matter of some comfort appeared. An inward voice of thanksgiving to God for the gift of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to us Gentiles; the mystery hid from ages, adorable, incomprehensible, unutterable, and unmerited; and if the sweet singer of Israel had occasion to say, ‘Awake, sackbut, psaltery, and harp, and praise the Lord;’ so had I, so had we, so had every one whose eyes the god of this world had not blinded.*”

“*My native fierceness seemed, in the clear vision, to be the chief sin of my bosom, not yet wholly subdued: good Lord, and God of love, subdue it!*”

“*7th. Soul, awake! the everlasting antitypal Sabbath I trust is at hand, the end of all labours, sufferings, and sins; see and prepare for it by letting the earth now enjoy its Sabbaths, even in a gradual relaxation and holy carelessness in all the special concerns of flesh and blood.*”

“*8th. Protracted my vesper beyond the usual tissue, by reason of a sweet inspired song of thanksgiving to a gracious and ever adorable Providence.*”

“*10th. Thy work is not yet done; the war in the members is still felt. Patience hath not yet had its perfect work. O my poverty! Lord, help me!*”

“*11th. In the midst of various discouragements I was induced, even from observation, to believe that our late labour had not been wholly in vain; yea, on the 15th and 20th, I was a witness to some effects thereof.*”

“19th. A silent meeting with a loaded atmosphere; great heaviness, and the holy fire almost but not quite out.

“22d. I am a wonder of God’s mercy and bounty. He is, as it were, renewing my youth, and giving, in old age, to enjoy and sweetly apply the labours of my youth, whilst multitudes of my equals and associates are dropping into eternity, or else various ways distressed. Awake, soul, and work; for the eleventh hour is come!

“23d. In a religious view, suffering is my portion. Lord, sustain!

“25th. A sweet song of thanksgiving.

“31st. The tenor of the drawing or proper steerage this day was, to keep carefully the holy medium between a criminal remissness in temporals on the one hand, and an anxiety about them on the other.” *Spiritual Diary*, vol. ii, p. 235.

One sentence excepted, which is not relevant, here are the whole memoranda of the eminent man’s religious experience for one month, in which we find the following states distinctly marked:

1. Mourning over the small progress of religion in the place where he dwelt, yet receiving encouragement from other quarters, day 3d. 2. Exulting in God for redemption by Christ Jesus, ditto. 3. Humbled on a view of his natural fierceness of spirit, ditto. 4. Rejoicing at the prospect of being soon released from earth, day 7th. 5. Thanksgiving for providential blessings, day 8th. 6. Fighting against inward sin, day 10th. 7. Encouraged in the performance of his duty, days 11th, 15th, 20th. 8. Mourning over the heavenly flame, almost extinct, day 19th. 9. Triumphant in a restoration of mental and bodily vigour, day 22d. 10. Complaining of his suffering lot, day 23d. 11. Happy in his soul, and giving praise to God, day 25th. 12. Forming holy resolutions for the government of his future life, day 31st.

Let us compare this with Psalm 30., to which I have already referred in this introduction.

The Psalm begins with “I will extol thee, O Lord.” And we find in it *seven* different states distinctly marked:

1. He had been in great distress, and nearly overwhelmed by his enemies; implied in ^{<1930b>} **Psalm 30:1**. 2. He extols God for having lifted him up, and preserved him from his adversaries, ^{<1930b>} **Psalm 30:1, 3**. 3. He is brought

into great prosperity, trusts in what he had received, and forgets to depend wholly on the Lord, ^{<19304>}**Psalm 30:4-6**. 4. The Lord hides his face from him, and he is brought into great distress, ^{<19307>}**Psalm 30:7**: “Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.” 5. He makes earnest prayer and supplication, and pleads strongly with the Lord, ^{<19308>}**Psalm 30:8-10**. 6. He is restored to the Divine favour, and filled with joy, ^{<193011>}**Psalm 30:11**. 7. He purposes to glory in God alone, and trust in him forever, ^{<193012>}**Psalm 30:12**.

Now it is impossible that David could have been in all these states when he penned this Psalm: suppose them to be the *memoranda* taken from one week’s journal, and dressed in this poetic form; for it is possible that he might have passed through all these states in one *week*. Let us examine the *month’s* experience, extracted from the diary of *Dr. Rutt*; and let an able hand clothe that in a poetic dress; and we shall find it as apparently contradictory as the xxxth Psalm. Suppose both formed from *memoranda* of a *diary*, and all is plain.

I have spent the more time on this subject, because it is important to have some *general rule* by which we may account for the apparent inconsistencies often occurring in the same Psalm.

There is another class of Psalms to which this mode of interpretation is not applicable: I mean those composed in the *dialogue* form. There are several of this kind; and as the several interlocutors are not distinguished, it requires considerable attention to find out the different parts which belong to the speakers. I shall give an example of this class.

The *ninety-first* Psalm contains, in general, a description of the happiness of those who trust in the Lord: but is evidently divided among *three* speakers: the *psalmist*; another whom we may call his *friend*; and thirdly, *Jehovah*. I shall endeavour to assign to each his part.

The *psalmist* begins with asserting, in general terms, the happiness of the godly: “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty,” ^{<199101>}**Psalm 91:1**.

His *friend* states his own experience, and replies, “I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge,” &c., ^{<199102>}**Psalm 91:2**.

The *psalmist* answers: “Surely he shall deliver thee,” &c., ^{<199103>}**Psalm 91:3**; and goes on to enumerate the great privileges of the godly, to ^{<199108>}**Psalm 91:8**.

The friend then resumes, and shows how blessed the psalmist must be, who has an interest in the same God; and enters into a detail of his privileges, ^{<1910>}**Psalm 91:9-13.**

This speech concluded, *Jehovah* speaks, confirms what was said concerning the blessedness of the godly; and to such persons he promises the highest spiritual honours, long life, and endless salvation, ^{<1914>}**Psalm 91:14-16.**

Other Psalms of this class, such as the xxth and xxxth, &c., will be particularly pointed out in the course of the notes on this subject.

SECTION 8.—ON THE USE MADE OF THE PSALMS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Some have imagined that the book of Psalms is to be understood mystically, in reference to the Christian system; and, indeed, on this plan they have been interpreted and applied by many *fathers*, both ancient and modern. To this opinion I cannot subscribe: and therefore cannot frame a commentary in this way. That several of them are quoted, both by our Lord and his apostles, we have the fullest proof; and where they have shown the way, we may safely follow. Bishop *Horne*, who contends for the spiritual sense of this book, gives an interesting view of the principal passages that have been *quoted* in the *New Testament*; and from his *preface* I shall select a few paragraphs on this part of the subject: “No sooner,” says he, “have we opened the book, than the *second* Psalm presents itself, to all appearance, as an inauguration hymn composed by David, the anointed of *Jehovah*; when by him crowned with victory, and placed triumphant on the sacred hill of *Sion*. But let us turn to ^{<4425>}**Acts 4:25**, and there we find the apostles declaring the Psalm to be descriptive of the exaltation of *Jesus Christ*, and of the opposition raised against his Gospel, both by Jew and Gentile.

“In the *eighth* Psalm we may imagine the writer to be setting forth the pre-eminence of man in general above the rest of the creation: but by ^{<8116>}**Hebrews 2:6**, we are informed that the supremacy conferred on the second Adam, the man *Christ Jesus*, over all things in heaven and earth, is the subject there treated of.

“St. Peter stands up, ^{<4025>}**Acts 2:25**, and preaches the resurrection of Jesus from the latter part of the *sixteenth* Psalm; and, lo, *three thousand* souls are converted by the sermon.

“Of the *eighteenth* Psalm we are told in the course of the sacred history, ^{<1021>}**2 Samuel 22:1**, that ‘David spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:’ yet, in ^{<5159>}**Romans 15:9**, the *ninth* verse of that Psalm is adduced as a proof that the Gentiles should glorify God for his mercy in Christ Jesus: ‘As it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.’

“In the *nineteenth* Psalm David seems to be speaking of the material heavens and their operations only, when he says: ‘Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words into the ends of the world.’ But St. Paul, ^{<5108>}**Romans 10:18**, quotes the passage to show that the Gospel had been universally published by the apostles.

“The *twenty-second* Psalm Christ appropriated to himself, by beginning it in the midst of his sufferings on the cross: ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ Three other verses of it are also applied to him; and the words of the *eighth* verse were actually used by the chief priests when they reviled him: ‘He trusted in God,’ &c., ^{<12743>}**Matthew 27:43**.

“When David says, in the *fortieth* Psalm, ‘Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire—Lo, I come—to do thy will;’ we might suppose him only to declare, in his own person, that obedience is better than sacrifice; but, from ^{<58105>}**Hebrews 10:5**, we learn that Messiah in that place speaks of his advent in the flesh to abolish the legal sacrifices, and to do away sin by the oblation of himself, once for all.

“That tender and pathetic complaint in the *forty-first* Psalm: Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me,’ undoubtedly might be, and probably was, originally uttered by David upon the revolt of his old friend and counsellor Ahithophel, to the party of his rebellious son Absalom. But we are certain, from ^{<31318>}**John 13:18**, that this scripture was fulfilled when Christ was betrayed by his apostate disciple: ‘I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.’

“The *forty-fourth* Psalm we must suppose to have been written on occasion of a persecution under which the Church at that time laboured; but a verse of it is cited, ^{<4036>}**Romans 8:36**, as expressive of what Christians were to suffer on their blessed Master’s account: ‘As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’

“A quotation from the *forty-fifth* Psalm in ^{<5003>}**Hebrews 1:3**, certifies us that the whole is addressed to the Son of God, and therefore celebrates his spiritual union with the Church, and the happy fruits of it.

“The *sixty-eighth* Psalm, though apparently conversant about Israelitish victories, the translation of the ark to Sion, and the services of the tabernacle; yet does, under those figures, treat of Christ’s resurrection; his going upon high leading captivity captive, pouring out the gifts of the Spirit, erecting his Church in the world, and enlarging it by the accession of the nations to the faith; as will be evident to any one who considers the force and consequence of the apostle’s citation from it, ^{<4007>}**Ephesians 4:7, 8**: ‘Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.’

“The *sixty-ninth* Psalm is *five* times referred to in the Gospels, as being uttered by the prophet in the person of the Messiah. The *imprecations*, or rather *predictions*, at the latter end of it, are applied, ^{<5109>}**Romans 11:9, 10**, to the Jews; and to Judas, ^{<4021>}**Acts 1:20**, where the *hundred and ninth* Psalm is also cited as prophetic of the sore judgments which should befall that arch traitor, and the wretched nation of which he was an epitome.

“St. Matthew, informing us, ^{<4035>}**Matthew 13:35**, that Jesus spake to the multitude in parables, gives it as one reason why he did so: ‘That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, ^{<4973D>}**Psalms 73:2**, I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

“The *ninety-first* Psalm was applied by the tempter to the Messiah; nor did our Lord object to the application, but only to the false inference which his adversary suggested from it; ^{<4046>}**Matthew 4:6, 7**.

“The *ninety-fifth* Psalm is explained at large in ^{<5800>}**Hebrews 3:1-4:16**, as relative to the state and trials of Christians in the world, and to their attainment of the heavenly rest.

“The *hundred and tenth* Psalm is cited by Christ himself, ^{<4124>}**Matthew 22:44**, as treating of his exaltation, kingdom, and priesthood.

“The *hundred and seventeenth* Psalm, consisting only of *two verses*, is employed, ^{<6151>}**Romans 15:11**, to prove that the Gentiles were one day to praise God for the mercies of redemption.

“The twenty-second verse of the *hundred and eighteenth* Psalm: ‘The stone which the builders refused,’ &c., is quoted *six* different times as spoken of our Saviour. See ^{<4124>}**Matthew 21:42**; ^{<411210>}**Mark 12:10**; ^{<2317>}**Luke 20:17**; ^{<44041>}**Acts 4:11**.

“And *lastly*: ‘the fruit of David’s body,’ which God is said in the *hundred and thirty-second* Psalm to have promised that he would place upon his *throne*, is asserted, ^{<441231>}**Acts 2:30**, to be ‘Jesus Christ.’ “Bishop Horne on the Psalms, preface, p. xi.

That several of the above quotations are directly *prophetic*, and were intended to announce and describe the Redeemer of the world and the Gospel state, there is not the slightest reason to doubt; that others of them are *accommodated* to the above subjects, their own historical meaning being different, may be innocently credited: but let it always be remembered, that these accommodations are made by the same Spirit by which the Psalms were originally given; that this Spirit has a right to extend his own meaning, and to adapt his own words to subjects, transactions, and times, to which, from similarity of circumstances, they may be applicable. Many passages of the Old Testament seem to be thus quoted in the New; and often the words a *little altered*, and the meaning *extended*, to make them suitable to existing circumstances. Every writer is at perfect liberty thus to employ his own words, which he might, have already used on very different occasions. I need not tell the learned reader that the finest, as well as the oldest, of the heathen writers, *Homer*, is full of quotations *from himself*; and *Virgil*, his imitator, has not unfrequently followed his steps. But still there is a great and weighty difference as the subject respects the Holy Spirit; to his infinite wisdom and knowledge all times and circumstances, whether *past* or *future*, are always laid open; and, as it is one of the perfections of the work of God to produce the *greatest* and most *numerous effects* by the *fewest* and *simplest means*, so it is one of the perfections of the Holy Scriptures to represent things that are not as though they were; and to make the facts which then existed the representatives of those which should afterwards take place. Thus the Holy

Scriptures contain an infinity of meaning: the Old Testament, as it were, included and referred to in the New; as the New refers *back* to the Old, by which it was adumbrated; and refers *forward*, not only to all times and great occurrences during this mortal state, but also to the endless states of the just and the unjust in the eternal world.

SECTION 9.—ON THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE PSALMS, AND THE METHOD OF APPLYING THEM

The late learned Bishop *Horsley*, in his *preface* to the book of Psalms, says: “It is true that many of the Psalms are commemorative of the miraculous interpositions of God in behalf of his chosen people; for, indeed, the history of the Jews is a fundamental part of revealed religion. Many were probably composed upon the occasion of remarkable passages in David’s life, his dangers, his afflictions, his deliverances. But of those which relate to the public history of the natural Israel, there are few in which the fortunes of the mystical Israel, the Christian Church, are not adumbrated; and of those which allude to the life of David, there are none in which the *Son of David* is not the principal and immediate subject.

“David’s complaints against his enemies are Messiah’s complaints, first of the unbelieving Jews, then of the heathen persecutors and the apostate faction in the latter ages. David’s afflictions are the Messiah’s sufferings; David’s penitential supplications are the supplications of Messiah in agony; David’s songs of triumph and thanksgiving are Messiah’s songs of triumph and thanksgiving for his victory over sin, and death, and hell. In a word, there is not a page of this book of Psalms in which the pious reader will not find his *Saviour*, if he read with a view of finding him; and it was but a just encomium of it (the book of Psalms) that came from the pen of one of the early fathers, that ‘*it is a complete system of divinity for the use and edification of the common people of the Christian Church.*’“

Of the compilation of this book the above learned writer speaks thus: “The Psalms appear to be compositions of various authors, in various ages; some much more ancient than the time of King David, some of a much later age. Of many, David himself was undoubtedly the author; and that those of *his* composition were *prophetic*, we have David’s own authority; for thus King David, at the close of his life, describes himself and his sacred songs: “David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The

Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” It was the word, therefore, of *Jehovah’s Spirit* which was uttered by David’s tongue.

“The Psalms are all poems of the LYRIC kind, that is, adapted to music, but with great variety in the style of composition. Some are simply ODES. An *ode* is a dignified sort of song, narrative of the facts either of public history or private life, in a highly adorned and figurative style. Some are of the kind called ELEGIAC, which are pathetic compositions upon mournful subjects. Some are ETHIC, delivering grave maxims of life or the precepts of religion in solemn, but for the most part simple, strains. Some are ENIGMATIC, delivering the doctrines of religion in *enigmas* contrived to strike the imagination forcibly, and yet easy to be understood. In all these the author delivers the whole matter in his own person. But a very great, I believe the far greater, part are a sort of DRAMATIC ODES, consisting of *dialogues* between persons sustaining certain characters. In these dialogue Psalms the persons are frequently the *psalmist* himself, or the *chorus of priests and Levites*, or the *leader of the Levitical band*, opening the ode with a proem, declarative of the subject, and very often closing the whole with a solemn admonition drawn from what the other persons say. The other persons are JEHOVAH, sometimes as one, sometimes as another of the *Three Persons*; CHRIST in his incarnate state sometimes *before*, sometimes *after*, his resurrection; the *human soul* of Christ as distinguished from the *Divine essence*. Christ, in his incarnate state, is personated sometimes as a *Priest*, sometimes as a *King*, sometimes as a *Conqueror*. The resemblance is very remarkable between this *Conqueror* in the book of *Psalms*, and the *Warrior on the white horse* in the book of *Revelation*, who goes forth with a *crown* on his head, and a *bow* in his hand, conquering and to conquer. And the conquest in the *Psalms* is followed, like the conquest in the *Revelation*, by the *marriage* of the *Conqueror*. These are circumstances of similitude which, to any one versed in the *prophetic style*, prove beyond a doubt that the *mystical Conqueror* is the same personage in both.”

There is an opinion relative to the construction of this book, which, though to myself it appear as fanciful as it is singular, yet deserves to be mentioned, especially as so great a man as Dr. *Horsley* supposes, that if it were kept in view, it would conduce much to a right understanding of the book.

The whole collection of the Psalms forms a sort of HEROIC TRAGEDY. The *redemption of man* and the *destruction of Satan*, is the PLOT. The PERSONS OF THE DRAMA are the *Persons* of the GODHEAD; *Christ* united to one of them: *Satan*, *Judas*, the *apostate Jews*, the *heathen persecutors*, the *apostates of latter times*. The ATTENDANTS: *believers*, *unbelievers*, *angels*. The SCENES: *heaven*, *earth*, *hell*. The TIME of the *action*: from the *fall* to the final overthrow of the *apostate faction*, and the *general judgment*.

SECTION 10. ON THE PARTICULAR SUBJECT AND USE OF EACH PSALM

I have already given different tables relative to the division chronological arrangement, and supposed authors and occasions on which they were composed. There have been some others made, in which they have been classed according to their subjects, and their uses for the godly and the Christian Church. The most circumstantial that I have seen is that in the *Quintuplex Psalterium*, printed in 1508, already noticed in the beginning of this introduction. The following, from Bishop *Horsley*, may be probably of most general use:—

Services of the Festivals of the Jewish Church

For the SABBATH, Psa. 19., 104., and 118. For the PASSOVER, Psa. 78., 105., 114. For PENTECOST, Psa. 111., 135., 136. For the FEAST OF TRUMPETS, Psa. 81. For the FEAST OF TABERNACLES, Psa. 65., 67.

A war song, Psa. 149. Thanksgiving for national deliverances, or successful war, Psa. 48., 66., 76., 115., 124., 125., 144. Thanksgiving after a storm, hurricane, or earthquake, Psa. 29., 46. Upon placing the ark in Solomon's temple, Psa. 132. Prayers in seasons of national calamity, Psa. 29. Prayers for help in war, Psa. 44., 60., 61. Thanksgiving for Hezekiah's recovery, Psa. 30., 116. Prayers in the time of Manasseh's captivity, Psa. 29., 80. Thanksgiving for Manasseh's return, Psa. 85. Prayers, lamentations, and confessions of the captives, Psa. 74., 77., 102., 106., 137. Songs of triumph and thanksgiving of the returned captives, Psa. 107., 126., 146., 147. A king of Judah's inauguration vow, Psa. 101. Grand chorus for all the voices and all the instruments, Psa. cl. The blessedness of the righteous, and the final perdition of the opposite faction, Psa. 1., 36., 37., 112. The extermination of the religious faction, Psa. 14., 53. True godliness described as distinct from the ritual, Psa. 15., 50. The believer's scruples arising from the prosperity of the wicked, removed by revealed

religion, and the consideration of their latter end, Psa. 23. The pleasures of devotion, Psa. 84. Divine ænigmata; the subject, the Redeemer's divinity, the immortality of the soul, and a future retribution, Psa. 49. A mystical prayer of David in the character of the high priest, Psa. 16. Prayers of believers for protection against the atheistical conspiracy, Psa. 3., 4., 10., 12., 13., 14., 43., 54., 120., 123., 140. The believer's penitential confessions and deprecations, Psa. 6., 32., 38., 39., 51. Believer's prayer for the promised redemption, Psa. 130., 143.

Believers lament their afflicted state in this short and evil life, and pray for the resurrection, Psa. 90. Prayers for grace and mercy, Psa. 5., 25., 26., 131. Songs of triumph in prospect of the establishment of God's universal kingdom, Psa. 47., 67., 93. A believer's general praises and thanksgivings, Psa. 8., 19., 23., 103., 119. A believer's thanksgiving for the final extirpation of iniquity, and the idolatrous religions and persecuting power, Psa. 9., 11., 52., 66. The Church prays for preservation from corruptions, Psa. 28., 141.; for deliverance from the persecution of her enemies, Psa. 7., latter part of 27., from ver. 7 to the end, and 31., 59.; for Messiah's deliverance and success, Psa. 20. The Church gives thanks for Messiah's victory, Psa. 21.; for her own final deliverance, Psa. 18.; for the final extirpation of iniquity and idolatry, Psa. 92. Messiah's prayers, Psa. 22., 35., 41., 46., 57., 61., 62., 63., 86., 88.; in agony. When taken and deserted, Psa. 142.; thanksgivings, Psa. 40., 117., and 118., one Psa. 138; accusation of the impenitent Jews, his enemies, Psa. 55., 64., 69.; prophetic malediction of the Jewish nation, Psa. 109.; exaltation, Psa. 2., 24., 45., 95., 96., 97., 98., 99., 100., 110.; comforts of the afflicted Israelites with the promise of the final excision of the idolatrous faction, Psa. 94., exhorts to holiness and trust in God by the example of his own deliverance, Psa. 34.; predicts the final judgment, Psa. 75. God promises the Messiah protection and glory, Psa. 91. God's just judgment foretold upon the unjust judges of our Lord, Psa. 58., 82. The reign of the king's son, Psa. 72. Salvation is of the Jews, Psa. 87.

Of the Psalms, *six* are alphabetical, 25., 34., 37., 111., 112., 145.

Forty-five of the Psalms are called by the Masoretes *Mizmor*, 3., 4., 5., 6., 8., 9., 12., 13., 15., 19., 20., 21., 22., 23., 24., 29., 31., 38., 39., 40., 41., 47., 49., 50., 51., 52., 53., 54., 55., 73., 77., 79., 80., 82., 84., 84., 98., 100., 101., 109., 110., 139., 140., 141., 143.

Six are called *Michtam*, xvi., lvi., lvii., lviii., lix., lx.

Thirteen are called *Maschil*, 32., 42., 44., 45., 52., 53., 54., 55., 74., 78., 88., 89., 142.

Seven are called *Mizmor Shir*, 31., 65., 67., 68., 75., 77., 92.

Five are called *Shir Mizmor*, 48., 66., 83., 88., 108.


One is called *Shir*, 46.

Four are called *Tephillah*, 17., 86., 90., 102.

One is called *Tehillah*, 145.; *one*, *Shiggaion*, 7.; *one*, *Lehazchir*, 70.

Fifteen are called *Shir Hammaaloth*, or *Songs of Steps*, 120.-134.

SECTION 11.—ON THE GENERAL USE OF THE PSALMS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

That our blessed Lord used the book of Psalms as he did other books of Scripture, and quoted from it, we have already seen; this stamps it with the highest authority: and that he and his disciples used it as a book of *devotion*, we learn from their singing the *Hillel* at his last supper, which we know was composed of Psalms 113., 114., 115., 116., 117., and 118.; see  **Matthew 26:30**, and the notes there: and that they were used by the Christian Church from the earliest times in devotional exercises, especially in praising God, we have the most ample proof. At first what was called *singing* was no more than a *recitavio* or solemn mode of reading or repeating, which in the Jewish Church was accompanied by *instruments of music*, of the nature of which we know nothing. The Christian religion, which delights in *simplicity*, while it retained the Psalms as a book Divinely inspired, and a book of devotion, omitted the instrumental music, which, however, in after times, with other corruptions, crept into the Church, and is continued in many places, with small benefit to the godly, and little edification to the multitude. What good there might have been derived from it has been lost in consequence of the improper persons who generally compose what is commonly called the *choir of singers*. Those whose peculiar office it is to direct and lead the singing in Divine worship, should have clean hands and pure hearts. To see this part of public worship performed by unthinking if not profligate youths of both sexes, fills the serious with pain, and the ungodly with contempt. He who sings not with the *spirit* as well as the *understanding*, offers a sacrifice to God as

acceptable as the dog's head and swine's blood would have been under the Mosaic law.

I shall not enter into the question whether the *Psalms of David*, or *hymns* formed on New Testament subjects, be the most proper for Christian congregations; *both* I think may be profitably used. Nor will I take up the controversy relative to the adapting the Psalms to express an evangelical meaning in every place. I need only give my opinion, that I consider this a difficult, if not a dangerous, work. Where the Psalms evidently relate to the *Gospel dispensation*, the matter is plain; there it is proper and necessary to give them their full direction and meaning; but to turn those in this way that evidently have no such reference, I consider a temerarious undertaking, and wholly unwarrantable.

But the most difficult task is, throwing them into a *modern poetic form*, especially into metre; as in such cases many things are introduced for the sake of the poetry, and the final jingle, which were never spoken by the inspired penman; and it is an awful thing to add to or detract from the word of God, either in *poetry* or *prose*. And how frequently this is done in most metrical versions of the Psalms, need not be pointed out here. Perhaps one of the most faultless in this respect is an almost obsolete one in our own language, viz., that by *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*. Because of its uncouth form, this version has been unjustly vilified while others, by far its inferiors, have been as unreasonably extolled. The authors of this *version* (for it has been taken directly from the Hebrew text) have sacrificed every thing to the literal sense and meaning. The others, and especially that of *Tate* and *Brady*, which is no version from the original, sacrifice often the literal and true sense to sound and smoothness of numbers; in which, however, they are not always successful.

I shall add only one word on the subject of this very ancient version. I can sing almost every Psalm in the version of *Sternhold* and *Hopkins* AS the *Psalms of David*; I can sing those of the *new version* AS the Psalms of Dr. *Brady* and *Nahum Tate*. Either let one equally *literal*, with a better *versification*, be made; or restore to the people that form of sound words of which they have too long been deprived. But, to serve the purposes of devotion, we want a better translation of the Psalms; a translation in which the *hemistich*, or Hebrew poetic form, shall be carefully preserved; and with a very few expletives, (which should be distinguished by *italics*, or otherwise, in the printing, to bring the lines into those forms, to which our

versification or musical measures may extend,) we might sing the whole, without singing any thing in sense or meaning which was not *David's*. Indeed a species of *recitativo* singing would be the most proper for these sacred odes; as it would answer much better the solemn purposes of devotion, than the great mass of those tunes which are commonly employed in Church music, in which the style of singing is rarely adapted to the grand and melting compositions of *the sweet singer of Israel*. Let the plan be copied which is adopted from the Hebrew MSS. in Dr. *Kennicott's* edition; let them be translated line for line, as Dr. *Lowth* has done his version of Isaiah; let a dignified recitative music be adapted to the words; attend to metre, and be regardless of rhyme; and then the Psalms will be a mighty help to devotion, and truly religious people will sing with the spirit and the understanding also. Were a version of this kind made and substituted for that most inaccurate version in the *Prayerbook*, a stumbling-block would be taken out of the way of some sincere minds, who are pained to find, not only important differences, but even contradictions, between the Psalms which they read in their authorized version, and those which are used in the public service of the Church.

As many persons are greatly at a loss to account for the strange varieties between these two versions, (that in the *Bible*, and that in the *Prayerbook*,) it may be necessary to give them some information on this head. Properly speaking, the *Psalms* in the *Prayerbook*, called the *reading Psalms*, are rather a *paraphrase* than a *version*. It was never taken immediately from the *Hebrew*, with which it disagrees in places innumerable. In the main it follows the *Septuagint* and the *Vulgate*, but often differs from *them*, even where they *differ* from the *Hebrew*, and yet without following the *latter*. And there are many *words*, *turns of thought*, and varieties of *mood*, *tense*, and *person*, in it which do not appear in any of the above.

In the *prose Psalms* in our *authorized version* our translators have acted very conscientiously, as they have done in all other cases where they have *added* any thing, even the smallest particle, in order to fill up the sense, or accommodate the *Hebrew idiom* to that of the *English*; they have shown this by putting the *expletive* or *supplied* word in the *italic* letter. Thousands of such expletives, many of them utterly unnecessary, are found in the *prose Psalms* in the *Prayerbook*; but they have no such distinguishing mark, and are all printed as if they were the words of the Holy Spirit!

There are some things in this version that are *contradictory* to what is found in the Hebrew text. I shall give one example.

In ^{<OC>}**Psalm 125:3** we have the following words in the Hebrew text: **l [vrh cbv j wny al yk μyqydxh l rwg** *ki lo yanuach shebet haresha al goral hatstsaddikim*, which is faithfully translated in our common version, “For the rod of the wicked (*wickedness*, marg.) shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous:” this is rendered in the *prose Psalms* in the *Prayerbook* thus: “For the rod of the ungodly cometh not into the lot of the righteous.”

“This,” say the objectors, “is neither *Scripture* nor *truth*. 1. It is not *Scripture*: the *Hebrew* is, as our authorized version hath it: ‘The rod of the wicked shall not rest.’ But your version saith, ‘The rod of the ungodly cometh not.’ 2. It is not *truth*: ‘The rod of the wicked *often* cometh *into* the lot of the righteous;’ but here is the difference: though it *may come*, and often *doth come, into the lot of the righteous*, yet God never permitteth it to *rest* there. Here therefore your reading Psalms contradict both *Scripture* and *fact*.”

It may be asked, From what source is this objectionable reading derived? It evidently cannot be derived from the *Hebrew text*, as the reader will at once perceive. It is not in the *Vulgate*, which reads, Quia non relinquet Dominus virgam peccatorum super sortem justorum. “For the Lord will not leave the rod of sinners upon the lot of the righteous.” It is not in the Septuagint, **Οτι ουκ αφησει Κυριος την ραβδον των αμαρτωλων επι τον κληρον των δικαιων**, which is precisely the same as the *Vulgate*. Nor does this strange version receive any support from either the *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, *Æthiopic*, or *Arabic*.

To attempt to vindicate such a translation will neither serve the interests of the *Church*, nor those of Christianity, especially when we have one so very different and so very faithful put into the hands of the people by the *authority of the Church and the state*. That in the *Prayerbook* should be immediately suppressed, and replaced by that in our *authorized version*, that the people may not have a different version put into their hands on the *Lord’s day*, and in times of *public devotion*, from that which they find in their *Bible*; in consequence of which they are often confounded with discrepancies which it is out of their power to reconcile. It is passing

strange that the rulers of the Church have slumbered so long over a subject of such vast magnitude and importance.

To be fully satisfied on this subject, I have collated this *Prayerbook version* in many places with the *Hebrew text*, the *Septuagint*, the *Vulgate*, the old *Itala* or *Antehieronymian*, and the *oriental* versions in general; and find much cause of complaint against its general looseness, and frequent inaccuracy; and would give that advice to the rulers of our Church, that the prophet did to the rulers of the Jewish Church, on a subject in which the best interests of the people were concerned: “Go through, go through the *gates*; cast up, cast up the *highway*; take up the *stumbling-block* out of the way of my people; lift up a *standard* for the people;” ^{<25714>} **Isaiah 57:14; 62:10.**

With respect to *helps*, I may say in general that I have occasionally consulted, 1. The *Critici Sacri*. 2. *Venema*; whom I should have been glad to have used more particularly, but his plan would have led me into such an extent of comment, as would have far surpassed my limits. 3. *Rosenmuller’s* collections were of more use; but neither did his plan quadrate with mine. 4. *Calmet* afforded me most assistance, as he is, in almost all respects, the most judicious of all the commentators. 5. Could I have wholly agreed with the plan of the truly pious *Bishop Horne*, I might have enriched my work with many of those spiritual remarks with which his *commentary* abounds. Where I differ from *his plan* will best appear in a preceding part of this *introduction*, to which I must refer the reader. 6. From the very learned *Bishop Horsley* I have borrowed several useful *notes*, particularly of a critical kind. 7. But the work which I think may be of most use to masters of families, and ministers in general, is that excellent and judicious one by *Dr. Wm. Nicolson*, formerly *bishop of Gloucester*, with the quaint but expressive title, “DAVID’S HARP STRUNG AND TUNED; or an easy ANALYSIS of the whole *book of Psalms*, cast into such method, that the sum of every Psalm may quickly be collected and remembered.” In many places I have introduced the whole of the *analysis*, with some corrections, leaving out the *prayers* at the *end of each Psalm*; which, though very useful for the *family*, or for the *closet*, could not properly have a place in a *comment*. This work was *finished* by the author, October 22, 1658. 8. From an old folio MS. on vellum in my own collection, I have extracted some curious notes and renderings. It contains the *Vulgate*, or more properly the *Antehieronymian* version, with a translation after each verse in the ancient Scottish dialect, and after that a paraphrase in same

language. I have given the eighth Psalm as it stands in this ancient MS., after my notes on that Psalm. Most of my readers will find this at least an *edifying curiosity*. Extracts from it will appear in different parts of the work. I know nothing like the book of Psalms: it contains all the lengths, breadths, depths, and heights of the patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian dispensations. It is the most useful book in the Bible, and is every way worthy of the wisdom of God.

Readers may the Spirit of the ever blessed God make this most singular, most excellent, and most exalted of all his works, a present and eternal blessing to thy soul!-Amen.

ADAM CLARKE.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Chronological Notes relative to the Psalms written by David, upon the supposition that they were all composed in a period of about forty-seven years. See the Introduction.

- Year from the Creation, 2942-2989.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 1058-1011.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 1062-1015.
- Year since the Deluge, according to Archbishop Usher, and the English Bible, 1286-1333.
- Year from the destruction of Troy, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 123-170.
- Year before the first Olympiad, 286-239.
- Year before the building of Rome, 309-262.
- Year of the Julian Period, 3652-3699.
- Year of the Dionysian Period, 460-507.

PSALM 1

The blessedness of the righteous shown, in his avoiding every appearance of evil, 1. In his godly use of the law of the Lord, 2. This farther pointed out under the metaphor of a good tree planted in a good well-watered soil, 3. The opposite state of the ungodly pointed out, under the metaphor of chaff driven away by the wind, 4. The miserableness of sinners, and the final happiness of the godly, 5, 6.

NOTES ON PSALM 1

Verse 1. Blessed is the man] This Psalm has no *title*, and has been generally considered, but without especial reason, as a *preface* or *introduction* to the whole book.

The word **yrva** *ashrey*, which we translate *blessed*, is properly in the plural form, *blessednesses*; or may be considered as an *exclamation* produced by contemplating the state of the man who has taken God for his portion; *O the blessedness of the man!* And the word **vyah** *haish*, is emphatic: *THAT man*; that *one* among a *thousand* who lives for the accomplishment of the end for which God created him. 1. God made man

for happiness. 2. Every man feels a desire to be happy. 3. All human beings abhor misery. 4. Happiness is the grand object of pursuit among all men. 5. But so perverted is the human heart, that it seeks happiness where it cannot be found; and in things which are naturally and morally unfit to communicate it. 6. The true way of obtaining it is here laid down.

That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly] There is a double CLIMAX in this verse, which it will be proper to note:—

1. There are here *three* characters, each *exceeding* the other in sinfulness. 1. The UNGODLY $\mu\upsilon$ [*vr* *reshaim* from [*vr* *rasha*, to be *unjust*; rendering to none his due; withholding from God, society, and himself, what belongs to each. *Ungodly*-he who has not God in him; who is without God in the world. 2. SINNERS, $\mu\upsilon\alpha\sigma\iota$ *chattaim*, from $\alpha\sigma\iota$ *chata*, “to miss the mark,” “to pass over the prohibited limits,” “to transgress.” This man not only does *no good*, but he *does evil*. The former was *without God*, but not *desperately wicked*. The latter adds *outward transgression* to the *sinfulness* of his heart. 3. SCORNFUL, $\mu\upsilon\chi\iota$ *letsim*, from $\chi\iota$ *latsah*, “to mock, deride.” He who has no religion; lives in the open breach of God’s laws, and turns *revelation*, the *immortality of the soul*, and the existence of an *invisible world*, into ridicule. He is at least a *deist*, and endeavours to *dissolve*, as much as he can, the *bonds* of moral obligation in civil society. As the *sinner* exceeds the *ungodly*, so the *scornful* exceeds *both*.

The *second climax* is found in the words, 1. *Walk*; 2. *Stand*; 3. *Sit*: which mark *three different degrees* of evil in the *conduct* of those persons.

Observe, 1. The *ungodly* man—one uninfluenced by God. 2. The *sinner*-he who adds to *ungodliness*, *transgression*. 3. The *scornful*-the deist, atheist, &c., who make a mock of every thing sacred. The UNGODLY man *walks*, the SINNER *stands*, and the SCORNFUL man *sits down* in the way of iniquity.

Mark certain circumstances of their differing characters and conduct. 1. The *ungodly man* has his *counsel*; 2. The *sinner* has his *way*; and, 3. The *scorner* has his *seat*.

The *ungodly man* is unconcerned about religion; he is neither zealous for his own salvation, nor for that of others: and he *counsels* and *advises* those with whom he converses to adopt his plan, and not trouble themselves about praying, reading, repenting, &c., &c. there is no need for such things; live an honest life, make no fuss about religion, and you will fare

well enough at last. Now, “blessed is the man who walks not in this man’s counsel;” who does not come into his measures, nor act according to his plan.

The *sinner* has his particular way of transgressing; one is a *drunkard*, another *dishonest*, another *unclean*. Few are given to every species of vice. There are many *covetous men* who abhor *drunkenness*; many *drunkards* who abhor *covetousness*; and so of others. Each has his *easily besetting sin*; therefore, says the prophet, *let the wicked forsake HIS WAY*. Now, *blessed is he who stands not in such a man’s WAY*.

The *scorner* has brought, in reference to himself, all religion and moral feeling to an end. He has *sat down*-is utterly confirmed in impiety, and makes a mock at sin. His conscience is seared; and he is a believer in all unbelief. Now, *blessed is the man who sits not down in his SEAT*.

See the *correspondent relations* in this account. 1. He who *walks* according to the *counsel* of the *ungodly* will soon, 2. *Stand* to look on the way of *sinners*; and thus, being off his guard, he will soon be a partaker in their evil deeds. 3. He who has abandoned himself to transgression will, in all probability, soon become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin; and *sit down* with the *scorner*, and endeavour to turn religion into ridicule.

The last correspondency we find is:—1. The *seat* answers to the *sitting* of the *scornful*. 2. The *way* answers to the *standing* of the *sinner*; and 3, the *counsel* answers to the *walking* of the *ungodly*.

The great lesson to be learned from the whole is, sin is *progressive*; one evil propensity or act leads to another. He who acts by *bad counsel* may soon do *evil deeds*; and he who abandons himself to *evil doings* may end his life in *total apostasy* from God. “When lust has conceived, it brings forth sin; and when sin is finished, it brings forth death.” Solomon the son of David, adds a profitable advice to those words of his father: “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away;” ~~2014~~ **Proverbs 4:14, 15**.

As the *blessedness* of the man is great who avoids the ways and the workers of iniquity, so his *wretchedness* is great who acts on the *contrary*: to him we must reverse the words of David: “Cursed is the man who walketh in the counsel of the ungodly; who standeth in the way of sinners; and who sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” Let him that readeth understand.

Verse 2. But his delight is in the law of the Lord] **wxpj** *chephtso*, his will, desire, affection, every *motive* in his heart, and every *moving principle* in his soul, are on the side of *God* and his *truth*. He takes up *the law of the Lord* as the *rule of his life*; he brings all his actions and affections to this holy *standard*. He looketh into the perfect law of liberty; and is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word; and is therefore blessed in his deed. He not only *reads* to gain knowledge from the Divine oracles, but he *meditates* on what he has read, feeds on it; and thus receiving *the sincere milk of the word*, he grows thereby unto eternal life. This is not an *occasional* study to him; it is his work *day and night*. As his *heart* is in it, the *employment* must be *frequent*, and the *disposition* to it *perpetual*.

Verse 3. Like a tree planted] Not like one growing wild, however strong or luxuriant it may appear; but one that has been carefully *cultivated*; and for the proper growth of which all the advantages of soil and situation have been chosen. If a child be brought up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord, we have both reason and revelation to encourage us to expect a godly and useful life. Where religious education is neglected, alas! what fruits of righteousness can be expected? An *uncultivated soul* is like an *uncultivated field*, all overgrown with briers, thorns, and thistles.

By the rivers of water] **μym ygl p** *palgey mayim*, the streams or divisions of the waters. Alluding to the custom of *irrigation* in the eastern countries, where streams are conducted from a canal or river to different parts of the ground, and turned *off* or *on* at pleasure; the person having no more to do than by *his foot* to turn a sod from the side of one stream, to cause it to share its waters with the other parts to which he wishes to direct his course. This is called “watering the land with the foot,” ^{<65110>} **Deuteronomy 11:10**, where see the note.

His fruit in his season] In such a case expectation is never disappointed. Fruit is expected, fruit is borne; and it comes also in the time in which it should come. A godly education, under the influences of the Divine Spirit, which can never be withheld where they are earnestly sought, is sure to produce the fruits of righteousness; and he who reads, prays, and meditates, will ever *see* the *work* which God has given him to do; the *power* by which he is to perform it; and the *times, places, and opportunities* for doing those things by which God can obtain most glory, his own soul most good, and his neighbour most edification.

His leaf also shall not wither] His *profession* of true religion shall always be regular and unsullied; and his *faith* be ever shown by his *works*. As the *leaves* and the *fruit* are the evidences of the vegetative perfection of the tree; so a zealous religious profession, accompanied with good works, are the evidences of the soundness of faith in the Christian man. *Rabbi Solomon Jarchi* gives a curious turn to this expression: he considers the *leaves* as expressing those matters of the law that seem to be of no real use, to be quite unimportant, and that apparently neither add nor diminish. But even these things are parts of the Divine revelation, and *all have their use*; so even the apparently indifferent actions or sayings of a truly holy man have their use; and from the *manner* and *spirit* in which they are done or said, have the tendency to bear the observer to something great and good.

Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper] It is always healthy; it is extending its roots, increasing its woody fibres, circulating its nutritive juices, putting forth fruitbuds, blossoms, leaves, or fruit; and all these operations go on in a healthy tree, in their proper seasons. So the godly man; he is ever taking deeper root growing stronger in the grace he has already received, increasing in heavenly desires, and under the continual influence of the Divine Spirit, forming those purposes from which much fruit to the glory and praise of God shall be produced.

Verse 4. The ungodly are not so] The *Vulgate* and *Septuagint*, and the versions made from them, such as the *Æthiopic* and *Arabic*, double the last negation, and add a clause to the end of the verse, “Not so the ungodly, not so; they shall be like the dust which the wind scatters away *from the face of the earth*.” There is nothing solid in the men; there is nothing good in their ways. They are not of God’s planting; they are not good grain; they are only *chaff*, and a chaff that shall be separated from the good grain when the fan or shovel of God’s power throws them up to the wind of his judgments. The manner of *winnowing* in the eastern countries is nearly the same with that practiced in various parts of these kingdoms before the invention of *winnowing machines*. They either throw it up in a place out of doors by a large wooden shovel against the wind; or with their *weights* or *winnowing fans* shake it down leisurely in the wind. The grain falls down nearly perpendicularly; and the chaff, through its lightness, is blown away to a distance from the grain.

An ungodly man is never steady; his purposes are abortive; his conversation light, trifling, and foolish; his professions, friendships, &c., frothy, hollow, and insincere; and both he and his works are carried away to destruction by the wind of God's judgments.

Verse 5. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand] This refers to the *winnowing* mentioned in the preceding verse. Some of the versions have, *The ungodly shall not arise in the judgment*-they shall have *no resurrection*, except to shame and everlasting contempt. But probably the meaning is, When they come to be judged, they shall be condemned. They shall have nothing to plead in their behalf. That the impious were never to have any resurrection, but be annihilated, was the opinion of several among the Jews, and of some among Christians. The former believe that only the true Israelites shall be raised again; and that the souls of all others, the Christians not excepted, die with their bodies. Such unfounded opinions are unworthy of refutation.

Verse 6. The Lord knoweth] [*dwy yodea*, approveth the way, *aloweth the way*, Coverdale, of the righteous, *μυqydx tsaddikim*, from *qdx tsadak*, to give even weight; the men who give to all their *due*; opposed to *μy[vr reshaim*, ^{<90101>}**Psalm 1:1**, they who withhold *right* from all; see above. Such holy men are under the continual eye of God's *providence*; he *knows* the way that they take; *approves* of their motives, purposes, and works, because they are all wrought through himself. He *provides* for them in all exigencies, and *defends* them both in body and soul.

The way of the ungodly shall perish.] Their projects, designs and operations, shall perish; God's curse shall be on all that they *have*, *do*, and *are*. And in the day of judgment they shall be condemned to everlasting fire in the perdition of ungodly men. *The wicked shall perish at the presence of the Lord*. Reader take warning!

ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST PSALM

The *το κρινομενον* in this Psalm is, *Who is the happy man?* or, *What may make a man happy?*

I. This question the prophet resolves in the first two verses: 1. *Negatively*. It is he, 1. "That walks not in the counsel of the ungodly." 2. "That stands not in the way of sinners." 3. "That sits not in the seat of the scornful." 2.

Positively. It is he. 1. “Whose delight is in the law of the Lord.” 2. “Who doth meditate in the law day and night.”

II. This happiness of the good man is illustrated two ways: 1. By a similitude. 2. By comparing him with a wicked man.

1. The similitude he makes choice of is that of a *tree*; not every *tree* neither, but that which hath these eminences: 1. It is “planted; “it grows not of itself, neither is wild. 2. “Planted by the rivers of water,” it wants not moisture to fructify. 3. It doth fructify; “it brings forth fruit;” it is no *barren* tree. 4. The fruit it brings is seasonable; “it brings forth fruit in its season.” 5. It is always green, winter and summer; “the leaves wither not.” Clearly, without any trope, *Whatsoever* this good man *doth*, or takes in hand, “it shall prosper.”

2. He shows this good man’s happiness by comparing him with a wicked man, in whom you shall find all the contrary.

1. In general. *Not so.* As for the ungodly, it is not so with them: *not so* in the plantation; in the place; in the seasonable fruit; in the greenness; in the prosperity. So far from being like a *tree*, that they are like, 1. *Chaff*, a light and empty thing. 2. *Chaff* which the wind whiffles up and down. 3. *Chaff* which the wind scatters or *driveth away*. 4. And never leaves scattering, till it has driven it from the face of the earth. So the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, and *Arabic*.

2. And that no man may think that their punishment shall extend only to this life; in plain terms he threatens to them, 1. Damnation at the great day: “They shall not stand in judgment;” though some refer this clause to this life. When he is judged by men, *causa cadet*, he shall be condemned. 2. Exclusion from the company of the just: “Sinners shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous.”

III. In the close he shows the cause why the godly is happy, the wicked unhappy: 1. Because “the way of the righteous is known to God;” approved by him, and defended. 2. But the way, studies, plots, “counsels of the wicked, shall perish.”—DAVID’S HARP STRUNG AND TUNED. See the introduction.

PSALMS

PSALM 2

This Psalm treats of the opposition raised, both by Jew and Gentile, against the kingdom of Christ, 1-3. Christ's victory, and the confusion of his enemies, 4-6. The promulgation of the Gospel after his resurrection, 7-9. A call to all the potentates and judges of the earth to accept it, because of the destruction that shall fall on those who reject it, 10-12.

NOTES ON PSALM 2

Verse 1. Why do the heathen rage] It has been supposed that David composed this Psalm after he had taken Jerusalem from the Jebusites, and made it the head of the kingdom; ^{<1057>}**2 Samuel 5:7-9**. The Philistines, hearing this, encamped in the valley of Rephaim, nigh to Jerusalem, and Josephus, Antiq. lib. vii. c. 4, says that all Syria, Phoenicia, and the other circumjacent warlike people, united their armies to those of the Philistines, in order to destroy David before he had strengthened himself in the kingdom. David, having consulted the Lord, ^{<1057>}**2 Samuel 5:17-19**, gave them battle, and totally overthrew the whole of his enemies. In the first place, therefore, we may suppose that this Psalm was written to celebrate the taking of Jerusalem, and the overthrow of all the kings and chiefs of the neighbouring nations. In the second place we find from the use made of this Psalm by the apostles, ^{<4027>}**Acts 4:27**, that David typified Jesus Christ; and that the Psalm celebrates the victories of the Gospel over the *Philistine Jews*, and all the confederate power of the *heathen governors* of the Roman empire.

The *heathen*, **גוים** *goyim*, the nations; those who are commonly called the *Gentiles*.

Rage, **רָגַשׁוּ** *rageshu*, the gnashing of teeth, and tumultuously rushing together, of those indignant and cruel people, are well expressed by the *sound* as well as the *meaning* of the original word. A *vain thing*. Vain indeed to prevent the spread of the Gospel in the world. To prevent Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, from having the empire of his own earth. So vain were their endeavours that every effort only tended to open and enlarge the way for the all-conquering sway of the sceptre of righteousness.

Verse 2. Against his anointed] *hyj yvm l [al Meshichiah*, “Against his *Messiah*.”—*Chaldee*. But as this signifies the *anointed* person, it may refer first to *David*, as it does secondly to *Christ*.

Verse 3. Let us break their bands] These are the words of the confederate heathen powers; and here, as Bishop Horne well remarks, “we may see the ground of opposition; namely, the unwillingness of rebellious nature to submit to the obligations of Divine laws, which cross the interests, and lay a restraint on the desires of men. Corrupt affections are the most inveterate enemies of Christ, and their language is, We will not have this man to reign over us. Doctrines would be readily believed if they involved in them no precepts; and the Church may be tolerated in the world if she will only give up her discipline.”

Verse 4. He that sitteth in the heavens] Whose kingdom ruleth over all, and is *above* all might and power, human and diabolical. *Shall laugh*. Words spoken after the manner of men; shall utterly condemn their puny efforts; shall beat down their pride, assuage their malice, and confound their devices.

Verse 5. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath] He did so to the Jews who rejected the Gospel, and vexed and ruined them by the Roman armies; he did so with the opposing Roman emperors, destroying all the contending factions, till he brought the empire under the dominion of one, and him he converted to Christianity viz., *Constantine* the Great.

Verse 6. I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.] Here the Gospel shall be first preached; here the kingdom of Christ shall be founded; and from hence shall the doctrine of the Lord go out into all the earth.

Verse 7. I will declare the decree] These words are supposed to have been spoken by the Messiah. I will declare to the world the decree, the purpose of God to redeem them by my blood, and to sanctify them by my Spirit. My death shall prove that the required *atonement* has been made; my *resurrection* shall prove that this atonement has been *accepted*.

Thou art my Son] Made man, born of a woman by the creative energy of the Holy Ghost, that thou mightest feel and suffer for man, and be the first-born of many brethren.

This day have I begotten thee.] By thy *resurrection* thou art declared to be the Son of God, *εν δυναμει*, by *miraculous power*, being raised from

the dead. Thus by thy wondrous and supernatural *nativity*, most extraordinary *death*, and miraculous *resurrection*, thou art declared to be the Son of God. And as in that Son dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, all the sufferings and the death of that human nature were stamped with an infinitely meritorious efficacy. We have St. Paul's authority for applying to the *resurrection* of our Lord these words, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee;"—see ^{<4133>}**Acts 13:33**; see also ^{<8885>}**Hebrews 5:5**;—and the man must indeed be a bold interpreter of the Scriptures who would give a different gloss to that of the apostle. It is well known that the words, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," have been produced by many as a proof of the *eternal generation of the Son of God*. On the subject itself I have already given my opinion in my note, **See Clarke "Lu 1:35"**, from which I recede not one hair's breadth. Still however it is necessary to spend a few moments on the clause before us. The word **μῦν** *haiyom*, TO-DAY, is in no part of the sacred writings used to express *eternity*, or any thing in reference to it; nor can it have any such signification. *To-day* is an absolute designation of the *present*, and equally excludes *time past* and *time future*; and never can, by any figure, or allowable latitude of construction, be applied to express *eternity*. But why then does the Divine Spirit use the word *begotten* in reference to the declaration of the inauguration of the Messiah to his kingdom, and his being seated at the right hand of God? Plainly to show both to Jews and Gentiles that this Man of sorrows, this Outcast from society, this Person who was prosecuted as a blasphemer of God, and crucified as an enemy to the public peace and a traitor to the government, is no less than that *eternal Word*, who was in the beginning with God, who was God, and in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily: that this rejected Person was he for whom in the fulness of time a body was prepared, *begotten* by the exclusive power of the *Most High* in the womb of an *unspotted virgin*, which body he gave unto death as a *sin-offering* for the redemption of the world; and having raised it from death, *declared* it to be that *miraculously-begotten Son of God*, and now gave farther proof of this by raising the God-man to *his right hand*.

The word **ἔτι** *y yalidti*, "I have begotten," is here taken in the sense of *manifesting*, *exhibiting*, or *declaring*; and to this sense of it St. Paul (^{<45010>}**Romans 1:3, 4**) evidently alludes when speaking of "Jesus Christ, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, **τοῦ ὀρισθεντος Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει, κατὰ Πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης, ἐξ**

ἀναστασεως νεκρων; and *declared (exhibited or determined) to be the Son of God with power*, according to the Spirit of holiness.” This very rejected Person, I this day, by raising him from the dead, and placing him at my right hand, giving to him all power in heaven and earth, declare to be my Son, the beloved one in whom I am well pleased. Therefore hear *him*, believe on *him*, and obey *him*; for there is no redemption but through *his* blood; no salvation but in *his* name; no resurrection unto eternal life but through *his* resurrection, ascension, and powerful intercession at my right hand. *Thou art my Son; this day have I declared and manifested thee to be such*. It was absolutely necessary to the salvation of men, and the credibility of the Gospel, that the *supernatural* origin of the *humanity* of Jesus Christ should be manifested and demonstrated. Hence we find the inspired writers taking pains to show that he was born of a *woman*, and of that woman by the *sovereign power of the everlasting God*. This vindicated the character of the blessed virgin, showed the human nature of Christ to be immaculate, and that, even in respect to this nature, he was every way qualified to be a proper atoning sacrifice and Mediator between God and man. I need not tell the learned reader that the Hebrew verb **dl yalad**, *to beget*, is frequently used in reference to *inanimate* things, to signify their *production*, or the *exhibition* of the things produced. In ~~Gen 2:4~~ **Genesis 2:4**: These are the *generations*, **twdl wt toledoth**, of the heavens and the earth; this is the order in which God produced and exhibited them. See *Heb.* and *Eng. Concord.*, *Venema*, &c.

Verse 8. Ask of me, and I shall give thee] Here a *second* branch of Christ’s office as Saviour of the world is referred to; viz., his *mediatorial* office. Having died as an *atoning sacrifice*, and *risen again* from the dead, he was now to *make intercession* for mankind; and in virtue and on account of what he had done and suffered, he was, *at his request*, to have the *nations for his inheritance*, and the *uttermost parts of the earth for his possession*. He was to become supreme Lord in the mediatorial kingdom; in consequence of which he sent his apostles throughout the habitable globe to preach the Gospel to every man.

Verse 9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron] This may refer to the *Jewish nation*, whose final rejection of the Gospel was foreseen, and in whose place the Gentiles or *heathen* were brought into the Church of Christ. They were dispossessed of their land, their *city* was razed to its foundations, their *temple* was burnt with fire, and upwards of a *million* of

themselves were slaughtered by the Romans! So heavily did the *iron rod* of God's judgments fall upon them for their obstinate unbelief.

Verse 10. Be wise-O ye kings] An exhortation of the Gospel to the rulers of all kingdoms, nations, and states, to whom it may be sent. All these should listen to its maxims, be governed by its precepts, and rule their subjects according to its dictates.

Be instructed, ye judges] Rather, *Be ye reformed*-cast away all your idolatrous maxims; and receive the Gospel as the law, or the *basis* of the law, of the land.

Verse 11. Serve the Lord with fear] A general direction to all men. *Fear God* with that *reverence* which is due to his supreme *majesty*. *Serve* him as *subjects* should their *sovereign*, and as *servants* should their *master*.

Rejoice with trembling.] If ye serve God aright, ye cannot but be *happy*; but let a *continual filial fear* moderate all your joys. Ye must all stand at last before the judgment-seat of God; watch, pray, believe, work, and keep humble.

Verse 12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry] It is remarkable that the word son (**rb bar**, a Chaldee word) is not found in any of the versions except the *Syriac*, nor indeed any thing equivalent to it.

The *Chaldee*, *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Arabic*, and *Æthiopic*, have a term which signifies *doctrine* or *discipline*: "Embrace discipline, lest the Lord be angry with you," &c. This is a remarkable case, and especially that in so pure a piece of Hebrew as this poem is, a *Chaldee* word should have been found; **rb bar**, instead of **ben**, which adds nothing to the strength of the expression or the elegance of the poetry. I know it is supposed that **rb bar** is also pure Hebrew, as well as Chaldee; but as it is taken in the former language in the sense of *purifying*, the versions probably understood it so here. *Embrace that which is pure*; namely, the *doctrine* of God.

As all *judgment* is committed to the *Son*, the Jews and others are exhorted to *submit* to him, to be *reconciled* to him, that they might be received into his family, and be acknowledged as his adopted children. Kissing was the token of *subjection* and *friendship*.

Is kindled but a little.] The *slightest stroke* of the *iron rod* of Christ's justice is sufficient to break in pieces a whole rebel world. Every sinner,

not yet reconciled to God through Christ, should receive this as a most solemn warning.

Blessed are **all they**] He is only the *inexorable Judge* to them who harden their hearts in their iniquity, and still not come unto him that they may have life. But all they who *trust in him*-who repose all their trust and confidence in him as their *atonement* and as their *Lord*, shall be blessed with *innumerable blessings*, For as the word is the same here as in ^{<49010>}**Psalm 1:1**, *yrva ashrey*, it may be translated the same. “O the blessedness of all them who trust in him!”

This Psalm is remarkable, not only for its subject-the future kingdom of the *Messiah*, its *rise*, *opposition*, and *gradual extent*, but also for the elegant *change of person*. In the first verse the *prophet* speaks; in the third, the *adversaries*; in the fourth and fifth, the *prophet answers*, in the sixth, *Jehovah* speaks; in the seventh, the *Messiah*; in the eighth and ninth, *Jehovah answers*; and in the tenth to the twelfth, the *prophet* exhorts the *opponents* to submission and obedience.—Dr. A. Bayly.

ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND PSALM

The prime subject of this Psalm is CHRIST; the type, DAVID. The persons we are chiefly to reflect on are *three*, and which make *three parts* of the Psalm: I. The enemies of Christ; II. Christ the Lord; III. The princes and judges of the earth.

I. The enemies of Christ are great men, who are described here, partly from their *wickedness*, and partly from their *weakness*.

First, Their *wickedness* is apparent. 1. They *furiously rage*. 2. They *tumultuously assemble*. 3. They *set themselves*-stand up, and *take counsel*, *against the Lord and against his anointed*. 4. They encourage themselves in mischief, saying, “Come, and let us cast away their cords from us.” All which is sharpened by the interrogatory *Why!*

Secondly, Their *weakness*; in that they shall never be able to bring their plots and conspiracies against Christ and his kingdom to pass; for, 1. What *they imagine is but a vain thing*. 2. “He that sits in heaven shall laugh, and have them in derision.” 3. “He shall speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.” 4. For, maugre all their plots, “God hath set up his king upon his holy hill of Zion.”

II. At ~~906~~ **Psalm 2:6** begins the exaltation of Christ to his kingdom, which is the SECOND PART of the Psalm; in which the prophet, by a **προσωποποιια**, or *personification*, brings in God the Father speaking, and the Son answering.

First, The words of the Father are, “I have set my king;” where we have the inauguration of Christ, or his vocation to the crown.

Secondly, The answer of the Son, “I will preach the law;” which sets forth his willing obedience to publish and proclaim the laws of the kingdom; of which the chief is, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”

Thirdly, The reply of the Father, containing the reward that Christ was to have upon the publication of the Gospel; which was, 1. An addition to his empire by the conversion and accession of the Gentiles: “Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,” &c. 2. And the confusion of his enemies: “Thou shalt break them,” who would not have thee reign, that did rage and stand up against thee, “with a rod of iron; and break them in pieces as a potter’s vessel.”

III. In the *third part* the prophet descends to his exhortation and admonition, and that very aptly; for, Is Christ a King? Is he a King anointed by God? Is he a great King, a powerful King? So great that the nations are his subjects? So powerful that he will break and batter to pieces his enemies? Besides, Is he the only begotten Son of God? Be wise, therefore, O ye kings. In this we find,

First, The persons to whom this *caveat* is given: *kings* and *judges*.

Secondly, What they are taught. 1. To *know* their duty. “Be wise; be learned.” 2. To *do* their duty: “Serve the Lord with fear; rejoice with trembling; kiss the Son.”

Thirdly, The time when this is to be done; even *now*. The reason double: 1. Drawn from his wrath, and the consequent punishment: “Lest he be angry, and ye perish from the right way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.” 2. From the happy condition of those who learn to know, and fear, and serve, and adore him: “Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” There must be no delay; this is the time of wrath, and the day of salvation.

PSALMS

PSALM 3

David complains, in great distress, of the number of his enemies, and the reproaches they cast on him, as one forsaken of God, 1, 2; is confident, notwithstanding, that God will be his protector, 3; mentions his prayers and supplications, and how God heard him, 4, 5; derides the impotent malice of his adversaries, and foretells their destruction, 6, 7; and ascribes salvation to God, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 3

This is said to be **A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.**] See the account, ^{<10150>}**2 Samuel 15:1**, &c. And David is supposed to have composed it when obliged to leave Jerusalem, passing by the mount of Olives, weeping, with his clothes rent, and with dust upon his head. This Psalm is suitable enough to these circumstances; and they mutually cast light on each other. If the inscription be correct, this Psalm is a proof that the Psalms are not placed in any chronological order.

The word *Psalm*, **רמזמז** *mizmor*, comes from **רמז** *zamar*, to *cut*, whether that means to *cut into syllables*, for the purpose of its being adapted to musical tones, or whether its being *cut on wood*, &c., for the direction of the singers; what we would call a Psalm in *score*. This last opinion, however, seems too technical.

Verse 1. **Lord, how are they increased that trouble me?**] We are told that *the hearts of all Israel went after Absalom*, ^{<10151>}**2 Samuel 15:13**; and David is astonished to find such a *sudden* and *general* revolt. Not only the *common people*, but his *counsellors* also, and many of his chief *captains*. How *publicly* does God take vengeance for the sins which David committed so *privately*! In the horrible rebellion of Absalom we see the adultery of Bath-sheba, and the murder of Uriah. Now the words of Nathan begin to be fulfilled: “The sword shall not depart from thy house.”

Verse 2. **No help for him in God.**] These were some of the *reproaches* of his enemies, *Shimei* and others: “He is now down, and he shall never be able to rise. God alone can save him from these his enemies; but God has visibly cast him off.” These reproaches deeply affected his heart; and he mentions them with that *note* which so frequently occurs in the Psalms, and

which occurs here for the *first* time, **hl s selah**. Much has been said on the meaning of this word; and we have nothing but conjecture to guide us. The *Septuagint* always translate it by **διαψαλμα** *diapsalma*, “a pause in the Psalm.” The *Chaldee* sometimes translates it by **^ymI [I lealmin**, “for ever.” The rest of the versions leave it unnoticed. It either comes from **I S sal**, to *raise* or *elevate*, and may denote a particular *elevation* in the voices of the performers, which is very observable in the Jewish singing to the present day; or it may come from **hl s salah**, to *strew* or *spread out*, intimating that the subject to which the word is attached should be *spread out*, *meditated on*, and *attentively considered* by the reader. *Fenwick*, *Parkhurst*, and *Dodd*, contend for this meaning; and think “it confirmed by ^{<90916>}**Psalm 9:16**, where the word *higgaion* is put before *selah*, at the end of the verse.” Now *higgaion* certainly signifies *meditation*, or a fit subject for meditation; and so shows *selah* to be really a *nota bene*, *attend to* or *mind this*.

Verse 3. Thou, O Lord, art a shield] As a *shield* covers and defends the body from the strokes of an adversary, so wilt thou cover and defend me from them that rise up against me.

The lifter up of mine head.] Thou wilt restore me to the *state* from which my enemies have cast me down. This is the meaning of the phrase; and this he speaks *prophetically*. He was satisfied that the deliverance would take place, hence his confidence in prayer; so that we find him, with comparative unconcern, laying himself down in his bed, expecting the sure protection of the Almighty.

Verse 4. I cried unto the Lord with my voice] He was exposed to much danger, and therefore he had need of *fervour*.

He heard me] Notwithstanding my enemies said, and my friends feared, that there *was no help for me in my God*; yet *he heard me out of his holy hill*. *Selah*: mark this, and take encouragement from it. God never forsakes those who trust in him. He never shuts out the prayer of the distressed.

Verse 5. I laid me down and slept] He who knows that he has God for his Protector may go quietly and confidently to his bed, not fearing the *violence of the fire*, the *edge of the sword*, the *designs of wicked men*, nor the *influence of malevolent spirits*.

I awaked] Though humanly speaking there was reason to fear I should have been murdered in my bed, as my most confidential servants had been corrupted by my rebellious son; yet God, my shield, protected me. I both slept and awaked; and my life is still whole in me.

Verse 6. I will not be afraid of ten thousands] Strength and numbers are nothing against the omnipotence of God. He who has made God his refuge certainly has no cause to fear.

Verse 7. Arise, O Lord] Though he knew that God had undertaken his defence, yet he knew that his continued protection depended on his continual prayer and faith. God never ceases to help as long as we pray. When our hands hang down, and we restrain prayer before him, we may then justly fear that our enemies will prevail.

Thou hast smitten] That is, Thou *wilt* smite. He speaks in full confidence of God's interference; and knows as surely that he shall have the victory, as if he had it already. *Breaking the jaws* and *the teeth* are expressions which imply, confounding and destroying an adversary; treating him with extreme contempt; *using him like a dog, &c.*

Verse 8. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord] It is God alone who saves. He is the fountain whence help and salvation come; and to him alone the praise of all saved souls is due. His blessing is upon his people. Those who are saved from the power and the guilt of sin are his people. His mercy saved them; and it is by his *blessing* being continually upon them, that they continue to be saved. David adds his *selah* here also: *mark this!* 1. Salvation comes from God. 2. Salvation is continued by God. These are great truths; *mark them!*

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRD PSALM

The occasion of this Psalm was Absalom's rebellion. David being deserted by his subjects, railed on by Shimei, pursued for his crown and life by his ungracious son, and not finding to whom to make his moan, betakes himself to his God; and before him he expostulates his wrong, confesses his faith, and makes his prayer.

There are *three* strains of this accurate Psalm: I. His complaint. II. The confession of his confidence. III. His petition.

I. He begins with a sad and bitter complaint, amplified,

1. By the number and multitude of his enemies. They were many, very many; they were multiplied and increased: “All Israel was gathered together from Dan to Beer-sheba, as the sand of the sea for multitude;”
 <1071> **2 Samuel 17:11.**

2. From their malice they came together to do him mischief. They rose up, not *for* him, but *against* him; not to *honour*, but to *trouble* him; not to *defend* him as they ought, but to take away his *crown and life*; <1072> **2 Samuel 17:2.**

3. From their insults and sarcasm. It was not *Shimei* only, but many, that said it: “Many-say there is no help for him in his God.”

II. The *second* part of the Psalm sets forth David’s confidence:—

1. To their *multitude*, he opposeth ONE GOD. But THOU, O LORD!

2. To their malicious insurrection, Jehovah; who, he believed, 1. Would be a *buckler* to receive all the arrows shot against him. 2. His *glory*, to honour, though they went about to dishonour, him. 3. The *lifter up of his head*, which they wished to lay low enough.

3. To their vain boast of desertion, *There is no help for him in his God*, he opposeth his own experience, “I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me.”

4. By whose protection being sustained and secured, he deposes all care and fear, all anxiety and distraction. 1. He sleeps with a quiet mind: “I laid me down and slept, I awoke.” 2. He sings a *requiem*: “I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people, that have set themselves against me round about.”

III. In the close, or *third* part, he petitions and prays, notwithstanding his security: “Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God!” To move God to grant his request, he thankfully reminds him of what he had done before:—

1. “Arise and save me, for thou hast smitten all mine enemies.” Thou art the same God: do then the same work; be as good to thy servant as ever thou hast been.

2. He inserts an excellent maxim: *Salvation* belongeth *unto the Lord*. As if he had said, It is thy property and prerogative to save. If thou save not, I expect it from none other.

3. Lastly, as a good king should, in his prayers he remembers his subjects. He prayed for those who were using him despitefully: *Thy blessing be upon thy people!* To the same sense, *Coverdale*, in his translation.

PSALMS

PSALM 4

David prays to be heard, 1; expostulates with the ungodly, 2; exhorts them to turn to God, and make their peace with him, 3-5; shows the vain pursuits of men in search of happiness, which he asserts exists only in the approbation of God, 6, 7; commends himself to the Lord, and then quietly takes his repose, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 4

This Psalm seems to have been composed on the same occasion with the preceding, viz., *Absalom's rebellion*. It appears to have been an *evening* hymn, sung by David and his company previously to their going to rest. It is inscribed *to the chief Musician upon Neginoth, twnygnb j xnml lamnatstseach binginoth*. Probably the first word comes from *j xn natsach*, to be *over*, or *preside*; and may refer to the *precentor* in the choir. Some suppose that it refers to the *Lord Jesus*, who is the Supreme Governor, or victorious Person; the Giver of *victory*. *Neginoth* seems to come from *gn nagan*, to strike; and probably may signify some such instruments as the *cymbal, drum, &c.*, and *stringed instruments* in general. But there is no certainty in these things. What they *mean*, or what they *were*, is known to no man.

Verse 1. Hear me when I call] No man has a right to expect God to hear him if he do not call. Indeed, how shall he be heard if he *speak* not? There are multitudes who expect the blessings of God as confidently as if they had prayed for them most fervently; and yet such people pray not at all!

God of my righteousness] Whatever pardon, peace, holiness, or truth I possess, has come entirely from thyself. Thou art the *God of my salvation*, as thou art the *God of my life*.

Thou hast enlarged me] I was in *prison*; and thou hast brought me forth *abroad*. *Have mercy on me*-continue to act in the same way. I shall always *need thy help*; I shall never *deserve* to have it; let me have it in the way of *mere mercy*, as thou hast hitherto done.

Verse 2. O ye sons of men] *vya ynb beney ish*, ye *powerful men*-ye who are now at the head of affairs, or who are leaders of the multitude.

Love vanity] The poor, empty, shallow-brained, pretty-faced Absalom; whose prospects are all *vain*, and whose promises are all *empty*!

Seek after leasing?] This is a Saxon word, from [Anglo-Saxon], *falsehood*, from [A.S.], *to lie*. *Cardmarden* has adopted this word in his translation, Rouen, 1566. It is in none of the Bibles *previously* to that time, nor in any *after*, as far as my own collection affords me evidence; and appears to have been borrowed by King James's translators from the above.

Selah.] Mark this! See what the end will be!

Verse 3. The Lord hath set apart him that is godly] *dysj chasid*, the pious, benevolent man. He has marked such, and put them aside as his own property. "This merciful man, this feeling, tender-hearted man, is my own property; touch not a hair of his head!"

Verse 4. Stand in awe, and sin not] The *Septuagint*, which is copied by St. Paul, ^{<4045>}**Ephesians 4:26**, translate this clause, *οργιζεσθε, και μη αμαρτανετε*; *Be ye angry, and sin not*. The *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, give the same reading; and thus the original *wzgr rigzu* might be translated: If ye be angry, and if ye think ye have cause to be angry; do not let your disaffection carry you to acts of rebellion against both God and your king. Consider the subject deeply before you attempt to act. Do nothing rashly; do not justify one evil act by another: sleep on the business; converse *with your own heart upon your bed*; consult your pillow.

And be still.] *wmdw vedommu*, "and be *dumb*." Hold your peace; fear lest ye be found fighting against God. *Selah. Mark this!*

Verse 5. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness] Do not attempt to offer a sacrifice to God for prosperity in your present rebellious conduct. Such a sacrifice would be a sin. Turn to God from whom you have revolted; and offer to him a *righteous sacrifice*, such as the *law* prescribes, and such as *he* can receive. Let all hear and consider this saying. No *sacrifice*-no performance of religious duty, will avail any man, if his heart be not right with God. And let all know, that under the Gospel dispensation no sacrifice of any kind will be received but through the all-atoning sacrifice made by Christ.

Because of sin, justice has *stopped every man's mouth*; so that none can have access to God, but through the Mediator. By him only can the *mouth* of a sinner be *opened* to plead with God. Hear this, ye who trust in *yourselves*, and hope for heaven without either faith or dependence on the vicarious sacrifice of Christ.

Verse 6. Who will show us any good?] This is not a fair translation. The word *any* is not in the text, nor any thing equivalent to it; and not a few have quoted *it*, and preached upon the text, placing the principal emphasis on this illegitimate *word*.

The place is sufficiently emphatic without this. There are *multitudes who say, Who will show us good?* Man wants *good*; he hates *evil* as evil, because he has *pain, suffering, and death* through it; and he wishes to find that *supreme good* which will content his heart, and save him from evil. But men mistake this good. They look for a good that is to gratify their *passions*; they have no notion of any happiness that does not come to them through the *medium of their senses*. Therefore they reject *spiritual good*, and they reject the Supreme God, by whom alone all the powers of the soul of man can be gratified.

Lift thou up the light of thy countenance] This alone, the *light of thy countenance*-thy peace and *approbation*, constitute the *supreme good*. This is what we want, wish, and pray for. The *first* is the *wish* of the *worldling*, the *latter* the wish of the *godly*.

Verse 7. Thou hast put gladness in my heart] Thou hast given my soul what it wanted and wished for. I find now a happiness which earthly things could not produce. I have peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost; such inward happiness as they cannot boast who have got the highest increase of *corn* and *wine*; those TWO THINGS in the abundance of which many suppose happiness to be found.

To *corn* and *wine* all the versions, except the *Chaldee*, add *oil*; for *corn*, *wine*, and *oil*, were considered the highest blessings of a temporal kind that man could possess.

Verse 8. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep] Most men lie down, and most sleep, daily, for without *rest* and *sleep* life could not be preserved; but alas! how few lie down in *peace*! peace with their own consciences, and peace with God! David had then two great blessings, *rest* by *sleep*, and *peace* in his *soul*. He had a happy soul; and when he lay

down on his bed, his body soon enjoyed its repose, as the *conscience* was in *peace*. And he had a *third* blessing, a *confidence* that he should sleep in *safety*. And it was so. No fearful *dreams* disturbed his repose, for he had a mind *tranquillized* by the peace of God. As to his *body*, that enjoyed its due rest, for he had not overloaded *nature* either with *dainties* or *superfluities*. Reader, are not many of thy sleepless hours to be attributed to thy disordered soul—to a sense of guilt on thy conscience, or to a fear of death and hell?

Pray incessantly till thou get the *light of God's countenance*, till his Spirit bear witness with thine that thou art a child of God. Then thy repose will do thee good: and even in thy sleep thy happy soul will be getting forward to heaven.

ANALYSIS OF THE FOURTH PSALM

There are THREE parts in this Psalm:—

- I. An entrance, or petition for audience, ^{<19001>}**Psalm 4:1**.
- II. An *apostrophe* to his enemies, which is, 1. Reprehensive, ^{<19002>}**Psalm 4:2, 3**. 2. Admonitory, ^{<19003>}**Psalm 4:4, 5**.
- III. A *petition* for himself and God's people, ^{<19006>}**Psalm 4:6-8**.

I. He proposes his request and suit for audience. "Hear me when I call;" and this he founds on *four* arguments: 1. God has *promised* to hear me when I call: "Call upon me in trouble, and I will hear thee." I call; hear me, therefore, when I call. 2. His own *innocence*: "Hear me, O God of my righteousness." 3. He requests no more than what God had done for him at other times: *Thou hast enlarged me in trouble*, and why not now? 4. It was *mercy* and *favour* to answer him then; it will be the same to do it again: "Have mercy on me, and hear."

II. His *petition* being thus proposed and ended, he proceeds to the *doctrinal* part; and, turning himself to his enemies, 1. He sharply reproves them; 2. Then warns them, and gives them good counsel.

1. He turns his speech from God to men; the chief but the worst of men. **vya ynb beney ish**, "ye eminent men." Not plebeians, but nobles. The charge he lays to them, 1. They "turned his glory into shame." They endeavoured to dishonour him whom God had called and anointed to the kingdom. 2. "They loved vanity." A vain attempt they were in love with. 3. "They sought after falsity." They pursued that which would deceive them;

they would find at last that treachery and iniquity lied to itself. 4. That this charge might have the more weight, he figures it with a stinging interrogation, *How long?* Their sin had *malice* and *pertinacity* in it; and he asks them *how long* they intended to act thus.

And that they might, if possible, be drawn from their attempts, he sends them a *noverint*, *know ye*, which has two clauses: 1. Let them *know* that God hath set apart him that is godly for himself. 2. That God *will hear*, when either he or any good man calls upon him.

2. The reproof being ended, he gives them *good counsel*:—

1. That though they be *angry*, they ought not to let the sun go down upon their wrath.

2. That they *commune with their own hearts*—their conscience. That they do this on their beds, when secluded from all company, when passion and self-interest did not rule; and then they would be the better able to judge whether they were not in an *error*, whether their anger were not *causeless*, and their persecution *unjust?*

3. That they *offer the sacrifice of righteousness*—that they serve and worship God with an honest, sincere, and contrite heart.

4. That they *put their trust in the Lord*; trusting no more to their lies, nor loving their vanities, but relying on God's promises.

III. The *third* part begins with this question, *Who will show us any good?*

1. Who will show us that good which will make us happy? To which David, in effect, returns this answer, that it is not *bona animi*, intellectual gifts; nor *bona fortunæ*, earthly blessings; nor *bona corporis*, corporeal endowments: but *the light of God's countenance*. 2. Therefore he prefers his petition: "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." God's countenance is his *grace*, his *favour*, his *love*, and the *light of his countenance*, the *exhibition* and *expression* of this grace, favour, and love; in which alone lies all the happiness of man. Of this David expresses two effects, *gladness* and *security*:—

1. *Gladness* and *joy* far beyond that which may be had from any temporal blessings: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn, and wine, and oil increased; gladness beyond the joy in harvest;

and this joy is from the *light of God's countenance. Thou puttest. THOU,* by way of eminence.

2. *Security*, expressed under the metaphor of *sleep*: “I will lay me down in peace, and sleep;” just as in a *time of peace*, as if there were no *war* nor preparation for *battle*.

3. To which he adds the reason: “For thou Lord, alone makest me to dwell in safety.” I am safe, because I enjoy the light of thy countenance.

PSALMS

PSALM 5

David continues instant in prayer, 1, 2; makes early application to God, 3; and shows the hatred which God bears to the workers of iniquity, 4-6. His determination to worship God, and to implore direction and support, 7, 8. He points out the wickedness of his enemies, 9, and the destruction they may expect, 10; and then shows the happiness of those who trust in the Lord, 11, 12.

NOTES ON PSALM 5

This Psalm is inscribed *to the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David*. As *neginoth* may signify all kinds of instruments struck with a *plectrum*, stringed instruments, those like the drum, cymbals, &c.; so *nechiloth*, from **l j chal**, to be hollow, to bore through, may signify any kind of *wind* instruments, such as the horn, trumpet, flute, &c. See on the title to the preceding Psalm. The *Septuagint* have, **Εἰς το τέλος, ὑπερ της κληρονομουσης**, “In favour of her who obtains the inheritance.” The *Vulgate* and *Arabic* have a similar reading. The word **twl yj n nechiloth** they have derived from **l j n nachal**, to *inherit*. This may either refer to the Israelites who obtained the inheritance of the promised land, or to the Church of Christ which obtains through him, by faith and prayer, the inheritance among the saints in light. This Psalm is, especially, for the whole Church of God.

Verse 1. Give ear to my words] This is properly a *morning hymn*, as the preceding was an *evening hymn*. We have seen from the conclusion of the last Psalm that David was very happy, and lay down and slept in the peace and love of his God. When he opens his eyes on the following morning, he not only remembers but feels the happiness of which he spoke; and with his first recollections he *meditates* on the goodness and mercy of God, and the glorious state of salvation into which he had been brought. He calls on God *to give ear to his words*; probably words of God’s *promises* which he had been pleading.

Verse 2. Hearken unto the voice of my cry] We may easily find the process through which David’s mind was now passing: 1. We have seen from the preceding Psalm that he lay down in a very happy frame of mind, and that he had enjoyed profound repose. 2. As soon as he awakes in the

morning, his heart, having a right direction, resumes its work. 3. He meditates on God's goodness; and on his own happy state, though pursued by enemies, and only safe as long as God preserved him by an almighty hand and especial providence. 4. This shows him the need he has of the *continual protection* of the Most High; and therefore he begins to form his *meditation* and the *desires* of his heart into *words*, to which he entreats the Lord to *give ear*. 5. As he was accustomed to have answers to his prayers, he feels the necessity of being *importunate!* and therefore lifts up his *voice*. 6. Seeing the *workers of iniquity, liars, and blood-thirsty men* strong to accomplish their own purposes in the destruction of the godly, he becomes greatly in earnest, and *cries* unto the Lord: "Hearken unto the voice of my cry." 7. He knows that, in order to have a *right answer*, he must have a proper *disposition of mind*. He feels his subjection to the supreme authority of the Most High, and is ready to *do his will and obey his laws*; therefore he prays to God as his *King*: "Hearken, my King and my God." I have not only taken thee for my GOD, to *save, defend, and make me happy*; but I have taken thee for my KING, to *govern, direct, and rule* over me. 8. Knowing the necessity and success of prayer, he purposes to continue in the spirit and practice of it: "Unto thee will I pray." R. S. Jarchi gives this a pretty and pious turn: "When I have power to pray, and to ask for the things I need, then, O Lord, give ear to my *words*; but when I have no power to plead with thee, and fear seizes on my heart, then, O Lord, consider my *meditation!*"

Verse 3. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning] We find from this that he had not prayed in vain. He had received a blessed answer; God had *lifted upon him the light of his countenance*; and he therefore determines to be an early applicant at the throne of grace: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning." He finds it good to *begin* the day with God; to let Divine things occupy the first place in his waking thoughts; as that which first occupies the mind on awaking is most likely to keep possession of the *heart* all the day through.

In the morning will I direct my prayer] Here seems to be a metaphor taken from an archer. He *sees* his *mark*; puts his *arrow in his bow*; *directs* his shaft to the mark, i.e., takes his aim; lets fly, and then *looks up*, to see if he have hit his mark. Prayers that have a right aim, will have a prompt answer; and he who sends up his petitions to God through Christ, from a warm, affectionate heart, may confidently *look up* for an answer, for it will come. If an immediate answer be not given, let not the upright heart

suppose that the prayer is not heard. It has found its way to the throne; and *there* it is registered.

Verse 4. Neither shall evil dwell with thee.] As thou art holy, so thou hast pleasure only in holiness; and as to *evil men*, they shall never enter into thy glory; [r Ērgy al lo yegurecha ra, “the evil man shall not even sojourn with thee.”

Verse 5. The foolish shall not stand] He is a fool and a madman who is running himself out of breath for no prize, who is fighting against the Almighty; this every wicked man does; therefore is every *wicked* man a *fool* and a *madman*.

Thou hatest all workers of iniquity] Some sin *now* and *then*, others *generally*; some *constantly*, and some *labour* in it with all their might. These are the WORKERS *of iniquity*. Such even the God of infinite love and mercy *hates*. Alas! what a *portion* have the workers *of iniquity*! the hatred of God Almighty!

Verse 6. That speak leasing] Falsity, from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.] *leasunge*, a *lie*, *falsity*, *deceit*; from [A.S.] *leas*, *lie*, which is from the verb [A.S.] *leasian*, to *lie*. See on ^{<19042>} **Psalm 4:2**.

The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.] μymd vya ish damim, the *man of bloods*; for he who has the *spirit* of a murderer, will rarely end with *one* bloodshedding. So the Jews, who clamoured for the blood of our Lord, added to that, as far and as long as they could, the blood of his disciples.

Verse 7. In the multitude of thy mercy] David considered it an inexpressible privilege to be permitted to attend *public worship*; and he knew that it was only through the *multitude of God’s mercy* that he, or any man else, could enjoy such a privilege. He knew farther that, from the *multitude of this mercy*, he might receive *innumerable blessings* in his house. In this spirit, and with this dependence, he went to the house of the Lord. He who takes David’s views of this subject will never, willingly, be absent from the means of grace.

In thy fear] Duly considering the infinite holiness of thy majesty, will I worship, hwj tva eshtachaveh, will I bow and prostrate myself in the deepest self-abasement and humility.

Toward thy holy temple.] If David was the author of this Psalm, as is generally agreed, the *temple* was not built at this time: only the *tabernacle* then existed; and in the preceding clause he speaks of coming into the *house*, by which he must mean the *tabernacle*. But *temple* here may signify the *holy of holies*, before which David might prostrate himself while in the *house*, i.e., the court of the tabernacle. Even in the *house of God*, there is the *temple of God*; the *place* where the Divine Shechinah dwells. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. In all ages and dispensations, Jesus was ever the *temple* where the Supreme Deity was met with and worshipped. The human nature of Jesus was the real temple of the Deity. Nowhere else can God be found.

Verse 8. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness] When entered into the house, and prostrated before the *temple*, he knew that, unless God continued to *lead* and direct, he was not likely to profit even by such great advantages. We need God not only to bring us to his house, but to keep our feet while we are there.

Because of mine enemies] His conduct was marked; his enemies looked upon and watched him with an evil eye. They would have been glad of his *halting*, that they might have brought a reproach on the good cause which he had espoused. O how cautiously should those walk who make a profession of living to God, of knowing themselves to be in his favour, and of being delivered from all sin in this life!

Make thy way straight] Show me that I must go *right on*; and let thy light always shine on my path, that I may see how to proceed.

Verse 9. No faithfulness in their mouth] They make professions of friendship; but all is hollow and deceitful: "They flatter with their tongue."

Very wickedness] Their *heart* is full of all kinds of depravity.

Their throat is an open sepulchre] It is continually gaping for the dead; and sends forth effluvia destructive to the living. I fear that this is too true a picture of the whole human race, totally corrupt within, and abominable without. The heart is the *centre* and *spring* of this corruption; and the *words* and *actions* of men, which proceed from this source, will send out incessant streams of various impurity; and thus they continue till the grace of God changes and purifies the heart.

Verse 10. Destroy thou them, O God] All these apparently *imprecatory* declarations should be translated in the *future tense*, to which they belong; and which shows them to be *prophetic*. Thou WILT destroy them; thou WILT cast them out, &c.

Verse 11. Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice] Such expressions as these should be translated in the same way, *declaratively* and *prophetically*: “All those who put their trust in thee SHALL rejoice,—SHALL ever shout for joy.”

Verse 12. For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous] A righteous soul is a peculiar object of God’s affectionate regards; and therefore will be a subject of continual blessing.

With favour] Literally, *Like a shield, thy favour will crown him*. God loves such; and this love is their defence. In all places, times and circumstances, it will preserve them. “Keep yourselves,” says the apostle, “in the love of God.” He who abides in this love need not fear the face of any adversary. Thus ended the morning’s devotion of this excellent man: a model by which every Christian may frame his own.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTH PSALM

This Psalm consists of FIVE *parts*:—

- I. An introduction, in which he petitions to be heard; professes his earnestness about it, ^{<19080>}Psalm 5:1-3; and his confidence of audience.
- II. He delivers his petition, ^{<19088>}Psalm 5:8; and the reason of it—his *enemies*.
- III. These enemies he circumstantially describes, ^{<19089>}Psalm 5:9.
- IV. He prophesies that God will destroy them, ^{<19090>}Psalm 5:10.
- V. He prays for the Church, that God would preserve it, ^{<19091>}Psalm 5:11, 12.

I. 1. In the entrance he prays very earnestly for audience; he shows that he meant to be serious and fervent in it; and he chooses a variety of *words* to express the *same thing*, which rise by degrees in the description: 1. He rises from *meditation*; 2. To *words*; 3. From words to a *voice*; 4. From a voice to a *cry*. Then he desires God, 1. To *consider*. 2, To *give ear*. 3. To *hearken*. 1. He *considers*, who weighs the justice of the cause. 2. He *gives*

ear, who would understand what the suppliant means. 3. He attends and *hearkens*, who intends to satisfy the petitioner.

2. The reasons he uses here to beget audience are very considerable:—

1. The relation that was between him and his God: “Thou art my King and my God.”

2. That he would sue to none other: “To thee will I pray;” which he illustrates, 1. From the *time*. It is a morning petition. 2. It was a well composed and ordered prayer. 3. He would *lift up his eyes* with it; that is, have all his hope and expectation exercised in it. “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning; I will direct my prayer unto thee, and look up.”

3. The *third* reason is taken from the nature of God: whom he *will* and whom he *will not hear*. 1. Persevering sinners God will not regard. 2. To the upright he is ready to look. The sinners whom God will not hear he thus describes: 1. Men who *delighted in wickedness, evil, foolish workers of iniquity-liars-blood-thirsty and deceitful*. Now it was not likely that God should hear such: “For thou art not a God who hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee.” These it is said he *hated*; these he would *destroy*; these he did *abhor*. 2. But on the contrary, he who was *faithful*; who *relied on God*; who *feared the Lord*; who *attended the ordinances of his house*; who *worshipped towards his temple*; and who came, not *trusting to himself*, but in the *multitude of God’s mercies*; him he would hear.

II. David, having petitioned for audience, and delivered the grounds of his confidence, brings forth his petition that his life may be *holy* and *innocent*:—

1. “Lead me in thy righteousness.”

2. “Make thy way straight before me.” For which he gives this reason: “Because of mine enemies.”

III. These his enemies he circumstantially describes:—

1. By their MOUTH: “There is no faithfulness in their mouth.”

2. By their HEART: “Their inward parts are very wickedness.”

3. By their THROAT: “Their throat is an open sepulchre.”

4. By their TONGUE: “They flatter with their tongue.”

IV. Then he proceeds to prophesy against these enemies:—

1. God will *destroy them*.

2. They shall *fall by their own counsels*.

3. They shall *be cast out in the multitude of their transgressions*. For which predictions he gives this reason: *They are rebels*. For *they have rebelled against thee*. Rebels, not against *David*, but against *God*. They have not rejected *me*, but they have rejected *thee*.

V. The *conclusion* contains his prayer for God’s people, whom he here describes: 1. They are *righteous*. 2. They *put their trust in God*. 3. They *love his name*.

And he prays for them, that, 1. They may be happy; that they may *shout for joy*. 2. They may be *joyful in God*.

And he expects an answer; because, 1. God *defends them*. 2. He will continue to *bless them*. 3. He will with his *favour compass them as with a shield*.

PSALMS

PSALM 6

This Psalm contains a deprecation of eternal vengeance, 1; a petition to God for mercy, 2. This is enforced from a consideration of the psalmist's sufferings, 3; from that of the Divine mercy, 4; from that of the praise and glory which God would fail to receive if man were destroyed, 5; from that of his humiliation and contrition, 6, 7. Being successful in his supplication, he exults in God, 8, 9; and predicts the downfall of all his enemies, 10.

NOTES ON PSALM 6

This Psalm has the following inscription: *To the chief Musician on Neginoth, upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David; which the Chaldee translates, "To be sung on neginoth, a harp of eight strings."* The various interpretations given to this inscription, both by ancients and moderns, show us that nothing is known concerning it. We have already seen that *neginoth* probably signifies all instruments which emitted sounds by *strokes*, or *stringed instruments* in general. This Psalm was to be accompanied with such instruments; but *one* of a particular kind is specified, viz., *sheminith*; so called from its having *eight* strings. The *chief musician* is directed to accompany the recital of this Psalm with the above instrument.

Verse 1. O Lord, rebuke me not] This Psalm, Which is one of the *seven Penitential Psalms*, is supposed to have been written during some grievous disease with which David was afflicted after his transgression with Bath-sheba. It argues a deep consciousness of sin, and apprehension of the just displeasure of God. It is the very language of a true penitent who is looking around for help, and who sees, as *Bishop Horne* well expresses it, "*above*, an angry God, ready to take vengeance; *beneath*, the fiery gulf, ready to receive him; *without*, a world in flames; *within*, the gnawing worm." Of all these, none so dreadful as an angry God; his wrath he particularly deprecates. God rebukes and chastens him, and he submits; but he prays not to be rebuked *in anger*, nor chastened in *hot displeasure*, because he knows that these must bring him down to total and final *destruction*.

Verse 2. Have mercy] I have no *merit*. I deserve all I feel and all I fear.

O Lord, heal me] No earthly physician can cure my malady. *Body* and *soul* are both diseased, and only God can help me.

I am weak] **l l ma umlal.** I am *exceedingly weak*; I cannot take nourishment, and my strength is exhausted.

My bones are vexed.] The disease hath entered into my bones.

Verse 3. How long?] How long shall I continue under this malady? How long will it be before thou speak peace to my troubled heart?

Verse 4. Return, O Lord] Once I had the light of thy countenance, by sin I have forfeited this; I have provoked thee to depart: O Lord, return! It is an awful thing to be obliged to say, *Return, O Lord*, for this supposes *backsliding*; and yet what a mercy it is that a *backslider* may RETURN to God, with the expectation that *God will return to him!*

Verse 5. In death there is no remembrance of thee] Man is to glorify thee on earth. The end for which he was born cannot be accomplished in the grave; heal my body, and heal my soul, that I may be rendered capable of loving and serving thee here below. A dead body in the grave can do no good to men, nor bring any glory to thy name!

Verse 7. Mine eye is consumed] **hvv[** *ashesah*, is blasted, withered, sunk in my head.

Verse 8. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity] It seems that while he was suffering grievously through the disease, his enemies had insulted and mocked him;—upbraided him with his transgressions, not to increase his *penitence*, but to cast him into despair.

The Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.] The Lord pitifully beheld the sorrows of his heart, and mercifully forgave his sins.

Verse 10. Ashamed and sore vexed] May they as deeply deplore their transgressions as I have done mine! May *they return*; may they be *suddenly converted!* The original will bear this meaning, and it is the most congenial to Christian principles.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTH PSALM

The parts of this Psalm are TWO, in general:—

I. A *petition* to God for himself, contained in the first *seven* verses.

II. The account of his *restoration*, contained in the *three* last.

I. The *petition* consists of *two* parts: 1. Deprecation of *evil*; 2. Petition for *good*.

1. He prays to God to *avert* his *wrath*: “O Lord, rebuke me not,” &c.

2. He entreats to be partaker of *God’s favour*: “Have mercy upon me,” &c.

1. To his *BODY*: “Heal me, O Lord.” 2. To his *SOUL*: “Deliver my soul: O save me!”

He enforces his petition by divers weighty reasons:

1. From the *quantity* and *degrees* of his *calamity*, which he shows to be great from the *effects*. 1. In *general*; he was in a languishing disease: “I am weak.” 2. In *particular*; 1. Pains in his *bones*: “My bones are vexed.” 2. Trouble in his *soul*: “My *soul* also is troubled.”

2. From the *continuance* of it. It was a *long* disease; a lingering sickness; and he found no ease, no, not from his God. The pain I could the better bear if I had comfort from heaven. “But thou, O Lord, how long?” Long hast thou withdrawn the light of thy countenance from thy servant.

3. From the *consequence* that was likely to follow; *death*, and the *event* upon it. It is my intention to celebrate and praise thy name; the *living* only can do this: therefore, let me *live*; for *in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?*

4. And that he was brought now to the *gates of death*, he shows by *three* apparent *symptoms*: 1. *Sighs* and *groans*, which had almost broken his heart; the companions of a perpetual grief: “I am weary of my groaning.” 2. The abundance of his *tears* had dried and wasted his body: “He made his bed to swim, and watered his couch with his tears.” 3. His *eyes* also *melted away*, and *grew dim*, so that he seemed *old* before his time: “My eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old.”

6. That which added to his sorrow was, *he had many ill-wishers* who insulted over him: “Mine eye is waxen old because of mine enemies.”

II. But at last receiving comfort and joy, he is enabled to look up; and then he turns upon his enemies, who were longing for his destruction: “Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.”

He magnifies God's mercy; and mentions its manifestation *thrice* distinctly: 1. "The Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping." 2. "The Lord hath heard my supplication." 3. "The Lord will receive my prayer."

Then follows his prophetic declaration concerning them: 1. Shame and confusion to see their hope frustrated: "They shall be confounded." 2. Vexation, to see the object of their envy restored to health and prosperity: "They shall be sore vexed." 3. They shall return to their companions with *shame*, because their wishes and plots have miscarried. 4. He intimates that this shame and confusion shall be *speedy*: "They shall return, and be ashamed suddenly." Or, possibly, this may be a wish for their conversion, *wbvy yashubu*, let *them be* CONVERTED, [*gr raga*, *suddenly*, lest sudden destruction from the Lord should fall upon them. Thus the genuine follower of God prays, "That it may please thee to have mercy upon our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers; and to TURN their HEARTS." A *Christian* should take up every thing of this kind in a *Christian* sense.

PSALMS

PSALM 7

The psalmist prays against the malice of his enemies, 1, 2; protests his own innocence, 3-5; prays to God that he would vindicate him, for the edification of his people, 6-8; prays against the wickedness of his enemies, 9; expresses strong confidence in God, 10; threatens transgressors with God's judgments, 11-13; shows the conduct and end of the ungodly, 14-16; and exults in the mercy and lovingkindness of his Maker, 17.

This Psalm is entitled, *Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite*. The word *shiggayon* comes from *shagah*, to wander, a wandering song; i.e., a Psalm composed by David in his wanderings, when he was obliged to hide himself from the fury of Saul.

Bishop *Horsley* thinks it may have its name, a *wandering ode*, from its being in different parts, taking up different subjects, in different styles of composition. But he has sometimes thought that *shiggaion* might be an *unpremeditated* song; an *improviso*.

As to *Cush the Benjamite*, he is a person unknown in the Jewish history; the name is probably a name of *disguise*; and by it he may covertly mean *Saul* himself, the *son of Kish*, who was of the *tribe of Benjamin*. The subject of the Psalm will better answer to *Saul's* unjust persecution and *David's* innocence, than to any other subject in the history of *David*.

NOTES ON PSALM 7

Verse 1. O Lord my God] *yhl a hwhy* *Yehovah Elohai*, words expressive of the strongest confidence the soul can have in the Supreme Being. Thou self-existent, incomprehensible, almighty, and eternal Being, who neither needest nor hatest any thing that thou hast made; thou art my God: God in *covenant* with thy creature man; and my God and portion particularly. Therefore, *in thee do I put my trust*-I repose all my confidence *in thee*, and expect all my good *from thee*.

Save me] Shield me from my persecutors; abate their pride, assuage their malice, and confound their devices!

Deliver me] From the counsels which they have devised, and from the snares and gins they have laid in my path.

Verse 2. Lest he tear my soul like a lion] These words seem to answer well to *Saul*. As the *lion* is *king* in the forest; so was *Saul* king over the land. As the *lion*, in his fierceness, seizes at once, and tears his prey in pieces; so David expected to be seized and suddenly destroyed by *Saul*. He had already, in his rage, thrown his javelin at him, intending to have pierced him to the wall with it. As from the *power of the lion* no beast in the forest could deliver any thing; so David knew that *Saul's power* was irresistible, and that none of his friends or well-wishers could save or deliver him out of such hands. "Lest he tear my soul (my life) like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver." All this answers to *Saul*, and to none else.

Verse 3. If I have done this] David was accused by *Saul* of *affecting the kingdom*; and of *waiting* for an opportunity to *take away the life of his king, his patron, and his friend*. In his application to God he refers to these charges; meets them with indignation; and clears himself of them by a strong appeal to his Judge; and an imprecation that, if he had meditated or designed any such thing, he might meet with nothing but curse and calamity either from God or man.

Verse 4. Yea, I have delivered him] When, in the course of thy providence, thou didst put his life in my hand in the *cave*, I contented myself with cutting off his skirt, merely to show him the danger he had been in, and the spirit of the man whom he accused of designs against his life; and yet even for this my heart smote me, because it appeared to be an indignity offered to him who was the *Lord's anointed*. This fact, and my venturing my life frequently for his good and the safety of the state, sufficiently show the falsity of such accusations, and the innocence of my life.

Verse 5. Let the enemy persecute my soul] If I have been guilty of the things laid to my charge, let the worst evils fall upon me.

Verse 6. Arise, O Lord, in thine anger] To thee I commit my cause; arise, and sit on the throne of thy judgment in my behalf.

Verse 7. For their sakes therefore return thou on high.] Thy own people who compass thy altar, the faithful of the land, are full of gloomy

apprehensions. They hear the charges against me; and see how I am persecuted. Their minds are divided; they know not what to think. For *their sakes, return thou on high*-ascend the judgment-seat; and let them see, by the dispensations of thy providence, *who is innocent* and *who is guilty*. David feared not to make this appeal to God; for the consciousness of his innocence showed him at once how the discrimination would be made.

Verse 8. The Lord shall judge the people] He will execute justice and maintain truth among them. They shall not be as sheep without a shepherd.

Judge me, O Lord] Let my innocence be brought to the light, and my just dealing made clear as the noonday.

Verse 9. The wickedness of the wicked] The iniquity of *Saul's* conduct.

But establish the just] Show the people *my* uprightness.

Verse 10. My defence is of God] I now leave my cause in the hands of my Judge. I have no uneasy or fearful apprehensions, because I know God will save the upright in heart.

Verse 11. God is angry with the wicked every day.] The *Hebrew* for this sentence is the following: μωϋ | kb μ[z | [w *veel zoem becol yom*; which, according to the *points*, is, *And God is angry every day*. Our translation seems to have been borrowed from the *Chaldee*, where the whole verse is as follows: amwy | k y[yvr | a zygr āwqtbw hakz anyd ahl a elaha daiyana zaccaah ubithkoph rageiz al reshiey col yoma: “God is a righteous Judge; and in strength he is angry against the wicked every day.”

The *VULGATE*: *Deus Judex justus, fortis, et patiens; numquid irascitur per sinpulos dies?* “God is a Judge righteous, strong, and patient; will he be angry every day?”

The *SEPTUAGINT*: Ο Θεος Κριτης δικαιος, και ισχυρος, και μακροθυμος, μη οργην επαγων καθ εκαστην ημεραν; “God is a righteous Judge, strong and longsuffering; not bringing forth his anger every day.”

SYRIAC: “God is the Judge of righteousness; he is not angry every day.”

The *ARABIC* is the same as the *Septuagint*.

The ÆTHIOPIC: “God is a just Judge, and strong and longsuffering; he will not bring forth tribulation daily.”

COVERDALE: *God is a righteous judge, and God is ever threateninge.*

KING EDWARD’S Bible by *Becke* 1549, follows this reading.

CARDMARDEN: *God is a righteous judge, [strong and patient] and God is provoked every day.* *Cardmarden* has borrowed *strong and patient* from the *Vulgate* or *Septuagint*, but as he found nothing in the *Hebrew* to express them, he put the words in a *smaller letter*, and included them in *brackets*. This is followed by the *prose version* in our *Prayer Book*.

The GENEVAN *version*, printed by *Barker*, the king’s printer, 1615, translates thus: “God judgeth the righteous, and him that contemneth God every day.” On which there is this marginal note: “He doth continually call the wicked to repentance, by some signs of his judgments.”

My ancient *Scotico-English MS. Psalter* only begins with the conclusion of this Psalm.

I have judged it of consequence to trace this verse through all the ancient versions in order to be able to ascertain what is the *true reading*, where the evidence on one side amounts to a positive *affirmation*, “God IS angry every day;” and, on the other side, to as positive a *negation*, “He is NOT angry every day.” The mass of evidence supports the latter reading. The *Chaldee* first corrupted the text by making the addition, *with the wicked*, which our translators have followed, though they have put the words into *italics*, as not being in the Hebrew text. In the MSS. collated by *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi* there is no various reading on this text.

The true sense may be restored thus:—

l a el, with the vowel point *tsere*, signifies GOD: *l a al*, the same letters, with the point *pathach*, signifies *not*. Several of the versions have read it in this way: “God judgeth the righteous, and is NOT angry every day.” He is not always chiding, nor is he daily punishing, notwithstanding the continual wickedness of men: hence, the ideas of *patience* and *longsuffering* which several of the versions introduce. Were I to take any of the translations in preference to the above, I should feel most inclined to adopt that of *Coverdale*.

Verse 12. If he turn not] This clause the *Syriac* adds to the preceding verse. Most of the versions read, “If ye return not.” Some contend, and not without a great show of probability, that the two verses should be read in connection, thus: “God is a just Judge; a God who is provoked every day. If (the sinner) turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.” This, no doubt, gives the sense of both.

Verse 13. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death] This appears to be all a prophecy of the tragical death of *Saul*. He was wounded by the *arrows* of the *Philistines*; and his own *keen sword*, on which he fell, terminated his woful days!

Verse 14. He travaileth with iniquity] All these terms show the pitch of envy, wrath, and malevolence, to which *Saul* had carried his opposition against *David*. He *conceived mischief*; he *travailed with iniquity*; he *brought forth falsehood*-all his expectations were blasted.

Verse 15. He made a pit] He determined the destruction of *David*. He laid his plans with much artifice; he executed them with zeal and diligence; and when he had, as he supposed, the grave of *David* digged, he fell into it himself! The metaphor is taken from pits dug in the earth, and slightly covered over with reeds, &c., so as not to be discerned from the solid ground; but the animal steps on them, the surface breaks, and he falls into the pit and is taken. “All the world agrees to acknowledge the equity of that sentence, which inflicts upon the *guilty* the punishment intended by them for the innocent.”—*Horne*.

Verse 16. Shall come down upon his own pate.] Upon his *scalp*, *dqdq kodkod*, the top of the head. It may refer to *knocking the criminal on the head*, in order to deprive him of life. Had *scalping* been known in those days, I should have thought the reference might be to that barbarous custom.

Verse 17. I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness] I shall celebrate both his justice and his mercy. I will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High. The *name* of God is often put for his *perfections*. So here, *ʿyl [hwhy μν shem Yehovah Elyon*; “The perfections of *Jehovah*, who is above all.” My old *Scotico-English MS.*, mentioned at the conclusion of the *introduction*, begins at this verse, where are the following words by way of paraphrase: *Sang falles til ioy; and he that synges well that name, his ioy es mare than i kan tell*. Those who are happy may sing;

and he who can duly celebrate the name of God, who knows it to be a strong tower into which he can run and find safety, has inexpressible happiness. That is the sense of the above.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTH PSALM

- I. His appeal to God by way of *petition*, ^{<190701>}**Psalm 7:1, 2, 6.**
- II. The *reasons* of this appeal,—set down through the whole Psalm.
- III. His doxology or thanksgiving, ^{<190717>}**Psalm 7:17.**

I. He begins his appeal with a petition for deliverance from his persecutors: “Save me and deliver me,” ^{<190701>}**Psalm 7:1.** In which he desires God to be,

1. *Attentive* to him: 1. Because of the relation between them. For he was *the Lord his God*. 2. He trusted in him: “O Lord my God, I trust in thee,” ^{<190701>}**Psalm 7:1.**

2. *Benevolent* to him. For he was now in danger of death. He had, 1. Enemies. 2. Many enemies. 3. Persecuting enemies. 4. But one above the rest, a *lion ready to rend him in pieces*; so that if God forsook him, he would do it. “Save me from those that persecute me,” &c., ^{<190702>}**Psalm 7:2.**

II. And then he gives his reasons why he doth appeal to his God, which are: 1. His own *innocence*. 2. God’s *justice*.

1. He makes a protestation of his innocence. He was accused that he lay in wait, and plotted for Saul’s life and kingdom; but he clears himself, shows the impossibility of it, and that with a fearful imprecation. 1. *O Lord-if I have done any such thing as they object; if I have rewarded evil to him that was at peace with me,* ^{<190703>}**Psalm 7:3, 4,** which was indeed an impossible matter. *For I have delivered him-as Saul in the cave,* ^{<0241>}**1 Samuel 24:2.** His imprecation—*Then let mine enemy persecute me*—let him take both my life and my honour, kingdom, property, and whatever thou hast promised me.

2. And, which is the second reason of this appeal, being innocent, he calls for justice. “Arise, O Lord—lift up thyself—awake for me to judgment.” For, 1. The rage of my enemies is great. 2. The judgment was thine that chose me to be king of thy people. Awake for me. 3. This will be for thy honour, and the edification of thy Church. “The congregation of thy people shall compass thee about. For their sakes return thou on high.” Ascend the tribunal, and do justice.

Now, upon this argument of God's justice, he dwells and insists to the last verse of the Psalm.

1. He avows God to be his Judge.

2. He prays for justice to be done to *him* and to the *wicked*. 1. To *him*, an innocent person: "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness." 2. To the *wicked*: "O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end!"

3. He prays not only for *himself*, but for all *good men*: "Establish the just." And adds this reason, that as "God trieth the hearts and reins," he is fittest to be judge, in whom is required *knowledge* and *prudence*.

4. The other two properties of a judge are, to *save*, and to *punish*; and the triumph of his faith is, that he knows He will do both. 1. *He will save the just and upright in heart*, and therefore his *defence is in God*. 2. He will *punish the wicked*, for he is *angry with them every day*; and yet even to them he shows much clemency and forbearance. He waits for their conversion. He whets, binds on, and sharpens his instruments of death; but he shoots not till there is no remedy. But, *If they will not return he will whet his sword, &c.*

5. But the Lord's longsuffering had no good effect upon Saul; he grew worse and worse: *He travailed with mischief; conceived iniquity; brought forth falsehood; and digged a pit for his innocent neighbour, into which he fell himself*. Thus the righteous God *executed judgment and vindicated innocence*.

III. The close of the Psalm is a *doxology*. Thanks that a good and merciful God would judge for the righteous, save those who are true of heart, *establish the just*, and take vengeance upon the wicked. For this, saith David, "I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord the Most High."

The righteous may be oppressed, but they shall not be forsaken: nor can they lose even by their afflictions, for they shall be turned to their advantage. Every occurrence helps a good man, whether prosperous or adverse; but to the wicked every thing is a curse. By his wickedness, even his blessings are turned to a bane.

PSALMS

PSALM 8

The glory and excellence of God manifested by his works, 1, 2; particularly in the starry heavens, 3; in man, 4; in his formation, 5; and in the dominion which God has given him over the earth, the air, the sea, and their inhabitants, 6-8: in consequence of which God's name is celebrated over all the earth, 9.

NOTES ON PSALM 8

The inscription to this Psalm is the following: *To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.* This has been paraphrased, "To the conqueror, concerning the wine-presses;" and has been supposed to be a Psalm intended for the time of *vintage*: and as that happened about the time of the year in which it is supposed the world was created, hence there is a general celebration of those works, and of the creation, and the high privileges of man. The *Chaldee* gives it a different turn: "A Psalm of David, to be sung upon the harp, which he brought out of Gath." That the Psalm has respect to our Lord and the time of the Gospel, is evident from the reference made to ^{<4902>}Psalm 8:2, in ^{<40125>}Matthew 11:25, the express quotation of it in ^{<40216>}Matthew 21:16, and another reference to it in ^{<46027>}1 Corinthians 1:27. The *fourth* and *sixth* verses are quoted ^{<8016>}Hebrews 2:6-9. See also ^{<46157>}1 Corinthians 15:27, and ^{<40122>}Ephesians 1:22. The *first* and *second* ADAM are both referred to, and the first and second creation also; and the glory which God has received, and is to receive, through both. It relates simply to Christ and redemption.

Verse 1. O Lord our Lord] *wynnda hwhy* *Yehovah Adoneynu*; *O Jehovah our Prop, our Stay, or Support.* *ynda* *Adonai* is frequently used: sometimes, indeed often, for the word *hwhy* *Yehovah* itself. The root *ˆd dan* signifies *to direct, rule, judge, support*. So *Adonai* is the Director, Ruler, Judge, Supporter of men. It is well joined with *Jehovah*; this showing what God is *in himself*; that, what God is *to man*; and may here very properly refer to our Lord Jesus.

How excellent is thy name in all the earth!] How illustrious is the name of Jesus throughout the world! His incarnation, birth, humble and obscure life, preaching, miracles, passion, death, resurrection, and ascension, are celebrated through the whole world. His religion, the gifts and graces of his

Spirit, his people-Christians-his Gospel and the preachers of it, are everywhere spoken of. No name is so universal, no power and influence so generally felt, as those of the Saviour of mankind. Amen.

Thy glory above the heavens.] The *heavens* are glorious, the most glorious of all the works of God which the eye of man can reach; but the *glory of God* is infinitely above even these. The words also seem to intimate that no power, earthly or diabolical, can *lessen* or injure that glory. The glory and honour which God has by the Gospel shall last through time, and through eternity; and of that glory none shall be able to rob him, to whom majesty and dominion are eternally due. This has been applied by some to the *resurrection* of our Lord. He *rose* from the dead, and *ascended* above all heavens; and by these his glory was sealed, his mission accomplished, and the last proof given to his preceding miracles.

Verse 2. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings] We have seen how our Lord applied this passage to the Jewish children, who, seeing his miracles, cried out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”

<42116> **Matthew 21:16.** And we have seen how the *enemy* and the *avenger*-the *chief priests* and the *scribes*-were offended because of these things; and as the Psalm wholly concerns Jesus Christ, it is most probable that in this act of the Jewish children the prophecy had its *primary* fulfilment; and was left to the Jews as a witness and a sign of the Messiah, which they should have acknowledged when our Lord directed their attention to it.

There is also a very *obvious sense* in which the *mouths of babes and sucklings show forth the praises of God*; viz., the means by which they derive their first nourishment. In order to extract the milk from the breasts of their mothers, they are obliged to *empty their own mouths entirely of air*, that the eternal air, pressing on the breast, may force the milk through its proper canals into the mouth of the child, where there is no resistance, the child having extracted all air from its own mouth which in this case resembles a perfectly *exhausted receiver* on the plate of an *airpump*; and the *action of sucking* is performed on the same principle that the receiver is exhausted by the working of the airpump. Of this curious pneumatic action the child is capable the moment it breathes; and, its strength considered, performs it as perfectly the first hour as it does in any other period of its childhood or infancy. What does all this argue? Why *instinct*. And pray what is *instinct*? You cannot tell. But here is an operation by which the

pure *Boylean vacuum* is made; and this by an infant *without any previous teaching!* Do you suppose that this is an *easy operation*, and that it requires little *skill*? You are mistaken. You have done this yourself while an infant, under the sole guidance of God. Can you do it *now*? You are startled! Shall I tell you what appears to you a secret? There is not one in ten thousand *adults*, who have had their first nourishment from the breasts of their mothers who can perform the same operation again! And those who have had occasion to practise it have found great difficulty *to learn that art* which, in the first moment of their birth, they performed to perfection! Here is the finger of God; and here, *out of the mouths of babes and sucklings*, he *has ordained* such a *strength of evidence and argument* in favour of his being, his providence, and his goodness, as is sufficient to *still and confound* every infidel and atheist in the universe, all the *enemies of righteousness*, and all the *vindicators* of desperate and hopeless causes and systems.

The words may also be applied to the *apostles* and *primitive* preachers of the Gospel; to the *simple* and *comparatively unlearned* followers of Christ, who, through his teaching, were able to confound the *wise* among the *Jews*, and the *mighty* among the *heathens*: and in this sense our Lord uses the term *babes*, ^{<01125>}**Matthew 11:25**: “I thank thee, O Father-because thou hast hid these things from the *wise* and *prudent*, and hast revealed them to *babes*.”

We may also witness, in the *experience* of multitudes of simple people who have been, by the preaching of the Gospel, converted from the error of their ways, such a strength of *testimony* in favour of the work of God in the *heart*, and his effectual teaching in the *mind*, as is calculated to *still*, or reduce to silence, every thing but *bigotry* and *prejudice*, neither of which has either *eyes* or *ears*. This *teaching*, and these *changing* or *converting* influences, come from God. They are not acquired by human *learning*; and those who put this in the place of the Divine teaching never grow wise to salvation. To enter into the kingdom *of heaven*, a MAN must become as a *little child*.

Verse 3. When I Consider thy heavens] *hara yk ki ereh; because I will see*. He had often seen the heavens with astonishment, and he purposes to make them frequent subjects of contemplation; and he could not behold them without being affected with the skill, contrivance, and power, manifested in their formation.

The work of thy fingers] What a view does this give of the majesty of God! The *earth* is nearly *eight thousand* English miles in diameter: but to form an adequate conception of its magnitude, we must consider it in its *superficial* and *solid contents*. Upon the supposition that the earth's *polar* diameter is *seven thousand nine hundred and forty miles*, and its equatorial, *seven thousand nine hundred and seventy-seven*, (estimates considered to very near approximations to the truth,) the whole superficies of the terraqueous globe will amount to about *one hundred and ninety-eight millions, nine hundred and eighty thousand, seven hundred square miles*; and its solid contents, in cubic miles will be expressed by the following figures: 264,544,857,944, i.e., *two hundred and sixty-four thousand five hundred and forty-four millions, eight hundred and fifty-seven thousand, nine hundred and forty-four*. Great as we have shown the *bulk* of the earth to be, from the most accurate estimates of its diameter it is but small when compared with the bulks of some of the other bodies in the solar system. The planet *Herschel*, or *Georgium Sidus*, known on the continent of Europe by the name of *Uranus*, is *eighty times and a half* greater than the earth; *Saturn*, *nine hundred and ninety-five* times greater; *Jupiter*, *one thousand two hundred and eighty-one* times greater; and the *sun*, the most prodigious body in the system, *one million three hundred and eighty-four thousand, four hundred and sixty-two* times greater. *The circumference* of the sun contains not fewer than *two millions seven hundred and seventy-seven thousand* English miles; and a degree of latitude, which on the earth amounts only to *sixty-nine miles and a half*, will on the sun (the circle being supposed in both instances to be divided into *three hundred and sixty degrees*) contain not less than about *seven thousand seven hundred and forty miles*, a quantity almost equal to the terrestrial axis. But the immense *volume* (in cubic miles) which the solar surface includes amounts to the following most inconceivable quantity: 366,252,303,118,866,128, i.e., *three hundred and sixty-six thousand two hundred and fifty-two billions, three hundred and three thousand one hundred and eighteen millions, eight hundred and sixty-six thousand, one hundred and twenty-eight*. Notwithstanding the amazing magnitude of the sun, we have abundant reason to believe that some of the fixed stars are much larger; and yet we are told they are *the work of GOD'S FINGERS!* What a *hand*, to move, form, and launch these globes! This expression is much more *sublime* than even that of the prophet: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure; and weighed the

mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance!" ^{<23012>} **Isaiah 40:12**. This is *grand*; but the *heavens* being the work OF GOD'S FINGERS is yet more sublime.

The moon and the stars] The sun is not mentioned, because the heavens-the moon, planets, and stars-could not have appeared, had *he* been present. Those he wished to introduce because of their immense variety, and astonishing splendour; and, therefore, he skilfully leaves out the sun, which would have afforded him but one object, and one idea. To have mentioned him with the others would have been as ridiculous in *astronomy*, as the exhibition of the top and bottom of a vessel would be in *perspective*. Various critics have endeavoured to restore the *sun* to this place: and even Bishop *Horsley* says, "It is certainly strange that the sun should be omitted, when the moon and the stars are so particularly mentioned." But with great deference to him, and to Dr. *Kennicott*, who both show how the text may be *mended*, I say, it would be most strange had the psalmist introduced the *sun*, for the reasons already assigned. The *Spirit* of God is always right; our *heads* sometimes, our *hearts* seldom so.

Which thou hast ordained] *htnnwk conantah*, which thou hast prepared and established. Made their respective spheres, and fitted them for their places. Space to matter, and matter to space; all adjusted in number, weight, and measure.

Verse 4. What is man] *vwna hm mah enosh*, what is wretched, miserable man; man in his fallen state, full of infirmity, ignorance, and sin?

That thou art mindful of him?] That thou settest thy heart upon him, keepest him continually in thy merciful view.

And the son of man] *µda ˆbw uben Adam*, and the son of Adam, the first great rebel; the fallen child of a fallen parent. See the note on ^{<18717>} **Job 7:17**. Some think eminent men are here intended. What is *man* in *common*; what the *most eminent men*; that thou shouldst be mindful of them, or deign to visit them?

That thou visitest him?] By sending thy Holy Spirit to convince him of *sin*, *righteousness*, and *judgment*. It is by these *visits* that man is preserved in a salvable state. Were God to withhold them, there would be nothing in the soul of man but sin, darkness, hardness, corruption, and death.

Verse 5. Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels] The original is certainly very emphatic: *pyhl am c[m wj rsj tw vattechasserchu meat meelohim*, Thou hast lessened him for a little time from God. Or, Thou hast made him less than God for a little time. See these passages explained at large in the notes on ^{<806>}**Hebrews 2:6**, &c., which I need not repeat here.

Verse 6. Thou madest him to have dominion] Jesus Christ, who, being in the form of God, and equal with God, *for a time* emptied himself, and made himself of no reputation; was afterwards *highly exalted*, and had a name above every name. See the notes referred to above, and those on ^{<807>}**Philippians 2:6-9**.

Thou hast put all things under his feet] Though the whole of the brute creation was made subject to Adam in his state of innocence; yet it could never be literally said of him, that God had put all things under his feet, or that he had dominion over the work of God's hands; but all this is most literally true of our Lord Jesus; and to him the apostle, ^{<808>}**Hebrews 2:6**, &c., applies all these passages.

Verse 7. All sheep and oxen] All *domestic* animals, and those to be employed in *agriculture*.

Beasts of the field] All *wild beasts*, and inhabitants of the *forest*.

Verse 8. The fowl of the air] All these were given to man in the beginning; and he has still a general dominion over them; for thus saith the Lord: "The fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every BEAST of the EARTH, and upon every FOWL of the AIR, and upon all that MOVETH upon the EARTH, and upon all the FISHES of the SEA; into your hand are they delivered;" ^{<809>}**Genesis 9:2**. To this passage the psalmist most obviously refers.

Verse 9. O Lord our Lord] The psalmist concludes as he began. Jehovah, our prop and support! his name is excellent in all the earth. The name of JESUS is celebrated in almost every part of the habitable globe; for his Gospel has been preached, or is in the progress of being preached, through the whole world. *Bibles* and *missionaries* are now carrying his name, and proclaiming his fame, to the utmost nations of the earth.

The whole of this Psalm, and the seventh and eighth verses in particular, have been the subject of much spiritualization in ancient and modern

times. I shall give two examples: one from the pious Bishop *Horne*; the other from the ancient *Latino-Scotico-English* Psalter, mentioned before.

That of Bishop *Horne*, on the 7th and 8th verses, is as follows: “Adam, upon his creation, was invested with sovereign dominion over the creatures, in words of the same import with these, ^{<01028>}**Genesis 1:28**, which are therefore here used, and the creatures particularized, to inform us that what the first Adam lost by transgression, the second Adam gained by obedience. That glory which was set above the heavens could not but be over all things on the earth; and accordingly we hear our Lord saying, after his resurrection, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and earth,’ ^{<02818>}**Matthew 28:18**. Nor is it a speculation unpleasing or unprofitable to consider that he who rules over the material world is Lord also of the intellectual or spiritual creation represented thereby.

“The souls of the faithful, lowly, and harmless, are the *sheep* of his pasture; those who like *oxen*, are strong to labour in the Church, and who by expounding the word of life tread out the corn for the nourishment of the people, own him for their kind and beneficent Master. Nay, tempers fierce and untractable as the *wild beasts* of the desert, are yet subject to his will. Spirits of the angelic kind, that, like the *birds of the air*, traverse freely the superior region, move at his command; and these evil ones, whose habitation is in the *deep abyss*, even to the great *leviathan* himself, all, all are put under the feet of the King Messiah; who, because he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, was therefore highly exalted, and had a name given him above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, whether of things in heaven, or things on earth, or things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father; ^{<0288>}**Philippians 2:8**, &c.” Thus far the pious bishop.

I shall now give, as a singular curiosity, the whole Psalm, with its translation and paraphrase, from the ancient MS. already mentioned; inserting first the *Latin text*; next, the *translation*; and, thirdly, the *paraphrase*. The Latin text seems to be the old *Itala*, or *Antehieronymian*; at least it has readings which have been thought peculiar to that version.

PSALM 8

Ver. 1. Domine Deus noster, quoniam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa terra.

Trans. Lord our Lord, qwat thi name es wonderfull in al the Erde.

Par. The prophete in louing, bygynnes and says: Lord of al, thow ert specialy our Lord that dredes the, loves the. *Thi name* that es the ioy and the fame of thi name Ihesu: for the creaturs that thu hes made and bought qwat it es wonderful. Als so say withouten end: for nane suffis for to know al creaturs: in qwilk wonder of the, and that in al the Erd, nought in a party anely.

Quoniam elevata est magnificentia tua super Celos.

Trans. For lyfted es thi worchyp aboben hevens.

Par. That es at say, thu ert mare worthy to be loued and wirchepyd than any Aungel or haly Saule may thynk.

Ver. 2. Exodus ore infancium et lactencium perfecisti laudem, propter inimicos tuos, ut destruas inimicum et ultorem.

Trans. Of the mouth of nought spekand, and sowkand, thou has made louying, for thin ennys, that thou destroye the enmy and the venger.

Par. Nought anely thow ert loued of perfite men, bot of the mouthe of barnes that spekes nought: Zit there er tha that kan nought speke the wisdom of this werld: and of soukand, the qwilk gladdely resayves the lare of haly Kyrk theare moder. Thow has made thi luf thug perfyte for thin ennys: fals cristen men, to schame and to schende for thai er wer than er haythen men. That thu destroy the enmy; that es, he that es wyse in his awen eghen; and wil nought be underloute til thi wil: *and the venger*: that es he that defends his Syn; and sais that he synnes nought; or that his syn es les than other mennes.

Ver. 3. Quoniam videbo celos tuos, et opera digitorum tuorum, lunam et stellas quas tu fundasti.

Trans. For I sal se thi hevens werkes of thi fyngers the mone and the Sternys the quilk thow groundid.

Par. Thow destrues al that es contrariand til the; bot i in al thying confourom me to do thi wil; for thi i sal se in lyf withouten end. *Thi hevens*, that es Aungels and Apostels the qwilk er werkes of thi fingers: that es, that er mode perfyte thurgh the Haly Gost, of qwam es seven gyftes. Of he be bot a Spirit, als mani fyngers er in a hand. And i sal see the

Mone, that es haly Kyrk: and the sternes that es ilk a ryghtwise man by hym selfe, the qwilk thu groundid in charite.

Ver. 4. Quid est homo quod memor es ejus; aut filius hominis, quoniam visitas eum?

Trans. **What es man that thu ert menand of hym: or son of man for thou visites hym?**

Par. Als it war with despyte, he sais *man*, erdely and synful, qwat es he, that thu has mynd of hym. Als fer sett fra the; at the lest gyfand hym hele and ese of body. Or *son of man*: that es, he that es gastely, and beres the ymage of heven. Qwat es he, for thou visits hym. Als present the qwilk es nere the for clennes of lyf. Or *son of man* he calles Crist, through qwam he visits mannes kynd.

Ver. 5. Minuisti eum paullo minus ab angelis: gloria et honore coronasti eum; et constituisti eum super opera manuum tuarum.

Trans. **Thow lessed hym a littil fra aungels; with ioy and honour thu coround hym: and thu sett him aboven the werkes of thi hend.**

Par. Crist was *lessed fra aungels*, for he was dedely, and mught suffer pyne; but a littel; for in other thyng, es he abouen aungels, thair Kyng and Sychthu thou coround hym with ioy, that es with bryghthede of body, na mare sufferand pyne; and honour, for he es honourable til al: and thou sett hym abouen aungels and al creatures.

Ver. 6, 7. Omnia subjecisti sub pedibus ejus: oves et boves insuper et pecora campi.

Trans. **Al thynges thu underkest undyr his fete: schepe and oxen al over that, and the bestes of the feld.**

Par. That undyr hys Lordschyp and hys myght, in has cestyn al thyng: tha er *schepe* that er innocentes, als well aungels als men. *And oxen*, tha er, traveland men gastely, in haly Kyrk, *over that*; and the *bestes of the feld*; thai er lufers of this werld, wonnand, in the feld of fleschly lusts; nocht in hillis of vertus; and so be the brode way thai ga til hell.

Ver. 8. Volucres celi et pisces maris qui perambulant semitas maris.

Trans. **Fowls of heven and fysche of the see, that gas the wayes of the see.**

Par. Fowls of heven, er prowde men that wald hee thair setil abouen al other. Fysches of the see, er covaytus men, the qwilk in the ground of the werld, sek es erthdly gudes, that all stretes in the see, sone wither oway. Al thir sal be underlout til Crist onther herts in grace, or thare in pine.

Ver. 9. Domine Deus noster, quam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa terra.

Trans. Lard our Lard qwat thi name is wonderful in al the erth.

Par. Als he bigan swa he endes, schewand that bygyning and endyng of al gode, is of Gode; and til his louing agh i for to be done.

The reader will no doubt be struck with the remarkable agreement between the pious bishop of Norwich and this ancient translator and paraphrast, particularly on the 7th and 8th verses. The language also is in several respects singular. The participle of the present tense, which we terminate with *ing*, is here almost always terminated with *and*. So *Spekand, sowkand, gyfand, sufferand, traveland*, for speaking, sucking, giving, suffering, travelling, &c.

As the participle signifies the *continuance* of the action, the termination and seems much more proper than *ing*; *speak-and*, i.e., *continuing* to speak; *give-and*, *continuing* to give; *suffer-and*, suffer more; *travel-and*, travel on, &c. There are some words in this ancient MS. which I have met nowhere else.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTH PSALM

This Psalm begins and ends with a general proposition, figured by an exclamation, which contains an admiration; for he admires what he cannot perfectly comprehend. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens." Such is the glory of thy divinity, power, and goodness, that it fills not only the earth, but transcends the very heavens, in which angels and blessed spirits, though they know much more than we on earth, yet cannot comprehend thy Majesty, which fills all and exceeds all.

This general proposition being premised, the prophet descends to some *particular instances*, in which the excellence of God's name particularly appears; and he mentions *three*: I. *Infants*. II. The *heavens*, with the *moon* and *stars*. III. *Man* himself.

I. The excellence of God's power, divinity, and goodness, appears in infants: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength." 1. The sucking of babes, and speaking of young children, are evident demonstrations of God's excellent name; for who taught the babe to suck, or the dumb infant to speak, but the *Lord our Governor*? 2. The children that cried "Hosanna!" in the temple, struck with the miracles of our Lord; while the priests, through *envy*, were *dumb*. 3. Or by *babes* may be meant such as the worldly-wise repute no better than *children* and *fools*. By simple *prophets*, ignorant *fishermen*, humble *confessors*, and faithful *martyrs*, hath he *stilled the enemy* and the *avenger*; confounded the wisest philosophers, and stopped the mouths of devils.

II. The next instance in which the glory and excellence of God's name appears is the *heavens*, the *moon* and the *stars*: these are the works of his *fingers*, and therefore called *Thy heavens*; whose amplitude is great, order and orbs wonderful, beauty admirable, matter durable, and motions various yet stable; together with the *stars*, whose multitude is innumerable, magnitude vast and various, order admirable, and influences secret and wonderful. The varying, yet regular and constant course of the *moon*, her changes, phases, and influences on the earth and the waters, on men and other animals. All these have been *ordained* by the all-wise God; and the earth and its inhabitants are receiving continual benefits from them.

When I *consider* these things, then I say to myself:

III. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" This is the psalmist's *third* instance to manifest the excellence of God's providence and government of the world, in which he reflects upon man in his *baseness* and in his *dignity*.

1. In his baseness, vileness, and misery, signified by the question, *What is man?* As if he should say, What a poor creature? how miserable! What except dust and ashes, as to his body, when he was at the best; for he was *taken from the dust of the ground*, even when his soul was formed *in the image of God*. But now miserable dust while he lives, and to dust he shall return when he dies. What then is this miserable creature, of what worth, that thou, so great, and so glorious a Being, who art higher than the heavens, shouldst *visit* and *take care* of him!

2. This is his dignity; he can know, love, serve, and enjoy thee for ever; and thou settest thy love upon him above all other creatures. This thou hast showed in the following ways:—

1. In *visiting* him, and in being *mindful* of him: 1. Thou visitest him by conferring on him many temporal blessings. 2. In illuminating his mind by thy Holy Spirit. 3. In sending him thy *law* and thy *Gospel*, by *prophets* and *apostles*. 4. In giving thy *Son* to take upon himself human nature, and to die, the just for the unjust, that thou mightest bring him to thyself, through whom he is to receive remission of sins, and an eternal inheritance among the saints in light. 5. In making him, fallen and wretched as he is, lord of thy creatures; giving him all sheep and oxen, the beasts of the field, the fowls of heaven, and the fish of the sea. 6. But this universal dominion belongs principally to the Lord Jesus, *through* whom and *by* whom all good comes to man, and *to* whom all glory should be given, world without end. Let God's excellent name be exalted throughout all the earth!

PSALMS

PSALM 9

David praises God for the benefits which he has granted to Israel in general, and to himself in particular, 1-4. He encourages himself in the Lord, knowing that he will ever judge righteously, and be a refuge for the distressed, 7-10. He exhorts the people to praise God for his judgments, 11, 12; prays for mercy and support; and thanks God for his judgments executed upon the heathen, 13-16. He foretells the destruction of the ungodly, 17; prays for the poor and needy, and against their oppressors, 18-20.

NOTES ON PSALM 9

The inscription to this Psalm in the HEBREW text is, *To the chief Musician upon Muth-lab-ben, A Psalm of David.* The CHALDEE has, “A Song of David, to be sung concerning the Death of the Strong Man, (or *champion*, **arbgd degabra**,) who went out between the Camps;” that is, Goliath, on account of whose defeat this Psalm has been supposed by many to have been composed. The date in the margin is several years posterior to the death of Goliath. See the introduction.

The VULGATE: A Psalm of David, for the end; concerning the secrets of the Son.”

The SEPTUAGINT and ÆTHIOPIC are the same with the *Vulgate*.

The SYRIAC: “A Psalm of David concerning Christ’s receiving the throne and the kingdom, and defeating his enemies.

The ARABIC: “Concerning the mysteries of the Son, as to the glory of Christ, his resurrection, and kingdom, and the destruction of all the disobedient.”

Houbigant causes the Hebrew title to agree with the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, and *Æthiopic*, by uniting **twm l** [*al muth*, “concerning the death,” into the word **twm l** [*alamoth*, which signifies *secrets* or hidden things. “To the chief musician, or conqueror; secrets concerning the Son: A Psalm of David.

About a hundred MSS. and printed editions unite the words as above. Some translate **twm l** [*alamoth*, “concerning the youth or infancy; the

infancy of the Son.” Several of the *fathers* have on this ground interpreted it, “concerning the *incarnation* of our Lord.” Indeed the title and the Psalm have been so variously understood, that it would be as painful as it would be useless to follow the different commentators, both ancient and modern, through all their conjectures.

Verse 1. I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart] And it is only when the *whole heart* is employed in the work that God can look upon it with acceptance.

I will show forth] *hrpsa asapperah*, “I will *number out*, or *reckon up*;” a very difficult task, *Ëytwal pn niphleotheycha*, “thy miracles;” supernatural interventions of thy power and goodness. He whose eye is attentive to the operation of God’s hand will find many of these. In the Vulgate this Psalm begins with *Confitebor tibi, Domine*, “I will confess unto thee, O Lord,” which my old MS. above quoted translates thus: *Ï sal schrifte Lard, til the, in al my hert, Ï sal tel al twi wonders*. On which we find the following curious paraphrase: “Here the prophete spekes agaynes that grucches with ese of il men: and the travel and anguis of gude men. *I sal schrifte til the Lard*; that is, I sal lufe the in al my hert, hally gederant it til thi luf: and gyfand na party tharof tyl errour, na to covatyse: ne til fleschly luf. A vile errour it is that some men says, that God dose unrightwisly in mani thinges in erthe: for tham thynk that tay sold nocht be done. Als I hard say nocht lang sythem, of a man of religyon, and of grete fame, that qwen he was in the see, in poynte to peryshe, he said tyl Gode: Lard thu dos unryghtwysly if thou sofyre us to perysch here. God myght haf answered and said, My rightwysnes reches to sofer a beter man than thou ert to perisse here: for I hope, had he ben a ryghtwyse man, he had nocht sayd swa: for al ar unryghtwyse, that hopes that any unrightwysnes may be in Godes wylle. Bot I sal luf the in al thi workes; and tel al thy wonders; that is, bathe that er sene, and that ar nocht sene; visibels and invisibels.”

Verse 2. I will be glad and rejoice in thee] I am glad that thou hast heard my prayer, and showed me mercy; and I will rejoice in thee, in having thee as my portion, dwelling and working in my heart.

Verse 3. When mine enemies are turned back] It is a sure sign of a nearly approaching complete conquest over sin, when, by resistance to its influences, it begins to lose its power. That is the time to *follow on to know the Lord*.

Verse 5. Thou hast rebuked the heathen] We know not what this particularly refers to, but it is most probably to the Canaanitish nations, which God destroyed from off the face of the earth; hence it is said, *Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever*, $d[w \mu l w [l$ *leolam vaed*, *endlessly*. Here $\mu l w [$ *olam* has its proper signification, *without end*. He who contends it means only *a limited time*, let him tell us *where* the Hivites, Perizzites, Jebusites, &c., now dwell; and *when* it is likely they are to be restored to Canaan.

Verse 6. Destructions are come to a perpetual end] Rather, “The enemy is desolated for ever; for thou hast destroyed their cities, and their memory is perished with them.” Multitudes of the cities of the Canaanites have perished so utterly that neither name nor vestige remains of them.

Verse 7. But the Lord shall endure] All things shall have an end but God and holy spirits.

Verse 8. He shall judge the world in righteousness] All the dispensations of God’s providence are founded in righteousness and truth.

Verse 9. A refuge] $bgcm$ *misgab*, *a high place*, where their enemies can neither *reach* nor *see* them. He who has God for his portion has all safety in him.

Verse 10. They that know thy name] Who have an experimental acquaintance with thy mercy, *will put their trust in thee*, from the conviction that *thou never hast forsaken*, and *never will forsake*, *them that trust in thee*.

Verse 11. Declare among the people his doings.] It is the duty of all those who have received the salvation of God, to recommend him and his salvation to the whole circle of their acquaintance, Christians, so called, when they meet, seldom speak about God! Why is this? Because they have nothing to say.

Verse 12. When he maketh inquisition for blood] This not only applies to the *Canaanites*, *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, and *Philistines*, who shed the blood of God’s people unjustly, but to all the nations of the earth who, to enlarge their territory, increase their wealth, or extend their commerce, have made destructive wars. For the blood which such nations have shed, their blood shall be shed. If *man* should make no inquisition for this

iniquitously spilt blood, GOD will do it, for he *remembers them*; and the *cry of the humbled*, distressed people, driven to distraction and ruin by such wars, *is not forgotten before him*.

Verse 13. Have mercy upon me, O Lord] David, having laid down the preceding maxims, now claims his part in their truth. I also am in trouble through the unjust dealings of my enemies; I am brought to the *gates of death*; have mercy on *me*, and lift *me* up, that, being saved from the *gates of death*, I may show forth thy praise in *the gates of the daughter of Zion*. *The gates of death-an open grave, leading to a yawning hell. The gates of the daughter of Zion-all the ordinances of God, by which the soul is helped forward to heaven.*

Verse 15. The heathen are sunk down to the pit] See on ^{<49715>} **Psalm 7:15.**

Verse 16. The Lord is known by the judgment] It is not every *casualty* that can properly be called a *judgment of God*. Judgment is his strange work; but when he executes it, his mind is plainly to be seen. There are no natural causes to which such calamities can be legally attributed.

The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.] There is nothing that a wicked man does that is not against his own interest. He is continually doing himself harm, and takes more pains to destroy his soul than the righteous man does to get his saved unto eternal life. This is a weighty truth; and the psalmist adds: *Higgaion; Selah*. Meditate on this; mark it well. See on ^{<49715>} **Psalm 3:3**. Some think that it is a direction to the musicians, something like our *Presto, Largo, Vivace, Allegro*, “Play briskly and boldly; beat away; and let *sense* and *sound* accompany each other.”

Verse 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell] *hl wavl lisholah, headlong into hell, down into hell*. The original is very emphatic.

All the nations that forget God.] They will not live in his fear. There are both *nations* and *individuals* who, though they *know* God, *forget* him, that is, are *unmindful* of him, do not *acknowledge* him in their designs, ways, and works. These are all to *be thrust down into hell*. Reader, art thou forgetful of thy *Maker*, and of HIM who *died* for thee?

Verse 18. The needy shall not alway be forgotten] The needy, and the poor, whose expectation is from the Lord, are never forgotten, though sometimes their deliverance is delayed for the greater confusion of their

enemies, the greater manifestation of God's mercy, and the greater benefit to themselves.

Verse 19. Arise, O Lord] Let this be the time in which thou wilt deliver thy poor people under oppression and persecution.

Verse 20. Put them in fear] **μῆλ ἡρώμ ἠώῃ ἡτύβ** *shithah Yehovah morah lahem*, "O Lord, place a teacher among them," that they may know they also are accountable creatures, grow wise unto salvation, and be prepared for a state of blessedness. Several MSS. read **αρώμ** *morre, fear*; but *teacher* or *legislator* is the reading of all the *versions* except the *Chaldee*. *Coverdale* has hit the sense, translating thus: **Ⓞ** *Lorde, set a Scholemaster ober them*: and the old Psalter, **Sett Lord a brynger of Law abouen tham**.

That **the nations may know themselves** to be but **men]** **vwna** *enosh*; Let the Gentiles be taught by the preaching of thy Gospel that they are *weak* and *helpless*, and stand in need of the salvation which Christ has provided for them. This may be the spirit of the petition. And this is marked by the extraordinary note *Selah*; Mark well, take notice. So the term may be understood.

"This whole Psalm," says Dr. Horsley, "seems naturally to divide into three parts. The first *ten* verses make the **FIRST** part; the *six* following, the **SECOND**; and the remaining *four* the **THIRD**."

"The **FIRST** part is prophetic of the utter extermination of the irreligious persecuting faction. The prophecy is delivered in the form of an **Επινικιον**, or song of victory, occasioned by the promise given in the *fifteenth* verse of the *tenth* Psalm; and through the whole of this song the psalmist, in the height of a prophetic enthusiasm, speaks of the threatened vengeance as accomplished."

"The **SECOND** part opens with an exhortation to the people of God to praise him as the Avenger of their wrongs, and the watchful Guardian of the helpless, and, as if the flame of the prophetic joy which the oracular voice had lighted in the psalmist's mind was beginning to die away, the strain is gradually lowered, and the notes of triumph are mixed with supplication and complaint, as if the mind of the psalmist were fluttering between things present and to

come, and made itself alternately present to his actual condition and his future hope.

“In the THIRD part the psalmist seems quite returned from the prophetic enthusiasm to his natural state, and closes the whole song with explicit but cool assertions of the future destruction of the wicked, and the deliverance of the persecuted saints, praying for the event.”

ANALYSIS OF THE NINTH PSALM

This Psalm consists of *five* chief parts:—

- I. David’s thanksgiving, ^{<1900b>}**Psalm 9:1, 2**, amplified and continued till the *tenth* verse.
 - II. An exhortation to others to do the like, ^{<1901b>}**Psalm 9:11**, and the reason of it, ^{<1901c>}**Psalm 9:12**.
 - III. A petition for himself, ^{<1901d>}**Psalm 9:13**, and the reason of it, ^{<1901e>}**Psalm 9:14**.
 - IV. A remembrance of God’s mercy in the overthrow of his enemies, for which he sings a song of triumph, from ^{<1901f>}**Psalm 9:15-19**.
 - V. A prayer in the conclusion against the prevalence of the heathen, ^{<1901g>}**Psalm 9:19, 20**.
- I. His profession of praise is set down in the two first verses, in which we may perceive,—
 1. The matter of it, with the extent: *All the marvellous works of God*.
 2. That he varies the synonyms. *I will praise thee; I will show forth; I will be glad and rejoice in thee; I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High!* in which there is a *climax*.
 3. The principle whence this praise flowed: 1. Not from the *lips*, but from the *heart*. 2. From the *whole heart*: “I will praise thee with my whole heart.”

This he amplifies from the cause, which is double:

1. That which outwardly moved him, and gave him a just occasion to do so; the overthrow of his enemies: “When my enemies are turned back;”

who were not overcome by strength or valour, but by the presence and power of God.

2. They shall fall and perish at thy presence. Thou wast the chief cause of this victory; and, therefore, deservest the thanks. Of this the prophet makes a full narrative in the two next verses, setting God as it were upon the bench, and doing the office of Judge. 1. "Thou maintainest my right, and my cause." 2. "Thou sittest on the throne judging right." 3. "Thou hast rebuked the heathen." 4. "Thou hast destroyed the wicked; thou hast put out their name for ever." In a word, Thou art a just Judge, and defendest the innocent, and punishest their oppressors; and *therefore I will praise thee*.

3. And then, upon the confidence of God's justice and power, he exults over his enemies. *O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end*. Thy power of hurting and destroying is taken away; the fortified cities in which thou dwellest are overthrown; and their memory and thine are perished.

4. Next, to make his assertion clearer; to the enemies' power he opposes that of God; his kingdom to their kingdom. But the Lord, in the administration of his kingdom, is, 1. Eternal: "The Lord shall endure for ever." 2. His office to be Judge: "He hath prepared his throne for judgment." 3. He is a universal Judge: "He shall judge the whole world." 4. He is a just Judge: "He shall judge in righteousness; he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness." 5. He is a merciful Judge: "For the Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed; a refuge in times of trouble."

5. The effect of this execution of justice. His people are encouraged: who are here described, 1. By their *knowing* him: "They that know thy name." 2. By *trusting* in him: "Will put their trust in thee." 3. By their *seeking* him: "For thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee."

II. An exhortation to others to praise God: "Sing praises to the Lord." The reason of this, 1. He *dwells* in Zion. 2. He *works* graciously there: "Sing praises to the Lord that DWELLS in Zion: declare among the people his DOINGS." 3. That will destroy their oppressors, and avenge their blood: "When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them; he forgetteth not the cry of the humble."

III. A petition for himself: "Have mercy on me, O Lord; consider my trouble," &c.; for which he gives these reasons:—

1. That "I may show forth thy praise."
2. "ALL thy praise."
3. "In the gates of the daughter of Zion."
4. That I may do it with joyful lips.
5. Which I will do: "I WILL rejoice in thy salvation."

IV. Then he sings forth his song of triumph over his enemies:—

1. The "heathen are sunk down in the pit they have made."
2. "In the net which they hid are their own feet taken."
3. This is the Lord's work. Though wicked men did doubt before of his providence and justice; yet now "the Lord was known by the judgment which he executed."
4. For "the wicked was snared in the work of his own hands. Higgsaion, Selah." Which is a thing exceedingly to be meditated upon, and not forgotten.
5. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God." 1. Their breath is in their nostrils, and die they must. 2. If they repent not, they shall suffer eternal punishment. 3. However this may be, God's goodness shall be manifested to the innocent: "The expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever."

V. A prayer in the conclusion against the prevalence of the heathen, in which he shows great earnestness and faith:—

1. "Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail."
2. "Let the heathen be judged in thy sight."
3. "Put them in fear, O Lord!" Now they fear nothing, being in their height of prosperity. They are insolent and proud; manifest thy Divine presence to their terror.
4. For then they will know themselves to be but *men*-infirm and mortal creatures; and not insult over thy people, nor glory in their own strength and prosperity.

The original word has been translated *teacher, lawgiver, governor*. Then send them, 1. A *teacher*, who may make them wise unto salvation. 2. A *lawgiver*, who shall rule them in thy fear. 3. A *governor*, that shall tame and reduce to order their fierce and savage nature. Let the nations be converted unto thee. This will be the noblest triumph. Let their hearts be conquered by thy mercy. And thus the Psalm will conclude as it began, *To the Conqueror*, on whose vesture and thigh is the name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

PSALMS

PSALM 10

The psalmist complains to God of the oppressions which the poor suffer from the wicked man, whom he describes as the hater of the poor, 1, 2; proud, 3; one who will not seek God, 4; and is regardless of his judgments, 5; self-confident, 6; blasphemous and deceitful, 7; strives by subtlety and treachery to destroy the poor, 8-10; and supposes that God is regardless of his conduct, 11. The psalmist calls earnestly on God to preserve the poor and humble, and cast down the oppressor, 12-15. He foresees that his prayer is heard; that judgment will be executed, and the poor delivered, 16-18.

NOTES ON PSALM 10

Verse 1. Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?] This Psalm makes a part of the preceding in the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint*; and in four of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. It seems to belong to the time of the *captivity*, or the *return* of the captives. It was probably made in reference to *Sanballat*, and the other enemies or the Jews. There is a great similarity between this and Psalms 13., 14., 35., and 53. In these, as *Calmet* remarks, we find the same complaints, the same sentiments, and almost the same expressions.

God is represented here as standing at some distance, beholding the oppression of his people, and yet apparently disregarding it.

Verse 2. The wicked in his pride] On no principle of *nature* or *reason* can we account for a *wicked man* persecuting a *humble follower of God* because of his *religion*. The devil hates godliness; and the wicked man hates it also, because the devil is in his heart.

Verse 3. Boasteth of his heart's desire] Boasts among his fellows how often he has gratified such and such passions, in such and such circumstances. This shows the excess of a depraved and imbruted spirit. He who can boast of his iniquity, is in the broad road to perdition. Should such a one repent and turn to God, it would be equal to any miracle.

Blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.] Or, *he blesseth the covetous, he abhorreth the Lord*. Those who are like himself he commends, and with them he associates; and *they abhor the Lord*-they

have a mortal hatred against every thing that is holy; and they are under the full influence of that *carnal mind* which is *enmity* to the Lord.

Verse 4. Will not seek after God] He is too *proud* to bend his knee before his Judge; he is too haughty to put on sackcloth, and lay himself in the dust, though without deep repentance and humiliation he must without doubt perish everlastingly.

Verse 5. His ways are always grievous] Or, *He is travailing in pain* to bring forth iniquity at all times. He is full of lust, or *irregular* and *unholy* desires; he *conceives* and *brings forth sin*; and sin being finished, time, place, and opportunity concurring, *death is soon brought forth*.

Thy judgments are far above out of his sight] He is so blinded with sin, that he cannot see the operations of God's hand.

He puffeth at them.] He whistles at them; insults God, and despises men. He overthrows them with his *breath*; he has only to give orders, and they are destroyed. "Bring me the head of Giaffer," said an Asiatic despot. The head was immediately brought! No trial, no judge, no jury; but the despot's will and caprice.

Verse 6. I shall not be moved] I have whatever I covet. I hold whatsoever I have gotten. I have money and goods to procure me every gratification.

Verse 7. His mouth is full of cursing, and deceit, and fraud] What a finished character! A blasphemer, a deceitful man, and a knave!

Verse 8. He sitteth in the lurking places] In this and the following verse there appears to be an allusion to *espionage*, or setting of *spies* on a man's conduct; or to the conduct of an assassin or private murderer. He sitteth in *lurking* places—in *secret* places; his *eyes-spies* are *privily set*; he lieth in *wait secretly*: he doth *catch* the poor, when he draweth him into his *net*. He is like a hunter that lays his traps and gins, digs his pits, sets his nets; and when the prey falls into them, he destroys its life.

Verse 10. He croucheth] Of the scoffing, mocking, insulting, and *insidious* conduct of *Sanballat*, *Tobiah*, and *Geshem*, the fourth and sixth chapters of *Nehemiah* give abundant proof; and possibly the allusion is to them. The lion squats down and gathers himself together, that he may make the greater spring.

Verse 11. God hath forgotten] He hath cast off this people, and he will never more re-establish them. So *Sanballat* thought.

Verse 12. Arise, O Lord] Hear their reproaches see their guile, consider thy oppressed people. “Lift up thine hand,” *threaten* them, that they may desist and repent. If they repent not let them be punished.

Verse 13. Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God?] How is it that the Lord permits such persons to triumph in their iniquity? The longsuffering of God leadeth them to repentance.

Verse 14. Thou hast seen it] Nothing can escape thy notice. Thou hast not forgotten thy justice, though judgment is not speedily executed on an evil work. But thou *wilt requite it with thy hand*. By thy *power* thou wilt cast down and destroy the wicked.

The poor committeth himself unto thee] To thee he has given up his body, his soul, and his cause; with the full conviction that thou who art the *helper of fatherless*, will not forget *him*.

Verse 15. Break thou the arm] Destroy his *power*, deprive him of his *influence*, that he may be no longer able to oppress.

Seek out his wickedness till thou find none.] All his public haunts and private ways shall be investigated; thou wilt bring all his villainies to light, and continue to inflict punishment, while there is a crime to punish. Or, “Continue to judge and punish transgressors, till not one is to be found.” This agrees with the following verse.

Verse 16. The Lord is king for ever] He has, and ever will have, the supreme power.

The heathen are perished out of his land.] They are all either cut off or *converted*. This may refer to the *Canaanites*. What a mercy that we can say this of our own country! Once it was entirely heathen; now not one heathen family in the whole land.

Verse 17. Lord, thou hast heard] Thou hast not permitted thy tempted and afflicted followers to pray in vain.

Thou wilt prepare their heart] See the economy of the grace of God: 1. God *prepares* the *heart*; 2. *Suggests the prayer*; 3. *Hears* what is prayed; 4. *Answers* the petition. He who has got a cry in his heart after God, may

rest assured that that cry proceeded from a Divine preparation, and that an answer will soon arrive. No man ever had a cry in his heart after salvation, but from God. He who continues to cry shall infallibly be heard.

Verse 18. **That the man of the earth may no more oppress.**] I believe the Hebrew will be better translated thus: “That he may not add any more to drive away the wretched man from the land.” Destroy the influence of the tyrant; and let him not have it again in his power to add even one additional act of oppression to those which he has already committed.

How many for the sake of their religion, and because they would serve God with a pure conscience, have, by wicked *lords*, proud and arrogant *land owners*, been driven off their farms, turned out of their houses, deprived of their employments, and exposed to wretchedness! While they served the devil, and were regardless of their souls, they had quiet and peaceable possession; but when they turned to the Lord, and became *sober* and *industrious*, attended the means of grace, read their Bible, and were frequent in prayer, then the *vile man of the earth* drove them from their dwellings! In the sight of such Philistines, piety towards God is the highest of crimes. What a dreadful account must these give *to the Judge of the fatherless and the oppressed!*

ANALYSIS OF THE TENTH PSALM

This Psalm divides itself into three parts:—

- I. A complaint against the enemies of the godly.
- II. A narration of the enemies’ malice.
- III. A petition to be delivered from them.

I. 1. He complains of God’s absence, which is quickened by the question, 1. “Why standest thou afar off?” 2. “Why hidest thou myself in times of trouble?” ^{<19101>}**Psalm 10:1.**

II. He complains of the enemies: “The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor.”

These he describes by *eight* characters:—

1. *Insolence*, pride, and the effect, persecution of good men. Having acquired dignity, places of honour, and riches, they become persecutors, they conspire to oppress good men. “Let them be taken in their own devices,” ^{<19102>}**Psalm 10:2.** Amen.

2. The wicked man *glories in mischief* which is a sign of extreme malice: “The wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire,” ^{<1910B>}**Psalm 10:3**.

3. He *applauds* and *encourages* others in their *rapine* and *spoil*, to which they are moved by their *covetousness*: “He blesseth the covetous,” ^{<1910B>}**Psalm 10:3**.

4. He *contemns God* and *man*. 1. MAN. He never thinks of being called to an account: God’s “judgments are out of his sight, and he puffs at his enemies.” 2. GOD. Him he reverences not: “He will not seek after God; neither is he in all his thoughts,” ^{<1910D>}**Psalm 10:4, 5**.

5. He lives in *profane security*: “He saith in his heart, I shall never be moved; I shall never be in adversity;” I am elevated beyond the reach of misfortune, ^{<1910E>}**Psalm 10:6**.

6. He is full of falsehood and deceit: “His mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and fraud.” He will not stick at an *oath*. He will curse himself; and take God to witness in his exactions, that he is doing nothing but what is right, ^{<1910F>}**Psalm 10:7**.

7. He is *cruel*. See the 9th and 10th verses, where he is compared to a *thief*, an *archer*, an *assassin*, a *lion*, &c. He is bad in heart, ^{<1910G>}**Psalm 10:6**; in *tongue*, ^{<1910H>}**Psalm 10:7**; in *work*, ^{<1910I>}**Psalm 10:8, 10**:—he is altogether bad.

8. He is a close atheist: “He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth his face, and will never see it:” which is the cause of his cruelty, falsehood, security, &c., ^{<1910J>}**Psalm 10:11**.

III. The THIRD part is a *petition* to be freed from the wicked man: “Arise, O Lord, lift up thy hand, forget not the humble,” ^{<1910K>}**Psalm 10:12**. To induce God thus to act, he uses two arguments:—

1. That thereby God would assert his own glory. For why should the wicked be suffered thus to blaspheme? “Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? He hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it,” ^{<1910L>}**Psalm 10:13**.

2. The *second* argument is taken from God’s *nature* and *work*. 1. In punishing wicked men. 2. In defending the helpless. “Surely thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite to requite it,” &c., ^{<1910M>}**Psalm 10:14**.

Then he returns to his prayer, and enforces his *second* argument taken from the *justice* and *office* of God:

1. That he would deprive the wicked of his power and strength: “Break thou the arm of the wicked—seek out his wickedness till thou find none,” ^{<191015>}**Psalm 10:15**. Let none escape—let them appear no more.

2. That he would *hear* and defend the righteous. Be to thy people what thou hast been in times past. 1. “The Lord is King for ever and ever.” 2. He *had expelled the Canaanites* before them: “The heathen are perished out of the land.” 3. “Thou hast heard the desire of the humble,” ^{<191016>}**Psalm 10:16, 17**.

Upon which he concludes with profession of strong confidence:—

1. “Thou wilt prepare the heart of the humble.”

2. “Thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.” 1. To the safety of the oppressed: “To judge the fatherless and the poor,” ^{<191018>}**Psalm 10:18**. 2. To the ruin of the oppressor: “That the man of the earth may no more oppress;” that he may have neither power nor influence left by which he may be a plague to the upright, or a supporter of infidelity, ^{<191018>}**Psalm 10:18**.

PSALMS

PSALM 11

David's friends advise him to flee to the wilderness from Saul's fury, 1-3. He answers that, having put his trust in God, knowing that he forsakes not those who confide in him, and that he will punish the ungodly, he is perfectly satisfied that he shall be in safety, 4-7.

NOTES ON PSALM 11

The inscription is, *To the chief Musician, A psalm of David.* By the *chief musician* we may understand the *master-singer*; the *leader of the band*; the *person who directed the choir*: but we know that the word has been translated, *To the Conqueror*; and some deep and mystical senses have been attributed to it, with which I believe the text has nothing to do.

Verse 1. In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye] Some of David's friends seem to have given him this advice when they saw Saul bent on his destruction: "Flee *as a bird to your mountain*;" you have not a moment to lose; your ruin is determined; escape for your life; get off as *swiftly* as possible to the hill-country, to some of those inaccessible fortresses best known to yourself; and hide yourself there from the cruelty of Saul. To which advice he answers, "In the Lord put I my trust," shall I act as if I were conscious of evil, and that my wicked deeds were likely to be discovered? Or shall I act as one who believes he is forsaken of the protection of the Almighty? No: I put my trust in him, and I am sure I shall never be confounded.

Verse 2. For, lo, the wicked bend their bow] Perhaps these are more of the words of his advisers: Every thing is ready for thy destruction: the arrow that is to pierce thy heart is already set on the bow-string; and the person who hopes to despatch thee is concealed in ambush.

Verse 3. If the foundations be destroyed] If Saul, who is the vicegerent of God, has cast aside his fear, and now regards neither truth nor justice, a righteous man has no security for his life. This is at present thy case; therefore flee! They have utterly destroyed the foundations; (of truth and equity;) what can righteousness now effect? *Kimchi* supposes this refers to the *priests* who were murdered by Doeg, at the command of Saul. The priests are destroyed, the preservers of knowledge and truth; the Divine

worship is overthrown; and what can the righteous man work? These I think to be also the words of David's advisers. To all of which he answers:—

Verse 4. The Lord is in his holy temple] He is still to be sought and found in the place where he has registered his name. Though the priests be destroyed, the God in whose worship they were employed still lives, and is to be found in his temple by his upright worshippers. And he tries the heart and the reins of both sinners and saints. Nothing can pass without his notice. I may expect his presence in the *temple*; he has not promised to meet me in the *mountain*.

Verse 5. The Lord trieth the righteous] He does not abandon them; he tries them to show their faithfulness, and he afflicts them for their good.

His soul hateth.] The *wicked* man must ever be abhorred of the Lord; and the *violent* man—the destroyer and murderer—*his soul hateth*; an expression of uncommon strength and energy: all the perfections of the Divine nature have such in abomination.

Verse 6. Upon the wicked he shall rain] This is a manifest allusion to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Snares] Judgments shall fall upon them *suddenly* and *unawares*.

Fire] Such as shall come immediately from *God*, and be *inextinguishable*.

Brimstone] Melted by the fire, for their *drink*! This shall be the portion of their *cup*.

A horrible tempest] *twp [l z j wr ruach zilaphoth*, “the spirit of terrors.” Suffering much, and being threatened with more, they shall be filled with confusion and dismay. My old MS. has *gost of stormis*. See at the end. **See Clarke** “⁴⁹¹⁰⁷Psalm 11:7”. Or, *the blast of destructions*. This may refer to the horribly suffocating Arabian wind, called [Arabic] *Smum*.

Mohammed, in describing his *hell*, says, “The wicked shall drink nothing there but hot stinking water; breathe nothing but burning winds; and eat nothing but the fruit of the tree *zakon*, which shall be in their bellies like *burning pitch*.” Hell enough!

The portion of their cup.] *Cup* is sometimes put for *plenty*, for *abundance*; but here it seems to be used to express the *quantum* of *sorrow*

and *misery* which the *wicked* shall have on the earth. See ^{<197518>}Psalm 75:8; ^{<25117>}Isaiah 51:17, 21-23; ^{<242515>}Jeremiah 25:15; 49:12; ^{<25021>}Lamentations 4:21, 22. It is also used in reference to the afflictions of the righteous, ^{<10122>}Matthew 20:22; 26:39, 42; ^{<41811>}John 18:11.

We find a similar metaphor among the heathens. The following, from *Homer*, Il. xxiv., ver. 525, is in point:—

Ἦως γὰρ ἐπεκλώσαντο θεοὶ δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι,
 Ζεῖν ἀχνυμένους, αὐτοὶ δὲ τ' ἀκηδέες εἰσι,
 Δοιοὶ γὰρ τε πιθοὶ κατακείαται ἐν Δίῳσιν οὐδεὶ
 Δωρῶν, οἷα δίδωσι, κακῶν, ἕτερος δὲ εἰσὼν,
 Ἦ μὲν καμμιζὰς δῶη Ζεὺς τερπικεραυνός,
 Ἄλλοτε μὲν τε κακῶ ὄγε κύρεται, ἄλλοτε δ' ἐσθλῶ.

*Such is, alas! the god's severe decree,
 They, only they are bless'd, and only free.
 Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
 The source of evil one, and one of good.
 From thence the CUP of mortal man he fills:
 Blessings to these; to those distributes ill.
 To most he mingles both: the wretch decreed
 To taste the bad unmixed, is curs'd indeed.*
 -POPE.

Verse 7. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness] He loves that which resembles himself. *His countenance*-his face-is ever open and unclouded to the upright. They always enjoy his salvation, and know that he is pleased with them.

The preceding verse my old MS. translates and paraphrases thus:—

He sal rayne on synful, snares, fyre, brimstane, and gost of stormis.

Par.—He sal rayne on synful in this werld, *snares*, that es wiked Lare: *fyre* is covatyse: *brunstane*, that es styng of il werkes: and *gost of stormis*, that es a stormy though that es withoutyn rest in Ihesu Crist, and ay es traveld with the wynd of the devel. Or *the gost of stormys*, es the last depertyng of synful fra ryghtwis men, and there fyre, brunston, storm, er part of the chalyie of thaim: that es, thai ar thair part in pyne. He cals thair pyne a *Cop*, for ilk dampned man sal drynk of the sorow of Hel, eftir the mesure of hys Syn. Behald the pynes of wikid men: fyrst, God raynes upon thaim snares, that es qwen he suffers fals prophetes that comes in clathing of

mekenes; and withinnen er wers than wolves, to desayf thaim thurgh error. Sythen the fyre of lychery, and covatys wastes al the gude that thai haf done: eftirward for stynk of il werkes that er castyn fra Crist, and al his Halows, and then er in sentence of dome; as in a grete storme, dryven in til a pitte of Hel, to bryn in fyre withoutyn ende. This es the entent of this wers.

Ver. 7. *For ryghtwis es Lord; and he lufes ryghtwisnes; evenes saw the face of hym]* Yf ge ask qwy oure lorde yelded pyne to synful? lo here an answe; for he es rightwis. Als so if ge wil witt qwy he gifes ioy til gude men? Lo here an answe; for he lufed ryghtwisnes: that es, ryghtwis men, in the qwil er many ryghtwisneses: thof ane be the ryghtwisnes of God, in the qwil al ryghtwise men or parcenel. *Evenes saw his face*: that es, evenes es sene in his knawying inence, both the partys of gud and il. This es ogayne wryches at sais, If God saf me nocht, I dar say he es unryghtwis: bot thof thai say it now, qwen he suffris wryched men error in thought, and worde and dede; thai sal nocht be so hardy to speke a worde qwen he comes to dampne thaire error. Bot who so lufes here and haldes that na unevenes may be in hym, qwam so he dampnes, or qwam so he saves, he sal have thaire myght to stand and to speke gude space. Now er swilk in a wonderful wodenes, that wenes for grete wordes to get ough of God.

The former part of this Psalm, *Flee as a bird, &c.*, this ancient author considers as the voice of *heresy* inviting the *true Church* to go away into error; and intimates that those who were separating from *haly kyrk* were very pure, and unblameable in all their conduct; and that *mountain* or *hill*, as he translates it, signifies *eminent virtues*, of which they had an apparently good stock. So it appears that those called *heretics* lived then a holier life than those called *halows* or saints.

ANALYSIS OF THE ELEVENTH PSALM

This Psalm is composed dialoguewise, betwixt David and those of his counsellors that persuaded him to fly to some place of safety from Saul's fury; which, if he did not, he was in a desperate condition. The Psalm has *two* parts.

I. He relates his counsellors' words ^{<9110>}**Psalm 11:1-3.**

II. To which he returns his answer, ^{<9110>}**Psalm 11:1**, and confirms it, ^{<9110>}**Psalm 11:4-7.**

I. You, my counsellors, whether of good or bad will I know not, tempt me, that, giving up all hope of the kingdom, I go into perpetual banishment. Such, you say, is Saul's fury against me. Thus, then, ye advise, "Flee *as a bird to your mountain*:" and your arguments are,

1. The greatness of the danger I am in: "For lo, the wicked bend *their bow*."

2. The want of aid; there is no hope of help. For *the foundations are cast down*. Saul has broken all the leagues and covenants he has made with you. He has slain the priests with the sword, has taken thy fortresses, laws subverted. If thou stay, perish thou must: some righteous men, it is true, are left; but *what can the righteous do?*

II. To these their arguments and counsel, David returns his answer in a sharp reprehension. I tell you,

1. "I trust in God: how say you then to my soul." And he gives his reasons for it from the sufficiency and efficiency of God.

1. You say *the foundations are cast down*; yet I despair not, for God is sufficient.

1. *Present in his holy temple*; he can defend.

2. He is a great King, and *his throne is in heaven*.

3. Nothing is hidden from him: "His eyes behold, and his eyelids," &c.

4. He is a just God, and this is seen in his proceedings both to the just and unjust. 1. *He trieth the righteous*, by a fatherly and gentle correction. 2. "But the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth."

These two last propositions he expounds severally, and begins with the *wicked*.

1. "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone," &c. 1. He shall rain upon them when they least think of it, even in the midst of their jollity, as rain falls on a fair day. 2. Or, he shall *rain down* the vengeance when he sees good, for it *rains not always*. Though he defer it, yet it *will* rain. 3. The punishment shall come to their utter subversion, as the fire on Sodom, &c. 4. This is the portion of their cup, that which they must expect from him.

2. But he does good to the just: “For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.” He bears him good will, and is careful to defend him.

On the whole the Psalm shows, 1. That David had the strongest conviction of his own uprightness. 2. That he had the fullest persuasion that God would protect him from all his enemies, and give him a happy issue out of all his distresses.

PSALMS

PSALM 12

The psalmist, destitute of human comfort, craves help from God, 1; gives the character of those who surrounded him, and denounces God's judgments against them, 2-5; confides in the promises of God, and in his protection of him and all good men, 6-8.

NOTES ON PSALM 12

The inscription to this Psalm is: *To the chief Musician upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.* See on the title of ^{<1001>}**Psalm 6:1**. The Arabic has “Concerning the end (of the world which shall happen) on the eighth day. A prophecy relative to the Advent of the Messiah.”

Some think that this Psalm was made when Doeg and the Ziphites betrayed David to Saul, see ^{<1021>}**1 Samuel 22:9; 23:19**; &c., but it is most likely that was written during the Babylonish captivity.

Verse 1. Help, Lord] Save me, O Lord; for merciful men fail, and faithful men have passed away from the sons of Adam. ~~Make safe me, Lord; for haly failed, for lessed es sothfastnes fra sons of men.~~ OLD MS.

Verse 2. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour] They are false and hollow; they say one thing while they mean another; there is no trusting to what they say.

Flattering lips, and with a double heart do they speak] *bl w bl b beleb valeb*, “With a heart and a heart.” They seem to have *two hearts*; *one* to speak fair words, and the *other* to invent mischief. The old MS. both translates and paraphrases curiously.

Trans. ~~Dayn spak ilkan til his neghbur: swykil lippis in hert, and thurgh hert thai spak.~~

Par.—Sothfastnes es lessed, and falsed waxes: and al sa vayn spak ilkone to bygyle his neghbur: and many spendes thair tyme in wayne speche withoutyn profyte and gastely frute. And that er *swyku lippis*; that er jangelers berkand ogaynes sothfastnes. And *swykel*, for *thai speke in hert and thurgh hert*; that es in dubil hert, qwen a fals man thynkes ane, and sais another, to desaiif hym that he spekes with.

This homely comment cannot be mended.

Verse 3. Proud things] *twl dg gedoloth, great things; great swelling words, both in their promises and in their commendations.*

Verse 4. Our lips are our own] Many think, because they have the faculty of speaking, that therefore they may speak what they please.

Old MS.—The qwilk sayd, our tounge we sal wyrchip, our lippes er of us, qwas our Lorde? Tha Ypocrites worchepes thair tounge; for thai hee tham self janglyng and settes in thaire pouste to do mykil thyng and grete: and thai rose tham that thair lippes that es thair facund and thair wyls er of tham self, nought of God, ne of haly menes lare; for thi that say *qua es our Lord?* that es, qwat es he to qwas rewle and conversacioun we sal be undir lout? and confourme us til? Als so to say, That es none.

Verse 5. For the oppression of the poor] This seems to refer best to the tribulations which the poor Israelites suffered while captives in Babylon. The Lord represents himself as looking on and seeing their affliction; and, hearing their cry, he determines to come forward to their help.

Now will I arise] I alone delivered them into the hands of their enemies, because of their transgressions; I alone can and will deliver them from the hands of their enemies; and the manner of their deliverance shall show the power and influence of their God.

From him that **puffeth at him.**] Here is much *interpolation* to make out a sense. Several of the *versions* read, “I will give him an open salvation.” My work shall be manifest.

Verse 6. The words of the Lord are pure words] None of his promises shall fall to the ground; the salvation which he has promised shall be communicated.

Silver tried in a furnace of earth] A reference to the purification of silver by the *cupel*. This is a sort of instrument used in the purification of silver. It may be formed out of a strong iron ring or hoop, adjusted in width and depth to the quantum of silver to be purified, and rammed full of well pulverized calcined bone. The metal to be purified must be mingled with *lead*, and laid on the cupel, and exposed to a strong heat in an air furnace. The impurities of the metal will be partly absorbed, and partly thrown off in fume. The metal will continue in a state of agitation till all the impurities

are thrown off; it will then become perfectly *still*, no more *motion* appearing, which is the token that the process is completed, or, according to the words of the text, is *seven times*, that is, perfectly *purified*.

Verse 7. Thou shalt keep them-thou shalt preserve them] Instead of the pronoun *them* in these clauses, several MSS., with the *Septuagint*, the *Vulgate*, and the *Arabic*, have us. The sense is equally good in both readings. God did bring forth the Israelites from Babylon, according to his word; he separated them from *that generation*, and reinstated them in their own land, according to his word; and most certainly he has *preserved them from generation to generation* to the present day, in a most remarkable manner.

Verse 8. The wicked walk on every side] The land is full of them. *When the vilest men are exalted*; rather, *As villany gains ground among the sons of Adam*. See the Hebrew. The *Vulgate* has, “In circuito impii ambulans; secundum altitudinem tuam multiplicasti filios hominum;” which is thus translated and paraphrased in my old MS.:—

Trans. In umgang wiked gos: eftir thy heenes thu has multiplied the sons of man.

Par. Us thy kepes; bot wiked gas in umgang; that es, in covatyng of erdley gudes, that turned with the whele of seven daies: in the qwilk covatys, thair yn ay aboute; for that sett nane endyng of thaire syn: and tharfor settes God na terme of thair pyne, but sons of men that lyfs skilwisly and in ryghtwisnes, thu has multiplied, aftir thi heghnes in vertus; aftir the heghnes of thi consayll, thou hast multiplied men bath il and gude; for na man may perfutely witt in erd, qwy God makes so many men, the qwilk he wote well sal be dampned: bot it es the privete of his counsayle, so ryghtwis, that no thyng may be ryghtwiser.

In this we find a number of singular expressions, which, while they elucidate the text, will not be uninteresting to the antiquary. Here, for instance, we see the true etymology of the words *righteous* and *righteousness*, i.e., *right wise* and *right wiseness*. For we have it above as a *noun*, *rightwisnes*: as an *adjective*, *rightwis*; and as an *adjective* in the *comparative* degree, *rightwiser*: and we should have had it as an *adverb*, *ryghtwisely*, had not the word *skilwisly* occurred to the author.

Righteousness is *right wiseness*, or that which is according to *true wisdom*. A *righteous* man is one who is *right wise*; properly instructed in *Divine wisdom*, and *acts* according to its dictates; and among them who act

rightwisely, there are some who act *rightwiser* than others; and nothing can be *rightwiser* than ever to *think* and *act* according to the *principles* of that *wisdom* which comes from above.

Right, [Anglo-Saxon] *rectus*, *straight*, is opposed to *wrong*, from [A.S.] *injury*, and that from [A.S.], to *twist*. As [A.S.] *rehtan* signifies to *direct*, so [A.S.] *wrangen* signifies to *twist*, or *turn* out of a *straight* or *direct* line. *Right* is *straight*, and *wrong*, *crooked*. Hence the *righteous man* is one who goes *straight forward*, acts and walks by *line* and *rule*; and the *unrighteous* is he who walks in *crooked paths*, does what is *wrong*, and is never guided by true *wisdom*. Such a person is sometimes termed *wicked*, from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], to act by *witch-craft*, (hence [A.S.] *wicca*, a *witch*,) that is to renounce God and righteousness, and to give one's self to the devil, which is the true character of a *wicked* man. Let him that readeth understand.

The vilest men are exalted] Were we to take this in its obvious sense, it would signify that at that time wickedness was the way to preferment, and that good men were the objects of persecution.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWELFTH PSALM

There are *four* parts in this Psalm:—

- I. A *prayer*, and the reason of it; ^{<9123>}**Psalm 12:1, 2.**
- II. A *prophecy* of the fall of the wicked ^{<9123>}**Psalm 12:3**, whose arrogance he describes, ^{<9124>}**Psalm 12:4.**
- III. God's *answer* to the petition, with a promise full of comfort, ^{<9125>}**Psalm 12:5**; ratified, ^{<9126>}**Psalm 12:6.**
- IV. A *petitory*, or *affirmative conclusion*: *Keep them*; or a confident affirmation that God will keep them from the contagion of the wicked, ^{<9127>}**Psalm 12:7**, of which there were too many, ^{<9128>}**Psalm 12:8.**

I. The *prayer*, which is very short, for he breaks in upon God with one word, **h[vwh Hoshiah! Help! Save, Lord!** ^{<9123>}**Psalm 12:1.** For which he gives two reasons:—

1. The scarcity of good men: “For the godly man ceaseth,” &c. There is neither piety nor fidelity among men.

2. The great abundance of the wicked, the licentious times; the perfidiousness, hypocrisy, and dissimulation of the men among whom he lived. “They speak vanity every one with his neighbour,” &c.; ^{<4912B>}**Psalm 12:2**. They take no care to perform what they promise.

II. The *prophecy*. This shows the end of their dissembling: “The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips;” ^{<4912B>}**Psalm 12:3**. These are described,

1. As proud boasters: “With our tongues will we prevail,” &c.
2. As persons restrained by no authority: “Who is the Lord over us?” ^{<4912A>}**Psalm 12:4**.

III. God’s *answer* to the petition, *Help, Lord!* is it so that the wicked are so numerous, so tyrannous, so proud, and so arrogant?

1. “I will arise, saith the Lord.”
2. I will not delay: “Now I will arise;” ^{<4912B>}**Psalm 12:5**.
3. “I will set him in safety (my followers) from him that puffeth,” &c.
4. I am moved to it by his sighs and groans: “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy,” &c.; ^{<4912B>}**Psalm 12:5**.

I. And of this let no man doubt: “The words of the Lord are pure words.” There is no more fallacy in the words of God than there is impurity in silver seven times refined; ^{<4912B>}**Psalm 12:6**.

IV. A petitory, or affirmative conclusion: *Thou shalt keep them, O Lord; or, O keep them!* The overflowings of wickedness are great.

1. *Keep them*. For unless God keep them they will be infected.
2. *Keep them from this generation*. For they are a generation of vipers.
3. *Keep them for ever*. For unless thou enable them to *persevere*, they will fall.
4. *And keep them*. For the power, pride, and influence of these impious men are very great. 1. “The wicked walk on every side.” As wolves they seek whom they may devour. 2. And wickedness is the way to preferment: “The vilest men are exalted;” ^{<4912B>}**Psalm 12:8**.

Thy people call on thee for help; they know thou canst help, and therefore are they confident that thou wilt help, because they know that thou art good.

PSALMS

PSALM 13

This Psalm contains the sentiments of an afflicted soul that earnestly desires succour from the Lord. The psalmist complains of delay, 1-3; prays for light and comfort, because he finds himself on the brink of death, 3; dreads the revilings of his enemies, 4; anticipates a favourable answer, and promises thanksgiving, 5, 6.

NOTES ON PSALM 13

There is nothing particular in the inscription. The Psalm is supposed to have been written during the captivity, and to contain the prayers and supplications of the distressed Israelites, worn out with their long and oppressive bondage.

Verse 1. How long wilt thou forget me] The words *hna d[ad anah, to what length, to what time*, translated here *how long?* are four times repeated in the two first verses, and point out at once great dejection and extreme earnestness of soul.

Hide thy face from me?] How long shall I be destitute of a clear sense of thy *approbation?*

Verse 2. Take counsel in my soul] I am continually framing ways and means of deliverance; but they all come to naught, because thou comest not to my deliverance. When a soul feels the burden and guilt of sin, it tries innumerable schemes of self-recovery; but they are all useless. None but God can speak peace to a guilty conscience.

Mine enemy be exalted] Satan appears to triumph while the soul lies under the curse of a broken law.

Verse 3. Consider and hear me] Rather, *answer me*. I have prayed; I am seeking thy face I am lost without thee; I am in darkness; my life draws nigh to destruction; if I die unforgiven, I die eternally. O Lord my God, *consider* this; hear and answer, for thy name's sake.

Verse 4. Let mine enemy say] Satan's ordinary method in temptation is to excite strongly to sin, to blind the understanding and inflame the passions; and when he succeeds, he triumphs by insults and reproaches. None so

ready then to tell the poor soul how deeply, disgracefully, and ungratefully it has sinned! Reader, take heed.

When I am moved.] When moved from my steadfastness and overcome by sin. O what desolation is made by the fall of a righteous soul! Itself covered with darkness and desolation, infidels filled with scoffing, the Church clad in mourning, the Spirit of God grieved, and Jesus crucified afresh, and put to an open shame! O God, save the pious reader from such wreck and ruin!

Verse 5. But I have trusted in thy mercy] Thou wilt not suffer me to fall; or if I have fallen, wilt thou not, for his sake who died for sinners, once more lift up the light of thy countenance upon me? Wilt thou not cover my sin?

My heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.] There is no true joy but of the heart; and the heart cannot rejoice till all guilt is taken away from the conscience.

Verse 6. I will sing unto the Lord] That heart is turned to God's praise which has a clear sense of God's favour.

Because he hath dealt bountifully with me.] *yl [I mg yk ki gamel alai, because he hath recompensed me.* My sorrows were deep, long continued, and oppressive, but in thy favour is life. A moment of this spiritual joy is worth a year of sorrow! O, to what blessedness has this godly sorrow led! He has given me the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness, and the garments of praise for mourning.

The old MS. Psalter, which I have so frequently mentioned and quoted, was written at least *four hundred* years ago, and written probably in Scotland, as it is in the Scottish dialect. That the writer was not merely a commentator, but a truly religious man, who was well acquainted with the travail of the soul, and that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which brings peace to the troubled heart, is manifested from various portions of his comment. To prove this I shall, I think I may say, favour the reader with another extract from this Psalm on the words, "How long wilt thou forget me," &c., ^{<9130>}**Psalm 13:1.** I have only to observe that with this commentator a true penitent, one who is deeply in earnest for his salvation, is called a *perfyte man*; i.e., one wholly given up to God.

How lang lord for getes thu me in the endyng? How lang o way turnes thou thi face fro me? The voice of haly men that covaytes and yernes the comyng of Iehu Crist, that thai might lyf with hym in ioy; and pleynaud tham of delaying. And sais, *Lord how lang for getes thu me in the endyng?* That I covayte to haf and hald. That es how lang delays thu me fra the syght of Iehu Crist, that es ryght endyng of myn entent. And how lang turnes thu thi face fra me? that es, qwen wil thu gif me perfyte Knawing of the? This wordes may nane say sothly, bot a perfyte man or woman, that has gedyrd to gydir al the desyres of thair Saule, and with the nayle of luf fested tham in Iehu Crist. Sa tham thynk one hour of the day war our lang to dwel fra hym; for tham langes ay til hym; bot tha that lufs nocht so, has no langyng that he come: for thair conscience sais thaim, that thai haf nocht lufed hym als that suld have done.

The language of true Christian experience has been the same in all times and nations. “But he that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love;” and to such this is strange language.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTEENTH PSALM

“This Psalm,” says Bishop Nicolson, “is a fit prayer for a soul that is sensible of God’s desertion.”

It has *three* parts:—

I. A heavy and bitter complaint of God’s absence, ^{<9130>}**Psalm 13:1, 2.**

II. An earnest petition for God’s return, ^{<9133>}**Psalm 13:3.** The reason, ^{<9134>}**Psalm 13:4.**

III. A profession of faith and confidence, with joy in God, accompanied with thanksgiving, ^{<9135>}**Psalm 13:5, 6.**

I. He bitterly complains, and aggravates it.

1. That God had forgotten him: “Wilt thou forget me?”

2. That he hid his face from him: “Wilt thou hide thy face?”

3. That he was distracted with many cares, what way to take, and what counsel to follow, to recover God’s favour: “I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart.”

4. In the meantime, his *enemy was exalted, triumphed and insulted over him*.

5. And, lastly, he complains of the delay, which is quickened by the *erotesis*, (interrogation,) and *anaphora*, (beginning several sentences with the same words,) *How long? How long? How long? What! for ever?*

II. His petition, ^{<19130>}**Psalm 13:3**. Of which there are three degrees opposed to the parts of his complaint, ^{<19130>}**Psalm 13:1, 2**.

1. *Look upon me, or consider me*. Thou hast hitherto seemed to turn away thy face; but once behold me, and give me a proof of thy love.

2. *Hear me*. Thou hast seemed to have forgotten; but now, I pray thee, remember me; and show that thou dost not neglect my prayer.

3. *Lighten my eyes*. I have been vexed in my soul, and agitated various counsels to recover thy favour; but do thou instruct me, and illuminate me, as to what course I shall take.

That his petition might be the sooner heard, he urges many arguments:—

1. From that relation that was between him and God: “O Lord my God, hear me!”

2. From a bitter event that was likely to follow, if God heard him not: “Lest I sleep the sleep of death.”

3. From another afflictive consequence—the boasting and insult of his adversaries: “Lest my enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.”

But although the answer was delayed, yet he does not despair—for,

III. In the conclusion, he professes faith, joy, and thankfulness:—

1. His *faith*: “I have trusted in thy mercy.”

2. His *joy*: “My heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.”

3. His *thankfulness*: “I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.”

According to this scale, this Psalm can neither be read nor paraphrased without profit.

PSALMS

PSALM 14

The sentiments of atheists and deists, who deny the doctrine of a Divine providence. Their character: they are corrupt, foolish, abominable, and cruel, 1-4. God fills them with terror, 5; reproaches them for their oppression of the poor, 6. The psalmist prays for the restoration of Israel, 7.

NOTES ON PSALM 14

There is nothing particular in the *title*; only it is probable that the word **דָּוִד** *ledavid, of David*, is improperly prefixed, as it is sufficiently evident, from the construction of the Psalm, that it speaks of the *Babylonish captivity*. The author, whoever he was, (some say Haggai, others Daniel, &c.,) probably lived beyond the Euphrates. He describes here, in fervid colours, the iniquity of the Chaldeans. He predicts their terror and destruction; he consoles himself with the prospect of a speedy return from his exile; and hopes soon to witness the reunion of the tribes of Israel and Judah. It may be applied to *unbelievers* in general.

Verse 1. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.] **לְבַן נָבָל**, which we render *fool*, signifies an *empty fellow*, a *contemptible person*, a *villain*. One who has a muddy head and an unclean heart; and, in his darkness and folly, says in his heart, “There is no God.” “And none,” says one, “but a *fool* would say so.” The word is not to be taken in the strict sense in which we use the term *atheist*, that is, one who denies the *being of a God*, or confounds him with *matter*. 1. There have been some, not many, who have denied the existence of God. 2. There are others who, without absolutely denying the Divine existence, deny his *providence*; that is, they acknowledge a Being of infinite power, &c., but give him nothing to do, and no world to govern. 3. There are others, and they are very numerous, who, while they profess to acknowledge both, deny them in their heart, and live as if they were persuaded there was no God either to punish or reward.

They are corrupt] They are in a state of *putrescency*; and *they have done abominable works*—the corruption of their *hearts* extends itself through all the actions of their *lives*. They are a plague of the most deadly kind; propagate nothing but destruction; and, like their father the devil, spread far and wide the contagion of sin and death. Not *one of them does good*.

He cannot, for he has no Divine influence, and he denies that such can be received.

Verse 2. The Lord looked down from heaven] Words spoken after the manner of men. From this glorious eminence God is represented as looking down upon the habitable globe, *to see if there were any that did understand* that there was a Supreme Being, the governor and judge of men; and, in consequence, *seek God* for his mercy, support, and defence.

Verse 3. They are all gone aside] They will not walk in the *straight* path. They seek *crooked* ways; and they have departed from *truth*, and the God of truth.

They are all together become filthy] *wj | an neelachu*. They are become *sour* and *rancid*; a metaphor taken from milk that has fermented and turned sour, rancid, and worthless.

There is **none that doeth good, no, not one.**] This is not only the state of heathen Babylon! but the state of the *whole inhabitants of the earth*, till the grace of God changes their heart. By *nature*, and from nature, by *practice*, every man is sinful and corrupt. He *feels* no good; he is *disposed* to no good; he *does* no good. And even God himself, who cannot be deceived, cannot find a single exception to this! Lord, what is man?

The *Vulgate*, the Roman copy of the *Septuagint*, the *Æthiopic*, and the *Arabic*, add those six verses here which are quoted by St. Paul,

Romans 3:13-18. See the notes on those passages, and see the *observations* at the end of this Psalm. See Clarke “**Psalm 14:7**”.

Verse 4. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?] Is there not one of them who takes this dreadful subject into consideration? To their deeply fallen state they add cruelty; they oppress and destroy the poor, without either interest or reason.

Who eat up my people as they eat bread] Ye make them an easy and unresisting prey. They have no power to oppose you, and therefore you destroy them. That this is the meaning of the expression, is plain from the speech of Joshua and Caleb relative to the Canaanites. **Numbers 14:9:** “Neither fear ye the people or the land; for they are bread for us.”

And call not upon the Lord.] They have no *defence*, for they *invoke not the Lord*. They are all either *atheists* or *idolaters*.

Verse 5. There were they in great fear] This is a manifest allusion to the history of the *Canaanitish nations*; they were struck with terror at the sight of the Israelites, and by this allusion the psalmist shows that a destruction similar to that which fell upon them, should fall on the Babylonians. Several of the versions add, from ^{<1936>}**Psalm 53:5**, “Where no fear was.” They were struck with terror, where no real cause of terror existed. Their fears had magnified their danger.

For God is in the generation] They feared the Israelites, because they knew that the Almighty God was among them.

Verse 6. Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor] Instead of *wvybt tabishu*, “Ye have shamed,” Bishop *Horsley* proposes to read *µvybt tabishem*, and translates the clause thus: “The counsel of the helpless man shall put *them* to shame.” But this is not authorized by MS. or *version*. There is no need for any change: the psalmist refers to the *confidence* which the afflicted people professed to have in God for their deliverance, which confidence the Babylonians turned into *ridicule*. The poor people took counsel together to expect help from God, and to wait patiently for it; and this counsel ye derided, because ye did not *know*—did not *consider*, that God was in the congregation of the righteous.

Verse 7. O that the salvation] Or, more literally, *Who will give from Zion salvation to Israel?* From Zion the deliverance must come; for God alone can deliver them; but *whom* will he make his instruments?

When the Lord bringeth back] For it is Jehovah alone who can do it. *Jacob shall rejoice*, and *Israel shall be glad*. That is, according to *Calmet*, the remains of the kingdom of Israel, and those of Judah, shall be rejoined, to their mutual satisfaction, and become one people, worshipping the same God; and he has endeavoured to prove, in a dissertation on the subject, that this actually took place after the return from the Babylonish captivity.

Many of the fathers have understood this verse as referring to the *salvation of mankind by Jesus Christ*; and so it is understood by my old MS. Psalter, as the following paraphrase will show: *Qwa sal gyf of Syon hele til Israel? qwen Lord has turned a way the captyfte of his folk, glad sal Jacob, and fayne be Israel. Qwa bot Crist that ge despyse, qwen ge wit nout do his counsaile of Syon fra heven, sal gyf hele til Israel? that es, sal saf al trew cristen men, noht als ge er that lufs noht God. And qwen our Lord has turned o way the captyfte of his folk: that es, qwen he has dampned the devel, and al his*

Servaundes, the qwilk tourmentes gude men, and makes tham captys in pyne. *Then glade sal Jacob*; that es, al that wirstils o gayns vices and actyf: *and fayne sal be Israel*: that es, al that with the clene egh of thair hert, sees God in contemplatyf lyf. For *Jacob* es als mikil at say als, *Wrestler*, or *suplanter of Syn*. *Israel es, man seand God*.

Of the two chief opinions relative to the design of this Psalm: 1. That it refers to *Absalom's rebellion*. 2. That it is a complaint of the *captives in Babylon*; I incline to the latter, as by far the most probable.

I have referred, in the note on ^{<1914B>}**Psalm 14:3**, to that remarkable addition of no less than *six verses*, which is found here in the *Vulgate*, the Vatican copy of the *Septuagint*, the *Æthiopic*, and the *Arabic*, and also in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, ^{<1913B>}**Romans 3:13-18**, which he is supposed to have quoted from this Psalm as it then stood in the Hebrew text; or in the version of the *Seventy*, from which it has been generally thought he borrowed them. That they are not interpolations in the *New Testament* is evident from this, that they are not wanting in any MS. yet discovered; and they exist in all the ancient versions, the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*. Yet it has been contended, particularly by St. *Jerome*, that St. Paul did not quote them from this Psalm; but, being intent on showing the corruption and misery of man, he collected from *different parts* several passages that bore upon the subject, and united them here, with his quotation from ^{<1914B>}**Psalm 14:3**, as if they had all belonged to that place: and that succeeding copyists, finding them in *Romans*, as quoted from that Psalm, inserted them into the *Septuagint*, from which it was presumed they had been lost. It does not appear that they made a part of this Psalm in *Origen's Hexapla*. In the portions that still exist of this Psalm there is not a word of these additional verses referred to in that collection, neither here nor in the parallel Psalm 53.

The places from which *Jerome* and others say St. Paul borrowed them are the following:—

^{<1913B>}**Romans 3:13**: “Their mouth is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit.” Borrowed from ^{<191510>}**Psalm 5:10**.

“The poison of asps is under their lips.” From ^{<191310B>}**Psalm 140:3**.

^{<191314>}**Romans 3:14**: “Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.” From ^{<191007>}**Psalm 10:7**.

<4815> **Romans 3:15**: “Their feet are swift to shed blood.” From <1016> **Proverbs 1:16**, or <2807> **Isaiah 59:7**.

<4816> **Romans 3:16-18**: “Destruction and misery are in their ways, the way of peace they have not known, and there is no fear of God before their eyes.” From <2807> **Isaiah 59:7, 8**.

When the reader has collated all these passages in the *original*, he will probably feel little satisfaction relative to the probability of the hypothesis they are summoned to support.

These verses are not found in the best copies of the *Vulgate*, though it appears they were in the old *Itala* or *Antehieronymain* version. They are not in the *Codex Alexandrinus* of the *Septuagint*; nor are they in either the *Greek* or *Latin* text of the *Complutensian* Polyglot. They are wanting also in the *Antwerp* and *Parisian* Polyglots. They are neither in the *Chaldee* nor *Syriac* versions. They are not acknowledged as a part of this Psalm by *Theodoret*, *Chrysostom*, *Euthymius*, *Arnobius*, *Apollinaris*, the *Greek Catena*, *Eusebius*, of *Cæsarea*, nor *Jerome*. The latter, however, acknowledges that they were in his time *read in the churches*. I have seen no Latin MS. without them; and they are quoted by *Justin Martyr* and *Augustine*. They are also in the *Editio Princeps* of the *Vulgate*, and in all the ancient *Psalters* known. They are in that *Psalter* which I have frequently quoted, both in the *Latino-Scotico-English* version and paraphrase.

Of this version the following is a faithful copy, beginning with the *third* verse of the *fourteenth* Psalm:—

Al tha helddid togyher; thai er made unprofytable:
 Thar es none that dos gude; thar es none til one.
 A grave oppymand, es the throte of tham.
 With thaire tunges trycherusly thai wroght
 Venym of snakes undir the lippis of tham.
 Qwhas mouth es ful of weryng and bitternes:
 Swyft thaire fete to spil blode.
 Brekynng and wikednes in thair waies:
 And the way of pees thai knew noght:
 The drede of God es noght byfore the eghen of thaim.

There is a good deal of difference between this, and that *version* attributed to *Wiclif*, as it stands in my large MS. Bible, quoted in different parts of the

New Testament, particularly in ~~<6130>~~ **1 Corinthians 13:1**, &c. I shall give it here line for line with the above.

Alle boweden aweye to gydre: thei ben maad unprofitable:
 There is not that doith good thing, ther is not to oon.
 A Sepulcre opnyng is the throote of hem:
 With her tungis thei diden gylinly; or trecherously:
 The venym of eddris, that is clepid Aspis, under her lippis:
 The mouth of whom is ful of cursing, or worrying and bittrenesse:
 The feet of hem ben swift to schede out blood:
 Contricion or defouling to God, and infelicite or cursidnesse, the wayes of hem;
 And thei knewen not the wayes of pees;
 The dreed of God is not bifore her ygen.

The words underlined in the above are added by the translator as explanatory of the preceding terms. It is worthy of remark that *Coverdale* inserts the whole of the addition in this Psalm, and *Cardmarden* has inserted it in his Bible, but in a letter different from the text.

It is now time to state what has been deemed of considerable importance to the authenticity of these verses; viz., that they are found in a *Hebrew MS.*, numbered by *Kennicott* in his catalogue 649. It is in the public library at *Leyden*; contains the *Psalms* with a *Latin version* and *Scholia*; and appears to have been written about the end of the *fourteenth* century, and probably by some *Christian*. I shall give the text with a literal *translation*, as it stands in this MS., line for line with the preceding:—

μνωργ j wtp rbq
 An open sepulchre is their throat;

~wyqyl j y μνωυl
 With their tongues they flatter;

μνωυl tj t bwvk[tmj
 The venom of the asp is under their tongue;

al m hmrmw hl a μhvp rva
 Whose mouth of cursing and bitterness is full;

μδ Ēwpvl μhyl gr wl q
 Swift are their feet to shed blood;

μhykrdb [r [gpw [r l zm

An evil aspect, and an evil event, in their ways:

w[dy al μwl v Ērdw

And the way of peace they know not.

μhyny[rgnl μyhl a dj p ^ya

No fear of God before their eyes.

It would be easy to criticise upon the Hebrew in this long quotation. I shall content myself with what *Calmet*, who received his information from others that had inspected the Leyden MS., says of this *addition*: “Les seavans, qui ont examine ce manuscrit, y ont remarque un Hebreu barbare en cet endroit; et des facons de parler, qui ne sentent point les siecles ou la langue Hebraique etoit en usage.” “Learned men, who have examined this MS., have remarked a barbarous Hebraism in this place, and modes of speech which savour not of those ages in which the Hebrew language was in use.”

If this be an interpolation in the Psalm, it is *very ancient*; as we have the testimony of *Jerome*, who was prejudiced against it, that it was read in all the churches in his time, and how long before we cannot tell. And that these verses are a valuable portion of Divine revelation, as they stand in ^{<813>}**Romans 3:13-18**, none can successfully deny. See *Rosenmuller*, *Kennicott*, and *Deuteronomy Rossi*.

ANALYSIS OF THE FOURTEENTH PSALM

This Psalm is the practical atheist’s character, and has TWO parts:—

- I. The description of the practical atheist, ^{<19140>}**Psalm 14:1-7**.
- II. A petition for the Church, ^{<19140>}**Psalm 14:7**.

I. 1. The atheist is here noted to us by different characters:—

1. From his *name*, **I bn nabal**, a *fool*, or rather a *churl*; no natural fool, but a sinful: a *fool* in that in which he should be wise.
2. His hypocrisy or cunning; *he saith*, but he will not have it known, it is to himself, “He saith in his heart.” He is a close, politic *fool*.
3. His saying, or his chief and prime principle: “There is no God.”

4. From his practice; confessing God in his words for some political advantages, yet in his works denying him. For, 1. His heart is wicked and unregenerate: "They are corrupt." 2. He is a sinner in a high practical degree: "They have done abominable works." 3. He performs no duty: "There is none that doeth good." He *commits* sin; he *omits* duty.

2. The psalmist demonstrates what he said *three* ways; and convinces them:—

1. By the testimony of *God* himself; he is a witness against them. He is, 1. An eyewitness: *he looks on*. 2. He is in heaven, and they are continually under his notice: "He looked down from heaven." 3. He sees *the children of men*, their *hearts* and their *works*. 4. And the object of his looking is to inquire after their *religion*: "To see if there were any that did understand and seek God."

2. And then he gives his testimony in these general terms: "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

3. Next he accuses them of *two sins* of which they were especially guilty. 1. *Injustice*: "They eat up my people as bread." 2. *Impiety*: "They call not upon the Lord."

4. And that his testimony is true, he convinces them, 1. By the light of their own *conscience*: "Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?" Does not their own conscience tell them that all this is true? Do they not *know* this? 2. By *fear* and *terror*, the effects of an evil conscience: "There were they in great fear." They said, *There is no God*; but their conscience told them that *God was in the congregation of the righteous*, and that they should grievously answer for their *injustice* and *impiety*. 3. By the *hardness* of their *heart*, and contempt of the good counsels of the godly. If *he* reprov'd, *they* mock'd. If he said *God was his refuge*, they laugh'd him to scorn. "Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge."

II. The second part of the Psalm contains a petition for the Church:—

1. He prays that God would *send salvation to his people*.

2. That it might be *out of Zion*; because *Christ* was anointed and set a King upon the holy hill of *Zion*: “O that the salvation of Israel were come out of *Zion*!”

3. For then the consequence would be the great joy and happiness of all his people for their deliverance from captivity, *spiritual* and *temporal*: “When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.”

PSALMS

PSALM 15

The important question answered, Who is a proper member of the Church militant? and who shall finally join the Church triumphant? ^{<9150>} **Psalm 15:1** contains the question; ^{<9150>} **Psalm 15:2-5**, the answer.

NOTES ON PSALM 15

The title, **dwdl rwmzm** *mizmor ledavid*, a Psalm of David, has nothing in it particularly worthy of notice. If it were a Psalm composed during the captivity, relating to their return and settlement in their own land, with the restoration of their temple service and all the ordinances of God, and a description of the persons who should then be considered Israelites indeed, the name of *David* is improperly prefixed. But the subject is of the most general utility, and demands the most solemn and serious attention of all men who profess to believe in the immortality of the soul.

Verse 1. Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?] The literal translation of this verse is, “Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in the mountain of thy holiness?” For the proper understanding of this question we must note the following particulars:—

1. The *tabernacle*, which was a kind of *moveable temple*, was a type of the *Church militant*, or the state of the people of God in this world.

2. *Mount Zion*, the *holy mount*, where the temple was built, was the type of the *kingdom of heaven*. There the ark became *stationary*, and was no longer carried about from place to place; and the whole was typical of the *rest* that remains for the people of God.

3. The TABERNACLE was a temporary and frequently-removed building, carried about from place to place, and not long in any one place. Concerning this it is said: **rwgy ym mi yagur**, “Who shall *lodge*, or *sojourn*,” there? It is not a *residence*, or *dwelling-place*, but a place to *lodge* in for a time.

4. The TEMPLE was a *fixed* and *permanent* building; and here it is inquired, **^kcy ym mi yiscon**, “Who shall *dwell, abide,*” or have his *permanent residence*, there?

5. The *tabernacle* being a migratory temple, carried about on the shoulders of the priests and Levites, there was no *dwelling* there for any; they could but *lodge* or *sojourn*.

6. The *temple* being *fixed*, the priests, Levites, &c., became *permanent occupiers*. There was no *lodging* or *sojourning*, but *permanent residence* for all connected with it.

7. The *tabernacle* is, therefore, a proper type of the *Church militant*, wandering up and down, tossed by various storms and tempests; the followers of God, having here *no continuing city*; *sojourning* only on earth to get a preparation for eternal glory.

8. The *temple* is also a proper type or emblem of the *Church triumphant* in heaven. "Here the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." It is the *dwelling-place*, the *eternal residence*, of all who are faithful unto death, who are made *pillars in that temple of God, to go no more out for ever*.

The questions therefore are,

1. Who can be considered a fit member of the Church of Christ here below? and,

2. Who shall be made partakers of an endless glory? In answer to these questions, the character of what we may term a *true Israelite*, or a *good Christian*, is given in the following particulars:—

Verse 2. He that walketh uprightly] **μymt Ēl wh holech tamim**, 1. *He walks perfectly*. Who sets God before his eyes, takes his word for the rule of his conduct, considers himself a *sojourner* on earth, and is continually *walking* to the kingdom of God. He acts according to the *perfections* of God's law; he has respect to all its parts, and feels the weight and importance of all its injunctions.

And worketh righteousness] 2. He is not satisfied with a *contemplative* life; he has *duties* to perform. The law of *righteousness* has placed him in certain *relations*, and each of these relations has its peculiar duties. **qdx l [p poel tsedek**, the words here used, signify to *give just weight*, to *render* to all their *dues*. 1. As he is the *creature* of GOD, he has duties to perform to *him*. He owes God his heart: *May son, give me thy heart*; and should love him with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. This is giving

GOD *his due*. 2. As a *member of civil society*, he has various duties to perform to his fellows, as they have to him. He is to love them as himself, and do unto all men as he would they should do unto him. 3. There are duties which he owes to *himself*. That his *body* may be in health, vigour, and activity, he should avoid every thing by which it might be injured, particularly all excesses in eating, drinking, sleeping, &c. That his *soul* may be saved, he should avoid all sin; all irregular and disorderly passions. He owes it to his soul to apply to God for that grace which produces repentance, faith, and holiness; and in order to get all these blessings, he should *read, watch, pray, hear the word preached*, and diligently use all the *ordinances of God*. He who acts not thus, *defrauds both his body and soul*: but the person in the text works righteousness—*gives to all their due*; and thus keeps a conscience void of offence, both towards God and man.

And speaketh the truth in his heart.] 3. He is a *true* man; in him there is no *false way*. He is no man of *pretenses*; *speaking one thing, and meaning another*. He *professes* nothing but what he *feels* and *intends*; with him there are no *hollow friendships, vain compliments, nor empty professions of esteem, love, regard, or friendship*. His *mouth* speaks nothing but what his *heart* dictates. His *heart, his tongue, and his hand*, are all in unison. *Hypocrisy, guile, and deceit*, have no place in his soul.

Verse 3. He that **backbiteth not with his tongue]** *wnvl | [| gr al lo ragal al leshono*, “he foots not upon his tongue.” 4. He is one who treats his neighbour with respect. He says nothing that might injure him in his *character, person, or property*; he *forgets* no calumny, he is *author* of no slander, he *insinuates* nothing by which his neighbour may be injured. The *tongue*, because of its slanderous conversation, is represented in the nervous original as *kicking about* the character of an absent person; a very common vice, and as destructive as it is common: but the man who expects to see God abhors it, and *backbites not with his tongue*. The words *backbite* and *backbiter* come from the Anglo-Saxon *bac, the back*, and [A.S.], *to bite*. How it came to be used in the sense it has in our language, seems at first view unaccountable; but it was intended to convey the treble sense of *knavishness, cowardice, and brutality*. He is a *knave*, who would rob you of your *good name*; he is a *coward*, that would speak of you in your *absence* what he dared not to do in your *presence*; and only an ill-conditioned *dog* would fly at and *bite your back* when your *face* was *turned*. All these *three ideas* are included in the term; and they all meet in the *detractor* and *calumniator*. His tongue is the tongue of a *knave*, a

coward, and a *dog*. Such a person, of course, has no right to the privileges of the *Church militant*, and none of his disposition can ever see God.

Nor doeth evil to his neighbour] 5. He not only avoids *evil speaking*, but he avoids also *evil acting* towards his neighbour. He *speaks* no *evil* of him; he *does* no *evil* to him; he does him no *harm*; he occasions him no *wrong*. On the contrary, he *gives him his due*. See under the second particular. See Clarke “⁶⁻¹⁹¹⁵¹² Psalm 15:2”.

Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.] 6. The word **hprj** *cherpah*, which we here translate *a reproach*, comes from **ānj** *charaph*, *to strip*, or *make bare*, *to deprive one of his garments*; hence **ānj** *choreph*, the *winter*, because it *strips the fields* of their *clothing*, and the *trees* of their *foliage*. By this, nature appears to be *dishonoured* and *disgraced*. The application is easy: a man, for instance, of a good character is reported to have done something wrong: the tale is spread, and the slanderers and *backbiters* carry it about; and thus the man is *stripped of his fair character*, of his *clothing of righteousness, truth, and honesty*. All may be *false*; or the man, in an hour of the power of darkness, may have been tempted and *overcome*; may have been wounded in the cloudy and dark day, and deeply mourns his fall before God. Who that has not the heart of a devil would not strive rather to *cover* than *make bare* the fault? Those *who feed*, as the proverb says, *like the flies, passing over all a man’s whole parts to light upon his wounds*, will take up the tale, *and carry it about*. Such, in the course of their diabolic work, carry the story of scandal to the righteous man; to him who loves his God and his neighbour. But what reception has the tale-bearer? The good man *taketh it not up*; **acn al** *lonasa*, he will not *bear* it; it shall not be propagated from him. He cannot prevent the detractor from *laying it down*; but it is in his power not to *take it up*: and thus the progress of the slander may be arrested. *He taketh not up a reproach against his neighbour*; and the tale-bearer is probably discouraged from carrying it to another door. Reader, drive the slanderer of your neighbour far away from you: ever remembering that in the law of God, as well as in the law of the land, “the *receiver* is as bad as the *thief*.”

Verse 4. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned] 7. This man judges of others by their conduct; he tries no man’s heart. He knows men only by the *fruits* they bear; and thus he gains knowledge of the *principle* from which they proceed. A *vile person*, **samn** *nimas*, the *reprobate*, one

abandoned to sin; is *despised*, **hzbñ nibzeh**, is *loathsome*, as if he were covered with the *elephantiasis* or *leprosy*, for so the word implies. He may be *rich*, he may be *learned*, he may be a *great man* and *honourable* with his master, in high offices in the state; but if he be a spiritual *leper*, an *infidel*, a *profligate*, the righteous man must despise him, and hold him, because he is an enemy to God and to man, in sovereign contempt. If he be in power, he will not treat him as if *worthy* of his dignity; while he *respects* the *office* he will *detest* the *man*. And this is quite right; for the popular odium should ever be pointed against vice.

Aben Ezra gives a curious turn to this clause, which he translates thus: “He is mean and contemptible in his own eyes;” and it is certain that the original, **samn wyny[b hzbñ nibzeh beeynaiv nimas**, will bear this translation. His *paraphrase* on it is beautiful: “A pious man, whatever good he may have done, and however concordant to the Divine law he may have walked, considers all this of no worth, compared with what it was his duty to do for the glory of his Creator.” A sentiment very like that of our Lord, ^{<21710>}**Luke 17:10**: “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.”

Taken in this sense, the words intimate, that the man who is truly pious, who is a proper member of the Church *militant*, and is going straight to the *Church triumphant*, is truly *humble*; he knows he *has nothing but what he has received*, he has no *merit*, he trusts not in himself, but in the living God. He renounces his *own righteousness*, and trusts in the *eternal mercy of God* through the *infinitely meritorious atonement* made by Jesus Christ. The language of his heart is,—

*“I loathe myself when God I see,
And into nothing fall;
Content that thou exalted be,
And Christ be all in all.”*

He honoureth them that fear the Lord] 8. This cause is a proof, however just the sentiment, that *Aben Ezra* has mistaken the meaning of the preceding clause. The truly pious man, while he has in contempt the *honourable* and *right honourable* profligate, yet *honours them that fear the Lord*, though found in the most abject poverty; though, with *Job*, on the *dunghill*, or, with *Lazarus*, covered with *sores* at the rich man’s gate.

Character is the object of his attention; persons and circumstances are of minor importance.

The fear of the Lord is often taken for the *whole of religion*; and sometimes for that *reverence* which a man feels for the *majesty* and *holiness of God*, that induces him to hate and depart from evil. Here it may signify the lowest degree of religion, *repentance whereby we forsake sin*.

Swareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.] 9. If at any time he have bound himself by a solemn engagement to do so and so, and he finds afterwards that to keep his *oath* will be greatly to his *damage*; yet such reverence has he for *God* and for *truth*, that he will not *change*, be the consequences what they may. He is faithful also to his *promises*; his bare word will bind him equally with an *oath*. He that will not be honest *without* an oath will not be honest *with* one.

The *Hebrew* might be thus translated: “He sweareth to afflict himself, and does not change;” and thus the *Chaldee* has rendered this clause. He has promised to the Lord to keep his body under, and bring it into subjection; to deny himself that he may not pamper the flesh, and have the more to give to the poor.

Verse 5. Putteth not out his money to usury] 10. As *usury* signifies *unlawful interest*, or that which is got by *taking advantage of the necessity of a distressed neighbour*, no man that fears God can be guilty of it. The word **Ēvn** *neshech*, which we translate *usury*, comes from *nashach*, to *bite as a serpent*; and here must signify that *biting* or *devouring usury*, which ruins the man who has it to pay. “The *increase of usury* is called **Ēvn** *neshech*, because it resembles the *biting of a serpent*. For as this is so small at first, as scarcely to be perceptible, but the *venom* soon spreads and diffuses itself till it reaches the vitals; so the *increase of usury*, which at first is not perceived nor felt, at length grows so much as by degrees to *devour* another’s substance.” *Middoch’s* edition of *Leigh’s Critica Sacra*, sub voce **Ēvn**.

The Jews ever were, and are still, remarkable for *usury* and *usurious contracts*; and a Jew that is saved from it is in the fair way, charity would suppose, to the kingdom of heaven. The Roman laws condemned the *usurer* to the forfeiture of *four times the sum*. Cato de Rust., lib. i.

Nor taketh reward against the innocent.] 11. He neither gives nor receives a *bribe* in order to pervert justice or injure an innocent man in his cause. The lawyer, who sees a poor man opposed by a rich man, who, though he is convinced in his conscience that the poor man has justice and right on his side, yet takes the *larger fee* from the *rich* man to plead against the poor man, has in fact taken a *bribe against the innocent*, and without the most signal interposition of the mercy of God, is as sure of hell as if he were already there.

He that doeth these things] He in whose character all these excellences meet, though still much more is necessary under the *Christian dispensation*, shall never be moved—he shall stand fast for ever. He is an upright, honest man, and God will ever be his support.

Now we have the important question answered, Who shall go to heaven? The man who to *faith in Christ Jesus* adds those *eleven* moral excellences which have been already enumerated. And only such a character is fit for a place in the Church of Christ.

On this verse there is a singular reading in my old MS. *Psalter*, which I must notice. The clause, *Qui pecuniam suam non dedit ad usuram*, “who putteth not out his money to usury,” is thus translated: *He that gat nout his catel til oker*. Now this intimates that the author had either read *pecudem*, CATTLE, for *pecuniam*, MONEY; or that *catel* was the only *money* current in his time and country. And indeed it has long been the case, that the *Scottish* peasantry paid their rents *in kind*; so many *cows* or *sheep* given to the laird for the usufruct of the ground. That this is no mistake in the *translation* is evident enough from the *paraphrase*, where he repeats the words, with his gloss upon them: *He that gaf nout his Catel till oker bodyly als covaytus men dos gastly: that he seke naight for his gude dede, na mede of this werld, bot anely of heven*.

The very unusual word *oker* signifies *produce* of any kind, whether of *cattle*, *land*, *money*, or even the human *offspring*. It is found in the *Anglo-Saxon*, the *Gothic*, the *German*, and the *Danish*; in all which languages it signifies *produce*, *fruit*, *offspring*, *usury*, and the like. Dr. *Jameson* does not show the word in any of its forms, though it is evident that it existed in the ancient *Scottish* language.

The word *catel* may be used here for *chattels*, *substance* of any kind, moveable or immoveable; but this word itself was originally derived from

cattle, which were from the beginning the *principal substance* or *riches* of the inhabitants of the country. Indeed the word *pecunia*, *money*, was derived from *pecus*, *cattle*, which were no longer used as a medium of commerce when silver and gold came into use. There is a passage in *Chaucer* where *cattel catching* seems to be used for *getting money*. Speaking of the wicked priests of his time, he says:—

Some on her churches dwell
Apparailled poorely proud of porte;
The seven Sacramentes thei doen sell,
In Cattel catching is her comfort.

Of each matter thei wollen mell;
And doen hem wrong is her disport.
To affraie the people thei been fell
And hold hem lower than doeth the Lorde.
Plowmanne's Tale, 3d part.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTEENTH PSALM

A Psalm of doctrine, consisting of *two* parts, in which we have the character of a sound Christian, (rather, an upright Jew.)

I. The *first* part is delivered in the form of a *dialogue* between God and the prophet, from ~~191501~~ **Psalm 15:1-5**.

II. The *second* is the *epiphonema*, or moral reflection, in the close of the last verse.

I. 1. The question proposed by the psalmist to God,

1. "Lord, who shall sojourn in thy holy tabernacle?"

2. "Who shall rest upon thy holy hill?" That is, because all are not *Israel* which are *of Israel*, therefore the psalmist asks of God, Who shall sojourn as a true member in the *Church militant*? And who shall *rest* in the *Church triumphant*?

2. To which God returns the following answer, containing very remarkable notes of the true character of a member of the Church:—

1. In *general*, he is a man, who is, 1. *Upright* in *thought*; he is an honest man: "He that walketh uprightly." 2. *Just* in his *deed*: "He works righteousness." 3. *True* in his *word*: "He speaks the truth in his heart."

2. In *particular*, he is a man who avoids evil.

1. In himself he is no slanderer: “He backbites not with his tongue.”

2. He is no wrong-doer: “Nor doeth evil to his neighbour.”

3. He is no reviler, tale-bearer, nor tale-hearer: “He takes not up a reproach against his neighbour.”

4. He is no favourer of sin: “In whose eyes an evil person is contemned.”

5. He is no oppressor nor extortioner: *He puts not his money to his poor brother to usury.*

6. No briber: “He takes no reward against the innocent.”

3. Such a man is he who *honours them that fear the Lord.*

4. “He sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.” He will surely keep his word; his character is composed of piety and charity.

II. The *epiphonema*, or moral reflection has these *two* parts:—

1. The *party* to whom this privilege belongs: “He that doeth these things;” for the *doers*, not the *hearers*, of the law shall be justified.

2. The *promise* made to him: “He shall never be moved.” The life of grace is the way to the life of glory. See the preceding notes.

PSALMS

PSALM 16

The contents of this Psalm are usually given in the following manner: David, sojourning among idolaters, and being obliged to leave his own country through Saul's persecution, cries to God for help; expresses his abhorrence of idolatry, and his desire to be again united to God's people, 1-4; and declares his strong confidence in God, who had dealt bountifully with him, 5-7. Then follows a remarkable prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, 8-11.

NOTES ON PSALM 16

The title of this Psalm in the Hebrew is **dwdl** **μtkm** *michtam ledavid*, which the *Chaldee* translates, "A straight sculpture of David." The *Septuagint*, **Στηλογραφια τω Δασιδ**, "The inscription on a pillar to David;" as if the Psalm had been inscribed on a pillar, to keep it in remembrance. As **μtk** *catham* signifies to *engrave* or *stamp*, this has given rise to the above inscription. **μtkm** *michtam* also means *pure* or *stamped gold*; and hence it has been supposed that this title was given to it on account of its *excellence*: a *golden Psalm*, or a Psalm worthy to be *written in letters of gold*; as some of the verses of *Pythagoras* were called *the golden verses*, because of their *excellence*. Gold being the most *excellent* and *precious* of all metals, it has been used to express metaphorically *excellence* and *perfection of every kind*. Thus a *golden tongue* or *mouth*, the most *excellent eloquence*; so *Chrysostom* means, this eminent man having had his name from his eloquence;—a *golden book*, one of the *choicest* and *most valuable* of its kind, &c. But I have already sufficiently expressed my doubts concerning the meanings given to these titles. See the note on the title of Psalm 60. {^{4960B} **Psalm 60:1**}

That David was the author there can be no doubt. It is most pointedly attributed to him by St. Peter, ⁴⁴²⁵ **Acts 2:25-31**. That its principal parts might have some relation to his circumstances is also probable; but that Jesus Christ is its main scope, not only appears from quotations made by the apostle as above, but from the circumstance that some parts of it never did and never could apply to David. From the most serious and attentive consideration of the whole Psalm, I am convinced that every verse of it belongs to Jesus Christ, and none other: and this, on reference, I find to be the view taken of it by my ancient Psalter. But as he is referred to here as

the Redeemer of the world, consequently, as God manifested in the flesh, there are several portions of the Psalm, as well as in the New Testament, where the *Divine* and *human* natures are spoken of *separately*: and if this *distinction* be properly regarded, we shall find, not only no inconsistency, but a beautiful harmony through the whole.

Verse 1. Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.] On the mode of interpretation which I have hinted at above, I consider this a prayer of the *man* Christ Jesus on his entering on his great atoning work, particularly his *passion* in the garden of Gethsemane. In that passion, Jesus Christ most evidently speaks as *man*; and with the strictest propriety, as it was the *manhood*, not the *Godhead*, that was engaged in the *suffering*.

ynrmv *shomreni*, keep me-preserve, sustain, this feeble *humanity*, now about to bear the load of that punishment due to the whole of the human race. For in thee, *ytysj* *chasithi*, have I hoped. No *human* fortitude, or animal courage, can avail in my circumstances. These are no *common* sufferings; they are not of a *natural* kind; they are not *proportioned* to the strength of a *human* body, or the *energy* of a human spirit; and my *immaculate humanity*, which is subjected to these sufferings, must be dissolved by them, if not upheld by thee, the strong God. It is worthy of remark, that our Lord here uses the term, *la El*, which signifies the *strong God*, an expression remarkably suited to the *frailty* of that *human nature*, which was now entering upon its vicarious sufferings. It will be seen with what admirable propriety the *Messiah varies the appellations* of the Divine Being in this address; a circumstance which no translation without paraphrase can express.

Verse 2. Thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord] Thou hast said *hwyl* *layhovah*, to Jehovah, the supreme, self-existing, and eternal Being; *Thou art my Lord*, *hta ynda adonai attah*, Thou art my *prop*, *stay*, or *support*. As the Messiah, or Son of God, Jesus derived his being and support from Jehovah; and the man Christ was supported by the eternal Divinity that dwelt within him, without which he could not have sustained the sufferings which he passed through, nor have made an atonement for the sin of the world; it is the suffering Messiah, or the Messiah in prospect of his sufferings, who here speaks.

My goodness extendeth not to thee] There are almost endless explanations of this clause; no man can read them without being

confounded by them. The SEPTUAGINT read **οτι των αγαθων μου ου χρειαν εχεις**; *Because thou dost not need my goods*. The VULGATE follows the *Septuagint*. The CHALDEE: *My good is given only by thyself*. So the SYRIAC: *My good is from thee*. The ARABIC: *Thou dost not need my good works*. And in this sense, with shades of difference, it has been understood by most commentators and critics.

Bishop Horsley translates, *Thou art my good-not besides thee*. Dr. Kennicott, *My goodness is not without thee*.

I think the words should be understood of what the Messiah was doing for men. My goodness, **ytbwc tobathi**, “my bounty,” is not to thee. What I am doing can add nothing to thy divinity; thou art not providing this astonishing sacrifice because thou canst derive any excellence from it: but this bounty extends to the *saints*-to all the spirits of just men made perfect, whose bodies are still in the earth; and to the excellent, **ryrda addirey**, “the noble or supereminent ones,” those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. The saints and illustrious ones not only taste of my goodness, but enjoy my salvation. Perhaps *angels* themselves may be intended; they are not uninterested in the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord. They *desire to look into these things*; and the victories of the cross in the conversion of sinners cause joy among the angels of God.

The **myvwdq kedoshim**, “saints,” or consecrated persons, may refer to the *first planters of Christianity, evangelists, apostles, &c.*, who were separated from all others, and *consecrated* to the great important work of preaching among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. With these was all the *desire*, **xpj chephets**, the *good will* and *delight* of Christ. In all their ministrations he was both *with* them and *in* them.

The passage, taken as referring to David, intimates that he abhorred the company of the profane and worthless, and delighted to associate with them that excelled in virtue.

On these two verses the translation and paraphrase of my old Psalter must not be forgotten:—

Ver. 1. Conserva me, Domine, &c.

Trans. Kepe me Lord, for I hoped in the; I said til Lord, my God thou ert; for, of my gudes thu has na nede.

Par.—The voice of Crist in his manhede; prayand til the fader, and sayand: Lord, fader, kepe me imang peplis, for I hoped in the, nocht in me. I said til the, my God, thu ert in that, that I am man; for thu has no nede of my godes; bot I haf of the, al that I haf; here is the wil pride of men confounded; that evenes that thai haf ought of tham self bot syn.

Ver. 2. Sanctis qui sunt in terra, &c.

Trans. Til halowes the qwilk er his land, he selcouthed all my willes in tham.

Par.—Nocht til wiked, bot til halows clene in saule, and depertid fra erdly bysynes, the qwilk er in his land: that es, that haf fested thair hope in the land of heven; and rotyd in luf: the qwilk hope es als anker in stremys of this werld. He selcouthed al my willes, that of wonderful, he made my willes, of dying and rying, sett and fulfilled in tham: that es, in thair profete, qware in that feled qwat it profeted tham my mekenes that wild dye, and my myght to rise.

Verse 4. Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god] The Chaldee has: “They multiply their idols, and afterwards hasten that they may offer their gifts.” In the Hebrew text there is no word for *God*, and therefore *Messiah* or *Saviour* might be as well substituted; and then the whole will refer to the unbelieving Jews. They would not have the true Christ; they have sought, and are seeking, another Messiah; and how amply fulfilled has the prophetic declaration been in them! Their *sorrows have been multiplied* for more than 1800 years.

The *Vulgate* and *Septuagint*, and after them the *Æthiopic* and *Arabic*, have given this clause a widely different turn: “their afflictions have been multiplied, and afterwards they have run swiftly;” referring to the suffering saints: the more they were afflicted and persecuted, the more fervent and prosperous they became.

Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer] *Ēsn nesech* is a libation, whether of *wine* or *water*, poured out on the sacrifice. A *drink-offering of blood* is not a correct form of expression; it is rather the *libation on the blood of the sacrifice* already made. Coverdale translates the same; but *Mathewes*, who reformed his text in a few places, has **Their brente offeringes of bloude**, without much mending the text; though by this the exceptionable

idea of a *drink-offering of blood* is avoided. As applicable to our Lord, here is an intimation that their libations and sacrifices should cease. None of these should exist under the Christian dispensation; Jesus Christ's offering upon the cross being the accomplishment and termination of all such sacrifices.

Nor take up their names into my lips.] None of those sacrifices shall be mentioned with any kind of respect after the *end* of their institution shall have been accomplished; for sacrifice, offering, burnt-offering, and sacrifice for sin, such as are offered according to the law, God would no longer receive; therefore Jesus said; "Lo, I come to do thy will; a body hast thou prepared me." Since that time all these sacrifices have ceased. The old *Psalter* is curious:—

Ver. 4. Multiplicate sunt infirmitates eorum; postea acceleraverunt.

Trans. Manyfalded er thair sekene: and sythen thai hasted thaim.

Par.—That es at say; thai knew that thai war ful seke in body and saule, and sythen thai hasted thaim til the Leche; for he that feles him seke, he sekis remedy. Il men wenes that thai er nocht seke for thi that dye in thair syn.

Non congregabo conventicula eroum de sanguinibus, &c.

Trans. I sal nocht gadyr the coventes of tha of blodis; ne I sal be menand of their names thurgh my lippis.

Par. That est at say, by the coventes of haly men, my servaundes sal nout fleschely, but gastly: for *blode* bytakyns syn and unclenes that that er in, that folow thair flesche, and the vanites of thair blode; that er comen of grete kyn. Ne I sal by menand of thair names; for thai er chaunged fra syn till ryghtwisnes on domesday, qwen I sal speke through my lippes til thaim that halde the name of wykednes: sa ye weryed til fyer with outhen end.

Verse 5. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance] The Messiah speaks. Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance; I seek no earthly good; I desire to do the will of God, and that only. It is God who has given me this lot-to redeem mankind-to have them for mine inheritance. From him I have received the *cup of suffering*, which I shall drink for their sake, through which I shall impart to them the *cup of consolation*. He, by the

grace of God, has *tasted death for every man*; and he has instituted the *cup of blessing* to commemorate his passion and death.

Verse 6. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places] Here is an allusion to the ancient division of the land by lot among the Israelites, the breadth and length being ascertained by lines which were used in measuring. I have got a rich inheritance of immortal spirits; and I myself, as man, shall have a name above every name, and be raised to thy throne, on which I shall sit, and be admired in my saints to all eternity.

I have a goodly heritage.] A Church, an innumerable multitude of saints, partakers of the Divine nature, and filled with all the fulness of God. And these shall dwell with me in the heaven of heavens to all eternity. The old *Psalter*:—

Ver. 5. Dominus pars hereditatis mee et calicis mei, &c.

Trans. Lord es part of myn herytage and of my chalyce; thow ert that sal restore myn herytage til me.

Par. Lord the fader es part, that es, he es porcioun and mede of myn herytage; that es of haly men, qwam I weld in herytage. Other men cheses tham what tham lyst: my part es God, and he es part of my chalyce: that es, he es my copp of al my delyte and boor. Wereldys men drynkes the venemus lustes, and the drubly delytes of lychery and covatys: I in my halows sal drynk God; for thu ert fadyr that sal restore till me, that es, til my men, myn herytage, that thai lost in Adam: that es thu restores til tham the knawying of my bryghthede.

Ver. 6. Punes ceciderunt michi in preclaris, &c.

Trans. Strynges fel to me in ful bryght: for qwy, myn herytage is ful bryght til me.

Par. Strynges, that er merkes of my possessioun, in thi bryghtnes, fel als with cutte; als the possessioun of prestes and dekens in the alde law, was God; for qwy myn herytage, that es haly men es bryght til me of that seme layth and aute castyng til some of the werld, til me thai er fairer and bryght.

Verse 7. Who hath given me counsel] Jesus, as *man*, received all his knowledge and wisdom from God; ^{<1020>}**Luke 2:40-52**. And in him were hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

My reins also instruct me] *ytwył k kilyothai, reins or kidneys*, which from their *retired* situation in the body, says *Parkhurst*, and being *hidden* in fat, are often used in Scripture for the most *secret workings* and *affections of the heart*.

The *kidneys* and their *fat* were always to be burnt in sacrifice, to indicate that the most secret purposes and affections of the soul are to be devoted to God.

In the night seasons.] That is, in the time of my *passion*, my secret purposes and determinations concerning the redemption of man support me. “For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame;” ^{<312>}**Hebrews 12:2**.

Verse 8. I have set the Lord always before me] This verse, and all to the end of ^{<1961>}**Psalm 16:11**, are applied by St. Peter to the *death and resurrection of Christ*. ^{<402>}**Acts 2:25**, &c.

In all that our Lord *did, said, or suffered*, he kept the glory of the Father and the accomplishment of his purpose constantly in view. He tells us that he did not come down from heaven to do his own will, but the will of the Father who had sent him. See ^{<317>}**John 17:4**.

He is **at my right hand]** That is, I have his constant presence, approbation, and support. All this is spoken by Christ as *man*.

I shall not be moved.] Nothing can swerve me from my purpose; nothing can prevent me from fulfilling the Divine counsel, in reference to the salvation of men.

Verse 9. Therefore my heart is glad] Unutterably happy in God; always full of the Divine presence; because whatsoever I do pleaseth him. The *man* Christ Jesus must be constantly in communion with God, because he was without spot and blemish.

My glory rejoiceth] My *tongue*, so called by the Hebrews, (see ^{<1970>}**Psalm 57:8; 30:12**,) because it was bestowed on us to glorify God, and because it is our *glory*, being the instrument of expressing our thoughts by words. See *Dodd*. But *soul* bids as fair to be the meaning. See **Clarke’s notes on “Ac 2:25”**, &c.

My flesh also shall rest in hope.] There is no sense in which these and the following words can be spoken of David. Jesus, even on the cross, and breathing out his soul with his life, saw that his rest in the grave would be very short: just a sufficiency of time to prove the *reality* of his death, but not *long enough* to produce *corruption*; and this is well argued by St. Peter, ^{<44231>}**Acts 2:31**.

Verse 10. Thine Holy One] This is in the plural number, **Ëydysj chasideycha**, *thy Holy Ones*; but none of the *versions* translate it in the *plural*; and as it is in the singular number, **Ëdysj chasidecha**, in several *ancient editions*, among which is the *Complutensian Polyglot*, and no less than *two hundred and sixty-four* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., and in the quotation by St. Peter, in ^{<44227>}**Acts 2:27; 13:35**, we may take it for granted that the present reading is a corruption; or that **Ëydysj** is an emphatic singular.

As to *leaving the soul in hell*, it can only mean permitting the *life* of the Messiah to *continue* under the power of *death*; for **l wav sheol** signifies a *pit*, a *ditch*, the *grave*, or *state of the dead*. See **Clarke's notes on the parallel places**, "**Ac 2:25**", &c.

See corruption.] All human beings see corruption, because born in sin, and liable to the curse. The human body of Jesus Christ, as being without sin, saw no corruption.

Verse 11. Thou wilt show me the path of life] I first shall find the *way out of the regions of death*, to *die no more*. Thus Christ was the *first fruits* of them that slept. Several had before risen from the dead, but they *died again*. Jesus rose from the dead, and is alive for evermore. Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead was the first entrance out of the grave to eternal life or lives, **μυyj chaiyim**, for the word is in the *plural*, and with great propriety too, as this resurrection implies the *life* of the *body*, and the *life* of the *rational soul* also.

In thy presence] **Ëynp paneycha**, *thy faces*. Every holy soul has, throughout eternity, the *beatific vision*, i.e., "it sees God as he is," because it is *like him*; ^{<44202>}**1 John 3:2**. It drinks in beatification from the presence of the Eternal TRINITY.

Thy right hand] The place of honour and dignity; repeatedly used in this sense in the Scriptures.

Pleasures for evermore.] j xn *netzach*, *onwardly; perpetually, continually*, well expressed by our translation, *ever* and *more*; an eternal progression. Think of *duration* in the most extended and unlimited manner, and there is still *more*; more to be suffered in hell, and more to be enjoyed in heaven. Great God! grant that my readers may have this beatific sight; this eternal progression in unadulterated, unchangeable, and unlimited happiness! Hear this prayer for His sake, who found out the path of life, and who by his blood purchased an entrance into the holiest! Amen and Amen.

For the application of the whole Psalm to David, see the analysis at the end, which is a little altered from *David's Harp Strung and Tuned*.

The remains of this Psalm in the old *Psalter* are worthy to be inserted:—

Ver. 7. *Benedicam Dominum qui tribuit michi intellectum, &c.*

Trans. I sal blis the Lord that gaf til me undyrstandyng; and over that til the nyght, supled me my neres.

Par. That es I sal luf the fader that hafs gyfen undyrstandyng til my servauntes, thurgh the qwilk the herytage of heven may be sene and welded; and aver that undyrstandyng, in the qwilk I saw, sais Crist, al sothefast thynges and haly. Of that I sal lof him that my nerys that es the Jewis of qwas kynd I toke flesch, that es my kyn snybbed me in wranges and temptaciounis, and passiouns, til the nyght, that es al the dede thai missaid hym, als so oure nerys; that es our fleschely delytes makes us worthy snybbyng til our dede; for perfytely may we nocht be with outen syn, qwyles we lyf.

Ver. 8. *Providebam Dominum in conspectu meo, &c.*

Trans. I perbaide God ay in my syght; for he es at the ryght hand til me, that I be nout styrred.

Par. And in al thys anguys I for gatt nout God: bot I pervayde hym ay in my syght; that es, I comande o mang passand thynges: I toke nout my nee fra hym that ay es; bot I fested it in hym, so that he was ay in my sight, and he es nout fyled in synnes that assyduely with the ee of his thocht, byhaldes God, for he es at the ryght hand of me: that I be nocht styred; that es, he

helps me in desyre of endless gudes, that I last stabil in hym, and for thi nane il thyng may haf mayster of me.

Ver. 9. Propter hoc, elatum, est cor meum, et exultavit lingua mea, &c.

Trans. That fore gladded es my hert, and my tounge joyed over that, and my flesch sal rest in hope.

Par. This es ful joy that in hert es resayved, and with tounge schewed, and over that joy in hert and mouth, my flesch sal rest in hope of rysyng.

Ver. 10. Quoniam non derelinques in Inferno animam meam, &c.

Trans. For thow sal nocht lefe my Saule in hell, ne thu sal nocht gvf thi Halow to se corrupcion.

Par. That es at say, the Saule that I haf als veray man, sal nocht be left in hell; and my body that thu haloued, sal nocht rote. Here men may knaw that this es goddes word; for other mens bodis rotes.

Ver. 11. Notas michi fecisti vias vite, &c.

Trans. Knawen thu maked til me, the wayes of lyf: thou sal fil me of joy with thi face, delytynges in thi ryghth and in til the end.

Par. Knawen thu maked thurgh me till myne, the wayes of lyf, that es the wayes of mekenes and charite, that men came til heven thurgh mekenes, fra qwethyn thai fel thurgh Pryde: and thow sal ful fil me; that es, my servaundes, of joy with thi face; that es, in the syght of the, apertly; so that thai desyre nothing over, qwen thai af sene the, face til face, and ay til than delytynges til tham in way of this lyf. In thi ryght hand; that es thi favoure, and thi mercy the qwilk delytyngs ledys tham intil the ende, that es, in til perfectioun of endeles Blisfulhede.

I have given the whole of the translation and comment of this Psalm from this ancient Psalter, as a curious specimen of the doctrine and language of our northern neighbours in the *thirteenth* or *fourteenth* century.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTEENTH PSALM

Michtam David: David's precious jewel, or Psalm of gold; literally to be understood of David, but primarily and principally of Christ, ^{<4022>}Acts **2:22-28** &c., whom he calls **dysj** chased, God's Holy One, ^{<491610>}Psalm

16:10. And foretells his passion, resurrection, and ascension, ^{<1916D>}**Psalm 16:9-11.**

This Psalm has *two* parts: I. *Petition*, ^{<1916D>}**Psalm 16:1.** II. *Thanksgiving*, ^{<1916D>}**Psalm 16:7.**

I. The *petition* begins the Psalm. It is for *preservation*: “Preserve me, O God.” Keep me to the kingdom both temporal and eternal that thou hast promised. Guard me; guide me; keep me. To induce the Lord to do this, he produces his reasons:—

1. His *confidence*: “For in thee I trust.” This is a powerful plea, for to trust God is the highest honour we can do him; it acknowledges him as Sovereign.

2. His relation: “O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my God.”

3. For this I would show myself thankful, and return the best of my best. But what can I give, save **τα σα εκ των σου**, “thy own things from thy own property?” *My goods* or goodness, my beneficence or bounty, *is nothing unto thee*. Sacrifice thou needest not, ^{<1918B>}**Psalm 50:8**, nor art delighted in them: but mercy thou requirest, ^{<2016B>}**Hosea 6:6.**

4. Then I will seek out thy *receivers*: “Thy saints that are in the earth.” The family of the saints were the object of David’s bounty, and his delight. But my liberality and charity shall extend *to the saints that are in the earth*, and unto such as are excellent; “in whom is all my delight.”

5. But as for the *wicked* men and idolaters, I have no delight in them.

These he points out by two characteristics:—

1. They “hasten after another god,” or *endow another god*. They spare no cost, but are lavish in endowing their gods: “Israel, part with thy jewels,” &c.

2. They offer their children to Molech: “Their drink-offerings of BLOOD will I not offer.” On these accounts:—

1. “Their sorrows shall be multiplied.” They shall be grievously punished.

2. I will not participate with them: “Their offerings I will not offer.”

3. They are objects of my detestation: "I will not take up their names into my lips."
6. He gives another reason why he should show himself so thankful to God and bountiful to his saints-God's great bounty and liberality to him.
 1. That God had given him a satisfactory portion: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup."
 2. That God defended him in it: "Thou maintainest my lot."
 3. That it was a fair portion: "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places," &c.

II. The *second* part of this Psalm is David's THANKSGIVING. It begins with, "I will bless the Lord," ^{<19167>}**Psalm 16:7**, not only for the temporal blessings mentioned before, but for the following spiritual blessings:—

1. For the illumination of his mind; that I may understand the thing that is right: "The Lord hath given me counsel."
2. For the sanctifying influence on his heart: "My reins instruct me in the night seasons." When he was most retired he seemed to hear a voice within him, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."
3. For his *confidence* and *watchfulness*: "I have set the Lord always before me." I do not forget my God; and he does not forget me.
4. For the *consciousness* he had of the Divine *presence*. "The Lord is at my right hand;" always ready to help and support me.
5. For his *power to preserve*: "I shall not be moved." Satan may stand at my right hand to resist and trouble me; **Zecariah 3:1**; but God is on my right hand to assist and comfort me; therefore, "I shall not be moved." While David prays and trusts, God supports; and while God supports, Satan cannot conquer.
6. For his *inward* happiness: "Therefore, my heart is glad." Wicked men rejoice in *appearance*; but David rejoiced in *heart*. He was all happy. His heart, glory, flesh, spirit, soul, body—all were overjoyed; and the reason was the prospect of his *resurrection*.
 1. "My flesh shall rest or dwell in hope." 1. In this world, as in an *inn*; 2. In the *grave*, as in a *repository*; 3. In *heaven*, as in an

endless *mansion*.

2. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Thou wilt not suffer death to have a final triumph; my flesh shall revive.

3. "Neither wilt thou suffer thy HOLY ONE to see corruption," meaning the *Messiah*, who should descend from his family. Christ's resurrection is the cause and pledge of ours.

7. He is thankful for the promise of a future life, which is here illustrated:—

1. From the *quantity*: "Fulness of joy."

2. From the *quality*: "Pleasures."

3. From the *honour*: "At thy right hand."

4. From the *perpetuity*: "For evermore."

5. From the *cause*: "Thy presence." The sight of God, the beatific vision. "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

For the application of the whole Psalm to *Christ* alone, see the preceding notes.

PSALMS

PSALM 17

David implores the succour of God against his enemies; and professes his integrity and determination to live to God's glory, 1. He prays for support, and expresses strong confidence in God, 5-9; describes the malice and cruelty of his enemies, and prays against them, 10-14; receives a strong persuasion of support and final victory, 15.

NOTES ON PSALM 17

The title is, *A prayer of David*; in which there is nothing that requires explanation. David was most probably the author of this Psalm; and it appears to have been written about the time in which Saul had carried his persecution against him to the highest pitch. See ^{<0270>}1 Samuel 27:1, &c. The Arabic calls it "A prayer of a perfect man, of Christ himself, or of any one redeemed by him." Dr. *Delaney*, in his life of David, supposes that this poem was written just after parting with Jonathan, when David went into exile.

Verse 1. Hear the right] Attend to the justice of my cause, qdx hwhy *Yehovah tsedek*, righteous Jehovah. "O righteous Jehovah, attend unto my cry."

Goeth **not out of feigned lips.]** My supplication is sincere: and the desire of my heart accompanies the words of my lips.

Verse 2. My sentence come forth from thy presence] Thou knowest my heart, and my ways; judge me as thou shalt find; let me not fall under the judgment of man.

Let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.] Thou knowest whether I render to all their due, and whether others act justly by me. Thou canst not be deceived: do justice between me and my adversaries.

Verse 3. Thou hast proved mine heart] Thou well knowest whether there be any evil way in me. Thou hast given me to see many and sore trials; and yet, through thy mercy, I have preserved my integrity both to thee and to my king. Thou hast seen me in my most *secret* retirements, and

knowest whether I have *plotted* mischief against him who now wishes to take away my life.

Thou hast tried me] *yntprx tseraphntani*; Thou *hast put me to the test*, as they do *metals*, in order to detect their *alloy*, and to *purify* them: well expressed by the *Vulgate*, *igne me examinasti*, “Thou hast tried me by fire;” and well paraphrased in my old *Psalter*,—*Thu examynd me the lykkenyng of the founnas, that purges metal, and imang al this, wykednes es nout funden in me: that es, I am funden clene of syn, and so ryghtwis.*—He who is saved from his sin is *right wise*; he has found the *true wisdom*.

My mouth shall not transgress.] This clause is added to the following verse by the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint*: “That my mouth may not speak according to the works of men, I have observed difficult ways because of the words of thy lips.” That is, So far from doing any improper *action*, I have even refrained from all *words* that might be counted inflammatory or seditious by my adversaries; for I took thy word for the regulation of my conduct, and prescribed to myself the most painful duties, in order that I might, in every respect, avoid what would give offence either to thee or to man. Among the genuine followers of God, plots and civil broils are never found.

Verse 4. The paths of the destroyer.] Some render, *hard* or *difficult paths*, the sense of which is given above. But the passage is exceedingly obscure. My old *Psalter* translates and paraphrases as follows:—

Trans. That my mouthe speke nocht the werkes of men, for the wordes of thi lippes I haf kepted hard wayse.

Par. That es, that nothing passe of my mouthe bot at falles to the louyng of *the*; *nocht til werkes of men*, that dos o gaynes thy wil; als to say, I spak *nocht* bot gude; and *for the wordes of thi lippes*, that es, to ful fil the wordes that thi prophetes saide; *I kepe hard waies* of verteus and of *tribulacioun*, the qwilk men thynk hard; and for thi thai leve the *hard way* til heven, and takes the soft way til hel; but it es ful hard *at the end*.

Verse 5. Hold up my goings in thy paths] David walked in God’s ways; but, without Divine assistance, he could not walk *steadily*, even in them. The *words of God’s lips* had shown him the steps he was to take, and he implores the strength of God’s grace to enable him to walk in those steps. He had been kept from the *paths of the destroyer*; but this was not

sufficient; he must *walk in God's paths*-must spend his life in *obedience* to the Divine will. Negative holiness can save no man. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

Verse 6. Incline thine ear unto me] David prayed from a conviction that God would hear: but he could not be satisfied unless he received an answer. In a believer's mind the petition and the answer should not be separated.

Verse 7. Show thy marvellous lovingkindness] David was now exposed to imminent danger; common interpositions of Providence could not save him; if God did not work *miracles* for him, he must fall by the hand of Saul. Yet he lays no *claim* to such miraculous interpositions; he expects all from God's *lovingkindness*.

The common reading here is **Ëydsj hl ph haphleh chasadeycha**, "distinguish thy holy ones;" but **al ph hapse**, "do wonders," is the reading of about *seventy* MSS., some ancient editions, with the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*. The marginal reading of this verse is nearer the original than that of the text.

Verse 8. Keep me as the apple of the eye] Or, *as the black of the daughter of eye*. Take as much care to preserve me now by *Divine influence*, as thou hast to preserve my *eye* by thy *good providence*. Thou hast entrenched it deeply in the skull; hast ramparted it with the forehead and cheek-bones; defended it by the eyebrow, eyelids, and eyelashes; and placed it in that situation where the hands can best protect it.

Hide me under the shadow of thy wings] This is a metaphor taken from the *hen* and her *chickens*. See it explained at large in the note on ^{<1237>}**Matthew 23:37**. The Lord says of his followers, **Zecariah 2:8**: "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye." How dear are our eyes to us! how dear must his followers be to God!

Verse 9. From my deadly enemies, who compass me about.] This is a metaphor taken from huntsmen, who spread themselves around a large track of forest, driving in the deer from every part of the circumference, till they are forced into the nets or traps which they have set for them in some particular narrow passage. The metaphor is carried on in the following verses.

Verse 10. They are enclosed in their own fat] Dr. *Kennicott*, Bishop *Horsley*, *Houbigant*, and others, read the passage thus: *wrgs wml bj yl [alai chablamo sageru*, “They have closed their net upon me.” This continues the metaphor which was introduced in the preceding verse, and which is continued in the two following: and requires only that *yl [ali*, “upon me,” should begin this verse instead of *end* the preceding; and that *bl j cheleb*, which signifies *fat*, should be read *l bj chebel*, which signifies *rope, cable, or net*. This important reading requires only the *interchange* of *two letters*. The *Syriac* translates it, *shut their mouth*: but the above emendation is most likely to be true.

They speak proudly.] Having compassed the mountain on which I had taken refuge, they now exult, being assured that they will soon be in possession of their prey.

Verse 11. They have now compassed us in our steps] Instead of *wnrva ashshurenu*, “our steps,” Dr. *Kennicott* and others recommend *wnyrva ashreynu*, “O lucky we, at last we have compassed him.” He cannot now escape; he is sure to fall into our hands.

They have set their eyes bowing down to the earth] All the commentators and critics have missed the very expressive and elegant metaphor contained in this clause. *Kennicott* says, *They drove the hart into toils, and then shot him*. Bishop *Horsley* says, on the clause, *They have set their eyes bowing down to the earth*: “This is the attitude of huntsmen, taking aim at an animal upon the ground.” No, it is the attitude of the huntsmen looking for the *slot*, or track of the hart’s, hind’s, or antelope’s foot on the ground. See at the conclusion of the Psalm. **See Clarke** “¹⁹⁷¹⁵ **Psalm 17:15**”.

Verse 12. Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey] I believe the word *lion* is here used to express *Saul* in his strength, kingly power, and fierce rapacity. See the observations at the end of the Psalm. **See Clarke** “¹⁹⁷¹⁵ **Psalm 17:15**”.

Verse 13. Arise, O Lord, disappoint him] When *he* arises to spring upon and tear me to pieces, arise *thou*, O Lord; disappoint him of his prey; seize him, and cast him down.

Deliver my soul] Save my life.

From the wicked, which is thy sword] Saul is still meant, and we may understand the words as either implying the *sword*, the *civil power*, with which God had intrusted him, and which he was now grievously abusing; or, it may mean, *deliver me by THY sword*-cut him off who wishes to cut me off. On this ground the next verse should be read *from men*, BY *thy hand*. So the margin. The hand of God not only meaning his *power*, but his *providence*.

Verse 14. From men of the world, which have] **dl j m μytmm** *mimethim mecheled, from mortal men of time*; temporizers; men who shift with the times, who have no fixed principle but one, that of securing their own secular interest: and this agrees with what follows-which have *their portion in this life*; who never seek after any thing *spiritual*; who have bartered heaven for earth, and have got the portion they desired; for thou *fillest their belly with thy hid treasure*. Their *belly*-their *sensual appetites*-is their *god*; and, when their animal desires are satisfied, they take their rest without consideration, like the beasts that perish.

Their portion in this life] **μyyj b** *bachaiyim, in lives*, probably meaning *heritable lands and estates*; for they leave them to their children, they *descend to posterity*, and every one has his *life portion* in them. They are *lands of lives*.

They are full of children] Have a numerous offspring, whom they educate in the same principles, and to whom they leave a large earthly patrimony, and who spend it as their fathers have done, and perhaps even more dissolutely. Often *covetous* fathers lay up riches, which *profligate* sons scatter to all the winds of heaven. I have seen many instances of this.

Verse 15. As for me] I cannot be satisfied with such a portion.

I will behold thy face] Nothing but an evidence of thy *approbation* can content my soul.

In righteousness] I cannot have thy approbation unless I am *conformed* to thy *will*. I must be *righteous* in order that my *heart* and *life* may please thee.

I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.] Nothing but God can satisfy the wishes of an immortal spirit. He made it with infinite capacities and desires; and he alone, the infinite Good, can meet and gratify these desires, and fill this all-capacious mind. No soul was ever satisfied

but by God; and he satisfies the soul only by restoring it to his image, which, by the *fall*, it has lost.

I think there is an allusion here to the *creation of Adam*. When God breathed into him the *breath of lives*, and *he became a living soul*, he would appear as one *suddenly awaked from sleep*. The first object that met his eyes was his *glorious Creator*, and being *made in his image* and in his *likeness*, he could converse with him face to face—was capable of the most intimate union with him, because he was filled with holiness and moral perfection. Thus was he *satisfied*, the God of infinite perfection and purity filling all the powers and faculties of his soul. David sees this in the light of the Divine Spirit, and knows that his happiness depends on being *restored to this image and likeness*; and he longs for the time when he shall completely arise out of the *sleep and death* of sin, and be *created anew after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness*. I do not think that he refers to the *resurrection* of the body, but to the resurrection of the *soul* in this life; to the regaining the image which Adam lost.

The paraphrase in my old *Psalter* understands the whole of this Psalm as referring to the persecution, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ; and so did several of the primitive fathers, particularly St. Jerome and St. Augustine. I shall give a specimen from ^{<1971>}**Psalm 17:11**:—

Projicientes me, nunc circumdederunt me: oculos suos statuerunt declinare in terram.

Trans. Forth castand me now, thai haf umgyfen me: thair egheu thai sette to heelde in the erde.

Par.—Forth kasten me out of the cite, als the stede had bene fyled of me: now thai haf umgyfen me in the cros hyngand, als folk that gedys til a somer gamen: for thai sett thair eghen, that es the entent of thaire hert to heeld in the erde; that es, in erdly thynges to covayte tham, and haf tham. And thai wende qwen thai slew Crist that he had suffird al the ill, and thai nane.

Perhaps some of my readers may think that this needs translating, so far does our present differ from our ancient tongue.

Text.—They have now cast me forth; they have surrounded me: their eyes they set down to the earth.

Par.—They have cast me out of the city, as if the state were to be defiled by me: now they have surrounded me hanging on the cross, as people gathered together at summer games. For they set their eyes, that is, the intent of their heart, down to the earth; that is, earthly things, to covet them and to have them: and they thought, when they slew Christ, that *he* had suffered all the ill, and *they* none.

BY the *slot* or track of the hart on the ground, referred to in ^{<1971>}**Psalm 17:11**, experienced huntsmen can discern whether there have been a hart *there*, whether he has been there *lately*, whether the *slot* they see be the track of a *hart* or a *hind*, and whether the animal be *young* or *old*. All these can be discerned by the *slot*. And if the reader have that *scarce book* at hand, *Tuberville on Hunting*, 4to, 1575 or 1611, he will find all this information in chap. xxii., p. 63, entitled, *The Judgment and Knowledge by the Slot of a Hart*; and on the same page; a wood-cut, representing a huntsman with *his eyes set, bowing down to the earth*, examining *three slots* which he had just found. The cut is a fine illustration of this clause. Saul and his men were hunting David, and curiously searching every place to find out any *track, mark, or footprint*, by which they might learn whether he *had been in such a place*, and whether he had been *there lately*. Nothing can more fully display the accuracy and intensity of this search than the metaphor contained in the above clause. He who has been his late Majesty's huntsmen looking for the slot in Windsor Forest will see the strength and propriety of the figure used by the psalmist.

Ver. 12. *Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey.*] This is the picture of Saul. While his huntsmen were beating every bush, prying into every cave and crevice, and examining every foot of ground to find out a *track*, Saul is ready, whenever the game is started, to spring upon, seize, and destroy it. The metaphors are well connected, well sustained, and strongly expressive of the whole process of this persecution.

In the *ninth* verse the huntsmen beat the forest to raise and drive in the game. In the *tenth* they set their nets, and speak confidently of the expected success. In the *eleventh*, they felicitate themselves on having found the *slot*, the certain indication of the prey being at hand. And in the *twelfth*, the king of the sport is represented as just ready to spring upon the prey; or, as having his bow bent, and his arrow on the string, ready to let fly the moment the prey appears. It is worthy of remark, that *kings* and *queens* were frequently present, and were the *chiefs of the sport*; and it was they

who, when he had been killed, *broke up* the deer: 1. Slitting down the brisket with their knife or sword; and, 2. Cutting off the head. And, as *Tuberville* published the first edition of his book in the reign of *Queen Elizabeth*, he gives a large wood-cut, p. 133, representing this princess just alighted from her horse—the stag stretched upon the ground—the huntsman kneeling, holding the fore foot of the animal with his left hand, and with his right presenting a knife to the queen for the purpose of the *breaking up*. As the second edition was published in the reign of *James the First*, the image of the *queen* is taken out and a *whole length of James* introduced in the place.

The same appears in *Tuberville's Book of Falconrie*, connected with the above. In p. 81, edition 1575, where the *flight of the hawk at the heron* is represented, the queen is seated on her charger: but in the edition of 1611 *King James* is placed on the same charger, the queen being removed.

The *lion* is the *monarch of the forest*; and is used successfully here to represent *Saul, king of Israel*, endeavouring to *hunt down David*; *hemming him in on every side*; *searching for his footsteps*; and ready to *spring upon him*, *shoot him with his bow*, or *pierce him with his javelin*, as soon as he should be obliged to flee from his *last cover*. The whole is finely imagined, and beautifully described.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTEENTH PSALM

David's appeal to God in justification of himself; and his petition for defence against his enemies.

There are THREE parts in this Psalm:—

I. A *petition*. 1. For audience, ^{<19170>}**Psalm 17:1, 6**. 2. For perseverance in good, ^{<19176>}**Psalm 17:5**. 3. For special favour, ^{<19177>}**Psalm 17:7, 8**. 4. For immediate deliverance, ^{<19173>}**Psalm 17:13, 14**.

II. A *narration*; in which we meet with, 1. His appeal to God, and his own justification, ^{<19172>}**Psalm 17:2-4**. 2. The reasons of it; his enemies and their character, ^{<19179>}**Psalm 17:9-14**.

III. A *conclusion*; which has two parts. 1. One belonging to this life; and, 2. One belonging to the life to come, ^{<19175>}**Psalm 17:15**.

I. 1. He begins with *petition* for audience. And he urges it for two reasons: 1. The justness of his cause: “Hear the right, O Lord.” 2. The sincerity of his heart: “That goeth not out of feigned lips.”

2. Again, there were other reasons why he desired to be heard: 1. He felt himself prone to slip, and fall from God: “Hold up my goings,” &c. 2. He was in great danger, and nothing but a miracle could save him: “Show thy marvellous lovingkindness.” 3. His enemies were insolent and mighty, and God’s sword only could prevail against them: “Arise, O Lord,” ^{<191713>} **Psalm 17:13, 14.**

II. A *narration*: His appeal to God. Since a verdict must pass upon him, he desired that God should pronounce it: “Let my sentence come forth from thy presence.” I know that thou art a righteous Judge, and canst not be swayed by prejudice: “Let thine eyes behold the thing that is equal,” and then I know it must go well with me: “Thou hast proved my heart. Thou hast tried me before on this business, and hast *found nothing*.”

1. *Nothing* in my HEART: “Thou hast proved my heart.”

2. *Nothing* in my TONGUE: “For I am purposed that my mouth shall not offend.”

3. *Nothing* in my HAND: “For, concerning the works of men,” which are mischievous; *by the words of thy lips*, I have had so great a regard to thy commandments that “I have kept myself from the paths of the wicked;” of him who, to satisfy his own desires, breaks all laws.

4. He confesses that he was poor and weak, and liable to fall, unless sustained by the grace of God: “Hold up my goings in thy paths.”

And this first petition he renews, and takes courage from the assurance that he shall be heard: “I will call upon thee, for thou wilt hear me.” And he puts in a special petition, which has two parts:—

1. “Show thy marvellous lovingkindness;” let me have more than ordinary help. And this he urges from the consideration that *God saves them who trust in him from those who rise up against them*.

2. That he would save him with the greatest care and vigilance, as a man would preserve the apple of his eye, or as a hen would guard her young: “Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me,” &c.

And to prevail in this *special petition*, he brings his arguments from his present necessity. He was encompassed with enemies, whom he describes:—

1. They were capital enemies; they hemmed him in on every side.
2. They were powerful, proud, and rich: “Men enclosed in their own fat, speaking proudly with their tongues,” ^{<191710>}**Psalm 17:10.**
3. Their counsels were fixed, and bent to ruin him: “They set their eyes, bowing down to the earth,” ^{<191711>}**Psalm 17:11.**
4. They were such enemies as prospered in their designs, ^{<191714>}**Psalm 17:14.**
 1. Men of the world. 2. They had their portion in this life, and sought for none other. 3. They fed themselves without fear: “Their bellies were full.”
 4. They had a numerous offspring, and therefore more to be dreaded because of their family connections. 5. They left much substance behind them, so that their plans might be all continued and brought to effect.

III. The *conclusion*, containing the expectation of David, opposed to his enemies’ felicity.

1. In this life: “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.”
2. In the life to come: “When I awake,” rise from the dead, “after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.”

On each of these divisions the reader is referred to the notes.

PSALMS

PSALM 18

David's address of thanks to Jehovah, 1-3. A relation of sufferings undergone, and prayers made for assistance, 4-6. A magnificent description of Divine interposition in behalf of the sufferer, 7-15; and of the deliverance wrought for him, 16-19. That this deliverance was in consideration of his righteousness, 20-24; and according to the tenor of God's equitable proceedings, 25-28. To Jehovah is ascribed the glory of the victory, 29-36; which is represented as complete by the destruction of all his opponents, 37-42. On these events the heathen submit, 43-45. And for all these things God is glorified, 46-50.

NOTES ON PSALM 18

The title: "To the chief Musician, A *Psalm* of David, the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day *that* the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul."

Except the first clause, this title is taken from ^{<1020>}**2 Samuel 22:1**. The reader is requested to turn to the notes on ^{<1020>}**2 Samuel 22:1**, for some curious information on this Psalm, particularly what is extracted from Dr. *Kennicott*. This learned writer supposes the whole to be a song of the Messiah, and divides it into *five parts*, which he thus introduces:—

"The Messiah's sublime thanksgivings, composed by David when his wars were at an end, towards the conclusion of his life. And in this sacred song the goodness of God is celebrated, 1. For Messiah's resurrection from the dead, with the wonders attending that awful event, and soon following it. 2. For the punishment inflicted on the Jews; particularly by the destruction of Jerusalem. And, 3. For the obedience of the Gentile nations. See ^{<6150>}**Romans 15:9**; ^{<80213>}**Hebrews 2:13**; and ^{<1020>}**Matthew 28:2-4**; with ^{<10247>}**Matthew 24:7, 29.**"

And that the title now prefixed to this hymn here and in ^{<1020>}**2 Samuel 22:1**, describes only the *time* of its composition, seems evident; for who can ascribe to David *himself* as the subject, ^{<191805>}**Psalm 18:5, 6, 8-17, 21-26, 30, 42, 44, &c.?**

In Dr. *Kennicott's* remarks there is a new translation of the whole Psalm, p. 178, &c.

The strong current of commentators and critics apply this Psalm to Christ; and to oppose a whole host of both ancients and moderns would argue great self-confidence. In the *main* I am of the same mind; and on this principle chiefly I shall proceed to its illustration; still however considering that there are many things in it which concern David, and him only. Drs. *Chandler* and *Delaney* have been very successful in their illustration of various passages in it; all the best critics have brought their strongest powers to bear on it; and most of the commentators have laboured it with great success; and Bishop *Horne* has applied the whole of it to Christ. My old Psalter speaks highly in its praise: “This Psalm contenes the sacrament of al chosyn men, the qwilk doand the law of God thurgh the seven fald grace of the Haly Gast fra al temptaciouns, and the pouste of dede and of the devel lesid: this sang thai syng til God; and thankes him and says, *I sal luf the Lord*, nocht a day or twa, bot ever mare: *my strength*, thurgh quam I am stalworth in thocht.”

Verse 1. I will love thee] Love always subsists on motive and reason. The verb **פָּיַר** *racham* signifies to *love with all the tender feelings of nature*. “From my inmost bowels will I love thee, O Lord!” Why should he love Jehovah? Not merely because he was infinitely great and good, possessed of all possible perfections, but because he was *good to him*: and he here enumerates some of the many blessings he received from him.

My strength.] 1. Thou who hast given me *power* over my adversaries, and hast enabled me to avoid evil and do good.

Verse 2. The Lord is my rock] 2. I stand on him as my *foundation*, and derive every good from him who is the source of good. The word **[לְסֵלָא]** *sela* signifies those craggy precipices which afford shelter to men and wild animals; where the *bees* often made their nests, and whence honey was collected in great abundance. “He made him to suck honey out of the rock,” ^(פְּסַלְמֵי) **Deuteronomy 32:13**. 3. He was his *fortress*; a place of *strength* and *safety*, fortified by *nature* and *art*, where he could be safe from his enemies. He refers to those inaccessible heights in the rocky, mountainous country of Judea, where he had often found refuge from the pursuit of Saul. What these have been to my body, such has the Lord been to my soul.

Deliverer] 4. **יְתִיבֵנִי** *mephalleti*, he who causes me to *escape*. This refers to his preservation in straits and difficulties. He was often *almost*

surrounded and taken, but still the Lord *made a way for his escape*—made a way out as his enemies got in; so that, while they got in at one side of his strong hold, he got out of the other, and so *escaped* with his life. These escapes were so narrow and so unlikely that he plainly saw the hand of the Lord was in them. 5. *My God, יל א Eli*, my strong God, not only the object of my adoration, but he who puts strength in my soul. 6. *My strength, ירwx tsuri*. This is a different word from that in the first verse. *Rabbi Maimon* has observed that רwx tsur, when applied to God, signifies fountain, source, origin, &c. God is not only the source whence my being was derived, but he is the fountain whence I derive all my good; in whom, says David, *I will trust*. And why? Because he knew him to be an eternal and inexhaustible fountain of goodness. This fine idea is lost in our translation; for we render two Hebrew words of widely different meaning, by the same term in English, *strength*. 7. *My buckler, yngm maginni*, my shield, my defender, he who covers my head and my heart, so that I am neither slain nor wounded by the darts of my adversaries. 8. *Horn of my salvation*. Horn was the emblem of power, and power in exercise. This has been already explained; see on ^{◀◀◀} **1 Samuel 2:1**. The horn of salvation means a powerful, an efficient salvation. 9. *My high tower*; not only a place of defence, but one from which I can discern the country round about, and always be able to discover danger before it approaches me.

Verse 3. I will call upon the Lord] When he was conscious that the object of his worship was such as he has pointed out in the above nine particulars, it is no wonder that he resolves to *call upon him*; and no wonder that he expects, in consequence, to be saved from his enemies; for who can destroy him whom such a God undertakes to save?

Verse 4. The sorrows of death compassed me] twm yl bj chebley maveth, the cables or cords of death. He was almost taken in those nets or stratagems by which, if he had been entangled, he would have lost his life. The stratagems to which he refers were those that were intended for his destruction; hence called the cables or cords of death.

The floods of ungodly men] Troops of wicked men were rushing upon him like an irresistible torrent; or like the waves of the sea, one impelling another forward in successive ranks; so that, thinking he must be overwhelmed by them, he was for the moment *affrighted*; but God turned the torrent aside, and he escaped.

Verse 5. The sorrows of hell] *l wav yl bj chebley sheol*, the *cables or cords of the grave*. Is not this a reference to the *cords or ropes* with which they *lowered the corpse into the grave?* or the bandages by which the dead were swathed? He was as good as dead.

The snares of death prevented me.] I was just on the point of dropping into the pit which they had digged for me. In short, I was all but a dead man; and nothing less than the immediate *interference* of God could have saved my life.

Verse 6. In my distress I called] His enemies had no hope of his destruction unless God should abandon him. They hoped that this was the case, and that therefore they should prevail. But God *heard his cry and came down* to his help; and this interference is most majestically described in the 7th and following verses. Dr. *Dodd* has collected some excellent observations on these verses from *Chandler, Delaney*, and others, which I shall transcribe, as I know not that any thing better can be offered on the subject.

Verse 7. Then the earth shook and trembled] “In this and the following verses David describes, by the sublimest expressions and grandest terms, the majesty of God, and the awful manner in which he came to his assistance. The representation of the storm in these verses must be allowed by all skilful and impartial judges to be truly sublime and noble, and in the genuine spirit of poetry. The majesty of God, and the manner in which he is represented as coming to the aid of his favourite king, surrounded with all the powers of nature as his attendants and ministers, and arming (as it were) heaven and earth to fight his battles, and execute his vengeance, is described in the loftiest and most striking terms. The *shaking of the earth*; the trembling of the mountains and pillars of heaven; the *smoke* that drove out of his nostrils; the *flames* of devouring fire that flashed from his mouth; the *heavens bending* down to convey him to the battle; his riding upon a *cherub*, and rapidly flying on the *wings of a whirlwind*; his concealing his majesty in the *thick clouds* of heaven; the bursting of the *lightnings* from the *horrid darkness*; the *uttering of his voice* in *peals of thunder*; the *storm of fiery hail*; the *melting of the heavens*, and their dissolving into floods of *tempestuous rain*; the *cleaving of the earth*, and disclosing of the bottom of the hills, and the subterraneous channels or torrents of water, by the very breath of the nostrils of the Almighty; are all of them circumstances which create admiration, excite a kind of horror, and exceed every thing of

this nature that is to be found in any of the remains of heathen antiquity. See *Longinus* on the Sublime, sec. 9, and *Hesiod's* description of Jupiter fighting against the Titans, which is one of the grandest things in all pagan antiquity; though upon comparison it will be found infinitely short of this description of the *psalmist's*; throughout the whole of which God is represented as a mighty warrior going forth to fight the battles of David, and highly incensed at the opposition his enemies made to his power and authority.

“When he descended to the engagement the very heavens bowed down to render his descent more awful, his *military tent* was *substantial darkness*; the *voice* of his *thunder* was the *warlike alarm* which sounded to the *battle*; the *chariot* in which he rode was the *thick clouds* of heaven, conducted by *cherubs*, and carried on by the irresistible force and rapid wings of an *impetuous tempest*; and the darts and weapons he employed were *thunderbolts, lightnings, fiery hail, deluging rains, and stormy winds!*

“No wonder that when God thus arose, all his enemies should be scattered, and those who hated him should flee before him.

“It does not appear from any part of David's history that there was any such storm as is here described, which proved destructive to his enemies, and salutary to himself. There might, indeed, have been such a one, though there is no particular mention of it: unless it may be thought that something of this nature is intimated in the account given of David's second battle with the Philistines, ^{<10153>} **2 Samuel 5:23, 24**. It is undoubted, however, that the storm is represented as real; though David, in describing it, has heightened and embellished it with all the ornaments of poetry. See Chandler, Delaney, and Lowth's ninth Prelection.

Verse 8. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils] -Or, ‘There ascended into his nostrils a smoke,’ as the words, literally rendered, signify. The ancients placed the seat of anger in the *nose*, or nostrils; because when the passions are warm and violent, it discovers itself by the heated vehement breath which proceeds from them. Hence the physiognomists considered open wide nostrils as a sign of an angry, fiery disposition.

“This description of a *smoke* arising into and a *fire* breaking forth from the nostrils of God, denotes, by a poetical figure, the greatness of his anger and indignation.

“*Fire out of his mouth devoured*—means that consuming fire issued out of his mouth. *Coals were kindled by it*, thus we render the next clause; but the words do not mean that fire proceeding from God kindled coals, but that burning coals issued from his mouth; and it should be rendered ‘living coals from his mouth burned, and consumed around him.’—*Chandler*.

Verse 9. He bowed the heavens also, and came down] —He made the heavens bend under him when he descended to take vengeance on his enemies. The psalmist seems here to express the appearance of the Divine majesty in a glorious cloud, descending from heaven, which underneath was substantially dark, but above, bright, and shining with exceeding lustre; and which, by its gradual approach to the earth, would appear as though the heavens themselves were bending down and approaching towards us.

Verse 10. He rode upon a cherub, and did fly] -That is, as it is immediately explained, *Yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind*. God was in the storm, and by the ministry of angels guided the course of it, and drove it on with such an impetuous force as nothing could withstand. He ‘rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.’ Angels are in a peculiar sense the attendants and messengers of the Almighty, whom he employs as his ministers in effecting many of those great events which take place in the administration of his providence; and particularly such as manifest his immediate interposition in the extraordinary judgments which he inflicts for the punishment of sinful nations. See ^{<19A33>} **Psalm 103:20; 104:4**. The *cherub* is particularly mentioned as an emblem of the Divine presence, and especially as employed in supporting and conveying the chariot of the Almighty, when he is represented as riding in his majesty through the firmament of heaven:—

—*Forth rush’d with whirlwind sound*
The chariot of paternal Deity;
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convey’d
By four cherubic shapes.
Par. Lost, lib. vi.

This seems to be the image intended to be conveyed in the place before us. “He rode upon a cherub, and did fly; he flew on the wings of the wind,” i.e., the cherub supported and led on the tempest, in which the Almighty rode as in his chariot. This is agreeable to the office elsewhere ascribed to the cherubim. Thus they supported the mercy-seat, which was peculiarly the throne of God under the Jewish economy. God is expressly said to “make the clouds his chariot,” ^{<194MB>} **Psalm 104:3**; and to “ride upon a swift cloud,” ^{<2310B>} **Isaiah 19:1**: so that “riding upon a cherub,” and “riding upon a swift cloud,” is riding in the cloud as his chariot, supported and guided by the ministry of the cherubim. The next clause in the parallel place of Samuel is, “He was seen on the wings of the wind;” **ary yera**, he *was seen*, being used for **ady yede**, he *flew*, **d daleth** being changed into **r resh**. Either of them may be the true reading, for the MSS. are greatly divided on these places; but on the whole **aryw vaiyera** appears to be the better reading: “And he was *seen* on the wings of the wind.”

As the original has been supposed by adequate judges to exhibit a fine specimen of that poetry which, in the choice of its terms, conveys both *sense* and *sound*, I will again lay it before the reader, as I have done in the parallel place, ^{<1021D>} **2 Samuel 22:2**. The words in *italic* {Hebrew} to be read from right to left.

ā[yw bwrk l [bkryw

vaiyaoph kerub al vayirkab

And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly!

j wr ypnk l [adyw

ruach canphey al waiyede

Yea, he flew on the wings of the wind!

The word **j wr ruach**, in the last line, should be pronounced, not *ruak*, which is no Hebrew word: but as a Scottish man would pronounce it, were it written *ruagh*. With this observation, how astonishingly is the *rushing of the wind* heard in the last word of each hemistich! *Sternhold* and *Hopkins* have succeeded in their version of this place, not only beyond all *they* ever did, but beyond every ancient and modern poet on a similar subject:—

*“On cherub and on cherubin
Full royally he rode;
And on the wings of mighty winds
Came flying all abroad.”*

Even the old *Anglo-Scottish Psalter* has not done amiss:—

And he steygh aboven cherubyn and he flow;
He flow aboven the fetthers of wyndes.

Verse 11. He made darkness his secret place] God is represented as dwelling in the *thick darkness*, ^{<1941>} **Deuteronomy 4:11;** ^{<1970>} **Psalm 97:2.** This representation in the place before us is peculiarly proper; as thick heavy clouds deeply charged, and with lowering aspects, are always the forerunners and attendants of a tempest, and greatly heighten the horrors of the appearance: and the representation of them, spread about the Almighty as a tent, is truly grand and poetic.

Dark waters] The vapours strongly condensed into clouds; which, by the stroke of the lightning, are about to be precipitated in torrents of rain. See the next verse.

Verse 12. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed] The word *hgn nogah* signifies the *lightning*. This *goes before him*: the *flash* is seen before the *thunder* is heard, and before the *rain* descends; and then the *thick cloud passes*. Its contents are precipitated on the earth, and the cloud is entirely dissipated.

Hail-stones and coals of fire.] This was the *storm* that followed the *flash* and the *peal*; for it is immediately added—

Verse 13. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice] And then followed the *hail and coals of fire*. The former verse mentioned the *lightning*, with its effects; this gives us the report of the *thunder*, and the increasing *storm of hail and fire* that attended it. Some think the words *hail-stones and coals of fire* are entered here by some careless transcribers from the preceding verse; and it is true that they are wanting in the Septuagint and the Arabic, in the parallel place in 2 Samuel, and in *five* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. I should rather, with Bishop *Horsley*, suppose them to be an interpolation in the preceding verse: or in that to have been borrowed from this; for this most certainly is their true place.

Verse 14. He sent out his arrows—he shot out lightnings] I believe the latter clause to be an illustration of the former. *He sent out his arrows*—that is, he shot out *lightnings*; for lightnings are the *arrows* of the Lord, and there is something very like the *arrowhead* apparent in the *zigzag* lightning. *Sense* and *sound* are wonderfully combined in the Hebrew of this last clause: **umhyw br pykrbw** *uberakim rab vaihummem*, “and thunderings he multiplied and confounded them.” Who does not hear the *bursting*, *brattling*, and *pounding* of thunder in these words? See *Delaney*?

Verse 15. The channels of water were seen] This must refer to an *earthquake*; for in such cases, the ground being rent, water frequently gushes out at the fissures, and often rises to a tremendous height. Whole rivers were poured out of the chasms made by the earthquake in Jamaica, A. D. 1694; and new lakes of water were formed, covering a *thousand* acres of land!

Verse 16. He drew me out of many waters.] Here the allusion is still carried on. The waters thus poured out were sweeping the people away; but God, by a miraculous interference, sent and drew David out. Sometimes *waters* are used to denote *multitudes of people*; and here the word may have that reference; multitudes were gathered together against David, but God delivered him from them all. This seems to be countenanced by the following verse.

Verse 17. He delivered me from my strong enemy] Does not this refer to his conflict with Ishbi-benob? “And Ishbi-benob, which *was* of the sons of the giant—thought to have slain David. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel;” ^{<102116>} **2 Samuel 21:16, 17.** It appears that at this time he was in the most imminent danger of his life, and that he must have fallen by the hands of the giant, if God had not sent Abishai to his assistance. *They were too strong for me.* He was nearly overpowered by the Philistines; and his escape was such as evidently to show it to be supernatural.

Verse 18. They prevented me in the day of my calamity] They took advantage of the time in which I was least able to make head against them, and their attack was sudden and powerful. I should have been overthrown,

but the Lord was my stay. He had been nearly exhausted by the fatigue of the day, when the giant availed himself of this advantage.

Verse 19. He brought me forth also into a large place] He enabled me to clear the country of my foes, who had before cooped me up in holes and corners. This appears to be the allusion.

Verse 20. The Lord rewarded me] David proceeds to give the reasons why God had so marvellously interposed in his behalf.

According to my righteousness] Instead of being an enemy to Saul, I was his friend. I dealt *righteously* with him while he dealt *unrighteously* with me.

Verse 21. I have kept the ways of the Lord] I was neither an *infidel* nor a *profligate*; I trusted in God, and carefully observed all the ordinances of his religion.

Verse 22. All his judgments were before me] I kept his law before my eyes, that I might see my duty and know how to walk and please God.

Verse 23. I was also upright] The times in which David was most afflicted were the times of his greatest uprightness. *Adversity* was always to him a time of spiritual prosperity.

Mine iniquity.] Probably meaning what is generally termed *the easily-besetting sin*; *the sin of his constitution*, or that to which the *temperament* of his body most powerfully disposed him. What this was, is a subject of useless conjecture.

Verse 25. With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful] Thou wilt deal with men as they deal with each other. This is the general tenor of God's providential conduct towards mankind; well expressed by Mr. *Pope* in his universal prayer:—

*“Teach me to feel another’s wo;
To hide the fault I see:
The mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.”*

It is in reference to this that our Lord teaches us to pray: “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.” If we act *feelingly* and *mercifully* towards our fellow creatures, God will act *tenderly* and *compassionately* towards us. The merciful, the upright, and the pure, will

ever have the God of mercy, uprightness, and purity, to defend and support them.

Verse 26. With the froward] **vq**[*ikkesh, the perverse man*; he that is crooked in his tempers and ways.

Thou wilt show thyself froward.] **l tptt** *tithpattal, thou wilt set thyself to twist, twine, and wrestle. If he contend, thou wilt contend with him. Thou wilt follow him through all his windings; thou wilt trace him through all his crooked ways; untwist him in all his cunning wiles; and defeat all his schemes of stubbornness, fraud, overreaching, and deceit.*

My old *Psalter* has, ~~With~~ *the wiked thou sal be wike*. Here the term *wicked* is taken in its *true original* sense, *crooked, or perverse*. With the *wiked*, the *perverse*, thou wilt show thyself *wike*, i.e., *perverse*; from [Anglo-Saxon], to *draw back, to slide*. As *he draws back* from thee, thou wilt *draw back* from him. It may, as before intimated, come from [A.S.], to seek for *enchantments; leaving God, and going to devils; to act like a witch*: but *here* it must *mean* as above. The plain import is, “If thou perversely oppose thy Maker, he will oppose thee: no work or project shall prosper that is not begun in his name, and conducted in his fear.”

Verse 27. For thou wilt save the afflicted] The afflicted are the *humble*; and those thou hast ever befriended.

Verse 28. For thou wilt light my candle] Thou wilt restore me to prosperity, and give me a happy issue out of all my afflictions. By the *lamp of David the Messiah* may be meant: thou wilt not suffer my family to become extinct, nor the kingdom which thou hast promised me utterly to fail.

Verse 29. I have run through a troop] This may relate to some remarkable victory, and the taking of some fortified place, possibly *Zion*, from the Jebusites. See the account ^{<10706>}**2 Samuel 5:6-8**.

Verse 30. God, his way is perfect] His conduct is like his nature, absolutely pure.

The word of the Lord is tried] Literally *tried in the fire*. It has stood all tests; and has never failed those who pleaded it before its author.

He is a buckler] A sure protection to every simple believing soul. We cannot believe his word too *implicitly*; nor trust too *confidently* in him.

Verse 31. For who is God save the Lord?] “For who is Eloah, except Jehovah?” None is worthy of adoration but the self-existent, eternal, infinitely perfect, and all-merciful Being.

Or who is a rock] A *fountain* emitting continual supplies of grace and goodness.

Verse 32. God-girdeth me with strength] The girdle was a necessary part of the Eastern dress; it *strengthened* and *supported* the loins; served to *confine* the *garments* close to the body; and in it they tucked them up when journeying. The *strength* of God was to his *soul* what the *girdle* was to the *body*. I need not add, that the *girdle* was also an *ornamental* part of the dress, and from it the sword was suspended.

And maketh my way perfect.] He directs me so that I do not go astray; he blesses me in my undertakings; and by him the issue of my labours is crowned with prosperity.

Verse 33. My feet like hinds’ feet] Swiftiness, or *speed of foot*, was a necessary qualification of an ancient hero. This was of great advantage in pursuing, combating, or escaping from a fallen foe. Ποδας ωκυς Αχιλλευς, “the swiftfooted Achilles,” is frequently given by *Homer* as a most honourable qualification of his hero.

Upon my high places.] In allusion to the *hinds*, *antelopes*, *mountain goats*, &c., which frequented such places, and in which they found both *food* and *safety*. God frequently preserved the life of David by means of these.

Verse 34. He teacheth my hands to war] The success which I have had in my military exercises I owe to the Divine help. How few of the conquerors of mankind can say so! And how few among those who call themselves *Christian warriors* dare to say so! *War* is as contrary to the spirit of Christianity as murder. Nothing can justify Christian nations in shedding each other’s blood! All men *should* live in peace; all men *might* live in peace; and the nation that is *first* to break it is under a heavy curse.

A bow of steel is broken by mine arms.] All the *versions* render this: “Thou hast made my arm like a brazen bow.” A bow of *steel* is out of the

question. In the days of David it is not likely that the method of making *steel* was known. The method of making *brass* out of *copper* was known at a very early period of the world; and the ancients had the art of *hardening* it, so as to work it into the most efficient swords. From his own account David was *swift, courageous, and strong*.

Verse 35. The shield of thy salvation] In all battles and dangers God defended him. He was constantly safe because he possessed the salvation of God. Everywhere God protected him. *Thy gentleness, Etw[anvathecha, thy meekness or humility*. Thou hast enabled me to bear and forbear; to behave with courage in adversity, and with humility in prosperity; and thus I am become *great*. By these means thou hast *multiplied* me. The *Vulgate* reads, *Disciplina tua ipsa me docebit*; “And thy discipline itself shall teach me.” In this sense it was understood by most of the *versions*. The old *Psalter* paraphrases thus: Thi chastying suffers me noight to erre fra the end to com.

Verse 36. Enlarged my steps] See on ^{<191819>}**Psalm 18:19**. From the hand of God he had continual prosperity; and while he walked with God no enemy was able to prevail against him. He details his successes in the following verses.

Verse 40. The necks of mine enemies] Thou hast made me a complete conqueror. *Treading on the neck* of an enemy was the triumph of the conqueror, and the utmost disgrace of the vanquished.

Verse 41. They cried] The Philistines called upon their gods, but there was none to save them.

Even **unto the Lord]** Such as Saul, Ishbosheth, Absalom, &c., who, professing to worship the true God, *called on him* while in their opposition to David; but God no more heard them than their *idols* heard the Philistines.

Verse 42. Then did I beat them] God was with *him*, and *they* had only an arm of flesh. No wonder then that his enemies were destroyed.

Small as the dust before the wind] This well expresses the manner in which he treated the Moabites, Ammonites, and the people of Rabbah: “He put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron; and made them pass through the brick-kiln,” &c. See ^{<101231>}**2 Samuel 12:31**, and the notes there.

Verse 43. The strivings of the people] Disaffections and insurrections among my own subjects, as in the revolt of *Absalom*, the *civil war of Abner* in favour of *Ish-bosheth*, &c.

The head of the heathen] *μῦγ var rosh goyim*, “the chief,” or “governor, of the nations;” all the circumjacent heathen people; all these were subdued by David, and brought under tribute.

A people whom I have not known] The people whom he *knew* were those of the *twelve tribes*; those whom he did *not know* were the Syrians, Philistines, Idumeans, &c. All these *served him*, that is, paid him *tribute*.

Verse 44. As soon as they hear of me] His victories were so rapid and splendid over powerful enemies, that they struck a general terror among the people, and several submitted without a contest.

Strangers shall submit themselves unto me.] Some translate this: “The children of the foreign woman have lied unto me.” This has been understood *two* ways: My own people, who have sworn fealty to me, have broken their obligation, and followed my rebellious son. Or, The heathens, who have been brought under my yoke, have promised the most cordial obedience, and flattered me with their tongues, while their hearts felt enmity against me and my government. Nevertheless, even in this unwilling subjection I was secure, my police being so efficient, and my kingdom so strong.

Verse 45. The strangers shall fade away] *rkn ynb beney nechar*, the same persons mentioned above. They shall not be able to effect any thing against me; *wl by yibbolu*, “they shall fall as the leaves fall off the trees in winter.”

And be afraid out of their close places.] Those who have formed themselves into *banditti*, and have taken possession of *rocks* and *fortified places*, shall be so afraid when they hear of my successes, that they shall surrender at discretion, without standing a siege. Perhaps all these verbs should be understood in the *perfect* tense, for David is here evidently speaking of a kingdom at rest, all enemies having *been subdued*; or, as the *title* is, *when the Lord HAD delivered him from all his enemies*.

Verse 46. The Lord liveth] By him alone I have gained all my victories; and he *continueth*, and will be my *Rock*, the *Source* whence I may at all

times derive help and salvation. May his name be blessed! May his kingdom be exalted!

Verse 47. God that avengeth me] The way that I took was after his own heart; therefore he sustained me in it, and did me justice over my enemies.

Subdueth the people under me.] He keeps down the spirits of the disaffected, and weakens their hands. They are subdued, and they continue under me; and this is the Lord's doing.

Verse 48. He delivereth me] That is, he *hath delivered* me, and continues to deliver me, from all that rise up against me.

The violent man.] Saul; this applies particularly to him.

Verse 49. Will I give thanks unto thee-among the heathen] Quoted by St. Paul, ^{<5150>}**Romans 15:9**, to prove that the *calling of the Gentiles* was predicted, and that what then took place was the fulfilment of that prediction.

But there is a sense in which it applies particularly to David, well observed by *Theodoret*: "We see," says he, "evidently the fulfilment of this prophecy; for even to the present day David praises the Lord among the Gentiles by the mouth of true believers; seeing there is not a town, village, hamlet, country, nor even a desert, where Christians dwell, in which God is not praised by their singing the Psalms of David."

Verse 50. Great deliverance giveth he to his king] David was a king of God's appointment, and was peculiarly favoured by him. Literally, *He is magnifying the salvations of his king*. He not only delivers, but follows up those deliverances with innumerable blessings.

Showeth mercy-to David] I have no *claim* upon his bounty. I *deserve* nothing from him, but he continues to show *mercy*.

To his seed] His *posterity*. So the words [*רז zera* and *σπέρμα*, in the Old and New Testament, should be universally translated. The common translation is totally improper, and *now* more so than formerly, when *anatomy* was less understood.

For evermore.] *μὴ ἔτι* [*ad olam, for ever*; through all duration of created worlds. And *more*-the eternity that is beyond time. This shows that another *David* is meant, with another kind of *posterity*, and another sort of

kingdom. From the *family of David* came the man *Christ Jesus*; his *posterity* are the *genuine Christians*; his *kingdom*, in which they are *subjects*, is *spiritual*. This *government* shall last through all time, for *Christianity* will continue to prevail till the *end of the world*: and it will be extended through *eternity*; for that is the kingdom of glory in which *Jesus* reigns on the throne of his *Father*, and in which his followers shall reign with him for ever and ever.

It has already been remarked that this whole Psalm has been understood as relating to the *passion* and *victories* of *CHRIST*, and the *success of the Gospel in the earth*. In this way *Bishop Horne* has understood and paraphrased it; and in the same way it is considered by the ancient *Psalter*, so often mentioned. Many of the primitive *fathers* and modern *interpreters* have taken the same view of it. Those passages which I judged to have this meaning I have pointed out, and have only to add that, as *David* was a *type of Christ*, many things spoken of him *primarily*, refer to our Lord *ultimately*; but much judgment and caution are required in their application. To apply the whole Psalm in this way appears to me very injudicious, and often derogatory from the majesty of *Christ*. Let this be my excuse for not following the same track in which many of my predecessors have gone.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTEENTH PSALM

David's Επινικιον or song of triumph after his conquest of all his enemies.

This Psalm may be divided into *four* parts:—

I. *David* shows what *God* is to his servants, and the effect it wrought upon him, ^{<91801>}**Psalm 18:1-3**.

II. The great danger in which he was from the power and multitude of his enemies, ^{<91804>}**Psalm 18:4-28**.

III. His glorious victories, and their consequences, ^{<91809>}**Psalm 18:29-45**.

IV. His thanksgiving for those victories, ^{<91846>}**Psalm 18:46-50**.

I. What *God* is to his servants, and to him especially. 1. *Strength*. 2. *Rock*. 3. *Fortress*. 4. *Deliverer*. 5. *Tower*. 6. *Buckler*. 7. *Horn of salvation*. 8. *High tower*, ^{<91801>}**Psalm 18:1, 2**. (See the notes.)

The *effect* it wrought in him. It produced, 1. *Love*: “I will love the Lord.” 2. *Confidence*: “In him will I trust.” 3. The *spirit of prayer*: “I will call on the Lord.” The fruit of all which was his *safety*: “So shall I be saved from mine enemies,” ^{<19183>}**Psalm 18:3**.

II. The great dangers in which he was, and of his escape.

1. His danger was great; for, 1. He was *encompassed with the sorrows of death*. 2. Was *terrified with the floods of ungodly men*. 3. *Surrounded by the sorrows of hell*. And, 4. *Prevented by the snares of death*, ^{<19184>}**Psalm 18:4, 5**.

2. He shows how he *behaved* in these dangers, and from whom he sought for help: 1. “He called upon the Lord.” 2. “He cried unto his God.”

3. He shows the *goodness* of God to him, and his readiness to help him: 1. “He heard me out of his holy temple.” 2. “My cry came into his ears.”

4. The *cause* of his escape was the immediate hand of God, who testified his presence by many supernatural signs. 1. EARTHQUAKES: “The earth shook and trembled.” 2. HILLS and *mountains* were *moved* from their places: “The hills moved,” &c., ^{<19187>}**Psalm 18:7**. 3. SMOKE came out of his nostrils. 4. A consuming FIRE came out of his mouth; and became permanent, for *coals were kindled* by it, ^{<19188>}**Psalm 18:8**. 5. A THICK DARKNESS announced his presence; and the atmosphere was greatly confused: “He bowed the heavens; darkness was under his feet,” ^{<19189>}**Psalm 18:9**. 6. There were *mighty winds* and *tempests*: “He flew on the wings of the wind,” ^{<191810>}**Psalm 18:10**. 7. There were violent inundations, with blackness of the atmosphere, dark waters, thick clouds of the sky, ^{<191811>}**Psalm 18:11**. 8. Great THUNDERS: “The Lord thundered; the Highest gave his voice.” 9. There was great HAIL, and FIERY METEORS: “Hailstones and coals of fire,” ^{<191812>}**Psalm 18:12, 13**. 10. *Tremendous* LIGHTNINGS, and *fearful* CHASMS opened in the earth: “He sent out,” &c., ^{<191814>}**Psalm 18:14, 15**.

5. He reckons up his *deliverances*, with the *manner* and *causes*:—

1. “He took, he drew me out of many waters,” ^{<191816>}**Psalm 18:16**.

2. He did this in a supernatural way: “He sent from above,” *ib*.

6. He describes his enemies from whom God delivered him. 1. They were very *numerous*, compared to *many waters*, ^{<191816>}**Psalm 18:16**: “He drew me

out of many waters.” 2. They were very *strong*. 3. Full of *malice*. 4. Too *strong for him*. 5. INSIDIOUS and CRUEL: “They prevented me in the day of my calamity,” ^{<191817>} **Psalm 18:17, 18.**

7. But God was his *STAY*: and the *causes* which moved God to help him were, 1. His own *good will*: “Because he delighted in me.” 2. David’s *innocence*; which he declares, ^{<191820>} **Psalm 18:20-25.**

8. And then, *ab hypothesi*, from his own particular case, he takes occasion to discourse *in thesi*, that this is not only true in David’s person, but shall be verified in all that are upright as he was: which he proves from the nature and usual manner of God’s proceedings with good and bad men, ^{<191825>} **Psalm 18:25-28.**

III. David’s *glorious* VICTORIES, and their CONSEQUENCES, ^{<191828>} **Psalm 18:28-46.**

1. His victory he expresses and amplifies many ways:—

1. From the opposition which he conquered. Nor *troops* nor *walls* hindered, ^{<191829>} **Psalm 18:29.**

2. From God’s singular *protection*. He was his *Buckler*, *his Rock*.

3. From his *armour*. He was made *fleet*; and had military *knowledge*, *strength*, and *defence*, from God, ^{<191833>} **Psalm 18:33.**

4. From his *safety*. He was not wounded in the battle.

5. From his *success*. He routed his enemies; they fled, and he pursued, ^{<191837>} **Psalm 18:37.**

6. From the *greatness* of the *victory*. It was a complete conquest; for his enemies were *taken*, or *consumed*, or *wounded*, so as to be *unable to rally*. They *fell under his feet*; their *necks* were *brought down*, ^{<191838>} **Psalm 18:38-42.**

7. From the *cause*. All was of God; he takes nothing to himself. *THOU hast girded me*. *THOU hast subdued*. *THOU hast given me*, &c.

2. The *consequences* of these victories were the propagation and enlargement of David’s kingdom:—

1. Before these victories there were murmurings and insurrections among his people: but now, being conqueror, they are all quiet: “Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people,” ^{<191843>} **Psalm 18:43.**

2. He was exalted to be *head of the heathen*: Moabites, Ammonites, &c., served him, ^{<191844>}**Psalm 18:44.**

3. People whom he had *not known* became tributary to him: “Aliens shall serve me,” ^{<191844>}**Psalm 18:44.**

4. This, it is true, they did out of *fear*, not *affection*. They *dissembled* in their fidelity; and several *fell off*: but still they were obliged to *submit*, ^{<191845>}**Psalm 18:45.**

IV. David’s THANKSGIVING. This is the main scope of the Psalm; to celebrate and extol the name and mercy of God for his victories. This has *two* parts: 1. His *present* thanksgiving. 2. His profession for the *future*.

1. He magnifies God: “The Lord liveth; and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted;” ^{<191846>}**Psalm 18:46.** And to this end, in the two next verses, he makes mention again of his victories, and attributes the whole success to God, ^{<191847>}**Psalm 18:47, 48.**

2. He professes still to do it; he will not cease even among the heathen: “Therefore will I give thanks,” ^{<191849>}**Psalm 18:49.**

3. And he shows how much reason he had to do so: because, 1. He had *great deliverances*. 2. He was the man of God’s *choice*; *his king-his anointed*. 3. This goodness was to survive him, and go to his *posterity*: “To David, and to his seed.” 4. It was to have *no end*: it was to be *for evermore*, ^{<191850>}**Psalm 18:50.**

Here the *true David* and the *spiritual seed* are referred to; and for this the reader is requested to examine the notes, and the remark before this *analysis*.

PSALMS

PSALM 19

The heavens and their host proclaim the majesty of God, 1-6; the excellence and perfection of the Divine law, 7-10; its usefulness, 11. The psalmist prays for pardon and preservation from sin, 12, 13; and that his words and thoughts may be holy, 14.

NOTES ON PSALM 19

The *title* of this Psalm has nothing particular in it; but it is not very clear that it was written by David, to whom it is attributed; though some think that he composed it in the wilderness, while persecuted by Saul. For this opinion, however, there is no solid ground. There is no note in the Psalm itself to lead us to know *when*, *where*, or by *whom* it was written. It is a highly finished and beautiful ode.

Verse 1. The heavens declare the glory of God] Literally, *The heavens number out the glory of the strong God*. A first view of the starry heavens strikes every beholder with astonishment at the *power* by which they were made, and by which they are supported. To find out the *wisdom* and *skill* displayed in their contrivance requires a measure of *science*: but when the vast *magnitude* of the celestial bodies is considered, we feel increasing astonishment at these works of the *strong God*.

The firmament] The whole *visible expanse*; not only containing the *celestial bodies* above referred to, but also the *air*, *light*, *rains*, *dews*, &c., &c. And when the composition of these principles is examined, and their great utility to the earth and its inhabitants properly understood, they afford matter of astonishment to the wisest mind, and of adoration and gratitude even to the most unfeeling heart.

Verse 2. Day unto day uttereth speech] Each day is represented as teaching another relative to some new excellence discovered in these *manifold works* of God. The *nights* also, by the same figure, are represented as giving information to each other of the increase of knowledge already gained.

“The labours of these our instructors know no intermission; but they continue incessantly to lecture us in the science of Divine wisdom. There is

one glory of the sun, which shines forth by day; and there are other glories of the moon and of the stars, which become visible by night. And because *day* and *night* interchangeably divide the world between them, they are therefore represented as transmitting, in succession, each to other, the task enjoined them, like the two parts of a choir, chanting forth alternately the praises of God.”—Bishop *Horne*.

Verse 3. There is **no speech nor language** where **their voice is not heard.**] Leave out the expletives here, which pervert the sense; and what remains is a tolerable translation of the original:—

μl wq [mvn yl b μyrbd ^yaw rma ^ya

Ein omer veein debarim, beli nishma kolam.

“No speech, and no words; their voice without hearing.”

μhyl m l bt hxqbw μwq axy xrah l kb

Bechol haarets yatsa kavvam: Ubiktsey thebel milleyhem.

“Into all the earth hath gone out their sound; and to the extremity of the habitable world, their eloquence.”

The word wq *kau*, which we translate *line*, is rendered *sonus*, by the *Vulgate*, and φθᾶγγος, *sound*, by the *Septuagint*; and St. Paul, ^{<SIOIS>}**Romans 10:18**, uses the same term. Perhaps the idea here is taken from a *stretched cord*, that emits a *sound* on being struck; and hence both ideas may be included in the same word; and μwq *kavvam* may be either *their line*, or *cord*, or *their sound*. But I rather think that the Hebrew word originally meant *sound* or *noise*; for in Arabic the verb [Arabic] *kavaha* signifies *he called out, cried, clamavit*. The sense of the whole is this, as Bishop *Horne* has well expressed it:—

“Although the heavens are thus appointed to teach, yet it is not by *articulate sounds* that they do it. They are not endowed, like man, with the faculty of speech; but they address themselves to the mind of the intelligent beholder in another way, and that, when understood, a no less forcible way, the way of picture or representation. The instruction which the heavens spread abroad is as universal as their substance, which extends itself in lines, or *rays*. By this means their words, or rather their *significant actions* or operations, μhyl m, are everywhere present; and thereby they

preach to all the nations the power and wisdom, the mercy and lovingkindness, of the Lord.”

St. Paul applies this as a prophecy relative to the universal spread of the Gospel of Christ, ^{<51018>}**Romans 10:18**; for God designed that the light of the Gospel should be diffused wheresoever the light of the celestial luminaries shone; and be as useful and beneficent, in a *moral* point of view, as that is in a *natural*. All the inhabitants of the earth shall benefit by the Gospel of Christ, as they all benefit by the *solar, lunar, and stellar light*. And, indeed, all have thus benefited, even where the *words* are not yet come. “Jesus is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” His *light*, and the *voice* of his *Spirit*, have already gone through the earth; and his *words*, and the *words of his apostles*, are by means of the *Bible* and *missionaries* going out to all the extremities of the habitable globe.

On these words I shall conclude with the translation of my old *Psalter*:—

Ver. 1. Hevens telles the joy of God; and the werkes of his handes schewis the firmament.

Ver. 2. Day til day riftes word; and nyght til nyght schewes conyng.

Ver. 3. Na speches er, ne na wordes, of the quilk the voyces of thaim be noght herd.

Ver. 4. In al the land yede the soun of thaim; and in endes of the wereld thair wordes.

Ver. 5. In the Soun he sett his tabernacle; and he as a spouse comand forth of his chaumber: he joyed als geaunt at ryn the way.

Ver. 6. Fra heest heven the gangyng of hym: and his gayne rase til the heest of hym: nane es that hym may hyde fra his hete.

All the *versions*, except the *Chaldee*, render the last clause of the *fourth* verse thus: “In the sun he hath placed his tabernacle;” as the old *Psalter* likewise does. They supposed that if the Supreme Being had a *local* dwelling, this must be it; as it was to all human appearances the fittest place. But the Hebrew is, “Among them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.” He is the *centre* of the universe; all the other heavenly bodies appear to serve him. He is like a general in his pavilion, surrounded by his troops, to whom he gives his orders, and by whom he is obeyed. So, the solar influence gives motion, activity, light, and heat to all the planets. To none of the other heavenly bodies does the psalmist assign a *tabernacle*, none is said to have a *fixed dwelling*, but the sun.

Verse 5. Which is as a bridegroom, &c.] This is a reference to the *rising of the sun*, as the following verse is to the *setting*. He makes his appearance above the horizon with splendour and majesty; every creature seems to rejoice at his approach; and during the whole of his course, through his whole circuit, his apparent revolution from east to west, and from one tropic to the same again, no part of the earth is deprived of its proper proportion of light and heat. The sun is compared to a *bridegroom* in his *ornaments*, because of the *glory* and *splendour* of his *rays*; and to a *giant* or *strong man running a race*, because of the *power* of his *light* and *heat*. The apparent motion of the sun, in his *diurnal* and *annual* progress, are here both referred to. Yet both of these have been demonstrated to be *mere* appearances. The sun's *diurnal* motion arises from the earth's rotation on its axis from west to east in *twenty-three hours, fifty-six minutes*, and *four* seconds, the *mean* or *equal* time which elapses between the two consecutive meridian-transits of the same fixed star. But on account of the sun's apparent ecliptic motion in the *same* direction, the earth must make about the *three hundred and sixty-fifth* part of a *second* revolution on its axis before any given point of the earth's surface can be *again* brought into the same direction with the sun as before: so that the length of a natural day is *twenty-four hours* at a mean rate. The apparent revolution of the sun through the *twelve* constellations of the zodiac in a *sidereal* year, is caused by the earth's making one *complete* revolution in its orbit in the same time. And as the earth's axis makes an angle with the axis of the ecliptic of about *twenty-three degrees* and *twenty eight minutes*, and always maintains its parallelism, i.e., is always directed to the same point of the starry firmament; from these circumstances are produced the regular *change* of the seasons, and continually differing *lengths* of the days and nights in all parts of the terraqueous globe, except at the *poles* and on the *equator*. When we say that the earth's axis is always directed to the *same* point of the heavens, we mean to be understood only in a general sense; for, owing to a *very slow* deviation of the terrestrial axis from its *parallelism*, named the *precession of the equinoctial points*, which becomes sensible in the lapse of some years, and which did not escape the observation of the ancient astronomers, who clearly perceived that it was occasioned by a slow revolution of the celestial poles around the poles of the ecliptic, the complete revolution of the earth in its orbit is *longer* than the *natural* year, or the earth's *tropical* revolution, by a little more than *twenty* minutes; so that in *twenty-five thousand seven hundred and sixty-three* entire terrestrial revolutions round the sun, the seasons will be

renewed *twenty-five thousand seven hundred and sixty-four* times. And in *half* this period of *twelve thousand eight hundred and eighty-two* natural years, the points which are *now* the north and south poles of the heavens, around which the whole starry firmament appears to revolve, will describe circles about the *then* north and south poles of the heavens, the semi-diameters of which will be upwards of *forty-seven* degrees.

Coming out of his chamber] wtpj m mechuppatho, from under his veil. It was a sort of *canopy* erected on four poles, which four Jews held over the bridegroom's head.

Verse 7. The law of the Lord] And here are *two* books of Divine Revelation: 1. The *visible* HEAVENS, and the *works of creation* in general. 2. The BIBLE, or Divinely inspired writings contained in the *Old and New Testaments*. These may all be called *the LAW of the Lord*; hrwt torah, from hry yarah, to *instruct, direct, put straight, guide*. It is God's system of *instruction*, by which men are *taught* the knowledge of God and themselves, *directed* how to walk so as to please GOD, redeemed from *crooked paths*, and *guided* in the way everlasting. Some think that hrwt torah means the *preceptive* part of Revelation. Some of the primitive fathers have mentioned *three* LAWS given by God to man: 1. The *law of nature*, which teaches the knowledge of God, as to his eternal power and Deity, by the visible creation. 2. The *law* given to *Moses* and the *prophets*, which teaches more perfectly the knowledge of God, his *nature*, his *will* and our *duty*. 3. The *law of grace* given by Christ Jesus, which shows the doctrine of the *atonement*, of *purification*, and of the *resurrection* of the body. The *first* is written in *hieroglyphics* in the heavens and the earth. The *second* was written on *tables of stone*, and in many *rites and ceremonies*. The *third* is to be written on the *heart* by the *power* of the *Holy Ghost*.

Is **perfect]** hmymt temimah, it is perfection, it is perfect in itself as a law, and requires *perfection* in the *hearts* and *lives* of men. This is ITS *character*.

Converting the soul] Turning it back to God. Restoring it to right reason, or to a sound mind; teaching it its own interest in reference to both worlds. This is ITS *use*.

The testimony of the Lord] twd[eduth, from d[ad, beyond, forward. The various types and appointments of the law, which *refer* to something

beyond themselves, and *point forward* to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Some understand, the *doctrinal* parts of the law.

Is **sure**] **hnman** *neemanah*, are *faithful*; they point out the things *beyond* them *fairly, truly, and fully*, and make no vain or *false* report. They all bear testimony to the great atonement. This is THEIR *character*.

Making wise the simple.] The simple is he who has but *one end* in view: who is concerned about his soul, and earnestly inquires, “What shall I do to be saved?” These testimonies point to the atonement, and thus the *simple-hearted* is made wise unto salvation. This is THEIR *use*.

Verse 8. The statutes of the Lord] **pydwqp** *pikkudim*, from **dqp** *pakad*, he visited, *cared, took notice of, appointed to a charge*. The *appointments, or charge delivered* by God to man for his regard and observance.

Are **right**] **pyrvy** *yesharim*, from **rvy** *yashar*, to make *straight, smooth, right, upright*, opposed to *crookedness* in mind or conduct; showing what the man should be, both *within and without*. This is THEIR *character*.

Rejoicing the heart] As they show a man what he is to observe and keep in charge, and how he is to please God, and the Divine help he is to receive from the *visitations* of God, they contribute greatly to the *happiness* of the upright—they *rejoice the heart*. This is THEIR *use*.

The commandment] **hwxm** *mitsvah*, from **hwx** *tsavah*, to *command, give orders, ordain*. What God has *ordered* man to do, or not to do. What he has *commanded*, and what he has *prohibited*.

Is **pure**] From **hrb** *barah*, to clear, *cleanse, purify*. All God’s commandments lead to *purity, enjoin purity*, and *point out* that *sacrificial offering* by which *cleansing and purification* are acquired. This is ITS *character*.

Enlightening the eyes.] Showing men what they should *do*, and what they should *avoid*. It is by God’s commandments that we *see* the exceeding *sinfulness of sin*, and the *necessity of redemption*, so that we may love the Lord with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. For this is the end of the commandment, and thus to *enlighten the eyes* is ITS *use*.

Verse 9. The fear of the Lord] **hary** *yirah*, from **ary** *yara*, to *fear*, to *venerate*; often put for the whole of Divine worship. The reverence we owe to the Supreme Being.

Is **clean]** **hrwhc** *tehorah*, from **rhc** *tahar*, to be *pure*, *clean*; not differing much from **hrb** *barah*, (see above,) to be *clean* and *bright* as the *heavens*; as purified SILVER. Its object is to purge away all *defilement*, to make a *spotless character*.

Enduring for ever] **d[l tdmw]** *omedeth laad*, *standing up to* PERPETUITY. The *fear* that prevents us from offending God, that causes us to *revere* him, and is the *beginning* as it is the safeguard of *wisdom*, must be carried all through life. No soul is safe for a moment without it. It prevents departure from God, and keeps that clean which God has purified. This is ITS *use*.

The judgments of the Lord] **μycpvm** *mishpatim*, from **tpv** *shaphat*, he *judged*, *regulated*, *disposed*, All God's *regulations*, all his *decisions*; what he has *pronounced* to be *right* and *proper*.

Are **true]** **tma** *emeth*, *truth*, from **μα** *am*, to *support*, *confirm*, *make stable*, and *certain*. This is the *character* of God's *judgments*. They shall all *stand*. All dispensations in providence and grace *confirm* them; they are *certain*, and have a *fixed character*.

And **righteous altogether.]** They are not only according to *truth*; but they are *righteous*, **wqdx** *tsadeku*, they give to *all their due*. They show what belongs to *God*, to *man*, and to *ourselves*. And hence the word *altogether*, **wdj** *yachdav*, *equally*, is added; or *truth* and *righteousness united*.

Verse 10. More to be desired are they than gold] This is strictly true; but who believes it? By most men *gold* is preferred both to *God* and his *judgments*; and they will barter every heavenly portion for gold and silver!

Sweeter also than honey] To those whose mental taste is rectified, who have a spiritual discernment.

Honey-comb.] Honey is *sweet*; but honey just out of the *comb* has a sweetness, richness and flavour, far beyond what it has after it becomes exposed to the air. Only those who have eaten of honey from the comb can feel the force of the psalmist's comparison: *it is better than gold*, yea, than

fine gold in the greatest quantity; it is *sweeter* than *honey*, yea, than *honey* from the *comb*.

Verse 11. By them is thy servant warned] *rhzn nizhar*, from *rhz zahar*, to be *clear*, *pellucid*. By these laws, testimonies, &c., thy servant is *fully instructed*; he *sees all clearly*; and he *discerns* that in *keeping of them there is great reward*: every man is wise, holy, and happy, who observes them. All Christian experience confirms this truth. Reader, what says *thine*?

Verse 12. Who can understand his errors?] It is not possible, without much of the Divine light, to understand all our *deviations* from, not only the *letter*, but the *spirituality*, of the Divine law. Frequent self-examination, and walking in the light, are essentially necessary to the requisite degree of spiritual perfection.

Cleanse thou me from secret faults.] From those which I have committed, and have forgotten; from those for which I have not repented; from those which have been committed in my heart, but have not been brought to act in my life; from those which I have committed without knowing that they were sins, sins of *ignorance*; and from those which I have committed in private, for which I should blush and be confounded were they to be made public.

Verse 13. From presumptuous sins] Sins committed not through *frailty* or *surprise*, but those which are the offspring of *thought*, *purpose*, and *deliberation*. Sins against judgment, light, and conscience. The words might be translated, *Preserve thy servant also from the proud*; from tyrannical governors, i.e., from evil spirits.—Bishop *Horsley*. So most of the *versions* understand the place.

Let them not have dominion over me] Let me never be brought into a *habit* of sinning. He who sins *presumptuously* will soon be *hardened* through the deceitfulness of sin.

Then shall I be upright] Let me be preserved from all the evil that the craft and malice of the devil or man work against me, then shall I continue to walk *uprightly*, and shall be *innocent from the great transgression*—from habitual sinning, from *apostasy*, from my *easily-besetting sin*. He who would be innocent from the great transgression, must take care that he indulge not himself in any. See Bishop *Horne*. Most men have committed

some particular sin which they ought to deplore as long as they breathe, and on account of the enormity of which they should for ever be humbled.

Verse 14. Let the words of my mouth] He has prayed against practical sin, the sins of the *body*; now, against the *sins* of the *mouth* and of the *heart*. Let my *mouth* speak nothing but what is *true, kind, and profitable*; and my *heart* meditate nothing but what is *holy, pure, and chaste*.

Acceptable in thy sight] Like a *sacrifice* without spot or blemish, offered up with a perfect heart to God.

O Lord, my strength] *yrwx tsuri*, “my fountain, my origin.”

My redeemer.] *yl ag goali*, my *kinsman*, he whose right it is to redeem the forfeited inheritance; for so was the word used under the old law. This prayer is properly concluded! he was *weak*, he felt the need of God’s *strength*. He had *sinned* and *lost all title to the heavenly inheritance*, and therefore needed the interference of the *Divine kinsman*; of HIM who, because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, also partook of the same. No prayer can be *acceptable* before God which is not offered up in his *strength*; through HIM who took our nature upon him, that he might redeem us unto God, and restore the long-lost inheritance. *Lord my help and my byer*.—Old *Psalter*. He who is my only *help*, and he that *bought* me with his blood. This prayer is often, with great propriety, uttered by pious people when they enter a place of worship.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETEENTH PSALM

I. There are TWO parts in this Psalm. The *first* is *doctrinal*; the *second*, *penitential*. The doctrinal part has two members:—

1. The first teaches us to know God by *natural reason*, from the *book of creation*, ^{<19191>}**Psalm 19:1-7**.

2. But because this way is insufficient to save a soul, therefore in the *second* part we have a better way prescribed, which is the *book of the Scriptures*; the excellences of which are described, ^{<19197>}**Psalm 19:7-11**.

II. The *penitential* part begins at the *twelfth* verse, for since the reward to be expected proceeds from the keeping of God’s law, and David’s heart told him he had not kept it, therefore, he begs *pardon* and *grace*,

^{<191912>}**Psalm 19:12-14**.

I. “The heavens declare,” &c. By the *glory of God* we are to understand his goodness, wisdom, power; in a word, all his attributes, of which we have a double declaration:—

1. A testimony from the *creatures*, but especially the *heavens*, whose magnitude, beauty, order, variety, perpetual motion, light, influences, &c., declare that there is an omnipotent, wise, good, and gracious God, who is their Creator; with this David begins: “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth,” &c.

2. The vicissitude of day and night, proceeding from their motions, declares this also: “Day unto day uttereth speech,” &c. 1. The heavens are *diligent preachers*; for they *preach all day and all night*, without intermission. 2. They are *learned preachers*, for they preach in all tongues: “There is no speech-where their voice is not heard.” 3. They are *universal preachers*, for they preach to the whole world: “Their sound is gone through all the earth,” &c.

3. But among all these creatures the SUN, for which God in heaven has set a *throne*, makes the fairest and clearest evidence, and that in the three following ways:—

1. By his *splendour*, light, and beauty; he riseth as gloriously as a bridegroom coming from under his canopy.

2. By his *wonderful celerity*, not only in revolving round his own axis, which revolution, although he is *one million three hundred and eighty-four thousand four hundred and sixty-two* times bigger than the earth, he performs in *twenty-five days fourteen* hours of our time, but also in the *swiftness* with which his light comes to the earth. It travels at the rate of *one hundred and ninety-four thousand one hundred and eighty-eight* miles in a *second* of time; and reaches our earth in *eight minutes* and about *twelve seconds*, a distance of *ninety-five millions five hundred and thirteen thousand seven hundred and ninety-four* English miles, at a mean rate.

3. His strange and miraculous *heat*, from which nothing is *hidden*, and by which every thing is *benefited*.

II. But as the declaration, even from the most glorious of creatures, is not sufficient to make men wise and happy, he has been pleased to declare himself by his WRITTEN WORD, called here the LAW generally; and is commended to us by the following reasons:—

1. From the *author*: It is the “law of Jehovah.”
2. From its *sufficiency*: It is “perfect.”
3. From its *utility*: “It converts the soul:—gives wisdom to the simple.”
4. From its *infallibility*: “The testimony of the Lord is sure.”
5. From its *perspicuity*: “The statutes of the Lord are right.”
6. From the *effects* it works on the *soul*: “They rejoice the heart.” They quiet the troubled conscience; “being justified by faith, we have peace with God.”
7. From its *purity*: “The commandment of the Lord is pure.” It is opposed to all *bad opinions* and *evil practices*.
8. From its *effects in the understanding*: “It enlightens the eyes.” It dispels all darkness and ignorance, all doubts and fears, diffidence, carnal security, false worship, &c., and gives us to see our own *deformities*.
9. From its *uncorruptness*: “The fear of the Lord is clean.” Other religions are *polluted* with human inventions, strange ceremonies, uncommanded sacrifices, false gods, &c.
10. From its *perpetuity*: “It endureth for ever.” It is an endless law, and an everlasting Gospel.
11. From its *truth* and *equity*: “It is altogether true and righteous.”

From all which David concludes, that it is both *precious* and *delightful*.

1. The *price* of it is beyond the best gold: “More to be desired than gold; yea, than much fine gold.”
2. It is *delightful*: “Sweeter than honey and the honey-comb.”
3. This he knew by his own *experience*: “Moreover, by them is thy servant illuminated.”
4. It is *profitable* to observe them: “For in keeping of them there is, 1. A *reward*. 2. A *great reward*.”

III. But this last consideration sent David to the throne of mercy. What! a reward, a great reward! and only to those who *keep God’s law*? My conscience tells me that the reward is not for *me*; I cannot plead this

observance. David had public sins, secret faults and errors, to deplore. But he had at hand *three* means of help: 1. *Confession of sin*. 2. *Petition for grace*. 3. *Faith* in the Divine *mercy*, through the great *Redeemer*.

1. He knew he was an *offender*, but he *knew not how greatly* he had *offended*. He saw that he was *guilty*, and asked *pardon*. He felt that he was *impure*, and asked *cleansing*: “Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from my secret faults.”

2. He prays that he may be preserved from *presumptuous sins*; that he might not be hardened in transgression: “Keep back also thy servant from presumptuous sins.” For which he gives *two* reasons: 1. If he were not *kept back* from them, sin would get the *dominion* over him. Sin would become a king, who would command, rule, and enslave him. 2. If thus kept back, he would be *innocent from the great transgression*; for he that gets under the strong habit of sin may at last deny God himself, renounce the blood of the covenant, and become a castaway.

3. Lastly, that his prayer may be heard, he prays for his prayer: “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight.” This is *pleading*, or *supplication*.

That prayer and supplication may be successful he acts *faith* in God, whom he,

1. Claims as his *strength*; literally, his *rock*, by whom alone he could resist and overcome.

2. His *redeemer*, through whom alone he could get pardon for the past, and grace to help him in time of need. To this word he adds nothing, as it includes every thing necessary to saint and sinner. See the *notes*.

PSALMS

PSALM 20

A prayer for the king in his enterprises, that his prayers may be heard, his offerings accepted, and his wishes fulfilled, 1-4. Confidence of victory expressed, 5, 6. Vain hopes exposed; and supplication made for the king. 7-9.

NOTES ON PSALM 20

It is most likely that this Psalm was penned on the occasion of David's going to war, and most probably with the Ammonites and Syrians, who came with great numbers of *horses* and *chariots* to fight with him. See ^{<10106>}**2 Samuel 10:6-8**, ^{<131907>}**1 Chronicles 19:7**. It is one of the *Dialogue Psalms*, and appears to be thus divided: Previously to his undertaking the war, David comes to the tabernacle to offer sacrifice. This being done, the *people*, in the king's behalf, offer up their prayers; these are included in the *three* first verses: the fourth was probably spoken by the *high priest*; the *fifth*, by *David* and his *attendants*; the last clause, by the high priest; the *sixth*, by the *high priest*, after the victim was consumed; the *seventh* and *eighth*, by *David* and his *men*; and the *ninth*, as a *chorus* by all the congregation.

Verse 1. The Lord hear thee] David had already offered the *sacrifice* and *prayed*. The *people* implore God to succour him in the day of trouble; of both *personal* and *national* danger.

The name of the God of Jacob] This refers to Jacob's wrestling with the Angel; ^{<01324>}**Genesis 32:24**, &c. And who was this Angel? Evidently none other than the *Angel of the Covenant*, the Lord Jesus, in whom was the *name of God*, the *fulness of the Godhead bodily*. He was the *God of Jacob*, who *blessed* Jacob, and gave him a *new name* and a *new nature*. See the *notes* on the above place in Genesis.

Verse 2. Send thee help from the sanctuary] This was the *place* where God recorded his name; the place where he was to be sought, and the place where he manifested himself. He dwelt between the *cherubim* over the *mercy-seat*. He is now in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. This is the true sanctuary where God must be sought.

Strengthen thee out of Zion] The *temple* or *tabernacle* where his prayers and sacrifices were to be offered.

Verse 3. Remember all thy offerings] The *minchah*, which is here mentioned, was a *gratitude-offering*. It is rarely used to signify a bloody sacrifice.

Burnt sacrifice] The *olah* here mentioned was a *bloody sacrifice*. The blood of the victim was spilt at the altar, and the flesh consumed. One of these offerings implied a *consciousness of sin* in the offerer; and this sacrifice he brought as an *atonement*: the other implied a sense of *mercies* already *received*, and was offered in the way of *gratitude*.

David presents himself before the Lord with offerings of both kinds.

This prayer of the *people* is concluded with *Selah*, which we have taken up in the general sense of *so be it. Hear and answer. It will and must be so, &c.*

Verse 4. Grant thee according to thine own heart] May God give thee whatsoever thou art setting thy heart upon, and accomplish all *thy desires!* This was probably the prayer of the *high priest*.

Verse 5. We will rejoice in thy salvation] We expect help from thee alone; it is in thy cause we engage; and to *thee*, as our war is a just one, we consecrate our banners, inscribed with thy name. It is said that the *Maccabees* had their name from the inscription on their banners; which was taken from ^{<Q151>}**Exodus 15:11**, *hwhy ׀ ab hkmk ym mi camochah baelim Yehovah*, “Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?” The word being formed from the *initial* letters *m M, k C, b B, y I, ybkm Ma Ca B I*, whence *Maccabeus* and *Maccabees*.

The words of this verse were spoken by David and his officers; immediately after which I suppose the high priest to have added, *The Lord fulfil all thy petitions!*

Verse 6. Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed] These are probably the words of the *priest* after the victim had been consumed; and those *signs* had accompanied the offering, which were proofs of God’s *acceptance* of the sacrifice; and, consequently, that the campaign would have a successful issue. David is God’s *anointed*; therefore, he is under his especial care. *He will hear him.* David must continue to *pray*, and to

depend on God; else he cannot expect continual salvation. David has vast multitudes of enemies against him; he, therefore, requires supernatural help. Because of this, *God will hear him with the saving strength of his right hand.*

The HAND of God is his *power*, the RIGHT *hand*, his *almighty power*; the STRENGTH *of his right hand*, his almighty power in *action*; the SAVING *strength of his right hand*, the *miraculous effects* wrought by his almighty power brought into *action*. This is what David was to expect; and it was the prospect of this that caused him and his officers to exult as they do in the following verse.

Verse 7. Some trust in chariots] The words of the original are short and emphatic: *These in chariots; and these in horses; but we will record in the name of Jehovah our God.* Or, as the *Septuagint*, μεγαλυθησομεθα, “we shall be magnified.” Or, as the *Vulgate*, *invocabimus*, “we shall invoke the name of the Lord.” This and the following verse I suppose to be the words of David and his officers. And the mention of *chariots* and *horses* makes it likely that the war with the *Ammonites* and *Syrians* is that to which reference is made here; for they came against him with vast multitudes of *horsemen* and *chariots*. See ^{<101005>}2 Samuel 10:6-8. According to the law, David could neither have chariots nor horses; and those who came against him with cavalry must have a very great advantage; but he saw that Jehovah his God was more than a match for all his foes, and in him he trusts with implicit confidence.

Verse 8. They are brought down and fallen] They were so confident of victory that they looked upon it as *already gained*. They who trusted in their *horses* and *chariots* are *bowed down*, and prostrated on the earth: they are all overthrown.

But we are risen] We who have trusted in the *name of Jehovah* are *raised up* from all despondency; and we *stand upright*-we shall conquer, and go on to conquer.

Verse 9. Save, Lord] This verse was spoken by all the *congregation*, and was the *chorus* and *conclusion* of the piece.

The verse may be read, *Lord, save the king! He will hear as in the day of our calling.* The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, *Anglo-Saxon*, read the verse thus: *Lord, save the king! and hear us whensoever we shall*

call upon thee. The Syriac reads differently: *The Lord will save us: and our king will hear us in the day in which we shall call upon him*. This refers all to GOD: while the others refer the latter clause to DAVID. *Lord, save David; and David will save us*. “If thou preservest *him*, he will be thy minister for good to *us*.” This appears to be the easiest sense of the place, and harmonizes with all the rest.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTIETH PSALM

This Psalm is a form of prayer delivered by David to the people, to be used by them for the king, when he went out to battle against his enemies.

In this Psalm there are the following parts:—

- I. A benediction of the people for their king, ^{<19201>}**Psalm 20:1-4**.
- II. A congratulation or triumph of the people after the victory, supposed to be already obtained, ^{<19215>}**Psalm 20:5-8**.
- III. A petition, ^{<19219>}**Psalm 20:9**.

I. The benediction directed to David’s person. The particulars; that he may have,

- 1. *Audience* in his necessity: “The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble.”
- 2. *Protection*: “The name of the God of Jacob defend thee,” ^{<19201>}**Psalm 20:1**.
- 3. *Help* and *strength* in battle: “Send thee help-strengthen thee;” which is amplified, 1. By the *place*: “Help from the sanctuary;” 2. “Strength out of Zion.”
- 4. *Acceptance* of his *person*; testified by the acceptance of his offerings and sacrifices, ^{<19215>}**Psalm 20:3**.
- 5. *Answers* to his *petitions*: “Grant thee according to thy own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel,” ^{<19204>}**Psalm 20:4**; which is plainly set down in the next verse: “The Lord fulfil all thy petitions,” ^{<19215>}**Psalm 20:5**.

This benediction being ended, they persuade themselves that the prayer of it shall be granted, because it will redound to God’s glory; and they will be thankful, and honour him for the victory.

- 1. “We will rejoice in thy salvation.” Or Do this, “that we may rejoice.”

2. "In the name of our God will we set up our banners." We will enter the city joyfully, with displayed banners, which we still erect as trophies to the honour of God.

II. Now follow the congratulation and triumph of their faith: for they give thanks as for a victory already obtained; as to their faith it was certain.

Before they prayed for audience and protection: here they testify they are certain and secure of both.

1. Of *protection*: "Now know I that the Lord will save," &c.

2. Of *audience*: "He will hear from his holy heaven."

3. Of *help*: "With the saving strength of his right hand," ^{<19206>} **Psalm 20:6**.

The certainty they had of this victory proceeded solely from their confidence in God. And this they illustrate by an argument drawn *a dissimili*: they were *not like* others who trust more to their *arms* than to their *prayers*; more to their *numbers* than to *God*.

1. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;" as the Ammonites, ^{<10106>} **2 Samuel 10:6**.

2. But we do not so: "We will remember the name of the Lord our God; the Lord of hosts, mighty in battle." Arms may be used by good or bad men; but the difference lies in the *object*, the *end*, and the *confidence*. A bad cause cannot have God's concurrence: a good cause will have his countenance and support.

3. And therefore the *success* was according to the confidence. 1. They who trusted in their arms, &c., *are brought down, and fallen*. 2. We who trusted in the Lord our God, *are risen, and stand upright*, ^{<19208>} **Psalm 20:8**.

III. The third part contains a short ejaculation, and is the sum of the Psalm.

1. "Save, Lord!" *Thou* alone canst save us: in *thee*, and in none other, do we put our trust.

2. "Let the king hear us." We propose to continue in prayer and faith; therefore, when we call, *let the king*, the *Messiah*, which *thou hast set on thy holy hill*, ^{<19206>} **Psalm 2:6**, hear us. Or, according to another arrangement of the words: 1. *Lord, save our king*. Make him wise and good, preserve his person, and prosper his government; that we may have peace in our time, and secular prosperity. 2. Hear thou us when we call. Let us have

also spiritual prosperity, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy name.—[Anglo-Saxon] “O thou Lord, health give the king.”—*Anglo-Saxon*.

PSALMS

PSALM 21

The psalmist returns thanks to God for giving him the victory over his enemies; which victory he had earnestly requested, 1, 2. He enters into a detail of the blessings that in consequent of the victory he had obtained, 3-7. He predicts the destruction of all those who may hereafter rise up against him, 8-12; and concludes with praising the power of Jehovah, 13.

NOTES ON PSALM 21

In the *title* of this Psalm there is nothing particularly worthy of remark. The *occasion* of it is variously understood. Some think it was composed to celebrate the victory obtained over *Sennacherib*; others, that it was made on the recovery of *Hezekiah*, and the grant of *fifteen* years of longer life; see ^{<192104>}**Psalm 21:4**. Others and they with most appearance of propriety consider it a song of rejoicing composed by David for his victory over the *Ammonites*, which ended in the capture of the royal city of *Rabbah*, the crown of whose king David put on his own head, see ^{<192103>}**Psalm 21:3**, and to procure which victory David offered the prayers and sacrifices mentioned in the preceding Psalm. Lastly, many think that it is to be wholly referred to the *victories of the Messiah*; and it must be owned that there are several expressions in it which apply better to our Lord than to David, or to any other person; and to him the *Targum* applies it, as does likewise my old *Anglo-Scottish Psalter* in paraphrasing the text.

Verse 1. The king shall joy] *aj yvm Ĕl m melech Meshicha*, “the King Messiah.”—*Targum*. What a difference between ancient and modern heroes! The former acknowledged all to be of God, because they took care to have their quarrel *rightly founded*; the latter sing a *Te Deum*, pro forma, because they well know that their battle is *not* of the Lord. Their own vicious conduct sufficiently proves that they looked no higher than the arm of human strength. God suffers such for a time, but in the end he confounds and brings them to naught.

Verse 2. Thou hast given him his heart’s desire] This seems to refer to the prayers offered in the preceding Psalm; see especially ^{<192101>}**Psalm 21:1-4**.

Verse 3. Thou preventest him] To *prevent*, from *prævenio*, literally signifies *to go before*. Hence that prayer in the *communion service* of our public Liturgy, “*Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour!*” That is, “*Go before us in thy mercy, make our way plain, and enable us to perform what is right in thy sight!*” And this sense of *prevent* is a literal version of the original word **וַנִּמְדַּקְתָּ** *tekademennu*. “For thou shalt go before him with the blessings of goodness.”

Our ancestors used *God before* in this sense. So in Henry V.’s speech to the French herald previously to the battle of Agincourt:—

*“Go therefore; tell thy master, here I am.
My ransom is this frail and worthless trunk;
My army, but a weak and sickly guard:
Yet, God before, tell him we will come on,
Though France himself, and such another neighbour,
Stand in our way.”*

A crown of pure gold] Probably alluding to the crown of the king of Rabbah, which, on the taking of the city, David took and put on his own head. See the history, ^{<10126>}**2 Samuel 12:26-30**.

Verse 4. He asked life of thee] This verse has caused some interpreters to understand the Psalm of *Hezekiah’s sickness, recovery, and the promised addition to his life of fifteen years*; but it may be more literally understood of the *Messiah*, of whom David was the *type*, and in several respects the *representative*.

Verse 5. His glory is great] But great as his glory was, it had its greatness from *God’s salvation*. There is no true *nobility* but of the soul, and the soul has none but what it receives from the *grace and salvation* of God.

Verse 6. Thou hast made him most blessed for ever] Literally, “Thou hast set him for blessings for ever.” Thou hast made the *Messiah* the *Source* whence all blessings for time and for eternity shall be derived. He is the *Mediator* between God and man.

Thou hast made him exceeding glad] Jesus, as *Messiah, for the joy that was set before him*, of redeeming a lost world by his death, *endured the cross, and despised the shame*, and is for ever set down on the right hand of God.

Verse 7. The king trusteth in the Lord] It was not by my *skill* or *valour* that I have gained this victory, but by *faith* in the *strong, protecting, and conquering arm* of JEHOVAH.

He shall not be moved.] Perhaps this may be best understood of him who was David's *prototype*. His throne, kingdom, and government, shall remain for ever.

Verse 8. Thine hand shall find out] Thy uncontrollable *power* shall find out all thine enemies, wheresoever *hidden* or howsoever *secret*. God knows the secret sinner, and where the workers of iniquity hide themselves.

Verse 9. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven] By thy wrath they shall be burnt up, and they shall be the means of consuming others. One class of sinners shall, in God's judgments, be the means of destroying another class; and at last themselves shall be destroyed.

Verse 10. Their fruit shalt thou destroy] Even their *posterity* shall be cut off, and thus their *memorial* shall perish.

Verse 11. For they intended evil] Sinners shall not be permitted to do all that *is in their power* against the godly; much less shall they be able to perform all that they *wish*.

Verse 12. Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back] God can in a moment strike the most powerful and numerous army, even in the moment of victory, with *panic*; and then even the *lame*, the army which they had nearly routed, shall take the prey, and divide the spoil.

Against the face of them.] Thou shalt cause them to turn their backs and fly, as if a volley of arrows had been discharged in their faces. This seems to be the *sense* of this difficult verse.

Verse 13. Be thou exalted] *Exalt thyself, O Lord*-thy creatures cannot exalt thee. *Lift thyself up*, and discomfit thy foes by thine own strength! Thou canst give a victory to thy people over the most formidable enemies, though they strike not one blow in their own defence. God's right hand has often given the victory to his followers, while they stood still to see the salvation of God. How little can the strength of man avail when the Lord *raiseth up himself* to the battle! His children, therefore, may safely trust in

him, for the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous flee into it, and are safe.

Praise thy power.] God is to receive praise in reference to that attribute which he has *exhibited* most in the defence or salvation of his followers. Sometimes he *manifests* his *power*, his *mercy*, his *wisdom*, his *longsuffering*, his *fatherly care*, his *good providence*, his *holiness*, his *justice*, his *truth*, &c. Whatever attribute or perfection he exhibits most, *that* should be the chief subject of his children's *praise*. One wants *teaching*, prays for it, and is deeply instructed: he will naturally celebrate the *wisdom* of God. Another feels himself beset with the most *powerful* adversaries, with the *weakest* of whom he is not *able* to cope: he cries to the Almighty God for *strength*; he is heard, and strengthened with strength in his soul. He therefore will naturally magnify the all-conquering *power* of the Lord. Another feels himself lost, condemned, on the brink of hell; he calls for *mercy*, is heard and saved: *mercy*, therefore, will be the *chief subject* of his praise, and the *burden of his song*.

The old Anglo-Scottish Psalter says, We sal make knowen thi wordes in gude wil and gude werk, for he synges well that wirkes well. For thi, sais he twise, we sal syng; ane tyme for the luf of hert; another, for the schewyng of ryghtwisness, til ensampil.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-FIRST PSALM

This is the people's **Επινικιον**, or *triumphal song*, after the victory which they prayed for in the former Psalm, when David went out to war. In this they praise God for the conquest which he gave him over his enemies, and for the singular mercies bestowed on himself. It consists of *three* parts:—

I. The general proposition, ^{<19210>}**Psalm 21:1**.

II. The narration, which is twofold, from ^{<19210>}**Psalm 21:1-4**. 1. An enumeration of the blessings bestowed on David, ^{<19210>}**Psalm 21:1-6**. 2. An account how God would deal with his enemies, ^{<19210>}**Psalm 21:6-12**.

III. A vow, or acclamation, ^{<19213>}**Psalm 21:13**, which is the *epilogue* of the piece.

I. The *sum of the Psalm* is contained in the *first verse*: "The king shall joy; the king shall be exceeding glad." Joy is the affection with which the king

and people were transported; for all that follows shows but the rise and causes of it.

I. The rise and object of it: “The strength of God; the salvation of God.” 1. His *strength*, by which he subdued his enemies, and contemned dangers. 2. His *salvation*, by which he escaped dangers, and fell not in battle.

II. 1. The *narration* of the goodness of God to David’s person, the particulars of which are the following:—

1. God granted to him what his *heart* desired: “Thou hast given him his heart’s desire,” and what his *lips* requested: “and hast not withholden the request of his lips.”

2. He granted him more than he asked: “Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness.”

3. He chose him to be *king*: “Thou hast set a crown of pure gold upon his head.” In which God prevented him, and chose him when he thought not of it.

4. When David went to war, “he asked life, and thou gavest him even length of days for ever and ever:” which is most true of Christ, the Son of David. In him his life and kingdom are immortal.

5. A great accession of *glory, honour, and majesty*. Though his glory was great, it was *in God’s salvation*; “Honour and majesty did God lay upon him.”

All which are summed up under the word *blessing* in the next verse. “For thou hast made him most blessed for ever;” and God had added the *crown* of all, a *heart to rejoice* in it: “Thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.”

6. The *continuance* of these blessings, which is *another* favour, with the *cause* of it: “For the king trusteth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved.” Thus far the *first part* of the *narrative*, which concerned David’s person particularly.

2. The *effects* of God’s goodness to David in *outward* things, and to the whole kingdom, in the overthrow of his enemies, (for without God’s protection what kingdom is safe?) form the *second part*.

1. God would make David his *instrument* in delivering Israel by the overthrow of his enemies: “Thine hand.”
2. He would certainly do it, for he could *find them out* wheresoever they were: “Thine hand shall find out thine enemies.”
3. This was easy to be done, as easy as for fire to consume stubble: “Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven.”
4. This destruction should be universal; it should reach even to their *posterity*: “Their fruit shalt thou destroy, and their seed.”
5. Their judgment should be fearful and unavoidable. God would set them up as a *mark to shoot at*: “Thou shalt make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows.”

At last the *cause* is added for these judgments; of the succour he will afford his afflicted, oppressed people; and the revenge he will take upon their enemies: “They intended evil against thee; they imagined a mischievous device.”

III. The vow or acclamation. This is properly the *epilogue*, and has *two parts*: 1. A petition—“Save the king and the people.” 2. A profession: “And we will give thanks to thee.”

1. “Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own strength.” Show thyself more powerful in defending thy Church than men and devils are in their attempts to destroy it.
2. We will be a thankful people; we will show that we have not received this grace of God in vain: “So will we sing, and praise thy power.”

PSALMS

PSALM 22

Under great affliction and distress, the psalmist prays unto God, 1-3; appeals to God's wonted kindness in behalf of his people, 4, 5; relates the insults that he received, 6-8; mentions the goodness of God to him in his youth, as a reason why he should expect help now, 9-11; details his sufferings, and the indignities offered to him, 12-18, prays with the confidence of being heard and delivered, 19-24; praises God. and foretells the conversion of the nations to the true religion, 25-31.

NOTES ON PSALM 22

The title of this Psalm, *To the chief Musician upon Ajeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David*, has given rise to many conjectures. The words **rj vh tI ya** *aiyeleth hashshachar* are translated in the margin, “the hind of the morning;” but what was this? Was it the name of a *musical instrument*? or of a tune? or of a *band of music*? *Calmet* argues for the last, and translates “A Psalm of David, addressed to the Musicmaster who presides over the Band called the Morning Hind.” This is more likely than any of the other conjectures I have seen. But *aiyeleth hashshachar* may be the name of the *Psalm* itself, for it was customary among the Asiatics to give names to their poetic compositions which often bore no relation to the subject itself. Mr. *Harmer* and others have collected a few instances from *D’Herbelot’s* *Bibliothèque Orientale*. I could add many more from MSS. in my own collection:—thus *Saady* calls a famous miscellaneous work of his *Gulisstan*, “The Country of Roses,” or, “The Rose Garden:” and yet there is nothing relative to such a *country*, nor concerning *roses* nor *rose gardens*, in the book. Another is called *Negaristan*, “The Gallery of Pictures;” yet no *picture gallery* is mentioned. Another *Beharistan*, “The Spring Season;” *Bostan*, “The Garden;” *Anvar Soheely*, “The Light of Canopus;” *Bahar Danush*, “The Garden of Knowledge;” *Tuhfit Almuneneen*, “The Gift of the Faithful,” a treatise on *medicine*; *Kemeea Isadut*, “The Alchymy of Life;” *Mukhzeen al Asrar*, “The Magazine of Secrets;” *Sulselet al Zahab*, “The Golden Chain;” *Zuhfit al Abrar*, “The Rosary of the Pious;” *Merat al Asrar*, “The Mirror of Secrets;” *Durjul Durar*, “The most precious Jewels;” *Deru Majlis*, “The Jewel of the Assembly;” *Al Bordah*, “The Variegated Garment;” a poem written by *Al*

Basiree, in praise of the *Mohammedan* religion, in gratitude for a cure which he believed he received from the prophet who appeared to him in a dream. The poem is written in *one hundred and sixty-two couplets*, each of which ends with [Arabic] *mim*, the *first letter* in the name of *Mohammed*.

Scarcely one of the above *titles*, and their number might be easily trebled, bears any relation to the *subject* of the work to which it is prefixed, no more than *Aijeleth Shahar* bears to the matter contained in the twenty-second Psalm. Such *titles* are of very little importance *in themselves*; and of no farther use to us than as they serve to distinguish the different *books, poems, or Psalms*, to which they are prefixed. To me, many seem to have spent their time uselessly in the investigation of such subjects. See Clarke's note on "^{<40118>}2 Samuel 1:18".

On the *subject* of the Psalm itself, there is considerable diversity of opinion: 1. Some referring it all to David; 2. Others referring it all to Christ; and, 3. Some, because of the application of several verses of it to our Lord in his sufferings, take a middle way, and apply it *primarily* to *David*, and in a *secondary* or *accommodated* sense, to *Christ*. Of this opinion was *Theodore* of *Mopsuestia*. who gave a very rational account of his own plan of interpretation; for which he was condemned by the *second* council of Constantinople or *fifth* Œcumenic council. *Grotius* and others have nearly copied his plan; and I think, with a little correction, it is the only safe one. That several parts of it relate to *David, primarily*, there is very little reason to doubt; that several passages may be applied by way of *accommodation* to our *Lord*, though *originally* belonging to and expressing the state of *David*, may be piously believed; and that it contains portions which are *direct prophecies* of our Lord's passion, death, and victory, appears too evident to be safely denied. On this plan I propose to treat it in the following paraphrase; keeping it as near to the Gospel standard as I can. Dr. *Delaney* supposes the Psalm to have been written by David when he was at *Mahanaim*, the very place where God appeared to Jacob in his distress. See ^{<01332>}**Genesis 32:2**. And on this supposition the *third, fourth, and fifth* verses may be easily and strikingly illustrated: *Our fathers trusted in thee; why may not I? Thou didst deliver THEM; why may not I expect deliverance also? THEY cried unto thee, trusted in thee, and were not confounded; I cry until thee, trust in thee; and why should I be confounded? For thou art the same God, thou changest not; and with thee there is no respect of persons. Thus David encouraged himself in the Lord;*

and these considerations helped to sustain him in his painful exercises and heavy distresses.

Verse 1. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?] Show me the cause why thou hast abandoned me to my enemies; and why thou seemest to disregard my prayers and cries? For a full illustration of this passage, I beg the reader to refer to **Clarke's note on "~~41746~~ Matthew 27:46"**.

The words of my roaring?] *ytgav shaagathi*, The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, with the *Anglo-Saxon*, make use of terms which may be thus translated: "My sins (or foolishness) are the cause why deliverance is so far from me." It appears that these versions have read *ytggv shegagathi*, "my sin of ignorance," instead of *ytgav shaagathi*, "my roaring:" but no MS. extant supports this reading.

Verse 2. I cry in the day-time, and in the night-season] This seems to be David's own experience; and the words seem to refer to his own case alone. Though I am not heard, and thou appearest to forget or abandon me; yet I continue to cry both day and night after thy salvation.

Verse 3. But thou art holy] Though I be not heard, even while I cry earnestly, yet I cannot impute any fault or unkindness to my Maker; for *thou art holy*, and canst do nothing but what is *right*. This is the language of profound resignation, in trials the most difficult to be borne.

Inhabitest the praises of Israel.] Thou dwellest in the *sanctuary* where the praises, thanksgivings, and sacrifices of thy people are continually offered.

Verse 4. Our fathers trusted in thee] David is supposed to have been, at the time of composing this Psalm, at *Mahanaim*, where Jacob was once in such great distress; where he wrestled with the angel, and was so signally blessed. David might well allude to this circumstance in order to strengthen his faith in God. I am now in the place where God so signally blessed the *head* and *father* of our *tribes*. I *wrestle* with God, as he did; may I not expect similar success?

Verse 5. They cried unto thee] So do *I*. *THEY were delivered*; so may *I*. *THEY trusted in thee*; I also trust in thee. *And were not confounded*; and is it likely that *I* shall be put to confusion?

Verse 6. But I am a worm, and no man] I can see no sense in which our Lord could use these terms. David might well use them to express his vileness and worthlessness. The old Psalter gives this a remarkable turn: *I am a worme, that es, I am borne of the mayden with outen manseede; and nout man anely, bot god als so: and nevir the latter, I am reprove of men.* In spitting, buffetyng, and punging with the thornes *and outkasting of folk*; for thai chesed Barraban the thefe, and nought me.

Verse 7. Laugh me to scorn] They utterly despised me; set me at naught; treated me with the utmost contempt. *Laugh to scorn* is so completely antiquated that it should be no longer used; *derided, despised, treated with contempt*, are much more expressive and are still in common use.

They shoot out the lip, they shake the head] This is applied by St. Matthew, ^{<1073>} **Matthew 27:39**, to the conduct of the Jews towards our Lord, when he hung upon the cross; as is also the following verse. But both are primarily true of the insults which David suffered from Shimei and others during the rebellion of Absalom; and, as the cases were so similar, the evangelist thought proper to express a similar conduct to Jesus Christ by the same expressions. These insults our Lord literally received, no doubt David received the same.

Verse 9. But thou art he that took me out of the womb] Thou hast made me; and hast guided and defended me from my earliest infancy.

Verse 11. Be not far from me; for trouble is near] A present God is a present blessing. We always need the Divine help; but more especially when troubles and trials are at hand.

Verse 12. Many bulls have compassed me] The *bull* is the emblem of brutal strength, that gores and tramples down all before it. Such was Absalom, Ahithophel, and others, who rose up in rebellion against David; and such were the Jewish rulers who conspired against Christ.

Strong bulls of Bashan] Bashan was a district beyond Jordan, very fertile, where they were accustomed to fatten cattle, which became, in consequence of the excellent pasture, the largest, as well as the fattest, in the country. See *Calmet*. All in whose hands were the chief power and influence became David's enemies; for Absalom had stolen away the hearts of all Israel. Against Christ, the chiefs both of Jews and Gentiles were united.

Verse 13. They gaped upon me] They were fiercely and madly beat on my destruction.

Verse 14. I am poured out like water] That is, as the old *Psalter*: *Ṭhai roughṭ na mare to sla me ṭhan to spil water.*

The images in this verse are strongly descriptive of a person in the deepest distress; whose strength, courage, hope, and expectation of succour and relief, had entirely failed.

Our Lord's sufferings were extreme; but I cannot think there is any sound theologic sense in which these things can be spoken of Christ, either in his agony in the garden, or his death upon the cross.

Verse 15. My strength is dried up] All these expressions mark a most distressed and hopeless case.

Into the dust of death.] This means only that he was *apparently* brought nigh to the grave, and consequent *corruption*; this latter David saw; but Jesus Christ never saw corruption.

Verse 16. For dogs have compassed me] This may refer to the *Gentiles*, the Roman soldiers, and others by whom our Lord was surrounded in his trial, and at his cross.

They pierced my hands and my feet] The other sufferings David, as a type of our Lord, might pass through; but the *piercing of the hands and feet* was peculiar to our Lord; therefore, this verse may pass for a *direct revelation*. Our Lord's hands and feet were pierced when he was nailed to the cross, David's never were pierced.

But there is a various reading here which is of great importance. Instead of *wrak caaru, they pierced*, which is what is called the *kethib*, or *marginal* reading, and which our translators have followed; the *keri* or textual reading is *yarak caari, as a lion*. In support of each reading there are both MSS. and eminent critics. The Chaldee has, "Biting as a lion my hands and my feet;" but the *Syriac, Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic* read, "they pierced or digged;" and in the *Anglo-Saxon* the words are, [Anglo-Saxon]: "*They dalve (digged) hands mine, and feet mine.*"

The *Complutensian Polyglot* has *wrak caaru, they digged or pierced*, in the *text*; for which it gives *hrk carah, to cut, dig, or penetrate*, in the

margin, as the root whence **wrak** is derived. But the Polyglots of *Potken, Antwerp, Paris, and London*, have **yarak caari** in the text; and **wrak caaru** is referred to in the *margin*; and this is the case with the most correct Hebrew Bibles. The whole difference here lies between **y yod** and **w wau**, which might easily be mistaken for each other; the former making *like a lion*; the latter, *they pierced*. The latter is to me most evidently the true reading.

Verse 17. I may tell all my bones] This may refer to the violent *extension* of his body when the whole of its weight hung upon the nails which attached his hands to the transverse beam of the cross. The body being thus extended, the principal bones became prominent, and easily discernible.

Verse 18. They part my garments] This could be true in *no sense* of David. The fact took place at the crucifixion of our Lord. The soldiers divided his *upper garment* into four parts, each soldier taking a part; but his *tunic* or *inward vestment* being without seam, woven in one entire piece, they agreed not to divide, but to cast lots *whose* the *whole* should be. Of this scripture the Roman soldiers knew nothing; but they fulfilled it to the letter. This was foreseen by the Spirit of God; and this is a direct revelation concerning Jesus Christ, which impresses the whole account with the broad seal of eternal truth.

Verse 19. Be not thou far from me] In the first verse he asks, *Why hast thou forsaken me?* Or, as if astonished at their wickedness, *Into what hands hast thou permitted me to fall?* Now he prays, *Be not far from me.* St. *Jerome* observes here, that it is the *humanity* of our blessed Lord which speaks to his *divinity*. Jesus was *perfect man*; and as *man* he suffered and died. But this *perfect* and *sinless man* could not have sustained those sufferings so as to make them expiatory had he not been supported by the *Divine nature*. All the expressions in this Psalm that indicate any *weakness*, as far as it relates to Christ, (and indeed it relates *principally* to him,) are to be understood of the *human nature*; for, that in him *God* and *man* were united, but not confounded, the whole New Testament to me bears evidence, the *manhood* being a perfect man, the *Godhead* dwelling bodily in that manhood. Jesus, as MAN, was conceived, born, grew up, increased in wisdom, stature, and favour with God and man; hungered, thirsted, suffered, and died. Jesus, as GOD, knew all things, was from the beginning with God, healed the diseased, cleansed the lepers, and raised the dead; calmed the raging of the sea, and laid the tempest by a word; quickened the

human nature, raised it from the dead, took it up into heaven, where as the Lamb newly slain, it ever appears in the presence of God for us. These are all Scripture facts. The *man* Christ Jesus could not work those miracles; the *God* in that man could not have *suffered* those sufferings. Yet *one person* appears to do and suffer all; here then is GOD *manifested in the FLESH*.

O my strength] The *divinity* being the power by which the *humanity* was sustained in this dreadful conflict.

Verse 20. Deliver my soul from the sword] Deliver *yvpn naphshi*, my life; save me alive, or raise me again.

My darling] *yt dj y yechidathi*, my only one. The only human being that was ever produced since the creation, even by the power of God himself, without the agency of man. ADAM the *first* was created out of the dust of the earth; that was his *mother*; God was the *framer*. ADAM the *second* was produced in the womb of the *virgin*; that was his mother. But that which was conceived in her was by the *power of the Holy Ghost*; hence the man Christ Jesus is the ONLY Son of God; God is his Father, and he is his ONLY ONE.

Verse 21. Save me from the lion's mouth] Probably our Lord here includes his *Church* with himself. The *lion* may then mean the *Jews*; the *unicorns*, *µymr remin* (probably the *rhinoceros*), the *Gentiles*. For the *unicorn*, see Clarke's note on "~~0222~~Numbers 23:22". There is no quadruped or *land animal* with one horn only, except the rhinoceros; but there is a *marine animal*, the *narwhal* or *monodon*, a species of *whale*, that has a very fine curled ivory horn, which projects from its snout. One in my own museum measures *seven feet four inches*, and is very beautiful. Some of these animals have struck their horn through the side of a ship; and with it they easily transfix the whale, or any such animal. The old Psalter says, "The unicorn es ane of the prudest best that es, so that he wil dye for dedeyn if he be haldyn ogayn his wil."

Verse 22. I will declare the name unto my brethren] I will make a complete revelation concerning the God of justice and love, to my *disciples*; and I will announce to the Jewish *people* thy merciful design in sending me to be the Saviour of the world.

Verse 23. Ye that fear the Lord] This is an exhortation to the *Jews* particularly, to profit by the preaching of the Gospel. Perhaps, by *them that fear him*, the *Gentiles*, and particularly the *proselytes*, may be intended. The *Jews* are mentioned by name: *Glorify him, all ye seed of Jacob; fear him, all ye seed of Israel.*

Verse 24. For he hath not despised] It is his property to help and save the poor and the humble; and he rejects not the sighings of a contrite heart. Perhaps it may mean, Though ye have despised me in my humiliation, yet God has graciously received me in the character of a sufferer on account of sin; as by that humiliation unto death the great atonement was made for the sin of the world.

Verse 25. The great congregation] In ^{<192727>}Psalm 22:22 he declares that he will *praise God in the midst of the congregation*. Here the *Jews* seem to be intended. In this verse he says *he will praise him in the GREAT CONGREGATION*. Here the *Gentiles* are probably meant. The Jewish nation was but a *small number* in comparison of the *Gentile* world. And those of the former who received the Gospel were very few when compared with those among the *Gentiles* who received the Divine testimony. The one *was* (for there is scarcely a converted Jew *now*) **I hq kahal**, an *assembly*; the other *was, is, and will be* increasingly, **br I hq kahal rab**, a *GREAT ASSEMBLY*. Salvation *was* of the *Jews*, it is *now* of the *Gentiles*.

Verse 26. The meek shall eat] **μϋων** [*anavim*. the *POOR*, shall eat. In the true only Sacrifice there shall be such a provision for all believers, that they shall have a fulness of joy. Those who offered the sacrifice, fed on what they offered. Jesus, the true Sacrifice, is the bread that came down from heaven; they who eat of this bread shall never die.

Verse 27. All the ends of the world] The Gospel shall be preached to every nation under heaven; and *all the kindred of nations*, **twj pvm mishpechoth**, the *families* of the nations: not only the *nations* of the world shall receive the Gospel as a *revelation* from God, but *each family* shall embrace it for their own salvation. *They shall worship before* Jesus the Saviour, and through him shall all their praises be offered unto God.

Verse 28. The kingdom is the Lord's] That universal sway of the Gospel which in the New Testament is called *the kingdom of God*; in which all

men shall be God's subjects; and righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, be *universally* diffused.

Verse 29. All they that be fat upon earth] The *rich*, the *great*, the *mighty*, even *princes*, *governors*, and *kings*, shall embrace the Gospel. They shall count it their greatest honour to be called *Christian*; to join in the assemblies of his people, to commemorate his sacrificial death, to dispense the word of life, to discourage vice, and to encourage the profession and practice of pure and undefiled religion.

That go down to the dust] Every *dying man* shall put his trust in Christ, and shall expect glory only through the great Saviour of mankind.

None can keep alive his own soul.] The *Vulgate* has: Et anima mea illi vivet, et semen meum serviet ipsi; "and my soul shall live to him, and my seed shall serve him." And with this agree the *Syriac*, *Septuagint*, *Aethiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*. The old *Psalter* follows them closely: *And my saule sal lyf til him; and my sēde hym sal serve*. I believe this to be the true reading. Instead of **wvpn** *naphsho*, HIS *soul*, some MSS., in accordance with the above ancient versions, have **yvpn** *naphshi*, MY *soul*. And instead of **al** *lo*, *not*, two MSS., with the versions, have **wl** *lo*, *to HIM*. And for **hyj** *chiyah*, shall *vivify*, some have **hyj y** *yichyeh*, shall *live*. The text, therefore, should be read, *My soul (yvpn napshi) shall live (wl lo) to him: my seed (y[rz zari) shall serve him*. These may be the words of *David* himself: "I will live to this Saviour while I live; and my spiritual posterity shall serve him through all generations."

Verse 30. Shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.] They shall be called *Christians* after the name of Christ.

Verse 31. Unto a people that shall be born] That is, one generation shall continue to announce unto another the true religion of the Lord Jesus; so that it shall be for ever propagated in the earth. Of his kingdom there shall be no end.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-SECOND PSALM

This Psalm concerns the Messiah, his passion, and his kingdom. Though, in some sense, it, may be applied to *David* as a *type*, yet *Christ* is the *thing signified*, and therefore it is primarily and principally verified of and in him; for he is brought in here, speaking,

First, Of his *dereliction*; then showing his *passion*, and the *cruelty* of his enemies.

Secondly, *Entreating* ease and *deliverance* from his sufferings.

Thirdly, *Promising thanks* to God; foretelling the preaching of the Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom by the accession of all nations.

There are *three* chief parts in this Psalm:—

I. Our Saviour's *complaint*, and the *causes* of it: prophetically expressing his sufferings nearly throughout the whole Psalm.

II. His *petition* and *prayer* that God would not absent himself, but deliver and save him, ^{<1921B>} **Psalm 22:3-5, 9-11, 19-21.**

III. His *thanksgiving* and *prophetic declaration* concerning the conversion of the Gentiles; ^{<1922>} **Psalm 22:22-31.**

1. He begins with a heavy complaint of dereliction in his extremity; and that he was not heard, though he prayed with strong crying and tears: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" &c. The words are *repeated* to show the deep anguish of his heart.

2. He shows how well-grounded his complaint was: for God had dealt with him contrary to his usual method; for when his saints called upon him, he heard *them* in *their* distress. Martyres si non eripuit, tum non deseruit. "If he did not deliver the martyrs, yet he did not desert them in their sufferings." His case was more grievous than any that had gone before. Of this he speaks particularly in the three succeeding verses, ^{<1921B>} **Psalm 22:3-5**, by which he reminds God of his promise: "Call on me in the time of trouble, and I will deliver thee." Of this they who went before had experience: and as he was the same God still, why should *this Sufferer* only be deserted? for *they* were heard and comforted.

1. "Thou art holy," propitious and benevolent. "Thou dwellest in the praises of Israel;" thou art continually helping them, and they are continually praising thee for this help.

To prove all this he brings the *example* of the *fathers*:—

2. "Our fathers trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them."

3. "They cried unto thee-and were not confounded."

But my case is worse than any other: “I am a worm, and am no man.”

He then details his sufferings:—

1. The scoffs and scorns cast upon him: “I am become the reproach of men, and the despised among the people.”

2. Their contempt is expressed both by *words* and *gestures*: “All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip-and shake the head.”

3. They laboured to deprive him of his God. They uttered this insulting sarcasm: “He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, since he delighted in him.”

II. He now breaks off the narration of his sufferings, has immediate recourse to God, refutes their irony, shows his confidence in God, and prays for assistance. This he strengthens by *three arguments* drawn from God’s goodness towards him:—

1. His *generation* and *birth*: “Thou-tookest me out of my mother’s womb.”

2. His *sustenance* and support ever since: “Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts;—thou art my God from my mother’s belly.” In a word, he was his *Saviour, Protector, and Preserver*.

3. Trouble is near, and there is none to help. Therefore, “Be not far from me.”

Now he returns to the *narration* of his passion, in which he sets forth the *despite, cruelty, and rage* of the Jews towards him, whom he compares to *bulls, lions, dogs, &c.*, ^{<192216>}**Psalm 22:16**.

1. They apprehended him: “Many bulls have compassed me;” &c.

2. They longed to condemn and devour him: “They gaped on me with their mouths, as a ravening and roaring lion.”

3. This was the cruelty of the *lions* and *bulls*, the *chief rulers*, and *chief priests*; and now follows the ravin of the *dogs*, the “multitude of the people;” they were the “assembly of the wicked;” and being stirred up by the *priests* and *rulers*, “they compassed him round about.”

4. They crucify him. And his passion is foretold, with what he should suffer in body and soul.

1. "I am poured out like water." My blood is poured out freely; and no more account taken of it, than if it were water spilt on the ground.
2. "All my bones (when hung on the cross) are out of joint."
3. "My heart (at the sense of God's hatred to sin) is dissolved *and melted* like wax."
4. "My strength (my animal spirits and muscular energy) is dried up like a potsherd;" or like a *pot*, whose *fluid* is *evaporated* by hanging long over a fierce fire.
5. "My tongue (for thirst) cleaveth to my jaws."
6. "Thou hast brought me to death-to the dust of death:" to the grave.
7. "They pierced my hands and my feet." I am crucified also, and die upon the cross.
8. By my long hanging upon the cross, my bones are so disjointed that they may be easily told: "I may tell all my bones."
9. "They look and stare upon me." They feel no *compassion*, but take pleasure in my agonies. This is an affection which is characteristic only of a devil.
10. "They part my garments among them." They delighted in his destruction for the sake of his *spoils*.

Having thus far described his *sufferings*, and the *malice* of his enemies, he begins again to *pray*; which is, in effect, the same with that ejaculation with which Christ gave up the ghost: "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." "Be not thou far from me, O Lord." "Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog." "Save me from the lion's mouth," &c.

III. This part, which is a *profession of thanks* for deliverance, contains a clear prophecy of the resurrection of Christ; that, having conquered death and Satan, he was to reign and gather a Church out of all nations, which was to continue for ever. This is amplified,

First, By a public profession of the benefit received from God: "I will declare thy name in the midst of the congregation, I will pay my vows." In which we have,

1. The *propagation, proclamation, and preaching* of the *Gospel*: “I will declare thy name;” which is amplified,

(1.) By the notation of the *objects* to whom preached, honoured here by the name of, 1. *Brethren*. 2. Those that *fear the Lord*. 3. *The seed of Jacob, the seed of Israel*. 4. *The meek or poor*. 5. *The fat-rich, great, or eminent of the earth*. 6. *They that go down to the dust*.

(2.) By the *place*: “The midst of the congregation”—the *great congregation*, i.e., both among the *Jews* and among the *Gentiles*.

(3.) By the *worship* they were to pay: 1. *Praise*. 2. *Paying of vows*. 3. *Fear*, or religious reverence.

2. An *exhortation* to his brethren, &c., to do this duty; and they must be fit for it, for every one is not fit to take God’s name in his mouth. It is, *Ye that fear the Lord—the seed of Jacob—the seed of Israel*, fear him, serve the Lord in fear, rejoice before him with reverence. Give him both external and internal worship.

3. And to *engage* them to this, he gives *two reasons*:

Reason 1. Drawn from God’s *goodness*, his acceptance of our worship, hearing our prayers, and affording help when we call: “For the Lord hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted. When he cried to him, he heard him.”

Reason 2. The great *good* that should happen to them who would believe and accept the Gospel; whom he calls here *the meek*, that is, the humble, broken-hearted, the penitent, the heavy laden; those who are oppressed with the burden of their sins, and astonished at a sense of God’s wrath. To them are made *three* promises of comfort:—

1. “They shall eat, and be satisfied.” They shall be fed with the word and ordinances of God.

2. “They shall praise the Lord for his mercy;” seeking his favour in his ordinances, which, under the Gospel, are generally *eucharistical*.

3. “Their heart shall live for ever;” their conscience being quieted and pacified, and freed from a sense of God’s wrath.

Secondly, The prophet proceeds, and shows us the amplitude of these benefits; that they belong, not only to the Jews but to the Gentiles, by whose conversion the kingdom of Christ is to be enlarged.

1. “All the ends of the world,” being warned by the preaching of the Gospel, and allured by these promises, shall remember-consider the lamentable condition in which they are, and deplore their former estate, impiety, and idolatry. And the mercy of God being now manifested to them-

2. They shall cast away their gods, *turn* from their evil ways, and seek that God from whom they have been alienated. And being converted—

3. They shall embrace a new form of religion under the Gospel: “All the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.”

4. Of which the reason is, because Christ is advanced to the throne; all power is given to him: “For the kingdom is the Lord’s, and he is governor among the people.”

5. He then shows the *two kinds of people* who should become subjects of the kingdom; in effect, *rich* and *poor*.

1. “The fat upon the earth.” The wealthy, the mighty; kings, princes, great men, are to be called into the kingdom, that they may be partakers of its grace: “All *they that be fat upon the earth,*” &c.

2. “They also that go down to the dust.” That is, the *poor*, the neglected, who draw out their life in misery, and sit, as it were, in the dust; those who are perpetual mourners, and have, as it were, perpetual dust and ashes upon their heads: “These shall bow before him.”

Lastly. He amplifies the greatness of this benefit by the *perpetuity* of Christ’s kingdom. It was not a feast of one hour, it was to continue.

1. “A seed shall serve him.” But this and the preceding clause may signify the psalmist’s resolution to live to God himself, and to show others the same way. See the *notes*.

This *seed*, however, shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. It shall be a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and called by Christ’s own name-CHRISTIANS.

2. When one generation is past, *another* shall come up to perform this duty, being instructed by their fathers: “They shall come and declare his righteousness to a people that shall be born.” *Manebit semper ecclesia*, “the Church is immortal.”
3. He concludes with the *cause* of all. Why called, justified, sanctified, saved. He hath done it; the GOD, the Author of all; the Fountain of all grace; the Giver of Jesus Christ, and eternal life through him. For by him, and of him, and through him, are all things; and to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever!

PSALMS

PSALM 23

The Lord is the Pastor of his people; therefore it may be inferred that they shall not want, 1. How he guides, feeds, and protects them, 2, 3. Even in the greatest dangers they may be confident of his support, 4. His abundant provision for them, 5. The confidence they may have of his continual mercy, and their eternal happiness, 6.

NOTES ON PSALM 23

There is nothing particular in the *title*; it is simply attributed to *David*; but as it appears to be a thanksgiving of the Israelites for their *redemption from the Babylonish captivity*, it cannot with propriety be attributed to David. Some think it was written by David in his *exile*, which is not likely; others, that he penned it when he was *finally delivered from the persecution of Saul*. I rather incline to the opinion that it was written *after the captivity*. The *Chaldee* seems to suppose that it was written to celebrate the goodness of God to the *Israelites in the desert*. It is a truly beautiful Psalm. Supposing it to have been written *after the captivity*, we see, 1. The redeemed captives giving thanks to God for their liberty. 2. Acknowledging that God had brought back their lives from the grave. 3. They represent themselves in Judea as a flock in an excellent pasture. 4. They declare that from the dangers they have passed through, and from which God had delivered them, they can have no fear of any enemy. 5. They conclude, from what God has done for them, that his goodness and mercy shall follow them all their days. And, 6. That they shall no more be deprived of God's worship, but shall all their days have access to his temple.

Verse 1. The Lord is my shepherd] There are two *allegories* in this Psalm which are admirably well adapted to the purpose for which they are produced, and supported both with *art* and *elegance*. The *first* is that of a *shepherd*; the *second*, that of a *great feast*, set out by a *host* the most kind and the most liberal As a *flock*, they have the most excellent *pasture*; as *guests*, they have the most nutritive and abundant *fare*. God condescends to call himself the *Shepherd* of his people, and his followers are considered as a *flock* under his guidance and direction. 1. He leads them out and in, so that they find pasture and safety. 2. He knows where to feed them, and in

the course of his grace and providence leads them in the way in which they should go. 3. He watches over them and keeps them from being destroyed by ravenous beasts. 4. If any have strayed, he brings them back. 5. He brings them to the *shade* in times of scorching heat; in times of persecution and affliction, he finds out an asylum for them. 6. He takes care that they shall lack no manner of thing that is good.

But who are his flock? All real penitents, all true believers; all who obediently *follow* his example, abstaining from every appearance of evil, and in a holy life and conversation showing forth the virtues of Him who called them from darkness into his marvellous light. "My sheep hear my voice, and follow me."

But who are not his flock! Neither the backslider in heart, nor the vile Antinomian, who thinks the more he sins, the more the grace of God shall be magnified in saving him; nor those who fondly suppose they are covered with the righteousness of Christ while living in sin; nor the crowd of the *indifferent* and the *careless*, nor the immense herd of *Laodicean loiterers*; nor the fiery bigots who would exclude all from heaven but themselves, and the party who believe as they do. These the Scripture resembles to *swine, dogs, wandering stars, foxes, lions, wells without water, &c., &c.* Let not any of these come forward to *feed on this pasture*, or take of the *children's bread*. Jesus Christ is the *good Shepherd*; the Shepherd who, to save his flock, laid down his own life.

I shall not want.] How can they? He who is their Shepherd has all power in heaven and earth; therefore he *can protect them*. The silver and gold are his, and the cattle on a *thousand* hills; and therefore he can *sustain* them. He has all that they need, and his heart is full of love to mankind; and therefore he will withhold from them no manner of thing that is good. The old *Psalter* both translates and paraphrases this clause well: **Lord governs me, and nothing sal want to me. In stede of pastour thare he me sett.** "The voice of a rightwis man: **Lord Crist es my kyng, and for thi (therefore) nathyng sal me want:** that es, in hym I sal be siker, and suffisand, for I hope in hymn gastly gude and endles. **And he ledes me in stede of pastoure,** that es, understandyng of his worde, and delyte in his luf. Qwar I am siker to be fild, thar in that stede (place) he sett me, to be nuryst til perfectioun." Who can say more, who need say less, than this?

Verse 2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures] *avd twanb binoth deshe*, not *green pastures*, but *cottages of turf or sods*, such as the shepherds had in open champaign countries; places in which themselves could repose safely; and *pens* thus constructed where the flock might be safe all the night. They were enclosures, and enclosures where they had *grass* or provender to eat.

Beside the still waters.] *Deep waters*, that the strongest heat could not exhale; not by a *rippling current*, which argues a *shallow* stream. Or perhaps he may here refer to the waters of *Siloam*, or *Shiloah*, that go softly, ²³¹⁸⁶ **Isaiah 8:6**, compared with the *strong current* of the *Euphrates*. Thou hast brought us from the land of our captivity, from beyond this mighty and turbulent river, to our own country streams, wells, and fountains, where we enjoy peace, tranquillity, and rest.

The old *Psalter* gives this a beautiful turn: **On the water of rehetynge forth he me broght.** On the water of grace er we broght forth, that makes to recover our strengthe that we lost in syn. **And reheteis** (strengthens) us to do gude workes. **My saule he turned**, that es, of a synful wreche, he made it ryghtwis, and waxyng of luf in mekeness. First he turnes our sautes til hym; and then he ledes and fedes it. Ten graces he telles in this psalme, the qwilk God gyfs til his lufers, (i.e., them that love him.)

Verse 3. He restoreth my soul] Brings back my life from destruction; and converts my soul from sin, that it may not eternally perish. Or, after it has *backslidden* from him, heals its backslidings, and restores it to his favour. See the old paraphrase on this clause in the preceding note.

In the paths of righteousness] *qdx yl g[mb bamageley tsedek*, “in the circuits” or “orbits of righteousness.” In many places of Scripture man appears to be represented under the notion of a *secondary planet moving round its primary*; or as a planet revolving round the sun, from whom it receives its *power of revolving*, with all its *light* and *heat*. Thus man stands in reference to the *Sun of righteousness*; by *his power* alone is he enabled to *walk uprightly*; by his *light* he is *enlightened*; and by his *heat* he is *vivified*, and enabled to bring forth *good fruit*. When he keeps in his proper *orbit*, having the *light* of the glory of God reflected from the face of Jesus Christ, he is enabled to *enlighten* and *strengthen* others. He that is enlightened may enlighten; he that is fed may feed.

For his name's sake.] To display the glory of his grace, and not on account of any *merit* in me. God's motives of conduct towards the children of men are derived from the perfections and goodness of his own nature.

Verse 4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death] The reference is still to the *shepherd*. Though I, as one of the *flock*, should walk through the most dismal valley, in the dead of the night, exposed to pitfalls, precipices, devouring beasts, &c., I should fear no evil under the guidance and protection of such a Shepherd. He knows all the *passes*, dangerous defiles, hidden pits, and abrupt precipices in the way; and he will guide me around, about, and through them. See the phrase *shadow of death* explained on ^{<0016>}**Matthew 4:16**. “Thof I ward well and imang tha, that nouthar has knowyng of God, ne luf or in myddis of this lyf, that es schadow of ded; for it es blak for myrkenes of syn; and it ledes til dede and il men, imang qwam gude men wones:—I sal nout drede il, pryve nor apert; for thu ert with me in my hert, qwar I fele thu so, that eftir the schadow of dede, I be with the in thi vera lyf.”—Old *Psalter*.

For thou art with me] He who has his God for a companion need fear no danger; for he can neither *mistake* his way, nor be *injured*.

Thy rod and thy staff] **Ēcbv** *shibtecha*, thy *sceptre, rod, ensign* of a *tribe, staff of office*; for so **cbv** *shebet* signifies in Scripture. *And thy staff*, **Ētn** [**vmw** *umishantecha*, thy *prop* or *support*. The former may signify the shepherd's crook; the latter, some sort of *rest* or *support*, similar to our *camp stool*, which the shepherds might carry with them as an occasional seat, when the earth was *too wet* to be sat on with safety. With the *rod* or *crook* the shepherd could *defend* his sheep, and with it lay *hold of their horns* or legs to pull them out of *thickets, boys, pits, or waters*. We are not to suppose that by the *rod correction* is meant: there is no idea of this kind either in the text, or in the original word; nor has it this meaning in any part of Scripture. Besides, *correction* and *chastisement* do not *comfort*; they are not, at least for the present, joyous, but grievous; nor can any person look forward to them with *comfort*. They abuse the text who paraphrase *rod correction*, &c. The other term **^** [**v** *shaan* signifies *support*, something to *rest on*, as a *staff, crutch, stave*, or the like. The *Chaldee* translates thus: “Even though I should walk in captivity, in the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear evil. Seeing thy WORD (**Ērmym** *meymerach*, thy personal Word) is my Assistant or Support; thy right word and thy law

console me.” Here we find that the WORD, **rmy** *meymar*, is distinguished from any thing *spoken*, and even from the *law* itself. I cannot withhold the paraphrase of the *old Psalter*, though it considers the *rod* as signifying correction: “Sothly I sal drede na nylle; for **thy wande**, that es thi lyght disciplyne, that chasties me as thi son: **and thi staf**, that es thi stalworth help, that I lene me til, and haldes me uppe; thai have comforthed me; lerand (*learning, teaching*) me qwat I suld do; and haldand my thought in the, that es my comforth.”

Verse 5. Thou preparest a table before me] Here the *second allegory* begins. A magnificent banquet is provided by a most liberal and benevolent host; who has not only the *bounty* to feed me, but power to protect me; and, though surrounded by *enemies*, I sit down to this table with confidence, knowing that I shall feast in perfect security. This may refer to the favour God gave the poor captive Israelites in the sight of the Chaldeans who had grievously treated them for *seventy* years; and whose king, Cyrus, had not only permitted them now to return to their own land, but had also furnished them with every thing requisite for their passage, and for repairing the walls of Jerusalem, and rebuilding the temple of the Lord, where the sacrifices were offered as usual, and the people of God *feasted* on them.

Thou anointest my head with oil] Perfumed oil was poured on the heads of distinguished guests, when at the feasts of great personages. The woman in the Gospel, who poured the box of ointment of spikenard on the head of our Lord (see **Matthew 26:6, 7**; **Mark 14:8**; **Luke 7:46**.) only acted according to the custom of her own country, which the host, who invited our Lord, had shamefully neglected.

My cup runneth over.] Thou hast not only given me abundance of *food*, but hast filled my *cup* with the best *wine*.

Verse 6. Goodness and mercy shall follow me] As I pass on through the vale of life, thy goodness and mercy shall follow my every step; as I proceed, so shall they. There seems to be an allusion here to the waters of the rock smitten by the rod of Moses, which followed the Israelites all the way through the wilderness, till they came to the Promised Land. God never leaves his true followers providential mercies gracious influences, and miraculous interferences, shall never be wanting when they are necessary. *I will dwell in the house, ytbvw veshabti*, “and I shall RETURN

to the house of the Lord,” *for ever*, **μymy Ēral leorech yamim**, “for length of days.” During the rest of my life, I shall not be separated from God’s house, nor from God’s ordinances; and shall at last dwell with him in glory. These two last verses seem to be the language of a priest returned from captivity to live in the temple, and to serve God the rest of his life.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

The scope of this Psalm is to show the happiness of that man who has God for his protector, and is under his care and tuition.

To illustrate this protection, &c., David proposes *two allegories*: the one of a *shepherd*; the other of a *free-hearted man* given to *hospitality*, and *entertaining* his guests bountifully. It has *two* parts: the *first* sets forth, 1. God’s care in providing him with all necessaries, ^{<19231>}**Psalm 23:1-4**. 2. His liberality in supplying him with all that he needed, ^{<19235>}**Psalm 23:5**.

The *second* part shows his confidence in God’s grace, and his thankfulness, ^{<19236>}**Psalm 23:6**.

I. He begins the first with this position, “God is my shepherd;” and upon it infers, “Therefore I shall not want.” He will do for me what a good shepherd will do for his sheep.

1. He will feed me in *green pastures*, ^{<19237>}**Psalm 23:2**.

2. He will there provide for my safety: “He makes me to lie down.”

3. He will provide waters of comfort for me.

4. These waters shall be gently-flowing streams, *still waters*-not turbulent and violent.

5. He will take care to preserve me in health; if sick, he will *restore me*.

6. He goes before and leads me, that I may not mistake my way: “He leads me in paths of righteousness,” which is his love; for it is “for his name’s sake.”

7. He *restores*. If I err and go astray, and *walk through the valley of the shadow of death*, (for a sheep is a stragglng creature,) *I will fear no evil: for his rod and staff comfort me*; his *law* and his *Gospel* both contribute to my correction and support.

Thus, as a good Shepherd, he supplies me with *necessaries*, that I want nothing: but over and above, as a *bountiful Lord*, he has furnished me *copiously* with *varieties* which may be both for *ornament* and *honour*.

1. He *has prepared a table for me*-and that *in the presence of my enemies*.

2. He *hath anointed my head with oil*, to refresh my spirits, and cheer my countenance.

3. And *my cup runneth over*-with the choicest wine he gladdens my heart.

II. The last verse, 1. Sets out David's confidence that it shall be no worse with him: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

2. Then he expresses his *thankfulness*: "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." In thy house, among the faithful, I will praise thy name as long as I live.

On each point in this analysis the reader is requested to consult the *notes*.

PSALMS

PSALM 24

The Lord is Sovereign Ruler of the universe, 1, 2. The great question, Who is fit to minister to the Lord in his own temple? 3-6. The glory of God in his entrance into his temple, 7-10.

NOTES ON PSALM 24

It is probable that this Psalm was composed on occasion of bringing the ark from the house of Obed-edom to Mount Sion, and the questions may respect the fitness of the persons who were to minister before this ark: the last verses may refer to the opening of the city gates in order to admit it. As many of the expressions here are nearly the same with those in Psalm xv., I must refer to that place for their particular illustration; though it is most likely that the two Psalms were composed on very different occasions. The first contains a *general question* relative to *who shall be saved?* This is more particular; and refers to the temple and tabernacle service, and who is fit to minister there.

Verse 1. The earth is the Lord's] He is the Creator and Governor of it; it is his own property. Men may claim districts and kingdoms of it as *their* property, but God is Lord of the soil.

The fullness thereof] “All its creatures.”—*Targum*. Every tree, plant, and shrub; the silver and the gold, and the cattle on a thousand hills.

They that dwell therein.] All *human beings*.

Verse 2. He hath founded it upon the seas] He not only created the vast *mass*, but separated the land from the waters, so that the mountains, &c., being elevated above the waters, appear to be founded on them, and notwithstanding all the tossings and ragings of the ocean, these waters cannot prevail. It is established upon the floods, and cannot be shaken.

Verse 3. Who shall ascend] Who is sufficiently holy to wait in his temple? Who is fit to minister in the holy place?

Verse 4. He that hath clean hands] He whose conscience is irreproachable; whose heart is without deceit and uninfluenced by unholy passions.

Who hath not lifted up his soul] Who has no *idolatrous* inclination; whose faith is pure, and who conscientiously fulfils his promises and engagements.

Verse 5. He shall receive the blessing] Perhaps alluding to Obed-edom, at whose house the ark had been lodged, and on whom God had poured out especial blessings.

And righteousness] Mercy: every kind of necessary good. It is the mercy of God that crowns the *obedience* and *fidelity* of good men. For what made them *good* and *faithful*? God's mercy. What crowns their fidelity? God's mercy.

Verse 6. This is the generation] This is the description of people who are such as God can approve of, and delight in.

That seek thy face, O Jacob.] It is most certain that *yhl a Elohey, O God*, has been lost out of the *Hebrew* text in most MSS., but it is preserved in two of *Kennicott's* MSS., and also in the *Syriac, Vulgate, Septuagint, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon*. "Who seek thy face, O God of Jacob."

Selah.] That is, It is confirmed; it is true. The persons who abstain from every appearance of evil, and seek the approbation of God, are those in whom God will delight.

Verse 7. Lift up your heads, O ye gates] The address of those who preceded the ark, the gates being addressed instead of the *keepers* of the gates. Allusion is here made to the triumphal entry of a victorious general into the imperial city.

In the hymn of *Callimachus* to Apollo, there are two lines very much like those in the text; they convey the very same sentiments. The poet represents the god coming into his temple, and calls upon the priests to open the doors, &c.

αυτοι νυν κατοχης ανακλινεσθε πυλαως,
αυται δε κληιδες, ο γαρ θεος ουκ ετι μακραν

*"Fall back, ye bolts; ye pond'rous doors, give way;
For not far distant is the god of day."
Callim. Hymn in Apol., ver. 6, 7.*

The whole of this hymn contains excellent sentiments even on the subject of the Psalms.

Everlasting doors] There seems to be a reference here to something like our *portcullis*, which hangs by pullies *above* the gate, and can be let down at any time so as to prevent the gate from being forced. In the case to which the psalmist refers, the portcullis is let down, and the persons preceding the ark order it to be raised. When it is lifted up, and appears above the head or top of the gate, then the folding doors are addressed: “Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;” let there be no obstruction; and the mighty Conqueror, the King of glory, whose presence is with the ark, and in which the symbol of his glory appears, shall enter. Make due preparations to admit so august and glorious a Personage.

Verse 8. Who is this King of glory?] This is the answer of those who are *within*. Who is this glorious King, for whom ye demand entrance? To which they reply:—

The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.] It is *Jehovah*, who is come to set up his abode in his imperial city: He who has conquered his enemies, and brought salvation to Israel. To make the matter still more solemn, and give those *without* an opportunity of describing more particularly this glorious Personage, those *within* hesitate to obey the first summons: and then it is *repeated*, ^{<19240>}**Psalm 24:9.**

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.] To which a more particular question is proposed:—*Who is HE, THIS King of glory?* To which an answer is given that admitted of no reply. *The Lord of hosts*—he who is coming with innumerable armies, *He is this King of glory*. On which, we may suppose, the portcullis was lifted up, the gates thrown open, and the whole cavalcade admitted. This verse seems to have been spoken before the ark appeared: Who is this (**hz zeh**) King of glory? when its coming was merely announced. In the *tenth* verse the form is a little altered, because the ark, the symbol of the Divine Presence, had then arrived. Who is He, (**awh ym mi hu,**) this King of glory? Here He is, to answer for himself. “The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.”

Though this Psalm has all the appearance of being an *unfinished piece*, yet there is a vast deal of dignity and majesty in it; and the *demands* from

without, the *questions* from those *within*, and the *answers* to those questions, partake of the true sublime; where nature, dignity, and simplicity, are very judiciously mingled together. The whole procedure is *natural*, the *language dignified*, and the *questions* and *answers* full of *simplicity* and elevated sentiments.

Several, both among ancients and moderns, have thought this Psalm speaks of the *resurrection of our Lord*, and is thus to be understood. It is easy to apply it in this way: Jesus has conquered sin, Satan, and death, by dying. He now rises from the dead; and, as a mighty Conqueror, claims an entrance into the realms of glory, the kingdom which he has purchased by his blood; there to appear ever in the presence of God for us, to which he purposes to raise finally the innumerable hosts of his followers; for in reference to these, He is the *Lord of hosts*; and, in reference to his victory, He is *the Lord mighty in battle*.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH PSALM

The subject of this Psalm is Christ, called the King of glory, ^{<19247>}**Psalm 24:7**, and it has *two* parts:—

- I. The first concerns Christ's lordship, which is, in general, over the whole world, ^{<19241>}**Psalm 24:1, 2**; but in particular, over the Church, ^{<19243>}**Psalm 24:3-7**.
- II. An exhortation to all men to receive Christ for their King.

I. The first part of this Psalm shows that God is King of all the world; but in this kingdom he has two kinds of subjects—

1. Either all men in general: "For the earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is; the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein." And for this he gives a reason, from the creation of it. He ought to have the dominion of it, and all in it: "For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods."

2. But all are not his subjects in the same way. There are a people whom he has called to be his subjects in another manner. There is a mountain which he hath sanctified and chosen above all other hills to make the seat of his kingdom, viz., the *Church*; and over them that live in it he is in a more peculiar manner said to be *Lord*, than of the whole earth; and these are more properly called his servants and subjects. And yet among these there is a difference too, for some only profess to be his servants, and call him

Lord, as hypocrites; there are some others that are his servants really and truly. And that this difference may be taken notice of, the prophet asks, *Quis?* “WHO shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?” And “WHO shall stand in his holy place?” As if he should say, Not *quisquis*; it is not *every one*; for infidels are not so much as in the Church. Hypocrites, howsoever in the Church, are not true members of the mystical Church; and some who come to the hill of the Lord, yet stand not in his holy place; *for many believe only for a season, and few continue faithful unto death.*

3. That it may then be truly known who they are over whom he is truly *Rex gloriæ*, “the King of glory,” the prophet gives us their character, and sets down three distinctive notes by which they may be known:—

1. *Cleanness of hands*: “He that hath cleann hands;” *a caede furto, &c.*; is free from all external wicked actions. For the hand is *οργανον οργανων*, the organ of the organs.

2. *Purity of heart*. For external purity is not enough, except the heart, the fountain of our actions, be clean.

3. *Truth of the tongue*. Is not guilty of lies and perjuries. “He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” After the prophet has given the character by which you may know the man, he assigns his reward, and ends with an acclamation. 1. This is he that “shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness (i.e., justification) from the God of his salvation.” 2. “This is the generation of them that seek thee;” that is, these are the people of God: let others boast themselves, and please themselves as they list, yet these are the godly party; these are they “that seek thy face, O God of Jacob.”

II. The second part is considered by some as an *exhortation* to all men, especially princes, nobles, and magistrates, that they receive, acknowledge, and worship Christ, as King.

1. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates*; that is, as some understand it—O ye princes that sit in the *gates*, lift up your *heads* and *hearts* to him, that the King of glory may come in.

2. To which good counsel the prophet brings in the princes asking this question: “Who is this King of glory!” to which he answers, “The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.” One who is able to bruise

you to atoms with his iron rod, and will do so if you reject him. And that the exhortation may pierce the deeper, he doubles both it and the answer.

After all, the most natural meaning is that which is given in the notes: from which we may infer:—

1. That the regal city is in no state of safety, if it have not the *ark of the Lord*.
2. That the *ark*-even the purest form of sound words in devotion, is nothing, unless they who minister and worship have *clean hands* and *pure hearts*, endeavouring to worship God in spirit and in truth.
3. That where the right faith is professed, and the worshippers act according to its dictates, *there* is the presence and the continual indwelling of God: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates-and the King of glory shall come in.”

PSALMS

PSALM 25

The psalmist, in great distress, calls upon God frequently, 1-5; prays for pardon with the strong confidence of being heard, 6-11; shows the blessedness of the righteous, 12-14; again earnestly implores the Divine mercy; and prays for the restoration of Israel, 15-22.

NOTES ON PSALM 25

This Psalm seems to refer to the case of the captives in Babylon, who complain of oppression from their enemies, and earnestly beg the help and mercy of God.

It is the first of those called acrostic Psalms, i.e., Psalms each line of which begins with a several letter of the Hebrew alphabet in their common order. Of acrostic Psalms there are *seven*, viz., xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., and cxlv. It is fashionable to be violent in encomiums on the Jews for the very *faithful manner* in which they have preserved the Hebrew Scriptures; but these encomiums are, in general, ill placed. Even this Psalm is a proof with what *carelessness* they have watched over the sacred deposit committed to their trust. The letter **ו** *vau* is wanting in the *fifth* verse, and **ק** *koph* in the *eighteenth*; the letter **ר** *resh* being twice inserted, once instead of **ק** *koph*, and a whole line added at the end, entirely out of the alphabetical series.

Verse 1. Do I lift up my soul.] His soul was *cast down*, and *by prayer* and *faith* he endeavours to *lift it up* to God.

Verse 2. I trust in thee] I depend upon thy infinite goodness and mercy for my support and salvation.

Let me not be ashamed] Hide my iniquity, and forgive my guilt.

Verse 3. Let none that wait on thee be ashamed] Though he had burden enough of *his own*, he felt for *others* in similar circumstances, and became an intercessor in their behalf.

Transgress without cause.] Perhaps **מַיְדְּגֻבִים** *bogedim* may here mean *idolatrous persons*. “Let not them that wait upon and worship thee be

ashamed: but they shall be ashamed who vainly worship, or trust in false gods.” See ^{<3021>}**Malachi 2:11-16**. The Chaldeans have evil entreated us, and oppressed us: they trust in their idols, let them see the vanity of their idolatry.

Verse 4. Show me thy ways] The psalmist wishes to *know* God’s way, to be taught his *path*, and to be led into his *truth*. He cannot discern this way unless God *show* it; he cannot *learn* the *path* unless God *teach* it; and he cannot *walk* in God’s *truth* unless God *lead* him: and even then, unless God *continue* to *teach*, he shall never *fully* learn the lessons of his salvation; therefore he adds, “Lead me in thy truth, and teach me;”
^{<9276>}**Psalm 25:5**.

That he may get this *showing*, *teaching*, and *leading*, he comes to God, as the “God of his salvation;” and that he may not lose his labour, he “waits on him all the day.” Many lose the benefit of their earnest prayers, because they do not *persevere* in them. They pray for a *time*; get remiss or discouraged; restrain prayer; and thus lose all that was already wrought for and in them.

Verse 5. On thee do I wait] This is the line in which **w** *vau*, the sixth letter in the order of the alphabet, is lost; for the line begins with **a** *aleph*, **Ĕ** *twaw* *othecha*, “on thee.” But four of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS. have **Ĕ** *twaw* *veothecha*, “AND upon thee.” This restores the lost **w** *vau*, which signifies “and.” The *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, *Arabic*, *Æthiopic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*, preserve it.

Verse 6. Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies, and thy loving-kindness] The word **μ** *yimj* **ר** *rachamim*, means the *commiseration* that a man feels in his bowels at the sight of distress. The second word, **μ** *ydsj* *chasadim*, signifies those *kindnesses* which are the offspring of a *profusion of benevolence*.

They have been ever of old.] Thou wert ever wont to display thyself as a ceaseless fountain of good to all thy creatures.

Verse 7. Remember not the sins of my youth] Those which I have committed through *inconsiderateness*, and *heat of passion*.

According to thy mercy] As it is *worthy of thy mercy* to act according to the measure, the greatness, and general practice of thy mercy; so give me an *abundant pardon, a plentiful salvation*.

For thy goodness' sake] *Goodness* is the nature of God; *mercy* flows from that *goodness*.

Verse 8. Good and upright is the Lord] He is *good* in his *nature*, and *righteous* in his *conduct*.

Therefore will he teach sinners] Because he is good, he will teach sinners, though they deserve nothing but destruction: and because he is *right*, he will *teach* them the *true way*.

Verse 9. The meek will he guide] מְיָוִם [*anavim*, the *poor*, the *distressed*; he will *lead in judgment*-he will direct them in their cause, and bring it to a happy issue, for he will show them the *way* in which they should go.

Verse 10. All the paths of the Lord] תְּוַךְ רַחֵם *orchoth* signifies the *tracks* or *ruts* made by the *wheels of wagons* by often passing over the same ground. *Mercy* and *truth* are the *paths* in which God *constantly walks* in reference to the children of men; and so *frequently* does he show them *mercy*, and so frequently does he fulfil his *truth*, that his paths are earnestly discerned. How frequent, how deeply indented, and how multiplied are those *tracks* to every *family* and *individual*! Wherever we go, we see that God's *mercy* and *truth* have *been there* by the *deep tracks* they have left behind them. But he is more abundantly merciful to those who *keep his covenant and his testimonies*; i.e. those who are conformed, not only to the letter, but to the spirit of his pure religion.

Verse 11. For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon] I have sinned; I need mercy; there is no reason why thou shouldst show it, but what thou drawest from the goodness of thy own nature.

Verse 12. That feareth the Lord] Who has a proper apprehension of *his* holiness, justice, and truth; and who, at the same time, sees *himself* a fallen spirit, and a transgressor of God's holy law, and consequently under the curse. That is the person that truly and reverently fears God.

Him shall he teach] Such a person has a *teachable spirit*.

The way that he shall choose.] The way that in the course of Providence he has chosen, as the way in which he is to gain things honest in the sight of all men; God will bless him in it, and give him as much earthly prosperity as may be useful to his soul in his secular *vocation*.

Verse 13. His soul shall dwell at ease] *ʿyl t bwcb betob talin*, “shall lodge in goodness;” this is the *marginal* reading in our version; and is preferable to that in the text.

His seed shall inherit] His *posterity* shall be blessed. For them many prayers have been sent up to God by their pious fathers; and God has registered these prayers in their behalf.

Verse 14. The secret of the Lord is with them] *dws sod*, the *secret assembly* of the Lord is with them that fear him; many of them have a Church in their own house.

He will show them his covenant.] He will let them see how great blessings he has provided for them that love him. Some refer this to the covenant of redemption by Christ Jesus.

Verse 15. Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord] All my expectation is from him alone. If I get at any time entangled, he will pluck my feet out of the net.

Verse 16. Turn thee unto me] Probably the prayer of the poor captives in Babylon, which is continued through this and the remaining verses.

Verse 17. The troubles of my heart are enlarged] The evils of our captive state, instead of lessening, seem to multiply, and each to be extended.

Verse 18. Look upon mine affliction] See my distressed condition, and thy eye will affect thy heart.

Forgive all my sins.] My sins are the *cause* of all my sufferings; forgive these.

This is the verse which should begin with the letter *q koph*; but, instead of it, we have *r resh* both here, where it should *not* be, and in the next verse where it should be. Dr. *Kennicott* reads *hmqw kumah*, “arise,” and *Houbigant*, *rxq ketsar*, “cut short..” The word which began with *q koph*

has been long lost out of the verse, as every *version* seems to have read that which now stands in the Hebrew text.

Verse 19. Consider mine enemies] Look upon them, and thou wilt see how impossible it is that I should be able to resist and overcome them. They are many, they hate me, and their hatred drives them to acts of *cruelty* against me.

Verse 20. O keep my soul] Save me from sin, and keep me alive.

Let me not be ashamed] He ends as he began; see ^{<19212>}**Psalm 25:2**: “Let me not be confounded, for I put my trust in thee.”

Verse 21. Let integrity and uprightness] I wish to have a *perfect heart*, and an *upright life*. This seems to be the meaning of these two words.

Verse 22. Redeems Israel, O God] The people are prayed for in the preceding verses as if *one person*; now he includes the whole, lest his own personal necessities should narrow his heart, and cause him to forget his fellow sufferers.

This verse stands out of the order of the Psalm; and does not appear to have formed a part of the *alphabetical* arrangement. It is a general prayer for the redemption of Israel from captivity; and may well be applied to those of the true Israel who are seeking for complete redemption from the power, the guilt, and the pollution of sin; and from all the *troubles* that spring from it. And let it be ever known, that God alone can redeem Israel.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH PSALM

This Psalm is a continued earnest prayer of a man or a people pressed with danger and enemies, and sensible of God’s heavy displeasure against sin. It consists of *five petitions*.

I. His *first* petition is, that his “enemies not triumph over him,” ^{<19212>}**Psalm 25:2, 3**.

II. His *second* is for *instruction*, ^{<19204>}**Psalm 25:4, 5**, which he urges, ^{<19218>}**Psalm 25:8-10, 12-14**.

III. His *third* is for *mercy* and *forgiveness*, ^{<19216>}**Psalm 25:6, 7, 11**.

IV. His *fourth* is a renewal of his first, ^{<19215>}**Psalm 25:15-17**, &c., with many arguments.

V. His *fifth* is for Israel in general, ~~<1927>~~ **Psalm 25:22**.

I. He begins with the profession of his faith and confidence in God, without which there can be no prayer: “Unto thee, O Lord,” &c.; he relies not on, nor seeks after, any human help. And upon this living hope, he prays—

1. For this life, that it shame him not, as it does where a man hopes, and is frustrated: “Let me not be ashamed.” Make it appear that I hope not in thee in vain.

2. “Let not mine enemies triumph over me.” Glorifying that I am deserted. This petition he urges by this argument: The example may prove dangerous, if thou send me no help; but it will be to thy glory, if I be relieved. If he were delivered, the faith and hope of others would be confirmed; if deserted, the good would faint and fail, the wicked triumph: therefore he prays, O, let none that wait on thee be ashamed; but let them be ashamed who transgress, that is, they that do me wrong *maliciously, without my cause* being given by *myself*.

II. He petitions for *instruction*, that he may be always guided and governed by the word of God, that he sink not under the cross, but rely on God’s promises.

1. “Show me thy ways, and teach me thy paths.” Show me that thou often dealest severely with thy best servants: bringest down, before thou exaltest; mortifiest, before thou quickenest; and settest the cross before the crown. *Teach me*-show me, that this is *thy way*.

2. “Lead me in thy truth, and teach me.” Cause me to remember that thy promises are firm and true; *yea* and *amen* to those who trust in thee. This makes me hope still: “Thou art the God of my salvation.”

III. His third petition is for *mercy*. He prays for mercy, and the removal of the sin that obstructs it.

1. “Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies, &c., which have been ever of old;” i.e., deal mercifully with me as thou hast ever done with those who flee to thee in their extremity.

2. He prays for the *remission* of the *sins* of his *youth*: “Remember not the sins of my youth.” This petition he repeats, ~~<19251>~~ **Psalm 25:11**: “For thy name’s sake pardon mine iniquity;” and upon this confession: “For it is great.”

The psalmist here breaks off prayer; and, to confirm his confidence, speaks of the nature and person of God. It is necessary sometimes, even in the midst of our prayers, to call to mind the nature of God, and his ways with his people, lest, through a sense of our unworthiness or great unfaithfulness, we should be discouraged. And this course David takes; he says,

1. “Good and upright is the Lord.” 1. *Good*, for he receives sinners *gratis*.
2. *Upright*-constant and true in his promises; therefore he will teach sinners in the way.

2. “The meek will he guide in judgment.” He will not suffer them to be tempted above their strength; will teach them what to answer; and will not proceed with rigour, but will interpret all in the most favourable sense.

3. In a word, “All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth.” 1. *Mercy*, in that he freely offers the remission of sins, the graces of his Spirit, support in distresses, and at last eternal life, to those who by faith and a good conscience walk before him: “Keep his covenant and his testimonies;” for the words of the *covenant* are: “I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed;” upon which follows: “Walk before me, and be thou perfect.”

4. Upon the confidence of which promises and covenant the psalmist repeats his prayer: “O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great,”

~~19251~~ **Psalm 25:11.**

The psalmist now admires the happiness of him who trusts in God: “What man is he that feareth the Lord!” This happiness he sets forth by the fruits that follow his piety:—

1. The *first* fruit he shall gather is instruction and direction in his vocation, and private life: “Him shall he teach in the way,” &c.

2. The *second* is, that his happiness shall not be *momentary*, but firm and lasting: “His soul shall dwell at ease.”

3. The *third* is, that he shall be happy in his *posterity*: “His seed shall inherit the land.”

4. The *fourth* is, that the redemption of mankind by Christ Jesus, with all the effects of it, pardon, holiness, &c., which is a secret unknown to the world, shall be revealed and applied to him: “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.”

IV. Being confirmed by these promises, and cheered with these fruits, he,

1. Testifies his faith in God for deliverance: “My eyes are ever toward the Lord; he will pluck my feet out of the net.”

2. He then renews his former prayer, it being nearly the same as that with which he began. It is conceived in several clauses: 1. “Turn thee unto me.” 2. “Have mercy upon me.” 3. “O bring me out of my distresses.” 4. “Look upon my affliction and trouble, and forgive me all my sins.” 5. “Consider mine enemies.” 6. “O keep my soul, and deliver me.” 7. “Let me not be ashamed.” 8. “Let integrity and uprightness preserve me.”

Petitioners, and men in misery, think they can never say enough. This makes him often *repeat* the same thing. The sum is, that God would hear and grant him defence and deliverance in his dangers; remission of sins which caused them; and protect, direct, and govern him in his troubles.

3. That he might prevail in his suit, like an excellent orator, he uses many arguments to induce God to be propitious to him:—

1. His faith and trust in his promises: “Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord.”

2. The danger he was now in: “His feet were in the net.”

3. He was oppressed, alone, and had none to help him: “I am desolate and afflicted.”

4. His inward afflictions and pain were grievous: “The troubles of my heart are enlarged.”

5. His enemies were many, powerful, merciless, cruel: “Mine enemies are many-and hate me with cruel hatred.”

6. And yet I am innocent, and desire to be so; and am thy servant: “Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait upon thee.”

V. The psalmist having thus, through the Psalm, prayed for himself, at last offers up a short but earnest petition for the whole Church; which proceeds from that *fellowship* or *communion* which ought to be among all saints: “Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles!” Turn our captivity, and forgive the sins which have occasioned it.

PSALMS

PSALM 26

The psalmist appeals to God for his integrity, and desires to be brought to the Divine test in order to have his innocence proved, 1-3; shows that he had avoided all fellowship with the wicked, and associated with the upright, 4-8; prays that he may not have his final lot with the workers of iniquity, 9, 10; purposes to walk uprightly before God, 11, 12.

NOTES ON PSALM 26

This Psalm, and the two following, are supposed by *Calmet* to be all parts of one ode, and to relate to the time of the captivity, containing the prayers, supplications, complaints, and resolutions of the Israelites in Babylon. This is probable; but we have not evidence enough to authorize us to be nice on such points. See on the following verse.

Verse 1. Judge me, O Lord] There are so many strong assertions in this Psalm concerning the innocence and uprightness of its author, that many suppose he wrote it to vindicate himself from some severe reflections on his conduct, or accusations relative to plots, conspiracies, &c. This seems to render the opinion probable that attributes it to David during his exile, when all manner of false accusations were brought against him at the court of Saul.

I have walked in mine integrity] I have never plotted against the life nor property of any man; I have neither coveted nor endeavoured to possess myself of Saul's crown.

I have trusted] Had I acted otherwise, I could not have been prosperous; for thou wouldst not have worked miracles for the preservation of a wicked man.

I shall not slide.] I shall be preserved from swerving from the paths of righteousness and truth.

Verse 2. Examine me, O Lord] To thee I appeal; and feel no hesitation in wishing to have all the motives of my heart dissected and exposed to thy view, and to that of the world.

Verse 3. For thy loving-kindness] A sense of thy favour and approbation was more to my heart than thrones and sceptres; and in order to retain this blessing, *I have walked in thy truth.*

Verse 4. I have not sat with vain persons] *awv ytm methey shav, men of lies, dissemblers, backbiters, &c.*

Neither will I go in with dissemblers] *μyml [n naalamim, the hidden ones, the dark designers, the secret plotters and conspirators in the state.*

Verse 5. I have hated the congregation of evil doers] I have never made one in the crowds of discontented persons; persons who, under pretense of rectifying what was wrong in the *state*, strove to subvert it, to breed general confusion, to overturn the laws, seize on private property, and enrich themselves by the spoils of the country.

Verse 6. I will wash mine hands in innocency] Washing the hands was frequent among the Jews, and was sometimes an action by which a man declared his innocence of any base or wicked transaction. This *Pilate* did, to protest his innocence of the mal-treatment and death of Christ. I will maintain that innocence of life in which I have hitherto walked; and take care that nothing shall be found in my heart or life that would prevent me from using the most holy ordinance, or worshipping thee in spirit and truth.

So will I compass thine altar] It is a mark of respect among the Hindoos to *walk* several times *round* a *superior*, and *round* a *temple*.

Verse 7. That I may publish] I have endeavoured to act so as always to keep a conscience void of offence towards thee and towards man. I have made a profession of faith in thee, and salvation from thee, and my *practice* gives no lie to my *profession*.

Verse 8. Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house] I have carefully used thine ordinances, that I might obtain more grace to help me to persevere. And I have not been attentive to those duties, merely because they were *incumbent* on me; but *I have loved the place where thine honour dwelleth*; and my delight in thy ordinances has made my attendance as pleasant as it was profitable. This verse would be better translated, *Jehovah, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place of the tabernacle of thy glory.* The *habitation* must mean the *holy of holies*, where the Divine Presence was manifest; and the *place of the tabernacle* must refer to the *mercy-seat*, or the place where the *glory of the Lord*

appeared between the cherubim, upon the lid or cover of the ark of the covenant. From his dwelling there, ^{^kvm} *mishcan*, the *place* and the *appearance* were called ^{hnykv} *shechinah*; the dwelling of Jehovah, or that glorious appearance which was the symbol of the Divine Presence.

Verse 9. Gather not my soul with sinners] As I have never loved their company, nor followed their practice, let not my eternal lot be cast with them! I neither love them nor their ways; may I never be doomed to spend an eternity with them!

Verse 10. Their right hand is full of bribes] He speaks of persons in office, who took bribes to pervert judgment and justice.

Verse 11. But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity] Whatever I may have to do with public affairs, shall be done with the strictest attention to truth, justice, and mercy.

Redeem me] From all snares and plots laid against my life and my soul.

And be merciful unto me.] *I deserve* no good, but thou art merciful; deal with me ever in thy mercy.

Verse 12. My foot standeth in an even place] On the above principles I have taken my stand: to abhor evil; to cleave to that which is good; to avoid the company of wicked men; to frequent the ordinances of God; to be true and just in all my dealings with men; and to depend for my support and final salvation on the mere mercy of God. He who acts in this way, *his feet stand in an even place*.

I will bless the Lord.] In all my transactions with men, and in all my assemblings with holy people, I will speak good of the name of the Lord, having nothing but good to speak of that name.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PSALM

There are *four* general parts in this Psalm:—

- I. An appeal of David to God to be his Judge, ^{<19261>} **Psalm 26:1, 2.**
- II. The causes that induced him to make the appeal. His conscious innocence, integrity, &c.
- III. A petition, ^{<19269>} **Psalm 26:9, 11.**
- IV. His gratitude, ^{<192612>} **Psalm 26:12.**

I. He begins with his appeal to God, whom he knew to be a *just Judge*; and therefore desires to be dealt with according to law: “Judge me; examine me; prove me; try me; even my reins and my heart.”

II. Then he assigns two causes of it; his *integrity* and his *faith*.

1. His *faith* and confidence in God were such that he knew that the Judge of all the world would do him right. “I have trusted in the Lord, therefore, I shall not slide.” I will not change my religion, though powerfully tempted to do so.

2. His *integrity*: “I have walked in my integrity.” For which he assigns the cause: “Thy loving-kindness is before my eyes; I have walked in thy truth.” I follow thy *word*, and the principle it lays down.

Next he sets down his integrity by an injunction of parts, which were two:

1. How he carried himself to men; 2. How he conducted himself towards God.

1. He abstained from all society, confederacy, counsels, and intimacy with wicked men; he did hate and abominate their ways: “I have not sat in counsel with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers. I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked.”

2. The other degree of his *integrity* was, his *piety*: “I will wash my hands in innocence,” i.e., I will worship thee; and for this end he would keep his hands from blood, oppression, &c., in order that he “might publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all the wondrous works of the Lord.”

3. He mentions a second act of his piety, his *love to God’s house*, and the service done in it: “O Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honour dwelleth.”

III. Upon which conscientiousness of his integrity he falls to prayer, that God would not suffer him to be polluted with the conversation of wicked men, nor involved in their punishment: “Gather not my soul with sinners.”

Observe the many titles he gives to wicked men:—

1. They are *vain persons*; void of the fear of God; irreligious, ^{<19204>} **Psalm 26:4.**

2. *Deep, dark men*; saying one thing with their mouth, and another with their heart, ^{<19204>} **Psalm 26:4.**

3. *Malignant*; doing all for their own ends, ^{<19215>}**Psalm 26:5**.
4. *Impious*; regardless of God and religion, ^{<19215>}**Psalm 26:5**.
5. *Sinners*; traders in wickedness, ^{<19210>}**Psalm 26:9**.
6. *Blood-thirsty men*; cruel and revengeful. ^{<19210>}**Psalm 26:9**.
7. *Mischievous*; ready to execute with their *hands* what they had plotted in their *heart*, ^{<192510>}**Psalm 26:10**.
8. *Lovers of bribes*; perverting judgment for the sake of money, ^{<192510>}**Psalm 26:10**.

With such David will have nothing to do: “But as for me, I will walk in my integrity.” *Redeem me* from such people, *and be merciful to me*.

IV. Lastly. He shows his gratitude. “My foot stands in an even place;” hitherto I am sure I am in the good way. I will *therefore praise the Lord in the congregation*; not only privately, but publicly.

My foot hath hitherto been kept right by thy grace and mercy; therefore, when thou shalt bring me back again to thy temple, I will not be ungrateful, but will sing praises to thy name in and with the great congregation. Amen.

PSALMS

PSALM 27

The righteous man's confidence in God, 1-3; his ardent desire to have the spiritual privilege of worshipping God in his temple, because of the spiritual blessings which he expects to enjoy there, 4-6; his prayer to God for continual light and salvation, 7-9; his confidence that, though even his own parents might forsake him, yet God would not, 10. Therefore he begs to be taught the right way to be delivered from all his enemies, and to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, 11-13; he exhorts others to trust in God; to be of good courage; and to expect strength for their hearts, 14.

NOTES ON PSALM 27

In the *Hebrew* and *Chaldee* this Psalm has no other title than simply **דוד לד** *ledavid: To or For David*. In the *Syriac*: “For David; on account of an infirmity which fell upon him.” In the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Arabic*, and *Æthiopic*, it has this title: “A Psalm of David, before he was anointed.” The *Anglo-Saxon* omits all the titles. For this title there is no authority in fact. However, it may be just necessary to state that David appears to have received the royal unction three times: 1. In Bethlehem from the hand of Samuel, in the house of his father Jesse; ^{<01613>} **1 Samuel 16:13**. 2. At Hebron after the death of Saul, by the men of Judah; ^{<1004>} **2 Samuel 2:4**. 3. By the elders of Israel, at Hebron, after the death of Ishbosheth, when he was acknowledged king over all the tribes; ^{<1008>} **2 Samuel 5:3**. At which of these anointings the Psalm was written, or whether before any of them, we know not; nor is the question to be decided. Some commentators say that it is a Psalm belonging to the *captivity*, and upon that system it may be well interpreted. And lastly, it has been contended that it was written by David after he had been in danger of losing his life by the hand of a gigantic Philistine, and must have perished had he not been succoured by Abishai; see the account ^{<10217>} **2 Samuel 21:17**; and was counselled by his subjects not to go out to battle any more, *lest he should extinguish the light of Israel*. To these advisers he is supposed to make the following reply:—

Verse 1. The Lord is my light and my salvation] This light can never be extinguished by man; the Lord is my salvation, my safeguard, my shield, and my defence; of whom then should I be afraid?

Verse 2. When the wicked-came upon me] Near as I appeared to you to be in danger of losing my life, I was safe enough in the hands of the Lord; and those who thought to *have eaten me up, stumbled*, failed of their purpose, and *fell*; the Philistine lost his own life.

Verse 3. Though a host should encamp against me] I am so confident of the Almighty's protection, that were I *alone*, and encompassed by a host, I would not fear. I am in the hand of God; and while in that hand, I am safe.

Verse 4. One thing have I desired] If I am grown too old, and from that circumstance unable to serve my country, I shall then prefer a retirement to the tabernacle, there to serve God the rest of my days. There I shall behold his glory, and there I may *inquire* and get important answers respecting Israel.

But though these words may be thus interpreted, on the above supposition, that David penned the Psalm on the occasion of his escape from the Philistine, and the desire expressed by his subjects that he should go no more out to war; yet it appears that they more naturally belong to the *captivity*, and that this verse especially shows the earnest longing of the captives to return to their own land, that they might enjoy the benefit of Divine worship.

Verse 5. He shall hide me in his pavilion] *hksb besucchoh, in his tabernacle*. I would make his temple my residence; I would dwell with God, and be in continual safety. *Pavilion* comes from *papilio* and *παπιλιων*, a *butterfly*. It signifies a *tent* made of cloth stretched out on poles, which in form resembles in some measure the insect above named.

In the secret of his tabernacle] Were there no other place, he would put me in the *holy of holies*, so that an enemy would not dare to approach me.

He shall set me upon a rock.] He shall so *strengthen* and *establish* me, that my enemies shall not be able to prevail against me. He shall hide me where they cannot find me, or put me out of the reach of the fiery darts of the wicked. He who lives *nearest to God* suffers least from temptation. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to thee: resist the devil and he will flee from thee."

Verse 6. Now shall mine head be lifted up] We shall most assuredly be redeemed from this captivity, and restored to our own land, and to the worship of our God in his own temple. There shall we offer sacrifices of

joy; we will sing praises unto the Lord, and acknowledge that it is by his might and mercy alone that we have been delivered.

Verse 7. Hear, O Lord, when I cry] This is the utmost that any man of common sense can expect *to be heard when he cries*. But there are multitudes who suppose God will bless them whether they *cry or not*; and there are others, and not a few, who although they *listlessly pray* and *cry not*, yet imagine God must and will hear them! God will answer them that *pray and cry*; those who do not are most likely to be without the blessings which they so much need.

Verse 8. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face] How much labour and skill have been employed to make sense of this verse as it stands in our translation! The original words are the following, from which our Version has been forcibly extracted:— *vqba hwhy Ēynp ta ynp wvqb ybl rma ĒI lecha amar libbi bakkeshu panai; eth paneycha, Jehovah, abakkesh*; of which I believe the true rendering to be as follows: “Unto thee, my heart, he hath said, Seek ye my face. Thy face, O Jehovah, I will seek. O my heart, God hath commanded thee to seek his face.” Then, *his face I will seek*. Which may be paraphrased thus: *Unto thee, his Church, God hath said, Seek ye, all who compose it, my face*. To which *I, his Church, have answered, Thy face, O Jehovah, I will seek*. On referring to Archbishop *Secker*, I find that he, and indeed Bishop *Horsley*, are of the same mind.

I had formerly proposed another method of reading this difficult verse. Suspecting that some error had got into the text, for *ynp wvqb bakkeshu panay*, “seek ye my face,” I had substituted *Ēynp vqba abakkesh paneycha*, “I will seek thy face;” or with the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint*, *Ēynp ytcqb bakkesti paneycha*, “I have sought thy face,” *exquisivit te facies mea, εἰσεζητησα το προσωπον σου*. And this small alteration seemed to make a good sense: “My heart said unto thee, I have sought thy face, (or, I will seek thy face,) and thy face, O Lord, I will seek.” I have not only *done* what it was my duty and interest to do, but I will *continue to do* it. Some have proposed to *mend* the text thus: *ybl rma ĒI ĒI lech lecha, amar libbi*, “Go to, saith my heart,” *hwhy ynp vqbn nebakkesh peney Jehovah*, “Let us seek the face of Jehovah.” This is rather a violent emendation, and is supported by neither MSS. nor *Versions*. The whole verse is wanting in one of Dr. Kennicott’s MSS. On the whole I prefer what is first proposed,

and which requires no alteration in the text; next, that of the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint*.

The old *Psalter* paraphrases thus: Τιλ της σαιδε μυ ηερτ, της μυ φαχε σογητ: τηψ φαχε, λορδ, Ι σαλ σεκε. “The gernyng of my hert that spekes til god, and he anely heres: saide til ~~the~~ *my face*, that es my presence soght the and na nother thyng. And fra now I sal seke thy face lastandly, til my dede; and that I fynd my sekyng:” i.e., To thee, said my heart; thee my face sought: thy face, O Lord, I shall seek. “~~The~~ *gernyng of my hert*, that spekes til God, and he anely heres, til ~~the~~ *my face*; that es, my presence soght the and no nother thyng: ~~and fra now~~ *I sal seke thy face* lastandly, til my dede, and that I fynd my sekyng:” i.e., The yearning strong desire of my heart, which speaks to God, and he alone hears; my face is to thee; that is, myself sought thee, and none other thing, and from now I shall seek thee lastingly till my death, and till that I find what I seek.

Verse 9. Hide not thy face—from me] As my face is towards thee wheresoever I am, so let thy face be turned towards me. In a Persian MS. poem entitled [Persic] *Shah we Gudda*, “The King and the Beggar,” I have found a remarkable couplet, most strangely and artificially involved, which expresses exactly the same sentiment:—

[Persic]

[Persic]

One meaning of which is:—

*OUR face is towards THEE in all our ways;
 THY face is towards US in all our intentions.*

Something similar, though not the same sentiment is in *Hafiz*, lib. i., gaz. v., cap. 2:—

[Arabic]

[Arabic]

*How can we with the disciples turn our face towards the kaaba,
 When our spiritual instructor turns his face towards the wine-cellar?*

I shall subjoin a higher authority than either:—

Ὅτι ὀφθαλμοὶ Κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους,
 Καὶ ὠτὰ αὐτοῦ εἰς δεήσεις αὐτῶν,
 Πρόσωπον δὲ Κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιοῦντας κακά.

<012>1 Peter 3:12.

*For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous;
And his ears to their supplication:
And the face of the Lord is upon the workers of evil.*

Verse 10. When my father and my mother forsake me] Or, more literally, “For my father and my mother have forsaken me; but the Lord hath gathered me up.” My parents were my protectors *for a time*; but the Lord has been my Protector *always*. There is no time in which I do not fall under his merciful regards.

Verse 11. Teach me thy way] Let me know the gracious designs of thy providence towards me, that my heart may submit to thy will.

And lead me in a plain path] In the path of righteousness, because of mine enemies, who watch for my halting.

Verse 12. Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies] *To their soul v̄pn̄b benep̄hesh*; their whole soul thirsts for my destruction. Let them not be gratified. They have suborned witnesses against me, but they are false witnesses: unmask their wickedness, and confound their counsels.

Verse 13. I had fainted, unless I had believed] The words in italics are supplied by our translators; but, far from being necessary, they injure the sense. Throw out the words *I had fainted*, and leave a *break* after the verse, and the elegant figure of the psalmist will be preserved: “Unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” — What! what, alas! should have become of me!

Dr. *Hammond* has observed that there is a remarkable elegance in the original, which, by the use of the beautiful figure *aposiopesis*, makes an abrupt breaking off in the midst of a speech. He compares it to the speech of *Neptune* to the winds that had raised the tempest to drown the fleet of *Æneas*.—*Æneid.* lib. i., ver. 131.

*Eurum ad se zephyrumque vocat: dehinc talia fatur;
Tantane vos generis tenuit fiducia vestri?
James cælum terramque, meo sine numine, venti,
Miscere, et tantas audetis tollere moles?
Quos ego-sed motos præstat componere fluctus.*

*To Eurus and the western blast he cried,
Does your high birth inspire this boundless pride?
Audacious winds! without a power from me,
To raise at will such mountains on the sea?
Thus to confound heaven, earth, the air, and main;
Whom I——but, first, I'll calm the waves again.*

PITTS.

Verse 14. Wait on the Lord] All ye who are in distress, *wait on the Lord*. Take me for an example. I waited on him, and *he strengthened my heart*; wait ye on him, and *he will strengthen your heart*. You cannot be unsuccessful; fear not. *Wait, I say, on the Lord*; wait for his succour in doing his will. *Age viriliter*, says the *Vulgate*; act like a *man, hope, believe, work, and fear not*.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PSALM

There are *four* general *parts* in this Psalm. David shows,

I. How free he is from fear in any danger; and he shows also the cause of his confidence, ^{<192701>}**Psalm 27:1-3**.

II. He expresses his love to God's house and his religion, ^{<192704>}**Psalm 27:4-6**.

III. He prays for succour and support ^{<192707>}**Psalm 27:7**, &c.

IV. He exhorts others to dependence on the Lord, ^{<192714>}**Psalm 27:14**.

I. It is possible (independently of the reason given in the notes) that some person, friend or foe, might ask David how he felt during the persecutions raised against him by Saul? To whom he may be supposed to return this answer: "I was never disheartened, never in despair; and the reason was, God was my *Light* to guide me, my *Rock* to save me, and my *Strength* to sustain and support me: 'The Lord is my light,' &c." And this he amplifies in the next two verses: 1. By *experience*: he had already found this true: "When the wicked, even mine enemies, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." 2. He puts a case: "Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident."

The arguments for his confidence were, 1. God's *goodness*, ^{<19270>}**Psalm 27:1**. 2. His own *experience*, ^{<19270>}**Psalm 27:2**. To which he adds, 3. What *God would do for him*.

1. He would hide him in his tabernacle, ^{<19270>}**Psalm 27:5**.

2. That though his father and mother should forsake him, God would take him up, ^{<19270>}**Psalm 27:10**.

3. That he should see the *goodness* of God in the land of the living, ^{<19271>}**Psalm 27:13**.

II. He expresses his great love and affection to the house of God: "One thing I have desired," and in this he was constant. "THAT (emphatically) I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." For *three* ends:—

1. "To behold the beauty of the Lord." To taste how good and gracious he is.

2. "To inquire in his temple." There to search the mind of God.

3. "To offer in his temple sacrifices of joy, and to sing praises to the Lord."

And this was another argument of his security: "For in the time of trouble he will hide me in his pavilion—he shall set me upon a rock, and my head shall be lifted up." And—

III. He prays for succour and support.

1. For *audience*, and an *answer*: "Hear, O Lord, when I cry; have mercy upon me, and answer me."

2. The *ground* of his prayer; his having willingly received the commandment of God: "He hath said, Seek ye my face. Thy face, O Lord, will I seek."

3. The *matter* of his prayer in *general*: "Hide not thy face from me; put not thy servant away in anger." In which he had good hope of success from former experience. "Thou hast been my help;" be to me now as thou hast been: "Leave me not, nor forsake me, O God of my salvation," &c.

4. The *matter* of his prayer in *particular*: "Teach me thy way, O God; lead me in a plain path." That is, teach me what to do that I may please thee, and "lead me in a plain path," that I may escape the snares of my enemies.

“Deliver me not over to their will,” for they seek my ruin. 1. They are perjured men: “False witnesses have risen up again me.” 2. They are mischievously bent: “They breathe out cruelty.”

5. And their cruelty and falsehood are so great that “unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living,” what would have become of me!

IV. He concludes with an *exhortation* that all others would consider his example, and in their greatest extremities be courageous, and put their trust in God as he did: “Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.” Be an expectant; for he that has promised to come will come, and will not tarry. But wait actively; be not idle. Use the *means* of grace; *read, hear, pray, believe, work*. Acknowledge him in all thy ways, and he will direct thy steps. They that wait upon the Lord shall never be confounded.

PSALMS

PSALM 28

A righteous man in affliction makes supplication to God, and complains of the malice of his enemies, 1-4; whom he describes as impious, and whose destruction he predicts, 5. He blesses God for hearing his prayers, and for filling him with consolation, 6, 7; then prays for God's people, 8, 9.

NOTES ON PSALM 28

This Psalm is of the same complexion with the two preceding; and belongs most probably to the times of the captivity, though some have referred it to David in his persecutions. In the *five* first verses the author prays for support against his enemies, who appear to have acted treacherously against him. In the *sixth* and *seventh* he is supposed to have gained the victory, and returns with songs of triumph. The *eighth* is a chorus of the people sung to their conquering *king*. The *ninth* is the prayer of the king for his people.

Verse 1. O Lord my rock] *yrwx tsuri* not only means *my rock*, but *my fountain*, and the *origin* of all the good I possess.

If **thou be silent]** If thou do not answer in such a way as to leave no doubt that thou hast heard me, I shall be as a dead man. It is a modern refinement in theology which teaches that no man *can know* when God hears and answers his prayers, but by an *induction of particulars*, and by an *inference* from his *promises*. And, on this ground, how can any man fairly presume that he is heard or answered at all? May not his *inductions* be no other than the *common occurrences of providence*? And may not *providence* be no more than the *necessary occurrence of events*? And is it not possible, on this skeptic ground, that there is *no God* to hear or answer? True religion knows nothing of these abominations; it teaches its votaries to pray to God, to expect an answer from him, and to look for the Holy Spirit to bear witness with their spirits that they are the sons and daughters of God.

Verse 2. Toward thy holy oracle.] *Ëvdq rybd* *debir kodshecha*; *debir* properly means that place in the holy of holies from which God gave oracular answers to the high priest. This is a presumptive proof that there

was a *temple* now standing; and the custom of stretching out the hands in prayer *towards the temple*, when the Jews were at a distance from it, is here referred to.

Verse 3. Draw me not away] Let me not be involved in the punishment of the wicked.

Verse 4. Give them] Is the same as *thou wilt give them*; a prophetic declaration of what their lot will be.

Verse 5. They regard not the works of the Lord] They have no knowledge of the true God, either as to his *nature*, or as to his *works*.

He shall destroy them, and not build them up.] This is a remarkable prophecy, and was literally fulfilled: the Babylonian empire was destroyed by Cyrus, and never built up again; for he founded the Persian empire on its ruins. Even the place where Babylon stood is now no longer known.

Verse 7. The Lord is my strength] I have the fullest persuasion that he hears, will answer, and will save me.

Verse 8. The Lord is their strength] Instead of **wml** *lamo, to them*, eight MSS. of *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi* have **wm**[**l** *leammo, to his people*; and this reading is confirmed by the *Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon*. This makes the passage more precise and intelligible; and of the truth of the reading there can be no reasonable doubt. "The Lord is the strength of his PEOPLE, and the saving strength of his anointed." Both *king* and *people* are protected, upheld, and saved by him.

Verse 9. Save thy people] Continue to preserve them from all their enemies; from idolatry, and from sin of every kind.

Bless thine inheritance] They have taken thee for their God; thou hast taken them for thy people.

Feed them] **h**[**r** *raah* signifies both to *feed* and to *govern*. *Feed them*, as a *shepherd* does his *flock*; *rule them*, as a *father* does his *children*.

Lift them up for ever.] Maintain thy true Church; let no enemy prevail against it. Preserve and magnify them for ever. *Lift them up*: as hell is the bottomless pit in which damned spirits sink down for ever; or, as Chaucer says, *downe all downe*; so heaven is an endless height of glory, in which

there is an eternal rising or exaltation. Down, all down; up, all up; for ever and ever.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PSALM

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

- I. A prayer, ^{<1920>}**Psalm 28:1-6.**
- II. A thanksgiving, ^{<1920>}**Psalm 28:6-9.**
- III. A prayer for the Church, ^{<1920>}**Psalm 28:9.**

I. The first part is a prayer to God; in which he first requests audience, ^{<1920>}**Psalm 28:2:** “Hear me.” And his prayer is so described, that it sets forth most of the conditions requisite in one that prays:—

1. The *object*-GOD: “Unto thee, O Lord, do I cry.”
2. His *faith*: “To thee I cry, who art my rock.”
3. His *fervour*: It was an ardent and vehement prayer: “I cry.”
4. *Humility*; it was a supplication: “Hear the voice of my supplication.”
5. His *gesture*: “I lift up my hands.”
6. According to God’s ORDER: “Towards thy holy temple.”

1. The argument he uses to procure an audience; the danger he was in: “Lest, if thou be silent, I become like them that go down to the pit.”

2. Then he expresses what he prays for, which is, that either

1. He might not be corrupted by the fair persuasions of hypocrites:
2. Or that he might not be partaker of their punishments: “Draw me not away with the wicked.” Upon whom he sets this mark: “Who speak peace-but mischief is in their hearts.”
3. Against whom he uses this imprecation, which is the second part of his prayer: “Give them according to their own deeds,” &c.
4. For which he gives this reason: They were enemies to God and to his religion; far from repentance, and any hope of amendment: “They regard not the words of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands; therefore he shall destroy them, and not build them up.”

II. Then follows an excellent form of thanksgiving, which he begins with “Blessed be the Lord;” and assigns the reasons, which express the chief parts of thanksgiving.

1. That God heard him: “He hath heard the voice of my supplication.”
2. That he would be his Protector: “The Lord is my strength and my shield.”
3. For his grace of confidence: “My heart trusted in him.”
4. That from him he had relief: “I am helped.”
5. The testification and annunciation of this gratitude: “Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.” He remembers the indenture: “I will DELIVER THEE,—thou shalt PRAISE ME.” And, therefore, with heart and tongue he gives thanks.
6. And that God might have all the honour, he repeats what he said before: “The Lord is their strength,” &c., that is, of all them that were with him.

III. He concludes with a prayer, in which he commends the whole Church to God’s care and tuition.

1. “Save thy people,” in the midst of these tumults and distractions.
2. “Bless thine inheritance;” that they increase in knowledge, piety, and secular prosperity.
3. “Feed them:” Give them a godly king.
4. “Lift them up for ever:” Make their name famous among the Gentiles; let them increase and multiply till thy Church embraces all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. This hath the Lord promised.

PSALMS

PSALM 29

The psalmist calls upon the great and mighty to give thanks unto God, and to worship him in the beauty of holiness, on account of a tempest that had taken place, 1, 2. He shouts the wonders produced by a thunderstorm, which he calls the voice of God, 3-9. Speaks of the majesty of God, 10; and points out the good he will do to his people, 11.

NOTES ON PSALM 29

In the Hebrew, this is called *A Psalm for David*. The *Vulgate* says, “A Psalm of David, when the tabernacle was completed.” The *Septuagint* says: “A Psalm of David, at the going out or exodus of the tabernacle.” The *Arabic* states it to be “A prophecy concerning the incarnation; and concerning the ark and the tent.” ^{<04612>}**Numbers 5:12**. The *Syriac*, “A Psalm of David, concerning oblation.” The Psalm was probably written to commemorate the abundant rain which fell in the days of David, after the heavens had been shut up for three years; ^{<02101>}**2 Samuel 21:1-10**.

Verse 1. O ye mighty] *μυι a ynb beney elim*, “sons of the strong ones,” or “sons of rams.” The *Chaldee* has, “Ye hosts of angels, sons of God.” The *Vulgate* has, “Offer to the Lord, ye sons of God; offer to the Lord the sons of rams;” in this rendering agree the *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*. The old Psalter has, *Bringes til Lord ye goddes sonnes; brynges til Lord sonnes of wether*: which it paraphrases thus: that es, yourself, sonnes of apostles, that war leders of goddes folk; qwam ye study to folow.

Glory and strength.] Ascribe all excellence and might to him.

The whole Psalm is employed in describing the effects produced by a thunder-storm which had lately taken place.

Verse 2. The glory due unto his name] Rather, *the glory of his name*. His name is *Mercy*; his nature is *love*. Ascribe *mercy*, *love*, *power*, and *wisdom* to him. All these are implied in the name *Jehovah*.

In the beauty of holiness.] *vdq trd hb behadrath kodesh*, “the beautiful garments of holiness.” Let the priests and Levites put on their

best and cleanest apparel; and let the whole service be conducted in such a way as to be no dishonour to the Divine Majesty. The *Vulgate* and others read, *In the palace of his holiness*. Let all go to the temple, and return thanks to God for their preservation during this dreadful storm. See on ^{<1920>}**Psalm 29:9**.

Verse 3. The voice of the Lord] THUNDER, so called, ^{<10923>}**Exodus 9:23, 28, 29;** ^{<18370>}**Job 37:4;** ^{<191813>}**Psalm 18:13;** ^{<23300>}**Isaiah 30:30**. On this subject see the note on ^{<18370>}**Job 37:4**, where there is a particular description of the nature and generation of thunder; and of the *lightning, clap, rain*, and other *phenomena* which accompany it.

Upon many waters.] The clouds, which Moses calls the waters which are above the firmament.

Verse 4. Is powerful] There is no agent in universal nature so powerful as the electric fluid. It destroys life, tears castles and towers to pieces, rends the strongest oaks, and cleaves the most solid rocks: universal animate nature is awed and terrified by it. To several of these effects the psalmist here refers; and for the illustration of the whole I must refer to the above notes on Job.

Full of majesty.] No sound in nature is so tremendous and majestic as that of *thunder*; it is the most fit to represent the voice of God.

Verse 5. Breaketh the cedars] Very tall trees attract the lightning from the clouds, by which they are often torn to pieces. *Woods* and *forests* give dreadful proof of this after a thunderstorm.

Verse 7. Divideth the flames of fire.] The forked zigzag lightning is the cause of *thunder*; and in a thunder-storm these lightnings are variously dispersed, smiting houses, towers, trees, men, and cattle, in different places.

Verse 8. The wilderness of Kadesh.] This was on the frontiers of Idumea and Paran. There may be a reference to some terrible thunder-storm and earthquake which had occurred in that place.

Verse 9. Maketh the hinds to calve] Strikes terror through all the tribes of animals; which sometimes occasions those which are pregnant to cast their young. This, I believe, to be the whole that is meant by the text. I

meddle not with the *fables* which have been published on this subject both by *ancients* and *moderns*.

Discovereth the forests] Makes them sometimes evident in the darkest night, by the sudden flash; and often by setting them on fire.

And in his temple] Does this refer to the effect which a dreadful thunder-storm often produces? Multitudes run to places of worship as asylums in order to find safety, and pray to God. See on ^{<1920>}**Psalm 29:2.**

Verse 10. The Lord sitteth upon the flood] *bvy l wbml hwhy Jehovah lammabbul yasheb*, “Jehovah sat upon the deluge.” It was Jehovah that commanded those waters to be upon the earth. He directed the storm; and is here represented, after all the confusion and tempest, as sitting on the floods, appeasing the fury of the jarring elements; and reducing all things, by his governing influence, to regularity and order.

Sitteth king for ever.] He governs universal nature; whatsoever he wills he does, in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, and in all deep places. Every phenomenon is under his government and control. There is something very like this in Virgil’s description of Neptune appeasing the storm raised by Juno for the destruction of the fleet of Æneas. See at the end of this Psalm. See Clarke ^{<1921>}**Psalm 29:11”**.

Verse 11. The Lord will give strength] Prosperity in our secular affairs; success in our enterprises; and his blessing upon our fields and cattle.

The Lord will bless his people with peace.] Give them victory over their enemies, and cause the nations to be at peace with them; so that they shall enjoy uninterrupted prosperity. The plentiful rain which God has now sent is a foretaste of his future blessings and abundant mercies.

In the note on ^{<1920>}**Psalm 29:10** I have referred to the following description taken from Virgil. Did he borrow some of the chief ideas in it from the 29th Psalm? The reader will observe several coincidences.

*Interea magno misceri murmure pontum,
Emissamque hyemem sensit Neptunus, et imis
Stagna refusa vadis: graviter commotus, et alto
Prospiciens, summa placidum caput extulit unda.
Disjectam Æneæ toto videt æquore classem,
Fluctibus oppressos Troas, cœlique ruina.*

* * * * *

Eurum ad se zephyrumque vocat: dehinc talia fatur

* * * * *

*Sic ait: et dicto citius tumida æquora placat,
Collectasque fugat nubes, solemque reducit.
Cymothæ simul, et Triton adnixus acuto
Detrudunt naves scopulo; levat ipse tridenti;
Et vastas aperit syrtes, et temperat æquor,
Atque rotis summas levibus perlabitur undas.*

* * * * *

*Sic cunctus pelagi cecidit fragor, æquora postquam
Prospiciens genitor, cæloque invectus aperto,
Flectit equos, curruque volans dat lora secundo.
Æn. lib. i., ver. 124.*

*“Mean time, imperial Neptune heard the sound
Of raging billows breaking on the ground.
Displeased, and fearing for his watery reign,
He rears his awful head above the main,*

*Serene in majesty; then rolled his eyes
Around the space of earth, of seas, and skies.
He saw the Trojan fleet dispersed, distressed,
By stormy winds and wintry heaven oppressed.*

* * * * *

*He summoned Eurus and the Western Blast,
And first an angry glance on both he cast;
Then thus rebuked.*

* * * * *

*He spoke; and while he spoke, he soothed the sea,
Dispelled the darkness, and restored the day.
Cymothæ, Triton, and the sea-green train
Of beauteous nymphs, and daughters of the main,
Clear from the rocks the vessels with their hands;*

*The god himself with ready trident stands,
And opes the deep, and spreads the moving sands;
Then heaves them off the shoals: where'er he guides
His finny coursers, and in triumph rides,
The waves unruffle, and the sea subsides.*

* * * * *

*So when the father of the flood appears,
And o'er the seas his sovereign trident rears,
Their fury fails: he skims the liquid plains
High on his chariot; and with loosened reins,
Majestic moves along, and awful peace maintains.*
DRYDEN.

Our God, Jehovah, sitteth upon the flood: yea, Jehovah sitteth King for ever.

The heathen god is drawn by his *sea-horse*, and *assisted* in his work by *subaltern deities*: Jehovah sits on the flood an everlasting Governor, ruling all things by his will, maintaining order, and dispensing strength and peace to his people. The description of the Roman poet is fine; that of the Hebrew poet, majestic and sublime.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY-NINTH PSALM

There are two parts in this Psalm:—

I. The *exhortation* itself, ^{<19201>}**Psalm 29:1, 2.**

II. The *reasons* on which it is founded. These are drawn,

1. From his *power*, ^{<19203>}**Psalm 29:3-11.**

2. From the *protection* he affords to his people, ^{<19201>}**Psalm 29:11.**

I. The *exhortation*, which is singular. It proceeds from a king, and not from a common man; a prince, a great prince; and reminds princes and great men that there is *One greater than they*; and that, therefore, they should yield unto him his *due honour and worship*.

1. That they *freely* yield and give it up: for which he is very earnest, as appears from the urged *repetition*, *give, give, give*.

2. That in *giving* this, they must understand they are giving him no more than *his due*: "Give him the honour due to his name."

3. What they are to give: *glory* and *strength*. 1. They must make his *name to be glorious*. 2. They must attribute their *strength* to him.

4. That they *bow before* and *adore* him.

5. That they *exhibit* this honour in the proper PLACE: “In his temple; and in the beauty of holiness.”

II. And that they may be more easily persuaded to give the Lord the honour due to his name, he proposes *two reasons* to be considered:—

First. His *power*; for although *they* be *mighty ones*, his power is infinitely beyond theirs; which is seen in his *works of nature*; but, omitting many others, he makes choice of the *thunder*, and the *effects* it produces.

1. From its *nature*: for howsoever philosophers may assign it to *natural causes*, yet religious men will look higher; and, when they hear those fearful noises in the air, will confess, with the psalmist, that it is *the voice of the Lord*, which he repeats here *seven* times; and this voice has affrighted the stoutest-hearted sinners, and the mightiest of tyrants.

2. From the *place* where this voice is given: “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; upon many waters.”

3. From its *force* and *power*. They are not vain and empty noises, but strike a terror: “The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.”

4. From its *effects*; which he explains by an induction:—

1. Upon the strong TREES, *the cedars of Lebanon*: “The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars,” &c.

2. Upon the *firmest* MOUNTAINS, even *Lebanon* and *Sirion*; for sometimes the thunder is accompanied with an *earthquake*, and the mountains *skip like a calf*.

3. Upon the *air*; which is, to common minds, no small wonder; for, as nothing is more contrary to *fire* than *water*, it is next to miraculous how, out of a *watery* cloud, such *flames of fire* should be darted. “The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.”

4. In the *brute creation*; for it makes them fear and leave their caves, dens, and woods; yea, makes some of them cast their young: “The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness,” &c.; “it maketh the hinds to calve.”

5. In the mighty *rains* which follow upon it; when the cataracts of heaven are opened, and such floods of water follow that a man might fear that the earth was about to be overwhelmed by a *second inundation*. Out of all which he draws this conclusion: “The Lord sitteth upon the flood; the Lord sitteth a King for ever;” therefore, the earth is not destroyed.

Secondly. His *second* reason is drawn from the *works of grace*. 1. When He moves men to acknowledge his voice, and to give him glory in his temple: “In his temple doth every man speak of his honour.” 2. By the *security* He gives to his people, even in the time when he utters his voice, and *speaks in thunder*; whereas the *wicked* then tremble and quake: “The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace,” i.e., bodily security, and peace of conscience.

PSALMS

PSALM 30

The psalmist returns thanks to God for deliverance from great danger, 1-3. He calls upon the saints to give thanks to God at the remembrance of his holiness, because of his readiness to save, 4, 5. He relates how his mind stood affected before this great trial and how soon an unexpected change took place, 6, 7; mentions how, and in what terms, he prayed for mercy, 8-10; shows how God heard and delivered him and the effect it had upon his mind, 11, 12.

NOTES ON PSALM 30

This *Psalm* or *song* is said to have been made or used *at the dedication of the house* of David, or rather the dedication of a house or temple; for the word *David* refers not to **tybh** *habbayith*, the *house*, but to **rwmzm** *mizmor*, a *Psalm*. But what temple or house could this be? Some say, the *temple* built by *Solomon*; others refer it to the *dedication* of the *second temple* under Zerubbabel, and some think it intended for the dedication of a *third temple*, which is to be built in the days of the Messiah. There are others who confine it to the *dedication of the house which David built* for himself on Mount Sion, after he had taken Jerusalem from the Jebusites; or to the purgation and re-dedication of his own house, that had been defiled by the wicked conduct of his own son Absalom. *Calmet* supposes it to have been made by David on the dedication of the place which he built on the threshing floor of Araunah, after the grievous *plague* which had so nearly desolated the kingdom, ^{<10:25>} **2 Samuel 24:25**; ^{<13:12>} **1 Chronicles 21:26**. All the parts of the Psalm agree to this: and they agree to this so well, and to no other hypothesis, that I feel myself justified in modelling the comment on this principle alone.

Verse 1. **I will extol thee-for thou hast lifted me up]** I will lift thee up, for thou hast lifted me up. Thou hast made me blessed, and I will make thee glorious. Thou hast magnified me in thy mercy; and I will show forth thy praise, and speak good of thy name.

I have made some remarks on this Psalm in the Introduction.

In this Psalm we find *seven* different states of mind distinctly marked:—

1. It is implied, in the *first verse*, that David had been in great distress, and nearly overwhelmed by his enemies.

2. He extols God for having lifted him up, and having preserved him from the cruelty of his adversaries, ^{<19301>}**Psalm 30:1-3.**

3. He is brought into great prosperity, trusts in what he had received, and forgets to depend wholly on the Lord, ^{<19304>}**Psalm 30:4-6.**

4. The Lord hides his face from him, and he is brought into great distress, ^{<19307>}**Psalm 30:7.**

5. He feels his loss, and makes earnest prayer and supplication, ^{<19308>}**Psalm 30:8-10.**

6. He is restored to the Divine favour, and filled with joy, ^{<19311>}**Psalm 30:11.**

7. He purposes to glory in God alone, and to trust in him for ever, ^{<19312>}**Psalm 30:12.**

As it is impossible for any man to have passed through *all these states* at the same time; it is supposed that the Psalm, like many others of the same complexion, has been formed out of the *memoranda of a diary*. See this point illustrated in the Introduction.

Thou hast lifted me up] Out of the pit into which I had fallen: the vain curiosity, and want of trust in God, that induced me to number the people. Bishop *Horsley* translates, *Because thou hast depressed me*. I thank God for my humiliation and afflictions, because they have been the means of teaching me lessons of great profit and importance.

Verse 2. Thou hast healed me.] Thou hast removed the plague from my people by which they were perishing in *thousands* before my eyes.

Verse 3. Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave] I and my people were both about to be cut off; but thou hast spared us in mercy, and given us a most glorious respite.

Verse 4. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his] Ye *priests*, who wait upon him in his sanctuary, and whose business it is to offer prayers and sacrifices for the people, magnify him for the mercy he has now showed in staying this most destructive plague.

Give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.] “Be ye holy,” saith the Lord, “for I am holy.” He who can give thanks at the *remembrance* of his holiness, is one who *loves holiness*; who *hates sin*; who longs to be saved from it; and takes encouragement at the recollection of God’s holiness, as he sees in this the *holy nature* which he is to share, and the *perfection* which he is *here* to attain. But most who call themselves Christians hate the doctrine of holiness; never hear it inculcated without pain; and the principal part of their studies, and those of their pastors, is to find out *with how little holiness they can rationally expect to enter into the kingdom of God*. O fatal and soul-destroying delusion! How long will a holy God suffer such abominable doctrines to pollute his Church, and destroy the souls of men?

Verse 5. For his anger endureth but a moment] There is an elegant abruptness in these words in the Hebrew text. This is the literal translation: “For a moment in his anger. Lives in his favour. In the evening weeping may lodge: but in the morning exultation.” So good is God, that he cannot delight in either the depression or ruin of his creatures. When he afflicts, it is for our advantage, that we may be partakers of his holiness, and be not condemned with the world. If he be *angry* with us, it is but for a *moment*; but when we have recourse to him, and seek his face, his *favour* is soon obtained, and there are *lives* in that favour—the *life* that *now is*, and the *life* that is *to come*. When *weeping* comes, it is only to *lodge* for the *evening*; but *singing* will surely come in the *morning*. This description of God’s slowness to anger, and readiness to save, is given by a man long and deeply acquainted with God as his *Judge* and as his *Father*.

Verse 6. In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.] Peace and prosperity had seduced the heart of David, and led him to suppose that *his mountain*—his dominion, *stood so strong*, that adversity could never affect him. He wished to know the physical and political strength of his kingdom; and, forgetting to depend upon God, he desired Joab to make a *census* of the people; which God punished in the manner related in ^{<102401>}**2 Samuel 24:1-17**, and which he in this place appears to acknowledge.

Verse 7. Thou didst hide thy face] Thou didst show thyself displeased with me for my pride and forgetfulness of thee: and then I found how vainly I had trusted in an arm of flesh.

Verse 8. I cried to thee, O Lord] I found no help but *in him* against whom I had sinned. See his confession and prayer, ^{<102417>}**2 Samuel 24:17**.

Made supplication.] Continued to urge my suit; was instant in prayer.

Verse 9. What profit is there in my blood] My being cut off will not magnify thy mercy. Let not the sword, therefore, come against me. If spared and pardoned, I will declare thy truth; I will tell to all men what a merciful and gracious Lord I have found. *Hear, therefore, O Lord;*
~~19310~~ **Psalm 30:10.**

Verse 11. Thou hast turned-my mourning into dancing] Rather *into piping*. I have not prayed in vain. Though I deserved to be cut off from the land of the living, yet thou hast spared me, and the remnant of my people. Thou hast *taken away my sackcloth*, the emblem of my distress and misery, and *girded me with gladness*, when thou didst say to the destroying angel, when he stood over Jerusalem ready to destroy it: “It is enough, stay now thy hand;” ~~10416~~ **2 Samuel 24:16.**

Verse 12. To the end that my glory may sing] The word *dwbk cabod*, which we here translate *glory*, is sometimes taken to signify the *liver*. Here it is supposed to mean the *tongue*; why not the heart? But does not David mean, by *his glory*, the *state of exaltation and honour* to which God had raised him, and in which he had before too much trusted; forgetting that he held it in a state of dependence on God? Now he was disciplined into a better sentiment. My *glory* before had sung praise to myself; *in* it I had rested; *on* it I had presumed; and intoxicated with my success, I sent Joab to number the people. Now my *glory* shall be employed for *another purpose*; it shall give thanks to God, and *never be silent*. I shall *confess* to all the world that all the good, the greatness, the honour, the wealth, prosperity, and excellence I possess, came from God alone; and that I hold them on his mere good pleasure. It is so; therefore, “O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.”

The old *Psalter* translates and paraphrases the last verse thus:—**That my joy syng til the, and I be noght stanged: Lord my God withouten ende I sal schryf til the.** The dede and the sorrow of oure syn God turnes in til joy of remission; and scheres oway oure sekk-(drives away our distress) and umgyfs (surrounds) qwen we dye, with gladness. **That oure joy syng til hym**, that has gyfen us that joy; for we be **no more stanged** (stung) with conscience of syn: na drede of dede or of dome; bot **withouten ende** we sal loue (praise) him. Na tunge may telle na herte may thynk the mykelnes of joy that es in louing (praising) of hym in gast, and in sothfastnes, i.e., *spirit and truth*.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTIETH PSALM

There are *two* parts in this Psalm:—

I. The *giving of thanks* for delivery from a great danger, ^{<1970B>}**Psalm 30:1-3.**

II. An *exhortation* to others to follow his example, and thus acknowledge God's merciful dealings with them, ^{<1970B>}**Psalm 30:4-12.**

I. He begins with thanksgiving: "I will extol thee, O Lord;" and adds the *causes*.

1. "Thou hast lifted me up," as one out of a deep dark pit.

2. "Thou hast not made my foes to triumph over me;" but rather turned their mirth into sadness.

3. "Thou hast healed me;"—both in body and mind.

4. "Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave;" restored me to life, when apparently condemned to death.

5. He earnestly sought these blessings: "O Lord my God, I cried unto thee," and thou didst for me all that I have mentioned.

II. After having given thanks, he calls on the saints to acknowledge and celebrate the goodness of God to him and to others: "Sing unto the Lord," &c. And to induce them to do this, he gives the instance in himself, that God was angry with him, but soon appeased.

1. He was angry, but his anger *endured but a moment*; but *life*, and a continuance of it, are from his favour.

2. And justly angry he was for his sin and carnal confidence: "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved."

3. The *effect* of his anger was: "He hid his face, and I was troubled."

This is the example that he sets before the saints, that they be not secure when the world goes well with them; lest they have experience of God's displeasure, as he had.

Next he shows the *means* he used to avert God's wrath; and this he proposes as a pattern for all to follow in like cases.

1. He betook himself to *prayer*. 2. He sets down the *form* he used.

1. He that is ill sends for the physician-so did I. This was the fruit of my chastisement; I cried unto thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication.

2. And the *form* he used was this:—I earnestly pleaded with God thus: 1. “What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit?” 2. “Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?” 3. Can a dead man praise thee, or canst thou make good thy promises to the dead? 4. And he concluded with, “Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me; O Lord, be thou my helper.”

3. He shows the effect of his prayer: “Thou hast turned my mourning into dancing, thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.”

4. For what end God did this: “That my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.”

Now, O ye saints, 1. You see my case; 2. You see what course I took; 3. You see the effect; 4. You see the end why God was so good to me, that I should praise him. To you, who are in my state, I propose my example. Betake yourselves to God in your necessities; and, having obtained deliverance by earnest prayer and faith, remember to return praise to God for his ineffable goodness.

PSALMS

PSALM 31

The psalmist, with strong confidence in God, in a time of distress prays earnestly for deliverance, 1-5. He expresses his abhorrence of evil, 6; gratefully mentions former interpositions of God, 7, 8; continues to detail the miseries of his case, 9-18; points out the privileges of them that fear God, 19, 20; shows that God had heard his prayers, notwithstanding he had given himself over for lost, 21, 22; calls on the saints to love God, and to have confidence in him, because he preserves the faithful, and plentifully rewards the proud doer, 23, 24.

NOTES ON PSALM 31

This Psalm contains no notes of *time* or *place*, to help us to ascertain *when*, *where*, or on *what account* it was written. Nor have we any certain evidence relative to the *author*: it might have been written by *David* during his persecution by Saul. Some think *Jeremiah* to have been the author: the *thirteenth* verse begins exactly with the same words as ²⁴⁰⁰**Jeremiah 20:10**. There are several other apparent references to passages in the book of Jeremiah, which shall be produced in the notes.

Verse 1. In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust] I confide in thee for every good I need: *let me not be confounded* by not receiving the end of my faith, the supply of my wants, and the salvation of my soul.

Verse 2. Bow down thine ear] Listen to my complaint. Put thy ear to my lips, that thou mayest hear all that my *febleness* is capable of uttering. We generally put our ear near to the lips of the sick and dying, that we may hear what they say. To this the text appears to allude.

Strong rock] Rocks, rocky places, or caves in the rocks, were often *strong places* in the land of Judea. To such natural fortifications allusions are repeatedly made by the Hebrew poetic writers.

Verse 4. Pull me out of the net] They have hemmed me in on every side, and I cannot escape but by miracle.

Verse 5. Into thine hand I commit my spirit] These words, as they stand in the *Vulgate*, were in the highest credit among our ancestors; by whom they were used in all dangers, difficulties, and in the article of death. *In*

manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum, was used by the sick when about to expire, if they were sensible; and if not, the priest said it in their behalf. In *forms of prayer* for sick and dying persons, these words were frequently inserted in Latin, though all the rest of the prayer was English; for it was supposed there was something sovereign in the *language* itself. But let not the abuse of such words hinder their usefulness. For an ejaculation nothing can be better; and when the pious or the tempted with confidence use them, nothing can exceed their effect. “Into thy hands I commend my spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.” I give my soul to thee, for it is thine: thou hast redeemed it by thy blood; it is safe nowhere but in thy hand. Thou hast promised to save them that trust in thee; thou art the *God of truth*, and canst not deny thyself. But these words are particularly sanctified, or *set apart* for this purpose, by the use made of them by our blessed Lord just before he expired on the cross. “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, **Πατερ, εις χειρας σου παρατιθεμαι το πνευμα μου**, ‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,’” ^{<42346>}**Luke 23:46**. The rest of the verse was not *suitable* to the Saviour of the world, and therefore he omits it; but it is suitable to us who have been redeemed by that sacrificial death. St. Stephen uses nearly the same words, and they were the last that he uttered. ^{<4175>}**Acts 7:59**.

Verse 6. I have hated them] That is, I have abominated their ways. *Idolaters* are the persons of whom David speaks.

I trust in the Lord.] While *they* trust in *vanities vain things*; (for *an idol is nothing in the world*;) and in *lying vanities*; (for much is *promised* and nothing *given*;) I trust in Jehovah, who is God all-sufficient, and is my Shepherd, and therefore I shall lack no good thing.

Verse 7. Thou hast known my soul in adversities] When all forsook me; when none could help me; when I could not save my own life; when my enemies were sure that I could not escape; then I found *thee* to be my Friend and Supporter. When *friend*, so called, finds it convenient not to know his friend in affliction and poverty, then thou didst acknowledge me as thine own, all worthless as I was. Human friendships may fail; but the Friend of sinners never fails. Cicero defines a real friend, *Amicus certus in re incerta cernitor*: “A friend in need is a friend indeed.” Reader, such a Friend is the Lord.

Verse 8. Thou hast set my foot in a large room.] Many hair-breadth escapes David had for his life; at that time especially when, playing before

Saul, the furious king took a spear and endeavoured to pierce him through the body, but he escaped and got to the deserts. Here God, who had saved his life, set his *feet in a large room*. The seventh and eighth verses speak of what God had done previously for him.

Verse 9. Mine eye is consumed] He now returns, and speaks of his present situation. Grief had brought many tears from his eyes, many agonies into his soul, and many distressful feelings into his whole frame.

My soul and my belly.] The *belly* is often taken for the whole body. But the term *belly* or *bowels*, in such a case as this, may be the most proper; for in distress and misery, the *bowels* being the most tender part, and in fact the very *seat of compassion*, they are often most affected. In Greek the word **σπλαγγνον** signifies a *bowel*, and **σπλαγγνιζομαι** signifies to *be moved with compassion*; to feel misery in the bowels at the sight of a person in pain and distress.

Verse 10. My life is spent with grief] My life is a life of suffering and distress, and by grief my days are shortened. *Grief* disturbs the functions of life, prevents the due concoction of food, injures the digestive organs, destroys appetite, impairs the nervous system, relaxes the muscles, induces morbid action in the animal economy, and hastens death. These effects are well expressed in the verse itself.

My years with sighing] **hj na** *anachah*. This is a mere *natural* expression of grief; the very *sounds* which proceed from a distressed mind; *an-ach-ah!* common, with little variation, to all nations, and nearly the same in all languages. The *och-och-on* of the Irish is precisely the same sound, and the same sense. Thousands of beauties of this kind are to be found in the sacred language.

Verse 11. I was a reproach] When proscribed at the court of Saul, my *enemies* triumphed, and loaded me with execrations; my *neighbours* considered me as a dangerous man, now deservedly driven from society; my *acquaintance*, who knew me best, were afraid to hold any communication with me; and *they* who *saw* me in *my exile* avoided me as if affected with a contagious disorder,

Verse 12. I am forgotten as a dead man] I am considered as a person adjudged to death. *I am like a broken vessel*-like a thing totally useless.

Verse 13. I have heard the slander of many] To this and the two foregoing verses the reader may find several parallels; ^{<24818>}**Jeremiah 18:18-19:15**, and ten first verses of ^{<24001>}**Jeremiah 20:1-10**. This has caused several to suppose that Jeremiah was the author of this Psalm.

Verse 14. But I trusted in thee] Hitherto thou hast been my Helper, and thou art my God; I have taken thee for my eternal portion.

Verse 15. My times are in thy hand] The events of my life are under thy control. No danger can happen to me without thy foresight; thou seest what is prepared for or meditated against me; thou canst therefore deliver me from mine enemies.

Verse 16. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant] Only let me know that thou art reconciled to and pleased with me, and then, come what will, all must be well.

Save me for thy mercies' sake.] Literally, *Save me in thy mercy*.

Verse 17. Let the wicked be ashamed] Those who traduce my character and lay snares for my life; let them be confounded.

Verse 18. Let the lying lips be put to silence] As to my enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, abate their pride, assuage their malice, and confound their devices. See ^{<24818>}**Jeremiah 18:18**.

Verse 19. O how great is thy goodness] God's goodness is infinite; there is enough for *all*. enough for *each*, enough for *evermore*. It is laid up where neither devils nor men can reach it, and it is laid up for *them that fear the Lord*; therefore every one who trembles at his word, may expect all he needs from this Fountain that can never be dried up.

Which thou hast wrought] Thou hast already prepared it; it is the work of thy own hands; thou hast provided it and proportioned it to the necessities of men, and all who trust in thee shall have it. And for them especially it is prepared *who trust in thee before men*-who boldly confess thee amidst a crooked and perverse generation.

Verse 20. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence] **Ëynp rtsb** *besether paneycha*, "With the covering of thy countenance." Their life shall be so hidden with Christ in God, that their enemies shall not be

able to find them out. To such a hiding-place Satan himself dare not approach. There *the pride of man* cannot come.

Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion] Thou shalt put them in the innermost part of thy tent. This implies that they shall have much communion and union with God; that they shall be transformed into his likeness, and have his highest approbation.

Verse 21. In a strong city.] If this Psalm was written by David, this must refer to his taking refuge with *Achish, king of Gath*, who gave him *Ziklag*, a fortified city, to secure himself and followers in. See ^{<192706>}**1 Samuel 27:6**. This is more likely than that it was *Keilah*, where he only had intimation of the traitorous design of the inhabitants to deliver him up to Saul; so that the place was no refuge to him, howsoever fortified. Perhaps the passage may mean that, under the protection of God, he was as safe as if he had been in a fortified city.

Verse 22. I said in my haste] Not duly adverting to the promise of God, I was led to conclude that my enemies were so strong, so numerous, and had so many advantages against me, that I must necessarily fall into and by their hands; however, I continued to pray, and thou didst hear the voice of my supplication.

Verse 23. O love the Lord, all ye his saints] It is only the *saints* that can love God, as they only are made partakers of the Divine nature. *Holy spirits* can love God, who is the fountain of their holiness; and the *saints* should love him.

Preserveth the faithful] Those who, being filled with the love of God, bring forth the fruits of that love-universal obedience to the will of God; for to such persons his commands are not grievous, their *duty* is their *delight*; while a man is *faithful* to the grace he has received, that is, uses and improves the talents with which God has intrusted him, God's service is perfect freedom.

The proud doer.] The man of the proud heart, haughty and supercilious carriage, and insulting and outrageous conduct. A *proud man* is peculiarly odious in the sight of God; and in the sight of reason how absurd! A sinner, a fallen spirit, an heir of wretchedness and corruption-proud! Proud of what? Of an indwelling devil! Well; such persons shall be *plentifully*

rewarded. They shall get their *due*, *their whole due*, and *nothing but their due*.

Verse 24. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart] In ^{<46161>}**1 Corinthians 16:13**, St. Paul says, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith; quit you like men; be strong:” **Γρηγορευετε, στηκετε εν τη πιστει, ανδριξεσθε, κραταιουσθε.** The latter words he seems to have borrowed from the *Septuagint*, who translate, “Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart,” by **Ανδριξεσθε και κραταιουσθω η καρδια υμων**, “Act like men, and your hearts shall be strengthened.”

They that hope in God, and are endeavouring to walk carefully before him, may take courage at all times, and expect the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-FIRST PSALM

This Psalm is composed and mixed of divers affections; for David sometimes prays, sometimes gives thanks; now he complains, now he hopes; at one time fears, at another exults. This vicissitude of affection is *six-fold*, and it may very well divide the Psalm.

- I. With great confidence he prays to God; ^{<193101>}**Psalm 31:1-6.**
 - II. He exults for mercy and help received; ^{<193107>}**Psalm 31:7, 8.**
 - III. He grievously complains of the misery he was in; ^{<193109>}**Psalm 31:9-14.**
 - IV. He prays again, upon the strength of God’s goodness; ^{<193115>}**Psalm 31:15-18.**
 - V. He admires, exults in, and proclaims God’s goodness, ^{<193119>}**Psalm 31:19-22.**
 - VI. He exhorts others to love God, and be courageous; ^{<193123>}**Psalm 31:23, 24.**
- I. In the six first verses he prays to God, and shows his reasons:—
 1. That he be never ashamed in his hope: “Let me never be ashamed.”
 2. That he be delivered, “speedily delivered.”
 3. That God would be “his rock, and a house of defence, to save him.”

4. That God would lead and guide him: "Lead me, and guide me."
5. That God would "pull his feet out of the net which they had laid for him."

The *reasons* on which he founds his prayer and expectations:—

1. His faith and confidence: "In thee, O Lord I put my trust."
2. The reason of his faith: "Thou art my ROCK and FORTRESS."
3. His deliverance would be to the honour of God: "For thy name's sake."
4. Thou art my strength; exert it in my behalf.
5. I rely upon thee: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit."
6. I expect thee to do for me as thou hast ever done: "Thou hast redeemed me."
7. I rely on thee alone, I seek no vain helps: "I have hated them that regard lying vanities; but I trust in the Lord."

His *petition* and his *reasons* are in effect the same; his confidence in God to be his *Deliverer, Fortress, Rock, Redeemer, &c.*

II. He exults for mercy and help already received, and by the experience of that, doubts the less in this: "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy." And his reason follows from his experience: 1. "For thou hast considered my trouble." 2. "Thou hast known my soul in adversity." 3. "Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy." 4. But "hast set my feet in a large room."

III. He prays, and grievously complains of what he suffered *within* and *without*.

1. He *prays*: "Have mercy upon me, O Lord."
2. Then he *complains*, and his complaint shows the reason of his prayer.

1. *Within*-at home, he was in a distressed state: "I am in trouble; my eye is consumed with grief; my years with sighing; my strength faileth; my bones are consumed."
2. *Without*-I have no comfort either from friends or enemies.

1. "I was a reproach among all my enemies."

2. My *friends* stand afar off: "I was a reproach, especially among my neighbours." "A fear to my acquaintance." "They that did see me without fled from me."

3. He shows the greatness of his grief, and the scorn he endured: "I am forgotten as a dead man;" "I am as a broken vessel," vile and useless.

4. I am mocked by the people: "I have heard the slander of many."

5. And the consequence was mischievous. 1. "Fear is on every side." 2. While they conspired, or "took counsel against my life." 3. And their counsel was, "to take away my life." What more could my enemies do, or my friends permit?

IV. After his complaint he comforts himself with his chief reason, *the goodness of God*. I have trusted in thee, O Lord, and said, Thou art my God. Let them conspire, take counsel, and devise what they can; yet I know, except thou permit them, they are not able to do it. "My times are in thy hand," not in *theirs*.

He then begins to pray again, and his prayer consists of *three* parts: 1. Deprecation. 2. Supplication. 3. Imprecation.

1. A *deprecation*: "Deliver me from the hands of my enemies," &c.

2. A *supplication*: "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; save me." "Let me not be ashamed, for I have called upon thee."

3. An *imprecation*: 1. "Let the wicked be ashamed, and be silent in the grave." 2. "Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous things," &c.

In this imprecation *four arguments* are used to enforce it:—

1. The *quality* of their persons: "They are wicked, impious men."

2. There is *no truth* in them: "They have lying lips." 1. Their *words* are false. 2. Their *actions* are worse: *They speak grievous things*, and that *against the righteous*. 3. But their *intention* is worst of all, for they do it *proudly, contemptuously, disdainfully, despitefully*; all proceeding from a *bad heart*.

V. In the *fifth* part he sets out the *abundant goodness of the Lord* to his people, and exclaims, in holy rapture, “O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee—which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!”

This goodness of God is always treasured up and to be had at all times. But observe: 1. It is *laid up* for none, nor *wrought* for any one, but *them that fear the Lord*. 2. And for those *who put their trust in him*, and acknowledge him, his cause, his people, and his cross, *before the sons of men*. And the acts of his goodness are here specified:—

1. “Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man.”

2. “Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.” Upon which consideration he breaks out into praise: 1. “Blessed be the Lord, for he hath showed me his marvellous kindness.” 2. He *corrects* his error, and former mistake: “I said in my haste, (rashly, imprudently,) I am cut off from before thine eyes; nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication.”

VI. The last part is an *exhortation to the saints*: 1. That they *love God*. 2. That they be of *good courage*; for he was the same God still, and would be as good to others as he was to him.

1. That they *love God*, and that for two reasons:—1. Because the “Lord preserveth the faithful.” This is his *mercy*. 2. That he “plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.” This is his *justice*.

2. That they *be of good courage*; for then “he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.” They were not to despair, but keep their hearts firmly fixed in the profession of the truth, which would be a seal of their *hope*.

PSALMS

PSALM 32

True blessedness consists in remission of sin, and purification of the heart, 1, 2. What the psalmist felt in seeking these blessings, 3-5. How they should be sought, 6, 7. The necessity of humility and teachableness, 8, 9. The misery of the wicked, 10. The blessedness of the righteous, 11.

NOTES ON PSALM 32

The *title* of this Psalm is significant, **lykcm dwdl** *ledavid maskil*, A Psalm of David, giving instruction, an instructive Psalm; so called by way of eminence, because it is calculated to give the highest instruction relative to the guilt of sin, and the blessedness of pardon and holiness or *justification* and *sanctification*. It is supposed to have been composed after David's transgression with Bath-sheba, and subsequently to his obtaining pardon. The *Syriac* entitles it, "A Psalm of David concerning the sin of Adam, who dared and transgressed; and a prophecy concerning Christ, because through him we are to be delivered from hell." The *Arabic* says, "David spoke this Psalm prophetically concerning the redemption." The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, and *Æthiopic*, are the same in meaning as the *Hebrew*.

Verse 1. Blessed is he whose **transgression** is **forgiven**] In this and the following verse *four* evils are mentioned: 1. *Transgression*, [**vp** *pesha*. 2. *Sin*, **hacj** *chataah*. 3. *Iniquity*, **w**[*avon*. 4. *Guile*, **hymr** *remiyah*. The *first* signifies the *passing over a boundary, doing what is prohibited*. The *second* signifies the *missing of a mark, not doing what was commanded*; but is often taken to express *sinfulness*, or sin in the future, producing transgression in the life. The *third* signifies *what is turned out of its proper course or situation*; any thing *morally distorted* or *perverted*. *Iniquity*, what is contrary to *equity* or *justice*. The *fourth* signifies *fraud, deceit, guile, &c.* To remove these evils, *three* acts are mentioned: *forgiving, covering, and not imputing*. 1. **TRANSGRESSION**, [**vp** *pesha*, must be *forgiven*, **ywcn** *nesui*, borne away, i.e., by a vicarious sacrifice; for *bearing sin, or bearing away sin*, always implies this. 2. **SIN**, **hacj** *chataah*, must be *covered*, **ywsk** *kesui*, hidden from the sight. It is odious and abominable,

and must be put out of sight. 3. INIQUITY, *ˆw*[*anon*, which is *perverse* or *distorted*, must not be imputed, *bvj y al lo yachshob*, must not be reckoned to his account. 4. GUILLE, *hymr remiyah*, must be annihilated from the soul: *In whose spirit there is no GUILLE*. The man whose *transgression* is forgiven; whose *sin* is hidden, God having cast it as a millstone into the depths of the sea; whose iniquity and perversion is not reckoned to his account; and whose *guile*, the deceitful and desperately wicked heart, is annihilated, being emptied of sin and filled with righteousness, is necessarily a happy man.

The old *Psalter* translates these two verses thus: *Blissid qwas wikednes es for gyben, and qwas synnes is hyled* (covered.) *Blisful man til kwam Lord retted* (reckoneth) *noght Syn: ne na treson es in his gast* (spirit.) In vain does any man look for or expect happiness while the *power* of sin remains, its *guilt unpardoned*, and its *impurity* not purged away. To the person who has got such blessings, we may say as the psalmist said, *yrva ashrey, O the blessedness of that man, whose transgression is forgiven!* &c.

St. Paul quotes this passage, ^{<5006}**Romans 4:6, 7**, to illustrate the doctrine of *justification by faith*; where see the notes.

Verse 3. When I kept silence] Before I humbled myself, and confessed my sin, my soul was under the deepest horror. “I roared all the day long;” and felt the hand of God heavy upon my soul.

Verse 5. I acknowledged my sin] When this confession was made thoroughly and sincerely, and I ceased to *cover* and *extenuate my offence*, then thou didst forgive the iniquity of my sin. I felt the hardness of heart: I felt the deep distress of soul; I felt power to confess and abhor my sin; I felt confidence in the mercy of the Lord; and I felt the forgiveness of the iniquity of my sin.

Selah.] This is all true; I *know* it; I *felt* it; I *feel* it.

Verse 6. For this shall every one that is godly] Because thou art merciful; because thou hast shown mercy to all who have truly turned to thee, and believed in thee; every one who fears thee, and hears of this, *shall pray unto thee* in an acceptable time, *when thou mayest be found*; in the time of finding. When the heart is softened and the conscience alarmed, that is a time of finding. God is ever ready; men are not so. Who can pray with a hard heart and a dark mind? While you feel relentings, pray.

Surely in the floods] In violent trials, afflictions, and temptations; when the rains descend, the winds blow, and the floods beat against that godly man who prays and trusts in God; “they shall not come nigh him,” so as to weaken his confidence or destroy his soul. His *house* is founded on a *rock*.

Verse 7. Thou art my hiding place] An allusion, probably, to the *city of refuge*: “Thou shalt preserve me from trouble.” The avenger of blood shall not be able to overtake me. And being encompassed with an impregnable wall, I shall feel myself *encompassed with songs of deliverance*—I shall know that I am safe.

Verse 8. I will instruct thee] These are probably the Lord’s words to David. Seeing thou art now sensible of the mercy thou hast received from me, and art purposing to live to my glory, I will give thee all the assistance requisite. I will become thy *Instructor*, “and will teach thee,” in all occurrences, “the way thou shouldst go.” I will keep *mine eyes* upon thee, and thou shalt keep thine upon me: as I go, thou must follow me; and I will continually watch for thy good.

Verse 9. Be ye not as the horse or as the mule] They will only act by *force* and *constraint*; be not like *them*; give a *willing service* to your Maker. “They have no understanding;” you have a *rational soul*, made to be guided and influenced by *reason*. The service of your God is a *reasonable service*; act, therefore, as a *rational being*. The horse and the mule are turned with difficulty; they must be constrained with *bit* and *bridle*. Do not *be like them*; do not oblige your Maker to have continual recourse to afflictions, trials, and severe dispensations of providence, to keep you in the way, or to recover you after you have gone out of it.

Verse 10. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked] Every *wicked* man is a *miserable* man. God has wedded sin and misery as strongly as he has holiness and happiness. God hath joined them together; none can put them asunder.

But he that trusteth in the Lord] Such a person is both safe and happy.

Verse 11. Be glad-and rejoice] Let every *righteous soul* rejoice and glory, but let it be *in the Lord*. Man was made for *happiness*, but his happiness must be founded on holiness: and holiness, as it comes from God, must be retained by continual union with him. Probably this verse belongs to the next Psalm, and was originally its first verse.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-SECOND PSALM

This Psalm is *doctrinal*, and shows the happiness of the man whose sin is pardoned, and who is himself restored to the favour and image of God. It is called *maschil*, or *instruction*; and the reason of this is shown at the *eighth* verse: "I will instruct thee, and teach thee." In it we have instruction, especially on these *three* points, which divide the Psalm:—

I. The happy state of a justified person, ^{<19301>}**Psalm 32:1, 2.**

II. The unhappy condition of that man who is not assured that he is justified and reconciled to God, ^{<19303>}**Psalm 32:3, 4.** And the way is prescribed how to gain this assurance, ^{<19305>}**Psalm 32:5.**

III. A lesson given for obedience after a man is brought into that state, ^{<19308>}**Psalm 32:8, 9.**

I. The prophet first instructs us in what *justification* consists:—

I. It is a *free remission*, a *covering of sin*; a *nonimputation of iniquities*. 2. In what state a person must be in order to obtain it. He must be honest, sincere, and upright in heart; deeply penitent, feeling the guilt of sin, and acknowledging its enormity. He must avoid *guile* or deceit; and not excuse, palliate, or extenuate his sin, but confess it.

II. This he proves by his own experience: he hid his sin, he confessed it not; and was in consequence, miserable.

1. I held my peace I confessed not. I did not ask pardon: "When I kept silence," &c.

2. I was wounded with the sting of a guilty conscience; fears, horrors, troubles of soul, came upon me: "My bones waxed old through my roaring."

3. And then he shows the *way* he took to *regain* happiness; it was a *contrary course* to that above; he concealed his sin no longer. 1. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity I have not hidden." 2. "I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."

Of which the effects were various:—

1. Upon *himself*. He recovered his happiness in being justified: "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

2. On the *whole Church*: “For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee.”

3. *Comfort in extremities*, and safety in the greatest danger: “Surely in the floods of great waters,” in an inundation of calamities, *they*-the troubles-*shall not come nigh him* who depends upon God’s goodness and mercy, and is reconciled to him. And he shows the reason from his own experience. God was his *Protector*: 1. “Thou art my hiding place: thou shalt preserve me from trouble.” 2. “Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.”

III. And now David sets down the duty of a justified person; that he is, after his pardon, obedient to God; and that not out of compulsion, but *freely* and *willingly*. In order to this, God condescends to be his *Instructor*.

1. “I will instruct;” give thee general counsel.

2. “I will guide thee with mine eye.” A good servant needs no *stripes*; he will observe *nutum*, the *nod*, or *nicturn heri*, the *wink of the master*. As my eye is always over you, carefully to instruct; so be you as ready to observe it.

3. Be not like *beasts*: the HORSE, *headlong*; the MULE, *headstrong*; “whose mouths must be held in with bit and bridle,” lest they fling, kick, hurt, or kill thee. *Constrained obedience* is for a *beast*; *free and voluntary obedience*, for a *man*.

4. Besides, to quicken your obedience, I will teach you two reasons. 1. From inconvenience and loss: “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked:” their griefs, troubles and punishments, are many and grievous. Be not, therefore, disobedient like the wicked. 2. From the *gain*. Your obedience shall be rewarded, and that amply: “He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him round about.” It shall be like the *girdle* with which he *is girded*. God will be present with him in his troubles. He shall perceive that he is in favour with God, that his sins are pardoned, and that he is an heir of eternal life.

Upon which he concludes with this exhortation: “Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.” For this rejoicing there is great cause; for this doctrine of free remission of sin can alone quiet a guilty conscience. And this pardon can only be obtained by faith in Christ Jesus.

PSALMS

PSALM 33

The Lord is praised for his works of creation, 1-9; and for the stability of his own counsels, 10, 11. The blessedness of the people who have the knowledge of the true God, his grace, and providence, 12-15. The vanity of all earthly dependence, 16, 17. The happiness of them that fear God, and trust in his mercy, 18-22.

NOTES ON PSALM 33

This Psalm has no *title* in the Hebrew and it was probably written on no particular occasion, but was intended as a hymn of praise in order to celebrate the power, wisdom, and mercy of God. Creation and providence are its principal subjects; and these lead the psalmist to glance at different parts of the ancient Jewish history. In eight of *Kennicott's MSS.*, this Psalm is written as a part of the preceding.

Verse 1. Rejoice in the Lord] It is very likely that the *last* verse of the preceding Psalm was formerly the *first* verse of this. As this Psalm has no *title*, the verse was the more easily separated. In the preceding Psalm we have an account of the happiness of the justified man: in this, such are taught how to glorify God, and to praise him for the great things he had done for them.

Praise is comely for the upright.] It is *right* they should give thanks to Him, who is the fountain whence they have received all the good they possess and thankfulness becomes the lips of the upright.

Verse 2. Praise the Lord with harp] *rwnk kinnor*; probably something like our *harp*: but Calmet thinks it the ancient *testudo*, or lyre with three strings.

The psalter] *l bn nebel*. Our translation seems to make a *third* instrument in this place, by rendering *rwc* [*asor*, an instrument of ten strings; whereas they should both be joined together, for *rwc* [*l bn nebel-asor* signifies the *nebal*, or *nabla*, with ten strings, or holes. Calmet supposes this to have resembled our *harp*. In one of *Kennicott's MSS.*, this Psalm begins with the second verse.

Verse 3. Sing unto him a new song] Do not wear out the old forms: fresh mercies call for new songs of praise and gratitude.

Play skilfully with a loud noise.] Let *sense* and *sound* accompany each other; let the style of the music be suited to the words. This *skill* is possessed by few singers. They can make a *loud noise*, but they cannot adapt *sound* to *sense*.

Verse 4. The word of the Lord is right] He is infinitely wise, and can make no mistakes; and all his works are done in truth. All the words, laws, promises, and threatenings of God are perfectly true and just. The dispensations of his providence and mercy are equally so. When he *rewards* or *punishes*, it is according to *truth* and *justice*.

Verse 5. He loveth righteousness] What he delights in himself, he loves to see in his followers.

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.] To hear its worthless inhabitants complain, one would think that God dispensed *evil*, not *good*. To examine the operation of his hand, every thing is marked with mercy and there is no place where his goodness does not appear. The *overflowing kindness* of God fills the earth. Even the iniquities of men are rarely a bar to his goodness: he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends his rain upon the *just* and the *unjust*.

Verse 6. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made] This is illustrated in the 9th verse: "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." This evidently refers to the account of the creation, as it stands in the first chapter of Genesis.

Verse 7. He gathereth the waters of the sea together] He separated the *water* from the *earth* and, while the latter was collected into continents, islands, mountains, hills, and valleys, the former was collected into *one place*, and called *seas*; and by his all-controlling power and providence the waters have been retained in their place, so that they have not returned to drown the earth: and he has so adapted the *solar* and *lunar influence* exerted on the waters, that the tides are only raised to certain heights, so that they cannot overflow the shores, nor become dissipated in the atmospheric regions. In this one economy there is a whole circle of science. The quantity of matter in the sun, moon, and in the earth, are all adjusted to each other in this astonishing provision: the *course* of the *moon*, and the

diurnal and *annual revolutions of the earth*, are all concerned here; and so concerned, that it requires some of the nicest of the Newtonian calculations to ascertain the laws by which the whole is affected.

Verse 8. Let all the earth fear the Lord] He who has thus *bound*, can *unloose*; he who has *created*, can *destroy*. He has promised life and prosperity *only* to the *godly*; let the *ungodly* stand in awe of him.

Verse 10. The counsel of the heathen to naught] This appears to be similar to what is mentioned in the second *Psalms*; the useless attempts of the Gentiles to prevent the extension of the kingdom of Christ in the earth: and it may refer to similar attempts of ungodly nations or men to prevent the promulgation of the Gospel, and the universal dissemination of truth in the world.

Verse 11. The counsel of the Lord] What he has determined shall be done. He determined to make a world, and he made it; to create man, and he created him. He determined that at a certain period God should be manifested in the flesh, and it was so; that he should taste death for every man, and he did so; that his Gospel should be preached in all the world; and behold it has already nearly overrun the whole earth. All his other counsels and thoughts, which refer to the *future*, shall be accomplished in their times.

Verse 12. Blessed is the nation] O how happy is that nation which has *hwhy Jehovah* for its *pyhl a Elohim*; the self-existent and eternal Lord for its covenant God; one who should unite himself to it by connections and ties the most powerful and endearing! The word *pyhl a Elohim*, which we translate GOD, refers to that economy in which God is manifested in the flesh.

The people whom he hath chosen] The *Jews*, who were *elected* to be his *heritage*, whom he preserved as such for two thousand years, and whom he has *reprobated* because of their unbelief and rebellion, and elected the Gentiles in their place.

Verse 13. The Lord looketh from heaven] This and the following verse seem to refer to God's *providence*. He sees all that is done in the earth, and his eye is on all the children of men.

Verse 15. He fashioneth their hearts alike] *He forms their hearts in unity*; he has formed them *alike*; they are all the *works of his hands*: and he

has formed them with the same powers, faculties, passions, &c.; body and spirit having the same essential properties in every human being.

Verse 16. There is no king saved by the multitude of a host] Even in the midst of the most *powerful* and *numerous* army, no *king* is in *safety* unless he have God's protection. A king is but a *man*, and may as easily lose his life as one of his common soldiers.

A mighty man is not delivered by much strength.] There are times in which his might can be of no avail to him: and unless the *mighty*, the *wise*, the *honorable*, &c., have the protection of God, there is no time in which their *might* may not be turned into *weakness*, their *wisdom* into *folly*, and their *dignity* into *disgrace*.

Verse 17. A horse is a vain thing for safety] Even the horse, with all his fleetness, is no sure means of escape from danger: the *lion* or the *tiger* can overtake him or he may stumble, fall, and destroy his rider.

Verse 18. Behold, the eye of the Lord] Though all the above are unavailing, yet here is one thing that can never fail; "the eye of the Lord"—the watchful providence of the Most High, "is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy."

Verse 19. To deliver their soul from death] To watch over and protect them in all sudden dangers and emergencies, so that they shall not *lose their LIVES* by any *accident*.

And to keep them alive in famine.] Not only prevent *sudden death* by an instantaneous interposition of my power, but keep them from a lingering death, by *extraordinary* supplies granted them in an *extraordinary manner*; because I am all in all, and all everywhere.

Verse 20. Our soul waiteth] Our whole life is employed in this blessed work; we *trust* in nothing but him; neither in multitudes of armed men, nor in natural strength, nor in the fleetest animals, nor in any thing human: we trust in Him alone "who is our help and our shield."

Verse 21. For our heart shall rejoice in him] Here is the fruit of our confidence: our souls are always *happy*, because we have taken God for our *portion*.

Verse 22. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us] We cannot abide in this state unless upheld by thee; and, as we disclaim all *merit*, we seek for a

continuance of thy *mercy*, and this we cannot expect but in a continual dependence on thee. “Let thy mercy, O Lord be upon us, according as we hope in thee.”

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-THIRD PSALM

This Psalm is *eucharistic*: the contents are—

- I. An *exhortation to praise* God, ^{<19330>}**Psalm 33:1-3.**
- II. The *arguments* he uses to enforce the duty, ^{<19330>}**Psalm 33:4-19.**
- III. The *confidence* of God’s people in his name. Their happiness, and petition, ^{<19330>}**Psalm 33:20-22.**

I. In the three first verses he exhorts men to praise God: but whom?

1. The *upright*; those who are not upright, cannot praise God.
2. That it be done with *zeal* and *affection*; with *singing*, with *voice*, and the *instruments* then in use; with some *new song*, composed on the occasion, for some new mercy; and that the whole be *skilfully* expressed.

II. This he urges on several good grounds:—

1. The first *argument*, in general drawn from the *truth*, the *faithfulness*, the *justice*, and *goodness* of God: 1. “For the word of the Lord is right.” 2. “All his works are done in truth.” 3. “He loveth righteousness and judgment.” 4. “The earth is full of his goodness.”

2. His *second argument* is drawn from God’s power in the creation of all things, and that by his word alone, ^{<19336>}**Psalm 33:6-9**; and upon it introduces, “Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.”

3. His *third argument* is drawn from God’s *providence* in governing the world, which may easily be discerned by those who will diligently consider his ways and proceedings, both to other people and to his Church.

1. He makes void all enterprises undertaken against his will, not only of single men, but of whole nations. “The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.”

2. Whereas, on the contrary, what he hath decreed shall be done. “The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of his heart to all generations.” On the consideration of which he breaks out into this

epiphonema, or joyous reflection: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord! and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance!”

After which he returns to his discourse on God’s *providence*, and by a *hypotyposis*, or splendid imagery, amplifies his former argument. For he sets God before us, as some great king on his throne, providing for all the parts of his empire, examining all causes, and doing justice to every one.

1. “The Lord looks from heaven, and beholds all the sons of men.”
2. “From the place of his habitation he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth.”
3. And he is not an *idle spectator*: “He sees and considers their hearts and their works.”

And he sees in what they *put their confidence*; in their *armies*, their *strength*, their *horse*, but not in *him*. But all in vain; for “there is no king saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety.” Multitude, strength, &c., without God, are useless.

Hitherto he had given a proof of God’s providence towards *all men*, but now he descends to a particular proof of it, by his care over his *Church*, which he wonderfully guides, defends, and protects, in all dangers and assaults: and that notice may be taken of it, he begins with, *Behold!*

1. “Behold, the eye of the Lord,” his tenderest care, “is over them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.”
2. “To deliver their soul from death, and keep them alive in famine.”

III. The three last verses contain the acclamation of God’s people, who place all their hope and trust in him; for, being stimulated by the former arguments, they do *three* things:—

1. They profess and express their *faith* and *dependence* on God: “Our soul waiteth on God, he is our help and our shield.”
2. They declare the *hope* by which they are upheld, and how *comforted*: “For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.”

3. Upon this hope they commend themselves by prayer to God; “Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.”

PSALMS

PSALM 34

David praises God, and exhorts others to do the same, 1-3; shows how he sought the Lord, and how he was found of him, 4-6. All are exhorted to taste and see the goodness of God; with the assurance of support and comfort, 7-10. He shows the way to attain happiness and long life, 11-16; the privileges of the righteous, and of all who sincerely seek God, 17-22.

NOTES ON PSALM 34

The *title* states that this is “A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.” The history of this transaction may be found in ^{<02110>}1 Samuel 21:10-15, on which chapter see the notes. But *Abimelech* is not the person there mentioned; it was *Achish*, king of Gath, called here *Abimelech*, because that was a common name of the Philistine kings. Neither MS. nor version reads *Achish* in this place; and all the versions agree in the title as it stands in our version, except the *Syriac*, which states it to be “A Psalm of David, when he went to the house of the Lord, that he might give the first-fruits to the priests.”

Of the *occasion* of this Psalm, as stated here, I have given my opinion in the notes on ^{<02110>}1 Samuel 21:10-15, to which I have nothing to add. On the whole I prefer the view taken of it by the *Septuagint*, which intimates that “David fell into an epileptic fit; that he frothed at the mouth, fell against the doorposts, and gave such unequivocal evidences of being subject to epileptic fits, and during the time his intellect became so much impaired, that *Achish Abimelech* dismissed him from his court.” This saves the character of David; and if it cannot be vindicated in this way, then let it fall under reproach as to this thing; for hypocrisy, deceit, and falsehood, can never be right in the sight of God, whatever men may ingeniously say to excuse them.

This is the *second* of the *acrostic* or *alphabetical Psalms*, each verse beginning with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. But in this Psalm some derangement has taken place. The verse which begins with *vau*, and which should come in between the *fifth* and *sixth*, is totally wanting; and the *twenty-second* verse is entirely out of the series; it is,

however, my opinion that this verse (the *twenty-second*) which now begins with **p phe**, **hdwp** *podeh, redeemeth*, was originally written **hdwpw** *vepodeh* or with **hdp** *padah*, as more than a hundred of Dr. *Kennicott's* MSS. read it, thus making **hdpw** *vepodah*, “and will redeem” and this reads admirably in the above connection. I shall here place the verses at one view, and the reader shall judge for himself:

Ver. 5. “They looked unto him, and were enlightened: and their faces were not ashamed.”

Ver. 22. “AND the Lord will redeem the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.”

Ver. 6. “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.”

Ver. 7. “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”

Thus we find the connection complete, with the above emendation.

Verse 1. I will bless the Lord at all times] He has laid me under endless obligation to him, and I will praise him while I have a being.

Verse 2. My soul shall make her boast] Shall *set itself to praise* the Lord—shall consider this its chief work.

The humble] **pywn** [*anavim*, the afflicted, such as *David* had been.

Verse 3. Magnify the Lord with me] **hwyl wl dg** *gaddelu lavhovah*, “make greatness to Jehovah;” show his greatness; and let “us exalt his name,” let us show how *high* and *glorious* it is.

Verse 4. I sought the Lord] This is the *reason* and *cause* of his gratitude. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me out of all my fears. This answers to the history; for when *David* heard what the servants of *Achish* said concerning him, “he laid up the words in his heart, and was greatly afraid,” ^{<0213>} **1 Samuel 21:13**. To save him, God caused the epileptic fit to seize him; and, in consequence, he was dismissed by *Achish*, as one whose defection from his master, and union with the *Philistines*, could be of no use, and thus *David's* life and honour were preserved. The reader

will see that I proceed on the ground laid down by the *Septuagint*. See before, ^{<19340>}**Psalm 34:1**.

Verse 5. They looked unto him] Instead of **wcybh** *hibbitu*, they looked, several of Dr. *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. have **wcybh** *habbitu*, with the point *pathach*, "Look ye."

And their faces were not ashamed.] Some MSS., and the *Complutensian Polyglot*, make this clause the beginning of a new verse and as it begins with a *vau*, **μhynpw** *upheneyhem*, "and their faces," they make it supply the place of the verse which appears to be lost; but see what is said in the introduction before the *first* verse.

Verse 6. This poor man cried] **yn[hz** *zeh ani*, "This afflicted man," *David*.

Verse 7. The angel of the Lord encampeth round] I should rather consider this angel in the light of a *watchman going round his circuit*, and having for the objects of his especial care such as *fear the Lord*.

Verse 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good] Apply to him by faith and prayer; plead his *promises*, he will fulfil them; and you shall know in consequence, that *the Lord is good*. God has put it in the power of every man to *know* whether the religion of the Bible be true or false. The *promises* relative to enjoyments in this life are the grand tests of Divine revelation. These must be fulfilled to all them who with deep repentance and true faith turn unto the Lord, if the revelation which contains them be of God. Let any man in this spirit approach his Maker, and plead the *promises* that are suited to his case, and he will soon know whether the doctrine be of God. He shall *taste*, and then *see*, that *the Lord is good*, and that the *man is blessed who trusts in him*. This is what is called *experimental religion*; the living, operative knowledge that a true believer has that he is passed from death unto life; that his sins are forgiven him for Christ's sake, the Spirit himself bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. And, as long as he is faithful, he carries about with him the testimony of the Holy Ghost; and he knows that he is of God, by the Spirit which God has given him.

Verse 9. There is no want to them that fear him.] He who truly *fears* God *loves* him; and he who *loves* God *obeys* him, and to him who *fears*, *loves*, and *obeys* God, there can be no want of things essential to his

happiness, whether spiritual or temporal, for this life or for that which is to come. This verse is wanting in the *Syriac*.


Verse 10. The young lions do lack] Instead of μyrypk *kephirim*, the young lions, one of *Kennicott's* MSS. has μyrybk *cabbirim*, "powerful men." The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon* have the same reading. *Houbigant* approves of this; and indeed the sense and connection seem to require it. My old *Psalter* reads:—*The Kyche had nede; and thai hungerd: but sekand Lard sal nocht be lessed of alle gode.* That es, says the paraphrase, with outen lessyng thai sal have God; that es alle gode; for in God is al gode.

Verse 11. Come, ye children] All ye that are of an *humble, teachable* spirit.

I will teach you the fear of the Lord.] I shall introduce the *translation* and *paraphrase* from my old *Psalter*; and the rather because I believe there is a reference to that very improper and unholy method of teaching youth the system of heathen mythology before they are taught one sound lesson of true divinity, till at last their *minds* are *imbued* with *heathenism*, and the vicious conduct of gods, goddesses, and heroes, here very properly called *tyrants*, becomes the model of their own; and they are as heathenish *without* as they are heathenish *within*.

Trans. Cummes sones heres me: bred of Lard I sal gou lere.

Par. Cummes with trauth and luf: sones, qwam I gette in haly lere: heres me. With eres of hert. I sal lere you, nocht the fabylys of poetes; na the storys of tyrauntz; bot the dred of oure Larde, that wyl bryng thou til the felaghschippe of aungels; and thar in is lyfe." I need not paraphrase this paraphrase, as it is plain enough.

Verse 12. What man is he that desireth life] He who wishes to live long and to live happily, let him act according to the following directions. For a comment upon this and the *four* ensuing verses, see the notes on  **1 Peter 3:10-12.**

Verse 17. The righteous cry] There is no word in the present *Hebrew* text for righteous; but all the *versions* preserve it. I suppose it was lost through its similitude to the word $\text{wq} [x \text{ tsaaku}$, they cry μyqydx $\text{wq} [x \text{ tsaaku}$ *tsaddikim*, the righteous cry.

Verse 18. A broken heart] *bl yr bvn nishberey leb*, the heart *broken* to *shivers*.

A contrite spirit.] *j wr yakd dakkeey ruach*, “the beaten-out spirit.” In both words the *hammer* is necessarily implied; in breaking to pieces the ore first, and then plating out the metal when it has been separated from the ore. This will call to the reader’s remembrance ^{<24239>} **Jeremiah 23:29**: “Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord? And like a *hammer* that breaketh the *rock* in pieces?” The *breaking to shivers*, and *beating out*, are metaphorical expressions: so are the *hammer* and the *rock*. What the large *hammer* struck on a rock by a powerful hand would do, so does the word of the Lord when struck on the sinner’s heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. The *broken heart*, and the *contrite spirit*, are two essential characteristics of true repentance.

Verse 19. Many are the afflictions of the righteous] No commander would do justice to a brave and skilful soldier, by refusing him opportunities to put his skill and bravery to proof by combating with the adversary; or by preventing him from taking the *post of danger* when necessity required it. The righteous are God’s soldiers. He suffers them to be tried, and sometimes to enter into the hottest of the battle and in their victory the power and influence of the grace of God is shown, as well as their faithfulness.

Delivereth him out of them all.] He may well combat heartily, who knows that if he fight in the Lord, he shall necessarily be the conqueror.

Verse 20. He keepeth all his bones] He takes care of his life; and if he have *scars*, they are honourable ones.

Verse 21. Evil shall slay the wicked] The very thing in which they delight shall become their bane and their ruin.

They that hate the righteous] All persecutors of God’s people shall be followed by the chilling blast of God’s displeasure in this world; and if they repent not, shall perish everlastingly.

Verse 22. The Lord redeemeth] Both the *life* and *soul* of God’s followers are ever in danger but God is continually redeeming both.

Shall be desolate.] Literally, *shall be guilty*. They shall be preserved from sin, and neither forfeit *life* nor soul. This verse probably should come in after the fifth. See the introduction to this Psalm.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-FOURTH PSALM

This Psalm is composed with great art, and this must be attended to by those who would analyze it. The scope of it is to praise God, and to instruct in his fear. Its parts are, in general, the following:—

I. He praises God himself, and calls upon others to follow his example,
^{<1934D>}**Psalm 34:1-8.**

II. He assumes the office of a teacher, and instructs both young and old in the fear of the Lord, ^{<1934D>}**Psalm 34:9-22.**

1. He praises God, and expresses himself thus:—1. I will bless the Lord. 2. His praise shall be in my mouth. 3. It shall be in my mouth continually. 4. It shall be expressed by a *tongue* affected by the *heart*: “My soul shall make her boast in the Lord.” 5. And so long would he continue it till others should be moved to do the like: “The humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.”

2. Upon which he calls upon others to join with him: “O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.” And to encourage them he proposes his own example: “I sought the Lord,” &c. Should it be said this was a singular mercy shown to David which others are not to expect, he in effect replies, No, a mercy it is, but it belongs to all that seek God: “They looked unto him,” &c. But should not this satisfy, and should they rejoin, This poor man (David) cried, and the Lord heard him, but David was in the Divine favour; he may be supposed to reply by this general maxim: “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him;” and be they who they may, *if they fear God*, this is their privilege.

II. Now he assumes the chair of the teacher; and the lessons are *two*:—

1. That they make a trial of God’s goodness: “O taste and see that the Lord is good.”

2. That they become his servants: “O fear ye the Lord, for there is no want,” &c.

And this he illustrates by a comparison: “The young lions (or, the rich and the powerful) may lack and suffer hunger,” but they *that seek the Lord* shall not.

These promises and blessings belong only to them that fear the Lord and lest some should imagine they had this fear, and were entitled to the promise, he shows them what this fear is.

Ale calls an assembly, and thus addresses them: “Come, ye children, and hearken unto me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.” That fear of the Lord which, if a man be desirous of life, and to see many days, shall satisfy him; and if he be ambitious to see good, the peace of a quiet soul and a good conscience shall lodge with him.

1. Let him be sure to take care of his tongue: “keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile.”
2. Let him act according to justice: “Depart from evil.”
3. Let him be charitable, ready to do good works: “Do good.”
4. Let him be peaceable; “Seek peace, and pursue it.”

These are the characteristics of those who fear the Lord, and seek him; and they shall want no manner of thing that is good.

It may be objected: The righteous are exposed to afflictions, &c., and ungodly men have power and prosperity; to which it may be answered: Afflictions do not make the godly *miserable*, nor does prosperity make the wicked *happy*. 1. As to the righteous, they are always objects of God’s merciful regards: “For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers.” But, 2. “The face of the Lord is against those who do evil,” &c.

These points he illustrates:—

1. The righteous cries, and the Lord heareth him, and delivereth him out of all his troubles; either, 1. By taking *them* from *him* or, 2. By taking *him* from *them*.
2. “The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart,” &c. Thus he comforts, confirms and strengthens.

3. Although the afflictions of the righteous are many, yet the Lord delivers him out of them all; makes him patient, constant, cheerful in all, superior to all.

4. “He keeps all his bones.” He permits him to suffer no essential hurt.

But as to the ungodly, it is not so with them; the very root of their perdition is their malice which they show, 1. To God; 2. To good men.

1. “Evil shall slay the wicked.”

2. “And they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.”

And then David concludes the Psalm with this excellent sentiment; Though God may suffer his servants to come into trouble, yet he delivers them from it. For it belongs to redemption to free one from misery; for no man can be redeemed who is under no hardship. This shall be done, says David. The “Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.” The Lord redeems from *trouble* and *affliction*, as well as from *sin*. He knows how to deliver the godly *from* temptation; and he knows how to preserve them *in* it. But it is his servants that he redeems, not his *enemies*. The *servant* may confidently look to his *master* for support.

PSALMS

PSALM 35

The psalmist, in great straits, prays for his personal safety, 1-3; and for the confusion of his enemies, 4-8; expresses his confidence in God, 9, 10; mentions his kindness to those who had rewarded him evil for his good, 11-16; appeals to God against them, 17-26; prays for those who befriended him; and praises God for his goodness, 27, 28.

NOTES ON PSALM 35

There is nothing in the *title* worthy of remark. The Psalm is simply attributed to David, and was most probably of his composing; and refers to the time of his persecution by Saul and his courtiers. The *Syriac* says it was composed when the Idumeans attacked David. The *Arabic* says it is a prophecy concerning the incarnation, and concerning the things practised against Jeremiah by the *people*. Some think that our Lord's sufferings are particularly pointed out here; and Bishop *Horsley* thinks that verses 11 to 16 apply more literally and exactly to Christ than to any other whomsoever.

Verse 1. Plead my cause, O Lord] Literally, *Contend, Lord, with them that contend with me.* The word is often used in a *forensic* or *law* sense.

Verse 2. Take hold of shield and buckler] Let them be discomfited in battle who are striving to destroy my life. It is by the *shield* and *buckler* of *others*, not any of his *own*, that God overthrows the enemies of his people. This is spoken merely after the manner of men.

Verse 3. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.] Give me an assurance that thou wilt defend both body and soul against my adversaries.

Verse 4. Let then be confounded] Let none of their projects or devices against me succeed. Blast all their designs.

The *imprecations* in these verses against enemies are all *legitimate*. They are not against the *souls* or *eternal welfare* of those sinners, but against their *schemes* and *plans* for *destroying the life of an innocent man*; and the holiest Christian may offer up such prayers against his adversaries. If a man aim a blow at another with a design to take away his life, and the blow would infallibly be mortal if it took place, and the person about to be slain

see that by breaking the arm of his adversary he may prevent his own death, and thus save his enemy from *actual* murder; it is his duty to prevent this double evil by breaking the arm of the blood-thirsty man. It is on this principle that David prays against his adversaries in the first eight verses of this Psalm.

Verse 5. Let the angel of the Lord chase them.] By *angel* we may either understand one of those *spirits*, whether good or bad, commonly thus denominated, or *any thing* used by God himself as the instrument of their confusion.

Verse 6. Let their way be dark] Let them lose their way, be entangled in morasses and thickets, and be confounded in all their attempts to injure me. All these phrases are *military*; and relate to *ambushes*, *hidden snares*, *forced marches* in order to *surprise*, and *stratagems* of different kinds.

Verse 7. For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit] The word **tj** *v* *shachath*, a *pit*, belongs to the second member of this verse, and the whole should be read thus: For without a cause they have hidden for me their net, without a cause they have digged a *pit* for my life. They have used every degree and species of cunning and deceit to ruin me.

Verse 8. Let his net that he hath hid] See the notes on ^{<190715>} **Psalm 7:15, 16.**

Verse 9. My soul] My life, thus saved—

Shall be joyful in the Lord] I am so circumstanced at present as to be in the utmost danger of being destroyed by my foes; if I escape, it must be by the strong arm of the Lord; and to him shall the glory be given.

Verse 10. All my bones shall say] My life being preserved, all the members of my body shall magnify thy saving mercy.

Deliverest the poor] This is a general maxim: God is peculiarly mindful of the poor. Where secular advantages are withheld, there is the more need for spiritual help. God considers this, and his kind providence works accordingly.

Verse 11. False witnesses did rise up] There is no doubt that several of this kind were found to depose against the life of David; and we know that the wicked Jews employed such against the life of Christ. See ^{<1859>} **Matthew 26:59, 60.**

They laid to my charge things that I knew not.] They produced the most unfounded charges; things of which I had never before heard.

Verse 12. To the spoiling of my soul] *To destroy my life*; so **vpn** *nephesh* should be translated in a multitude of places, where our translators have used the word *soul*.

Verse 13. When they were sick] This might refer to the case of Absalom, who was much beloved of his father, and for whose life and prosperity he no doubt often prayed, wept, and fasted.

My prayer returned into mine own bosom.] Though from the wayward and profligate life they led, they did not profit by my prayers, yet God did not permit me to pray in vain. They were like alms given to the miserable for God's sake, who takes care to return to the merciful man tenfold into his bosom. The *bosom* is not only the place where the Asiatics carry their purses, but also where they carry any thing that is given to them.

Verse 14. Mourneth for his mother.] **ma l bak** *caabel em*, as a mourning mother. How expressive is this word!

Verse 15. But in mine adversity they rejoiced] How David was mocked and insulted in the case of Absalom's rebellion by Shimei and others, is well known.

The objects] **mykn** *nechim*, the *smiters*, probably hired assassins. They were everywhere lying in wait, to take away my life.

Verse 16. With hypocritical mockers in feasts] These verses seem to be prophetic of the treatment of Christ. *They did tear me, and I knew it not.* They blindfolded and buffeted him; they placed him in such circumstances as not to be able to discern who insulted him, except by a supernatural knowledge. *With hypocritical mockers in feasts* may also relate prophetically to our Lord's sufferings. Herod clothed him in a purple robe, put a *reed* in his hand for a sceptre, bowed the knee before him, and set him at naught. Here their hypocritical conduct (pretending one thing while they meant another) was manifest, and possibly; this occurred at one of Herod's *feasts*.

Verse 17. My darling] **ytdyj y** *yechidathi*, *my only one*, ^{<19221>}**Psalm 22:20.** *My united one*, or *He that is alone*. Perhaps this may relate to Christ. See Clarke's note on "^{<19221>}**Psalm 22:20**".

Verse 18. I will give thee thanks in the great congregation] I hope to be able to attend at the tabernacle with thy followers, and there publicly express my gratitude for the deliverance thou hast given me.

Verse 19. That are mine enemies] Saul and his courtiers.

Verse 21. They opened their mouth wide] Gaped upon me to express their contempt.

And **said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.]** They said, *j ah j ah heach, heach*, the last syllable in each word being a protracted strongly guttural sound, marking insult and triumph at the same time. It is the word which we translate *Ah*, ^{<1982>} **Psalm 35:25.**

Verse 22. This thou hast seen] I have no need to adduce evidences of these wrongs; thou, to whom I appeal, hast seen them. Therefore,

Verse 23. Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment] I have delivered my cause into thy hand, and appeal to thee as my Judge; and by thy decision I am most willing to abide.

Verse 24. Judge me, O Lord my God] The manner of his appeal shows the strong confidence he had in his own innocence.

Verse 25. Swallowed him up.] *whwn [I b billaanuhu, we have gulped him down.*

Verse 26. Let them be ashamed] This may be a prophetic declaration against Saul and his courtiers. They were ashamed, confounded, clothed with shame, and dishonoured. All these took place in Saul's last battle with the Philistines, where he lost his crown and his life, and came to a most dishonourable end.

Verse 27. Let them shout for joy and be glad] While my enemies are confounded, let my friends exult in the Lord; and let them all praise him for his marvellous kindness to me.

Verse 28. And my tongue shall speak] I, who am chiefly concerned, and who have received most, am under the greatest obligation; and it will require the constant gratitude and obedience of my whole life to discharge the mighty debt I owe.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH PSALM

This Psalm may be divided into *three* parts:— I. A prayer for defence against his enemies. In which he prays, 1. For protection, ^{<19350>} **Psalm 35:1-3, 17, 19, 22-25**. And, 2. Imprecates evil to fall on their counsels and designs.

II. A bitter complaint against the malice of his enemies, which he pours out into the ears of God as motives to plead his cause, ^{<19350>} **Psalm 35:7, 11-16, 19-21**.

III. An expression of his trust and confidence in God for help and deliverance; his joy in it, ^{<19350>} **Psalm 35:9, 10**; his thanks for it, ^{<193518>} **Psalm 35:18, 28**; and a motive to others to do the like, ^{<19357>} **Psalm 35:27**.

1. In the courts of men and princes, innocent persons are often oppressed by false accusations and calumnies, persecuted and overborne by power.

He then, *first*, prays to God to be his Advocate, his Patron, and his Protector: 1. “Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive against me.” 2. “Fight against them that fight against me,” &c. 3. “Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.” Assure me of thy favour.

He *secondly*, begins an imprecation against his enemies: 1. “Let them be confounded and put to shame,” ^{<193504>} **Psalm 35:4**. 2. “Let them be as chaff before the wind,” ^{<193516>} **Psalm 35:5**. 3. “Let their way be dark and slippery,” ^{<193516>} **Psalm 35:6**. 4. “Let destruction come upon him unawares,” ^{<193518>} **Psalm 35:8**.

And here he inserts some reasons for his *petition* and *imprecation*:—

1. From the *justice* of his cause, and *their injustice*: “Without cause they hid for me their net,” ^{<193507>} **Psalm 35:7**.

2. From his gratitude; that, being delivered, he would be thankful: “And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord,” &c., ^{<193509>} **Psalm 35:9, 10**.

3. From his enemies’ dealings with him, ^{<193511>} **Psalm 35:11-17**.

II. He then enters upon his complaint; and lays to their charge,

1. *Perfidiousness*, extreme malice, and perjury: “False witnesses did rise,” &c.

2. *Ingratitude*. They rewarded me evil for good. Good he did to them; for, when they were afflicted, he fasted and prayed for them.

3. They were *cruel* to him: “In my adversity they rejoiced.”

4. They *mocked* him and made him their cruel sport: “The objects gathered themselves together against me,” &c.

5. And a *conspiracy* in all, ^{<1983D>}**Psalm 35:20, 21.**

Then he returns again to his petition; and expostulates with God, wondering that he should be so patient with them: “Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Rescue my soul from destruction,” &c.

And, to move God the sooner to do it, he repeats his former reason, ^{<1983D>}**Psalm 35:9**, engaging himself to be thankful: “I will give thee thanks in the great congregation; I will praise thee among much people.”

He continues his suit to the end of the Psalm; sometimes *praying*, at others *imprecating*.

1. He deprecates: “Let not my enemies wrongfully rejoice over me, neither let them wink with the eye,” &c. And that God may be the readier to hear him, and stay their joy and triumph, he subjoins these reasons: 1. “For they speak not peace.” 2. “They devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.” 3. They are impudent, lying people: “Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me,” &c. This is a truth; this is not hidden from thee: “This thou hast seen,” and from them to thee I turn my eyes; and thus renew my prayer:—

1. “Keep not silence.” Do not appear to neglect my cause; nor to let them pass on with impunity.

2. “Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment,” &c. Defend me, and confound them:—

3. “Judge me according to thy righteousness,” which suffers not the just to be always oppressed.

4. “Let them not rejoice over me,” and, in me, over the truth, and over a just cause.

5. “Let them not say in their hearts, So would we have it,” &c.

6. But rather let that befall them which I have prayed for: “Let them be ashamed,—brought to confusion,—and clothed with shame and dishonour, that magnify themselves against me.”

III. In the conclusion he expresses his trust and confidence in God; and intimates that if he be heard, then he, and the whole Church, and all good men, will rejoice together.

1. To them he first directs his speech: “Let them shout for joy that favour my righteous cause; yea, let them say continually; Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.”

2. He then declares what effect this will have upon him in particular: “My tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.”

PSALMS

PSALM 36

The miserable state of the wicked, 1-4. The excellence of God's mercy in itself, and to his followers, 5-9. He prays for the upright, 10; for himself that he may be saved from pride and violence, 11; and shows the end of the workers of iniquity, 12.

NOTES ON PSALM 36

The title in the Hebrew is, *To the conqueror, to the servant of Jehovah, to David.* The Syriac and Arabic suppose it to have been composed on occasion of Saul's persecution of David. Calmet supposes, on good grounds, that it was written during the Babylonish captivity. It is one of the finest Psalms in the whole collection.

Verse 1. The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart] It is difficult to make any sense of this line as it now stands. How can *the transgression of the wicked speak within my heart?* But instead of **ybl libbi**, MY heart, four of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS. have **wbl libbo**, HIS heart. "The speech of transgression to the wicked is in the midst of his heart." "There is no fear of God before his eyes." It is not by *example* that such a person sins; the *fountain* that sends forth the impure streams is *in his own heart*. There the spirit of transgression lives and reigns; and, as he has no *knowledge* of God, so he has no *fear of God*; therefore, there is no check to his wicked propensities: all come to full effect. Lust is conceived, sin is brought forth vigorously, and transgression is multiplied. The reading above proposed, and which should be adopted, is supported by the *Vulgate, Septuagint, Syriac, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon*. This latter reads the sentence thus: [Anglo-Saxon]; which I shall give as nearly as possible in the order of the original. "Quoth the unrightwise, that he do guilt in himself: is not fear God's at fore eyes his." That is, The unrighteous man saith in himself that he will sin: God's fear is not before his eyes. The old *Psalter*, in *language* as well as *meaning*, comes very near to the Anglo-Saxon: **The unrightwis saide that he trespas in hym self: the drede of God es nocht before his een.** And thus it paraphrases the passage: **The unryghtwis, that es the kynde [the whole generation] of wyked men; saide in hym self, qwar man sees nocht; that he trespas, that es, he synne at his wil,**

als [as if] God roght nocht [did not care] qwat he did; and so it es sene, *that the drede of God es nocht by fore his een*; for if he dred God, he durst nocht so say.”

I believe these *versions* give the true sense of the passage. The psalmist here paints the true state of the *Babylonians*: they were *idolaters* of the grossest kind, and worked iniquity with greediness. The account we have in the book of *Daniel* of this people, exhibits them in the worst light; and profane history confirms the account. Bishop *Horsley* thinks that the word [vp] *peshā*, which we render *transgression*, signifies the *apostate* or *devil*. *The devil says to the wicked, within his heart, There is no fear*; i.e., no cause of fear: “God is not before his eyes.” Placing the colon after *fear* takes away all ambiguity in connection with the reading *HIS heart*, already contended for. The *principle of transgression, sin in the heart, says*, or suggests to every *sinner, there is no cause for fear*: go on, do not fear, for there is no danger. He obeys this suggestion, goes on, and acts wickedly, as “God is not before his eyes.”

Verse 2. For he flattereth himself] He is ruled by the suggestion already mentioned; endeavours to persuade himself that he may safely follow the propensities of his own heart, *until his iniquity be found to be hateful*. He sins so boldly, that at last he becomes detestable. Some think the words should be thus understood: “He smootheth over in his own eyes with respect to the finding out of his iniquity, to hate it. That is, he sets such a false gloss in his own eyes upon his worst actions, that he never finds out the blackness of his iniquity; which were it perceived by him, would be hateful even to himself.”—Bishop *Horsley*.

Verse 3. The words of his mouth are iniquity] In the principle; *and deceit* calculated to pervert others, and lead them astray.

He hath left off to be wise, and to do good.] His heart is become foolish, and his actions wicked. He has cut off the connection between himself and all righteousness.

Verse 4. He deviseth mischief upon his bed] He seeks the silent and undisturbed watches of the night, in order to fix his plans of wickedness.

He setteth himself] Having laid his *plans*, he fixes his *purpose* to do what is bad; and he does it without any checks of conscience or abhorrence of

evil. He is bent only on mischief, and lost to all sense of God and goodness. A finished character of a perfect sinner.

Verse 5. Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens] That is, thou art abundant, infinite in thy mercy; else such transgressors must be immediately cut off; but thy long-suffering is intended to lead them to repentance.

Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds] $\mu y q j \vee d$ [*ad shechakim*, to the eternal regions; above all visible space. God's *faithfulness* binds him to fulfil the *promises* and *covenants* made by his mercy. Blessings from the *heavens*, from the *clouds*, from the *earth*, are promised by God to his followers; and his *faithfulness* is in all those places, to distribute to his followers the mercies he has promised.

Verse 6. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains.] $l a y r r h k$ *keharerey El, like the mountains of God*; exceeding high mountains; what, in the present language of *geology*, would be called *primitive mountains*, those that were formed at the beginning; and are not the effects of *earthquakes* or *inundations*, as *secondary* and *alluvial mountains* are supposed to be.

Thy judgments are a great deep] $h b r \mu w h t$ *tehom rabbah, the great abyss*; as incomprehensible as the *great chaos*, or first matter of all things which God created in the beginning, and which is mentioned ^{<DIOIC>} **Genesis 1:2**, and *darkness was on the face, $\mu w h t$ tehom, of the deep*, the vast profound, or what is *below all* conjecturable *profundity*. How astonishing are the thoughts in these two verses! What an idea do they give us of the mercy, truth, righteousness, and judgments of God!

The old *Psalter*, in paraphrasing *mountains of God*, says, **Thi ryghtwisnes**, that es, ryghtwis men, er gastly hilles of God; for that er hee in contemplacioun, and soner resayves the lyght of Crist. Here is a metaphor taken from the *tops* of *mountains* and *high hills* first catching the *rays* of *the rising sun*. "Righteous men are spiritual hills of God; for they are *high* in contemplation, and *sooner* receive the *light of Christ*." It is really a very fine thought; and much beyond the rudeness of the times in which this *Psalter* was written.

Man and beast.] Doth God take care of cattle? Yes, he appoints the lions their food, and hears the cry of the young ravens; and will he not provide

for the poor, especially the poor of his people? He will. So infinitely and intensely good is the nature of God, that it is his delight to make all his creatures happy. He preserves the *man*, and he preserves the *beast*; and it is his providence which supplies the *man*, when his propensities and actions level him with the *beasts* that perish.

Verse 7. How excellent is thy loving-kindness] He asks the question in the way of admiration; but expects no answer from angels or men. It is indescribably excellent, abundant, and free; and, “therefore, the children of Adam put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.” They trust in thy good *providence* for the supply of their *bodies*; they trust in thy *mercy* for the salvation of their *souls*. These, speaking after the *figure*, are the *two wings* of the Divine goodness, under which the children of men take refuge. The allusion may be to the *wings of the cherubim*, above the mercy-seat.

Verse 8. They shall be abundantly satisfied] *ywry yirveyun*, they shall be saturated, as a thirsty field is by showers from heaven. *Inebriaduntur*, they shall be inebriated.—*Vulgate*. *That sal be drunken of the plenteuoste of thi house*.—*Old Psalter*. This refers to the joyous expectation they had of being restored to their own land, and to the ordinances of the temple.

Of the river of thy pleasures.] *Ëynda l j n nachal adaneycha*, (or *Ënd[edencha*, as in four MSS.) *the river of thy Eden*. They shall be restored to their paradisaical estate; for here is a reference to the *river* that ran through the *garden of Eden*, and watered it; ^{<0020>}**Genesis 2:10**. Or the *temple*, and under it the *Christian Church*, may be compared to this *Eden*; and the *gracious influences of God* to be had in his *ordinances*, to the *streams* by which that *garden* was *watered*, and its fertility promoted.

Verse 9. For with thee is the fountain of life] This, in Scripture phrase, may signify a *spring of water*; for such was called among the Jews *living water*, to distinguish it from *ponds*, *tanks*, and *reservoirs*, that were supplied by water either received from the *clouds*, or conducted into them by *pipes* and *streams* from other quarters. But there seems to be a higher allusion in the sacred text. *µyyj rwqm Ëm[yk ki immecha mekor chaiyim*, “For with thee is the vein of lives.” Does not this allude to the great *aorta*, which, receiving the blood from the heart, distributes it by the arteries to every part of the human body, whence it is conducted back to the heart by means of the *veins*. As the *heart*, by means of the great *aorta*,

distributes the blood to the remotest parts of the body; so, GOD, by Christ Jesus, conveys the life-giving streams of his providential goodness to all the worlds and beings he has created, and the influences of his grace and mercy to every soul that has sinned. All spiritual and temporal good comes *from* Him, the FATHER, *through* Him, the SON, to every part of the creation of God.

In thy light shall we see light.] No man can illuminate his own soul; all understanding must come from above. Here the metaphor is changed, and God is compared to the *sun* in the firmament of heaven, that gives light to all the *planets* and their *inhabitants*. “God said, Let there be light; and there was light; “by that light the eye of man was enabled to behold the various works of God, and the beauties of creation: so, when God speaks light into the dark heart of man, he not only beholds his own deformity and need of the salvation of God, but he beholds the “light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;” “God, in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.” “In thy light shall we see light.” This is literally true, both in a spiritual and philosophical sense.

Verse 10. O continue thy loving-kindness] Literally, “Draw out thy mercy.” The allusion to the *spring* is still kept up.

Unto them that know thee] To them who *acknowledge thee* in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

And thy righteousness] That *grace* which *justifies the ungodly*, and *sanctifies the unholy*.

To the upright in heart.] *bl yrvyl levishrey leb, to the straight of heart*; to those who have but *one end* in view, and *one aim* to that *end*. This is true of every genuine *penitent*, and of every true *believer*.

Verse 11. Let not the foot of pride come against me] Let me not be trampled under foot by proud and haughty men.

Let not the hand of the wicked remove me.] *yndnt tenideni, shake me, or cause me to wander*. Both these verses may have immediate respect to the captives in Babylon. The Jews were, when compared with the Babylonians, *the people that knew God*; for *in Jewry was God known*, ^{<1970>}**Psalm 76:1**; and the psalmist prays against the treatment which the Jews had received from the proud and insolent Babylonians during the *seventy years* of their captivity: “Restore us to our own land; and let not

the proud foot or the violent hand ever *remove us from our country* and its *blessings; the temple, and its ordinances.*”

Verse 12. There are the workers of iniquity fallen] THERE, in Babylon, are the workers of iniquity fallen, and so *cast down that they shall not be able to rise*. A prophecy of the destruction of the Babylonish empire by Cyrus. That it was destroyed, is an historical fact; that they were never able to recover their liberty, is also a fact; and that Babylon itself is now blotted out of the map of the universe, so that the site of it is no longer known, is confirmed by every traveller who has passed over those regions.

The word **μν** *sham*, THERE, has been applied by many of the fathers to the *pride* spoken of in the preceding verse. *There*, in or by pride, says *Augustine*, do all sinners perish. *There*, in heaven, have the evil angels fallen through pride, says *St. Jerome*. *There*, in paradise, have our first parents fallen, through pride and disobedience. *There*, in hell, have the proud and disobedient angels been precipitated.—*Eusebius*, &c. THERE, by pride, have the *persecutors* brought God’s judgments upon themselves. See *Calmet*. But the first interpretation is the best.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH PSALM

The object of this Psalm is to implore God, out of his goodness, that he would deliver the upright from the pride and malice of the wicked.

I. The psalmist sets down the character of a wicked man, and his fearful state, ^{<1980>}**Psalm 36:1-5**.

II. He makes a narrative in commendation of God’s mercy, ^{<1980>}**Psalm 36:6-10**.

III. He prays for a continuance of God’s goodness to his people, petitions against his proud enemy, and exults at his fall, ^{<1980>}**Psalm 36:10-12**.

I. The character of a wicked man:—

1. “There is no fear of God before his eyes;” and from this, as an evil root, all the other evils spring: and thus he enters on an induction of particulars.

2. “He flattereth himself in his own eyes.” A great sin, in his eyes, is no sin: vice is virtue; falsehood, truth.

3. In this he continues, “until his iniquity be found to be hateful;”—till God, by some heavy judgment, has passed his sentence against it.

4. He is full of hypocrisy and deceit; “the words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit;” he gives goodly words, but evil is in his heart.

5. He has renounced all wisdom and goodness: “He hath left off to be wise, and to do good.”

6. He enters deliberately and coolly into evil plans and designs: 1. “He deviseth mischief upon his bed.” 2. “He sets himself (of firm purpose) in the way that is not good. 3. “He abhors not evil.” He invents wickedness; he labours to perfect it; yea, though it be of the deepest stain, he abhors it not.

II. How comes it that such wicked men are permitted to live? How is it that God can bear patiently with such workers of iniquity? The psalmist answers this question by pointing out God’s mercy, from which this long-suffering proceeds; which he considers in a *twofold* point of view: 1. *Absolute* and *general*, extending to all. 2. *Particular*, which is exhibited to the faithful only.

1. *General*. God is good to all; which is seen in his bountifulness, fidelity, justice; and in his preservation of all things: 1. “Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens.” Thou preservest them. Thy *faithfulness* reacheth *unto the clouds*. They water the earth, as thou hast promised. 3. “Thy righteousness is like the great mountains.” Immovable. 4. “Thy judgments are a great deep.” Unsearchable, and past finding out. 5. “Thou Lord, preservest man and beast.” In thee we live, move, and have our being.

2. In *particular*. He is especially careful of his followers. The providence by which he sustains them is, 1. A precious thing: “O, how excellent (quam pretiosa) how precious is thy loving-kindness, O Lord!” The operation of which, in behalf of the faithful, is hope, confidence, and comfort in distress: “Therefore the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow,” &c. 2. The effects of this, the plenty of all good things prepared for them: 1. “They shall be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of thy house.” 2. “Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.” To which he adds the cause: “For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light we shall see light.”

III. He concludes with a *prayer*, 1. For all God’s people. 2. For himself.

1. He prays that this excellent and precious mercy may light on all those who serve God sincerely: “O continue thy loving-kindness to them that know thee.”
2. He *prays* for himself; that he may be defended from the pride and violence of wicked men: “Let not the foot of pride come against me; and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.”
3. Lastly, he closes all with this exultation: “There are the workers of iniquity fallen!” There, when they promised themselves peace and security, and said, Tush! no harm shall happen to us; *there* and *then* are they fallen: “They are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.”

PSALMS

PSALM 37

Godly directions for those who are in adversity not to envy the prosperity of the wicked, because it is superficial, and of short duration, 1-22; to put their confidence in God, and live to his glory, as this is the sure way to be happy in this life, and in that which is to come, 23-40.

NOTES ON PSALM 37

In the *title* this Psalm is attributed to *David* by the *Hebrew*, and by most of the *Versions*: but it is more likely it was intended as an instructive and consoling ode for the captives in Babylon, who might feel themselves severely tempted when they saw those idolaters in prosperity; and themselves, who worshipped the true God, in affliction and slavery. They are comforted with the prospect of speedy deliverance; and their return to their own land is predicted in not less than *ten* different places in this Psalm.

This Psalm is one of the *acrostic* or *alphabetical* kind: but it differs from those we have already seen, in having *two* verses under each letter; the first only exhibiting the *alphabetical letter* consecutively. There are a few anomalies in the Psalm. The *hemistich*, which should begin with the letter [*ain*, has now a *lamed* prefixed to the word with which it begins, $\mu\text{I w}[\text{I}$ *leolam*; and the hemistich which should begin with *t tau* (~~193739~~ **Psalm 37:39**) has now a *w vau* prefixed, $\text{t}[\text{wvtw}$ *utheshuath*. It appears also that the letters *d daleth*, *k caph*, and *q koph*, have each lost a hemistich; and [*ain*, half a one. The manner in which this Psalm is printed in Dr. *Kennicott's* Hebrew Bible gives a full view of all these particulars. To the English reader some slighter differences may appear; but it should be observed, that the verses in our English Bibles are not always divided as those in the Hebrew. In all the Psalms that have a *title*, the *title* forms the *first* verse in the Hebrew; but our translation does not acknowledge any of those titles as a *part* of the Psalm, and very properly leaves them out of the enumeration of the verses.

Verse 1. Fret not thyself because of evil doers] It is as foolish as it is wicked to repine or be envious at the prosperity of others. Whether they

are godly or ungodly, it is God who is the dispenser of the *bounty* they enjoy; and, most assuredly, he has a right to do what he will with his own. To be envious in such a case, is to arraign the providence of God. And it is no small condescension in the Almighty to reason with such persons as he does in this Psalm.

Verse 2. For they shall soon be cut down] They have their portion in this life; and their enjoyment of it cannot be long, for their breath is but a vapour that speedily vanishes away. They fall before death, as the *greensward* does before the *scythe* of the *mower*.

Verse 3. Dwell in the land] Do not flee to foreign climes to escape from that providence which, for thy own good, denies thee affluence in thy own country.

And verily thou shalt be fed.] God will provide for thee the *necessaries* of life: its *conveniencies* might damp thy intellect in its *inventions*, and lead thee into *idleness*; and its *superfluities* would induce thee to pamper thy *passions* till the concerns of thy *soul* would be absorbed in those of the *flesh* and, after having lived an *animal* life, thou mightest die without God, and perish everlastingly.

The original, **hnnwma h[rw ureeh emunah**, might be translated, “and feed by faith.” The *Septuagint* has **και ποιμανθηση επι τω πλουτω αυτης**, and thou shalt feed upon its riches. The *Vulgate Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, are the same. The *Syriac*, seek faith. The *Chaldee*, be strong in the faith. The *Anglo-Saxon*, [Anglo-Saxon], and feeded thou shalt be in its welfare. *Old Psalter*, and thu sal be fed in ryches of it. But it is probable that **hnnwma emunah** here signifies *security*. And thou shalt be fed in security.

Dr. *Delaney* supposed that the Psalm might have been written by David in the behalf of *Mephibosheth*, who, being falsely accused by his servant *Ziba*, had formed the resolution to leave a land where he had met with such bad treatment. David, being convinced of his innocence, entreats him to dwell in the land, with the assurance of *plenty* and *protection*. It is more likely that it is addressed to the *captives in Babylon*; and contains the promise that they shall return to their own land, and again enjoy *peace* and *plenty*.

Verse 4. Delight thyself also in the Lord] Expect all thy happiness from him, and seek it in him.

The desires of thine heart.] *twl avm mishaloth*, the *petitions*. The godly man never indulges a *desire* which he cannot form into a *prayer* to God.

Verse 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord] *hwwhy l [l wg gol al Yehovah*, ROLL *thy way upon the Lord*: probably, a metaphor taken from the *camel*, who lies down till his load be *rolled* upon him.

He shall bring it to pass.] *hc[y yaaseh*, “He will *work*.” Trust God, and he will work for thee.

Verse 6. Thy righteousness as the light] As God said in the beginning, “Let there be light, and there was light;” so he shall say, Let thy innocence appear, and it will appear as suddenly and as evident as the *light* was at the beginning.

Verse 7. Rest in the Lord] *mwd dom*, “be silent, be *dumb*.” Do not find fault with thy Maker; he does all things well for others, he will do all things well for thee.

And wait patiently for him] *wl l l wj thw vehithcholel lo*, and *set thyself* to expect him; and be *determined* to expect, or wait for him. Such is the import of a verb in the *hithpoel* conjugation.

A heathen gives good advice on a similar subject:—

*Nil ergo optabunt homines? Si consilium vis,
Permittes ipsis expendere Numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris.
Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt Di.
Carior est illis homo, quam sibi.
Juv. Sat. x. 346.*

*“What then remains? Are we deprived of will?
Must we not wish, for fear of wishing ill?
Receive my counsel, and securely move;
Intrust thy pastime to the powers above.*

*Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.
In goodness, as in greatness, they excel:
Ah, that we loved ourselves but half so well!”
DRYDEN.*

Verse 9. They shall inherit the earth.] The word *xra arets*, throughout this Psalm, should be translated *land*, not *earth*; for it is most probable that it refers to the *land of Judea*; and in this verse there is a promise of their *return* thither.

Verse 10. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be] A prediction of the destruction of Babylon. This empire was now in its splendour; and the captives lived to see it totally overturned by Cyrus, so that even the shadow of its power did not remain.

Thou shalt diligently consider his place] *wnyaw veeynennu*, and he is *not*. The ruler is killed; the city is taken; and the whole empire is overthrown, in one night! And now even the place where Babylon stood cannot be ascertained.

Verse 11. But the meek] *mywn* *anavim*, the *afflicted*, the poor Jewish captives.

Shall inherit the earth] *xra arets*, the *land of Judea*, given by God himself as an *inheritance* to their fathers, and to their posterity for ever. See ^{<1950>} **Psalm 37:9.**

Verse 13. He seeth that his day is coming.] The utter desolation of your oppressors is at hand. All this may be said of every *wicked man*.

Verse 14. The wicked have drawn out the sword] There is an irreconcilable enmity in the souls of sinners against the godly; and there is much evidence that the idolatrous Babylonians *whetted their tongue like a sword, and shot out their arrows, even bitter words*, to malign the poor captives, and to insult them in every possible way.

Verse 15. Their sword shall enter into their own heart] All their execrations and maledictions shall fall upon themselves, and their power to do mischief shall be *broken*.

Verse 16. A little that a righteous man hath] This is a solid *maxim*. Whatever a good man has, has God's blessing in it; even the *blessings* of the wicked are *cursed*.

Verse 17. The arms of the wicked] Their power to do evil. Of this they are often deprived. *Talents* lent and abused shall be resumed, and the misuser called to a severe account by the Lord of the talents.

Verse 18. The Lord knoweth the days of the upright] He is acquainted with all his *circumstances*, *severings*, and *ability* to bear them; and he will either *shorten his trials* or *increase his power*. The Lord also *approves* of the man and his concerns; and his *inheritance shall be for ever*. He shall have God for his portion, here and hereafter. This is probably another indirect promise to the captives that they shall be restored to their own land. See ^{<1971>}**Psalm 37:11.**

Verse 19. They shall not be ashamed] They have expressed strong confidence in the Lord; and he shall so work in their behalf that their enemies shall never be able to say, “Ye have trusted in your God, and yet your enemies have prevailed over you.” No; for even *in the days of famine they shall be satisfied*.

Verse 20. The enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs] This verse has given the critics some trouble. Several of the Versions read thus: “But the enemies of the Lord, as soon as they are exalted to honour, shall vanish; like smoke they vanish.” If we follow the *Hebrew*, it intimates that *they shall consume as the fat of lambs*. That is, as the *fat* is *wholly consumed* in sacrifices by the fire on the altar, so shall they consume away in the fire of God’s wrath.

Verse 21. The wicked borroweth] Is often reduced to *penury*, and is obliged to become debtor to those whom he before despised.

And payeth not again] May *refuse* to do it, because he is a *wicked man*; or be *unable* to do it, because he is reduced to *beggary*.

But the righteous showeth mercy] Because he has received mercy from God, therefore he shows mercy to men. And even to his enemies *he showeth mercy, and giveth*; his *heart* being disposed to it by the influence of *Divine grace*, and his hand being enabled to do it by the blessing of God’s *providence*.

Verse 22. Shall inherit the earth] *xra arets* the *land*, as before. See ^{<1971>}**Psalm 37:11.**

Shall be cut off.] A *wicked Jew* shall meet with the same fate as a *wicked Babylonian*; and a *wicked Christian* shall fare no better.

Verse 23. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord] There is nothing for *good* in the text. *rbg geber* is the original word, and it

properly signifies *a strong man, a conqueror or hero*; and it appears to be used here to show, that even the *most powerful* must be supported by the Lord, otherwise their strength and courage will be of little avail.

And he delighteth in his way.] When *his steps are ordered by the Lord, he delighteth in his way*, because it is that into which his own good Spirit has directed him. Or, the *man delights in God's way*-in the *law and testimonies* of his Maker.

Verse 24. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down] The original is short and emphatic **l cwj al l py yk ki yippol, lo yutal**, which the *Chaldee* translates, “Though he should fall into sickness, he shall not die;” for which the reason is given, because *the Lord sustains by his hand*. Though he may for a time fall under the power of his adversaries, as the Jews have done under the Babylonish captivity, he shall not be forsaken. The right hand of God shall sustain him in his afflictions and distresses; and at last God will give him a happy issue out of them all. Neither the *text* nor any of the *Versions* intimate that a *falling into sin* is meant; but a falling into *trouble, difficulty, &c.*

Verse 25. I have been young, and now am old] I believe this to be literally true in all cases. I am now grey-headed myself; I have travelled in different countries, and have had many opportunities of seeing and conversing with religious people in all situations in life; and I have not, to my knowledge, seen one instance to the contrary. I have seen no *righteous man forsaken*, nor any *children* of the righteous *begging their bread*. God puts this honour upon all that fear him; and thus careful is he of *them*, and of their *posterity*.

Verse 26. He is ever merciful and lendeth] **^nwj μwyh l k kol haiyom chonen**, “all the day he is compassionate.” He is confirmed in the habit of godliness: he feels for the distresses of men, and is ready to divide and distribute to all that are in necessity.

And his seed is blessed.] The preceding words were not spoken casually; *his seed, his posterity, is blessed*; therefore they are not abandoned *to beg their bread*.

Verse 27. Depart from evil, and do good] Seeing the above is so, *depart from all evil*-avoid all sin; and let not this be sufficient, *do good*. The grace

of God ever gives this *two-fold power* to all who receive it; strength to *overcome evil*, and strength to *do that which is right*.

Dwell for evermore.] Be for ever an inhabitant of God's house. This may be also a promise of return to their own land, and of permanent residence there. See ^{<19570>}**Psalm 37:9, 11, &c.**

Verse 28. Forsaketh not his saints] *wydysj ta eth chasidaiv, his merciful or compassionate ones*; those who, through love to him and all mankind, are ever ready to give of their substance to the poor.

But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.] The children who follow the wicked steps of wicked parents shall, like their parents, be cut off. God's *judgments descend to posterity*, as well as his *mercies*.

Verse 29. The righteous shall inherit the land] If this be not another promise of return to their own land, from that of their captivity, it must be spiritually understood, and refer to their eternal dwelling with God in glory.

Verse 30. The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom] Foolish and corrupt conversation cannot come out of their mouth. They are taught of God, and they speak according to the wisdom that is from above.

Verse 31. The law of his God is in his heart] The Lord promised that a time should come in which he would make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel; he would put his laws in their minds, and in their hearts he would write them. This is fulfilled in the case above.

None of his steps shall slide.] His holy heart always dictates to his *eyes*, his *mouth*, his *hands*, and his *feet*. The precepts which direct his conduct are not only *written in his Bible*, but also *in his heart*.

Verse 32. The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.] Similar to what is said ^{<19570>}**Psalm 37:8**: "The wicked plotteth against the righteous." But it is added, ^{<19573>}**Psalm 37:33**: "The Lord will not leave him in his hands;" he will confound his devices, and save his own servants.

Verse 34. Wait on the Lord, and keep his way] This is the *true mode of waiting on God* which the Scripture recommends; *keeping God's way*-using all his ordinances, and living in the spirit of obedience. He who *waits* thus is sure to have the farther blessings of which he is in pursuit. *hwq kavah*, to wait, implies the *extension of a right line from one point to*

another. The first *point* is the human *heart*; the *line* is its *intense desire*; and the *last point* is GOD, to whom this *heart* extends this *straight line* of *earnest desire* to be filled with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

And he shall exalt thee to inherit the land] If ye keep his way, and be faithful to him in your exile, he will *exalt you, lift you up* from your present abject state, to inherit the land of your fathers. See before, ^{<19570>}**Psalm 37:9, 11, &c.**

When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.] They did see the destruction of the Babylonish king, *Belshazzar*, and his empire; and it was in consequence of that destruction that they were enlarged.

Verse 35. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree.] Does not this refer to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and to the *vision* he had of the *great tree which was in the midst of the earth, the head of which reached up to heaven*? See ^{<27010>}**Daniel 4:10, &c.**

Verse 36. Yet he passed away] Both *Nebuchadnezzar* and his wicked successor, *Belshazzar*; and on the destruction of the latter, when God had *weighed him in the balance, and found him wanting, numbered his days, and consigned him to death, his kingdom was delivered to the Medes and Persians*; and thus the Babylonian empire was destroyed.

Verse 37. Mark the perfect man] Him who is described above. Take notice of him: he is *perfect in his soul*, God having saved him from all sin, and filled him with his own *love* and *image*. And he is *upright* in his *conduct*; and his *end*, die when he may or where he may, is peace, quietness, and assurance for ever.

Almost all the *Versions* translate the *Hebrew* after this manner: *Preserve innocence, and keep equity in view; for the man of peace shall leave a numerous posterity.*

Bishop *Horsley* thus translates: “Keep (thy) loyalty, and look well to (thy) integrity; for a posterity is (appointed) for the perfect man.” He comes nearer to the original in his *note* on this verse: “Keep innocency, and regard uprightness; for the perfect man hath a posterity:” “but the rebellious shall be destroyed together; the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off,”

^{<19573>}**Psalm 37:38.**

Dr. Kennicott's note is, "tyrj a acharith, which we render *latter end*, is posterity, ^{<19913>} **Psalm 109:13**. The *wicked* and all his race to be destroyed, the *pious man* to have a numerous progeny, see his sons' sons to the *third* and *fourth* generation. See ^{<18819>} **Job 8:19; 18:13-20.**"

I think the original cannot possibly bear *our translation*. I shall produce it here, with the literal version of *Montanus*:—

pax viro novissimum quia; rectum vide et, integrum cutodi

μwl v vyal tyrj a yk rvy harw matth[w rmv

The nearest translation to this is that of the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate*:
 Φυλασσε ακακιαν, και ιδε ευθυτητα, οτι εστιν εγκαταλειμμα
 ανθρωπω ειρηνικω, Custodi innocentiam, et vide æquitatem; quoniam,
 sunt reliquix homini pacifico. "Preserve innocence, and behold equity;
 seeing there is a posterity to the pacific man." The *Syriac* says, "Observe
 simplicity, and choose rectitude; seeing there is a good end to the man of
 peace." The reader may choose. Our common version, in my opinion,
 cannot be sustained. The 38th verse seems to confirm the translation of the
Septuagint and the *Vulgate*, which are precisely the same in meaning;
 therefore I have given one translation for both.

The old *Psalter* deserves a place also: ~~Kepe unnoyandnes, and se evenhede; for tha~~
 relykes er til a peful man.

Verse 39. The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord] It is the Lord who made them *righteous*, by blotting out their sins, and infusing his Holy Spirit into their hearts; and it is by his grace they are continually sustained, and finally brought to the kingdom of glory: "He is their strength in the time of trouble."

Verse 40. The Lord-shall deliver them] For they are always exposed to trials, and liable to fall.

Because they trust in him.] They keep faith, prayer, love, and obedience in continual exercise. They continue to *believe* in, *love*, and *obey God*; and he continues to *save them*.

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH PSALM

What is here delivered may be reduced to these two general heads:—

I. He sets down the duty of a good man, which is to be patient, and put his confidence in God when he sees the wicked prosper and flourish.

II. He gives many reasons to prove the propriety of such conduct.

I. He begins with an interdict, and then descends to give some directions.

1. His interdict is, “Fret not thyself,” &c. Be not angry nor envious; to which he adds this reason, that their prosperity is but short: “For they shall be cut down,” &c.

2. Then he sets down some directions and rules to prevent *fretting* and *anger*.

1. The first is a perpetual rule for our whole life: “Trust in the Lord.” Rely not on human helps, friends, riches, &c.

2. “Be good.” Increase not thy state by evil arts or means.

3. “Dwell in the land.” Desert not thy station.

4. “And verily thou shalt be fed.” Enjoy quietly what thou hast at present.

5. “Delight thyself in the Lord.” Be pleased with his way.

6. “Commit thy way unto the Lord.” Labour in an honest vocation, and leave the rest to him; for “he will work for thee.”

7. “Rest in the Lord.” Acquiesce in his will and the dispensations of his providence; wait patiently for him; his time is the best. And then he repeats his interdict: “Fret not thyself.”

II. Then he resumes his *former* reason, mentioned ~~<1970>~~ **Psalm 37:2**, and amplifies it by an *antithesis*, viz., that it shall be well with the good, ill with the wicked, ~~<1970>~~ **Psalm 37:9-11**; and so it falls out for the *most* part, but not always; which is enough for temporal blessings.

1. “Evil doers shall be cut off, but those who wait on the Lord shall inherit the land.”

2. “Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be,” &c.

To this he adds a *second* reason, taken from the providence of God:—

1. In protecting the righteous, and confounding their enemies.

2. In blessing the little they have; in which he seems to remove a double objection: the first, about the tyranny of the wicked over the righteous; the second, that they are commonly in want and poverty.

The first temptation, by which many pious souls are troubled, is the power, the cruelty and the implacable hatred of wicked men: “The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him.” To which the psalmist answers, “The Lord shall laugh at him; for he seeth that his day of *punishment* is coming.” Yea, “but the wicked have drawn out their sword and bent their bow,” which is beyond plotting and derision, “to cast down the poor, and slay such as are of an upright conversation.” To which he answers, Be it so: “Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bow shall be broken.”

The other temptation is beggary and poverty, than which nothing is more afflictive, The ungodly swim in wealth; but the godly are commonly poor, and therefore exposed to contempt; for poverty reckons up no reputable genealogy. To this he answers: “A little that the righteous hath is better than the riches of many wicked.” *Better*, because used better; *better*, because possessed with contentment; *better*, because it has God’s blessing upon it. And this he proves by many reasons:—

1. “For the arms of the wicked (their riches) shall be broken; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous.”

2. “The Lord knoweth the days (good or bad) of the upright.” He loves them, and they are his care; and “their inheritance shall be for ever,” firm and stable.

3. “They shall not be ashamed in the evil time,” nor destitute, nor forsaken of necessities; for “in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.”

But with rich wicked men it is not so. Though they abound in wealth, yet they shall insensibly consume and perish, “as the fat of lambs,” burnt upon the altar, “vanisheth into smoke and passeth away.”

4. And yet there is another blessing on the good man’s little: he has often over and above, and something to spare to *give*, whereas the wicked is a borrower, with this bad quality, that *he payeth not again*. “But the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth.”

Of which he gives this reason: for “such as God blesseth shall possess the earth;” and “they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.” They may *have*, but not *enjoy*, the goods of this life.

And thus much the psalmist proved by his own experience: “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.” His liberality was the cause of it; “He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.”

A third reason of God’s protection is, that God upholds him: “The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord;” and should he by infirmity fall into error, or get into trouble or affliction, “he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.” He shall have his judgment corrected by God’s teaching, and no disease shall be able to remove him till God’s work be done *in him*, and *by him*.

In the rest of the Psalm he makes a repetition of all that went before: he repeats his chief rule, his promises, his comforts, and his threatenings.

He begins with this rule, ^{<1957B>} **Psalm 37:3**: “Depart from evil and do good, and dwell for evermore.” In which he exhorts to obedience, and in both parts brings instances of repentance, mortification, and vivification, which he fortifies with a double reason, as before.

1. A promise to the godly: “For the Lord loveth righteousness; he forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever.”

2. A threatening to the wicked: “But the seed Of the wicked shall be cut off.” These two reasons he resumes, amplifies, and illustrates.

First, That of the righteous: “The righteous shall inherit the land,” &c.; and that you may know whom he means by the righteous, he sets down his character.

1. He is one whose mouth speaks wisdom. He speaks reverently of God’s justice and providence.

2. One *whose mouth talks of judgment*; i.e., of that only which is just and right.

3. “The law of God is in his heart;” not in his tongue alone, or in his brain.

4. “None of his steps shall slide.” He keeps on his right way, and will not be seduced. Yet this righteous man has his enemies, ^{<195713>}**Psalm 37:13-15:** “For the wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.”

But although he has his enemies, yet has he also his protector: “The Lord will not leave him in his hand,” &c.; therefore “wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee. When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.”

Secondly, For they shall be cut off, as was said before, ^{<195728>}**Psalm 37:28;** and this he knew from his own experience: “I have seen the wicked in great power, and flourishing like a green bay-tree; yet I passed by, and lo, he was gone; I sought him, but he could not be found.”

And what he observed, others, if attentive and diligent, may observe also, both in respect of the righteous and the wicked. 1. For “mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.” 2. “But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off.”

Should the cause be inquired why God does these things, it is added, that this sums up all the doctrine of the Psalm:—

1. “The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he will save them because they trust in him.”
2. On the contrary, “the wicked shall be cut off and perish, because they trust not in him.”

PSALMS

PSALM 38

David prays God to have mercy upon him, and gives a most affecting account of his miserable state, 1-10; complains of his being forsaken by his friends, and cruelly persecuted by his enemies, 11-16; confesses his sin; and earnestly implores help, 17-22.

NOTES ON PSALM 38

The title in the HEBREW states this to be *A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance*. The CHALDEE; “A Psalm of David for a good memorial to Israel.” The VULGATE, SEPTUAGINT, and ÆTHIOPIC: “A Psalm of David, for a commemoration concerning the Sabbath.” The ARABIC: “A Psalm in which mention is made of the Sabbath; besides, it is a thanksgiving and a prophecy.” Never was a title more misplaced or less expressive of the contents. There is no mention of the *Sabbath* in it; there is no *thanksgiving* in it, for it is deeply *penitential*; and I do not see that it contains any *prophecy*. The SYRIAC: “A psalm of David, when they said to the Philistine king, Achish, This is David, who killed Goliath; we will not have him to go with us against Saul. Besides, it is a form of confession for us.” It does not appear that, out of all the titles, we can gather the true intent of the Psalm.

Several conjectures have been made relative to the occasion on which this Psalm was composed; and the most likely is, that it was in reference to some severe affliction which David had after his illicit commerce with Bath-sheba; but of what nature we are left to conjecture from the *third*, *fifth*, and *seventh* verses. Whatever it was, he deeply repents for it, asks pardon, and earnestly entreats support from God.

Verse 1. O Lord, rebuke me not] He was sensible that he was suffering under the displeasure of God; and he prays that the chastisement may be in *mercy*, and not in *judgment*.

Verse 2. Thine arrows stick fast in me] This no doubt, refers to the *acute pains* which he endured; each appearing to his feeling as if an arrow were shot into his body.

Verse 3. No soundness in my flesh] This seems to refer to some *disorder* which so affected the *muscles* as to produce *sores* and *ulcers*; and so

affected his *bones* as to leave him no peace nor rest. In short, he was completely and thoroughly diseased; and all this he attributes to his sin, either as being its natural consequence, or as being inflicted by the Lord as a punishment on its account.

Verse 4. Mine iniquities are gone over mine head] He represents himself as one sinking in *deep waters*, or as one oppressed by a *burden* to which his strength was unequal.

Verse 5. My wounds stink and are corrupt] Taking this in connection with the rest of the Psalm, I do not see that we can understand the word in any *figurative* or *metaphorical* way. I believe they refer to *some disease* with which he was at this time afflicted; but whether the *leprosy*, the *small pox*, or some other disorder that had attacked the whole system, and showed its virulence on different parts of the outer surface, cannot be absolutely determined.

Because of my foolishness.] This may either signify *sin* as the cause of his present affliction, or it may import an affliction which was the consequence of that *foolish levity* which prefers the momentary gratification of an irregular passion to health of body and peace of mind.

Verse 6. I am troubled] In mind. *I am bowed down*-in body. I am altogether afflicted, and full of distress.

Verse 7. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease] Or rather, a *burning*; **hl qn nikleh**, from **hl q kalah**, to *fry, scorch, &c.*, hence **hl qn nikleh**, a *burning*, or *strongly feverish disease*.

There is **no soundness in my flesh.]** All *without* and all *within* bears evidence that the whole of my solids and fluids are corrupt.

Verse 8. I am feeble and sore broken] I am so exhausted with my disease that I feel as if on the brink of the grave, and unfit to appear before God; therefore “have I roared for the disquietness of my heart.”

That David describes a *natural disease* here cannot reasonably be doubted; but what that disease was, who shall attempt to say? However, this is evident, that whatever it was, he most deeply deplored the cause of it; and as he worthily lamented it, so he found mercy at the hand of God. It would be easy to show a disease of which what he here enumerates are the very

general symptoms; but I forbear, because in this I might attribute to one what, perhaps, in Judea would be more especially descriptive of another.

Verse 9. Lord, all my desire is before thee] I long for nothing so much as thy favour; and for this my heart is continually going out after thee. Instead of *ynda Adonai, Lord*, several of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. have *hwby Yehovah*.

Verse 10. My heart panteth] *rj rj s secharchar, flutters, palpitates*, through fear and alarm.

My strength faileth] Not being able to take nourishment.

The light of mine eyes-is gone] I can scarcely discern any thing through the general decay of my health and vigour, particularly affecting my sight.

Verse 11. My lovers] Those who professed much affection for me; my friends, *y[r reai, my companions*, who never before left my company, *stand aloof*.

My kinsmen] *ybwrq kerobai, my neighbours*, stand afar off. I am deserted by all, and they stand off because of *y[gn nigi, my plague*. They considered me as suffering *under a Divine judgment*; and, thinking me an *accursed being*, they avoided me lest they should be infected by my disease.

Verse 12. They also that seek after my life] They act towards me as *huntsmen* after their prey; *they lay snares to take away my life*. Perhaps this means only that they *wished* for his death, and would have been glad to have had it in their power to end his days. Others *spoke all manner of evil of him*, and *told falsities* against him *all the day long*.

Verse 13. But I, as a deaf man] I was conscious of my guilt, I could not vindicate myself; and I was obliged in silence to bear their insults.

Verse 14. No reproofs.] *twj kwt tochachoth, arguments or vindications*; a forensic term. I was as a man accused in open court, and I could make no *defence*.

Verse 15. In thee, O Lord, do I hope] I have no helper but thee.

Thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.] Thou art eternal in thy compassions, and wilt hear the prayer of a penitent soul. In the printed copies of the

Hebrew text we have **yhl a ynda** *Adonai Elohai, Lord my God*; but, instead of **ynda** *Adonai*, one hundred and two of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. read **hwwhy** *Yehovah*. As this word is never pronounced by the Jews, and they consider it dreadfully sacred, in reading, wherever it occurs, they pronounce **ynda** *Adonai*; and we may well suppose that Jewish scribes, in writing out copies of the sacred Scriptures, would as naturally write *Adonai* for *Yehovah*, as they would in reading supply the *former* for the *latter*.

Verse 16. When my foot slippeth] They watched for my halting; and when my foot slipped, they rejoiced that I had fallen into sin!

Verse 17. For I am ready to halt] Literally, *I am prepared to halt*. So completely infirm is my soul, that it is impossible for me to take one right step in the way of righteousness, unless strengthened by thee.

Verse 18. I will declare mine iniquity] I will confess it with the deepest humiliation and self-abasement.

Verse 19. But mine enemies are lively] Instead of **μyyj** *chayim, lively*, I would read **μnyj** *chinam, without cause*; a change made by the half of one letter, **n nun** for a **y yod**. See the parallel places, ^{<10519>}**Psalm 35:19; 79:5**. See also the Preliminary Dissertation to Dr. *Lowth's* *Isaiah*, p. 40: "But without cause my enemies have strengthened themselves; and they who wrongfully hate me are multiplied." Here the one member of the verse answers to the other.

Verse 20. Because I follow the thing that good is.] The translation is as bad as the sentence is awkward. **bwc ypdr tj t** *tachath rodpi tob, because I follow goodness*. There is a remarkable addition to this verse in the Arabic: "They have rejected me, the beloved one, as an abominable dead carcass; they have pierced my body with nails." I suppose the Arabic translator meant to refer this to Christ.

None of the other Versions have any thing like this addition; only the Æthiopic adds, "They rejected their brethren as an unclean carcass." St. Ambrose says this reading was found in some Greek and Latin copies in his time; and Theodoret has nearly the same reading with the Arabic: **Και απερριψαν με τον αγαπητον, ως νεκρον εβδελυγμενον**, "And they

cast me, the beloved, out, as an abominable dead carcass.” Whence this reading came I cannot conjecture.

Verse 21. Forsake me not, O Lord] Though all have forsaken me, do not thou.

Be not far from me] Though my friends keep aloof, be thou near to help me.

Verse 22. Make haste to help me] I am dying; save, Lord, or I perish. Whoever carefully reads over this Psalm will see what a grievous and bitter thing it is to sin against the Lord, and especially to sin after having known his mercy, and after having escaped from the corruption that is in the world. Reader, be on thy guard; a life of righteousness may be lost by giving way to a moment’s temptation, and a fair character sullied for ever! Let him that most assuredly standeth take heed lest he fall.

*‘Tis but a grain of sweet that one can sow,
To reap a harvest of wide-wasting wo.*

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH PSALM

This Psalm may be divided into *two* parts:— I. A *deprecation*; begun ~~19801~~**Psalm 38:1**, and continued in ~~19821~~**Psalm 38:21, 22**.

II. A *grievous complaint* of sin, disease misery, God’s anger, the ingratitude of his friends, coldness of his acquaintances, and cruelty of his enemies; all which he uses as arguments to induce God to help him; continued, ~~19812~~**Psalm 38:2-20**.

I. In the first part he deprecates God’s anger, and entreats a mitigation of it; though rebuked, let it not be in wrath; if corrected, let it not be in rigour: “O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath,” &c.

II. His *complaint*, on which he falls instantly, and amplifies in a variety of ways.

1. From the prime cause, GOD: “Thine arrows stick fast in me,” &c.

2. From the impulsive cause: “His *sin*, his *iniquities*,” ~~19804~~**Psalm 38:4**; “His *foolishness*,” ~~19815~~**Psalm 38:5**.

3. From the *weight* of his afflictions, which were, in general, “the arrows of God which stuck in him; the hand of God, by which he was pressed;”

which were so grievous “that there was no soundness in his flesh—no rest in his bones.”

4. By an induction of particulars, where he declares many effects of the disease:—

1. Putrefaction of his flesh: “My wounds stink, and are corrupt.”

2. The *uncomfortable posture* of his *body*: “I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly.”

3. Torment in his bowels, &c.: “My loins are filled with a loathsome disease.”

4. Diseases through the whole system: “There is no soundness in my flesh.”

5. Debility and grievous plague: “I am feeble,” &c.

6. Anguish that forced him to cry out: “I have roared,” &c.

7. His heart was disquieted: “The disquietness of my heart.” But that it might appear that he had not lost his hold of his hope and his confidence in God, he directs his speech to him, and says: “Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hidden from thee.”

8. He had a palpitation or trembling of heart: “My heart pants.”

9. His strength decayed: “My strength fails.”

10. A defect of sight: “The sight of my eyes is gone from me.”

All these calamities David suffered from within. He was tormented in body and mind; but had he any comfort from without? Not any.

1. None from his friends: “My lovers and my friends stand aloof.” 2. As for his enemies, they even then added to his affliction: “They also that seek after my life lay snares for me.” In purpose, word, and deed, they sought to undo him.

He next shows his behaviour in these sufferings; he murmured not, but was silent and patient. “I was as a deaf man;—I was as a dumb man.” He made no defence.

This he uses as an argument to induce the Lord to mitigate his sufferings; and of his patience he gives the following reasons:—

1. His reliance on God for audience and redress: “For in thee, O Lord, do I hope; thou wilt hear me.”

2. For this he petitions; for to God he was not silent, though deaf and dumb to man. For *I said, Hear me!* and the assurance that he should be heard made him patient; for if not heard, his enemies would triumph: “Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me.”

3. He was thus patient when his grief was extreme: “For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me.” I am under a bitter cross; and I know that if I be thy servant, I must bear my cross; therefore, I take it up, and suffer patiently.

4. This cross I have deserved to bear; it comes on account of mine iniquity, and I will not conceal it: “I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.” I suffer *justly*, and therefore have reason to be patient.

He complains again of his enemies. Though he suffered justly, yet this was no excuse for their cruelty; he complains of their strength, their number, and their hatred. My enemies are *living*, while I am at *death's door*; they are *multiplied* while I am *minished*; they render me *evil* for the *good* I have done *them*.

Then he concludes with a petition to God, in which he begs *three* things:—

1. God's presence: forsake me not, O Lord; my God, be not far from me.”
2. He begs for help: “Help me, O Lord.”
3. And prays that this help may come speedily: “Make haste to help me.”

And these three petitions are directed to the Most High, as the God of his salvation: “O Lord, my salvation;” my deliverer from sin, guilt, pain, death, and hell.

In this Psalm, deeply descriptive of the anguish of a penitent soul, most persons, who feel distress on account of sin, may meet with something suitable to their case.

PSALMS

PSALM 39

The psalmist's care and watchfulness over his thoughts, tongue, and actions, 1-3. He considers the brevity and uncertainty of human life, 4-7; prays for deliverance from sin, 8-11; and that he may be protected and spared till he is fitted for another world, 12, 13.

NOTES ON PSALM 39

The title says, *To the chief Musician, Jeduthun himself, A Psalm of David.* It is supposed that this *Jeduthun* is the same with *Ethan*, ^{<1364>}**1 Chronicles 6:44**, compared with ^{<1364>}**1 Chronicles 16:41**; and is there numbered among the sons of *Merari*. And he is supposed to have been one of the *four masters of music, or leaders of bands*, belonging to the temple. And it is thought that David, having composed this Psalm, gave it to *Jeduthun and his company* to sing. But several have supposed that *Jeduthun* himself was the author. It is very likely that this Psalm was written on the same occasion with the preceding. It relates to a grievous malady by which David was afflicted after his transgression with Bath-sheba. See what has been said on the foregoing Psalm.

Verse 1. I said, I will take heed to my ways] I must be *cautious* because of my *enemies*; I must be *patient* because of my *afflictions*; I must be *watchful* over my tongue, lest I offend my GOD, or give my *adversaries* any cause to speak evil of me.

Verse 2. I held any peace, even from good] “I ceased from the words of the law,” says the *Chaldee*. I spoke nothing, *either good or bad*. I did not even defend myself.

My sorrow was stirred.] My afflictions increased, and I had an exacerbation of pain. It is a hard thing to be denied the benefit of *complaint* in sufferings, as it has a tendency to relieve the mind, and indeed, in some sort, to call off the attention from the *place* of actual suffering: and yet undue and extravagant *complaining* enervates the mind, so that it becomes a double prey to its sufferings. On both sides there are *extremes*: David seems to have steered clear of them on the right hand and on the left.

Verse 3. My heart was hot within me] A natural feeling of repressed grief.

While I was musing] What was at first a simple sensation of heat produced a *flame*; the *fire broke out* that had long been *smothered*. It is a metaphor taken from vegetables, which, being heaped together, begin to heat and ferment, if not scattered and exposed to the air; and will soon produce a *flame*, and consume themselves and every thing within their reach.

Verse 4. Lord, make me to know mine end] I am weary of life; I wish to know *the measure of my days*, that I may see how long I have to suffer, and *how frail* I am. I wish to know what is *wanting* to make up the number of the days I have to live.

Verse 5. My days as a handbreadth] My life is but a *span*; σπιθαμη του βιου.

And mine age is as nothing] ^yak *keein*, as *if at were not before thee*. All *time* is swallowed up in thy *eternity*.

Verily every man at his best state] bxh mda l k *col adam nitstab*, “every man that *exists*, is vanity.” All his projects, plans, schemes, &c., soon come to nothing. His body also moulders with the dust, and shortly passes both from the *sight* and *remembrance* of men.

Verse 6. Walketh in a vain show] ml xb *betsalem*, in a *shadow*. He is but the *semblance* of being: he appears for a while, and then *vanisheth* away. Some of the fathers read, “Although every man walketh in the image of God, yet they are disquieted in vain.”

He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.] He *raketh together*. This is a metaphor taken from *agriculture*: the husbandman rakes the corn, &c., together in the field, and yet, so uncertain is life, that he knows not who shall gather them into the granary!

Verse 7. And now, Lord, what wait I for?] Have I any object of pursuit in life, but to regain thy *favour* and thine *image*.

Verse 8. Deliver one from all my transgressions] I seek the pardon of my sins; I expect it from thy *mercy*. Grant it, “that I be not the reproach of the foolish,” (the godless and the profane,) who deride my expectation, and

say no such blessings can be had. Let them know, by thy saving me, that there is a God who heareth prayer, and giveth his Holy Spirit to all them that ask him.

Verse 10. Remove thy stroke away from me] This seems to be a figure taken from *gladiators*, or persons *contending in single combat*. One is wounded so as to be able to maintain the fight no longer: he therefore *gives in*, and prays his adversary to spare his life. I am conquered; I can hold the contest no longer: thou art too powerful for me. He cries what our ancestors used to term *craven*; the word spoken by him who was conquered in the battle *ordeal*, or *trial by combat*.

Verse 11. When thou with rebukes dost correct man] *twj kwt tochachoth* signifies a *vindication of proceedings in a court of law, a legal defence*. When God comes to maintain the credit and authority of his law against a sinner, he “causes his beauty to consume away:” a metaphor taken from the case of a culprit, who, by the arguments of counsel, and the unimpeachable evidence of witnesses, has the facts all proved against him, grows pale, looks terrified; his fortitude forsakes him, and he faints in court.

Surely every man is vanity.] He is incapable of resistance; he falls before his Maker; and none can deliver him but his *Sovereign* and *Judge*, against whom he has offended.

Selah.] This is a true saying, an everlasting truth.

Verse 12. Hear my prayer] Therefore, O Lord, show that mercy upon me which I so much need, and without which I must perish everlastingly.

I am **a stranger with thee]** I have not made this earth my home; I have not trusted in any arm but thine. Though I have sinned, I have never denied thee, and never cast thy words behind my back. I knew that *here* I had no continuing city. *Like my fathers*, I looked for a city that has permanent foundations, in a better state of being.

Verse 13. O spare me] Take me not from this *state of probation* till I have a thorough preparation for a *state of blessedness*. This he terms *recovering his strength*-being restored to the *favour* and *image* of God, from which he had fallen. This should be the daily cry of every human spirit: Restore me to thine image, guide me by thy counsel, and then receive me to thy glory!

ANALYSIS OF THE THIRTY-NINTH PSALM

This Psalm was apparently written on the same occasion as the preceding. The psalmist is still suffering as before, yet is silent and patient; but the suffering at last becoming very sharp, he could hold his peace no longer: then he spoke. And we have reason to be thankful that he broke silence, as whoever considers the weighty truths which he spoke must allow.

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

- I. His own account of his resolution to keep silence, ^{<19301>}**Psalm 39:1**, and the consequences of it, ^{<19302>}**Psalm 39:2, 3**.
- II. His expostulation with God on the shortness, uncertainty, and frailty of life, ^{<19304>}**Psalm 39:4-6**.
- III. His petition to have his sin pardoned, ^{<19308>}**Psalm 39:8**; to be saved from punishment, ^{<19310>}**Psalm 39:10**; and for farther grace and respite, ^{<19312>}**Psalm 39:12, 13**.

I. David acquaints us with his resolution: *I said*-I fully purposed to keep silence.

1. "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue."
2. This resolution he kept for a while: "I was dumb; I held my peace even from good," even from making a just defence.
3. But in this I found great difficulty, nay, impossibility.
 1. For all the time "my sorrow was stirred." My pain was increased by silence.
 2. "My heart was hot." I was strongly incited to utter my mind.
 3. "And, while thus musing, the fire burned;" what was within I saw should not be longer concealed: "Then spake I with my tongue."

II. He expostulates with God: and, being greatly oppressed both in body and mind, prays to know how long he is to live; or, rather, how soon he may get rid of his maladies, false friends, and deceitful enemies. Many considerations render his life uncomfortable.

1. It is very brittle and frail: "Make me to know how frail I am."

2. It is very short: "Behold, thou hast made my days as a handbreadth."
3. Yea, when carefully considered, it was even less, of no consideration: "Mine age is as nothing before thee."
4. It was full of vanity: "Verily, every man at his best estate (in his strength, riches, power) is altogether vanity." His labours promise much, perform little.
5. It is unstable and uncertain, as a *shadow*. "Surely, every man walketh in a vain shadow."
6. It is full of trouble and inquietude: "Surely, they are disquieted in vain."
7. Man labours for he knows not whom: "He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them."

Notwithstanding all this, he finds that even here God is a sufficient Portion for them that trust in him. Let others toil for riches; admire dignities, empires, pleasures; let them be proud of these, and complain that their life is too short to enjoy them; I have a stronger hold; I am persuaded that the Lord will have mercy upon me, and be my Support in all the troubles and uncertainties of life: "And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee."

III. On this confidence he again begins to pray,—

1. For remission of sin: "Deliver me from all my transgressions."
2. For defence against malicious tongues: "Make me not a reproach to the foolish."
3. For submission under Divine chastisement: "I was dumb, because thou didst it."
4. For a removal of his punishment: "Take away thy plague from me."
 1. And he adds the cause;—either remove thy hand, or I must needs perish: "I am even consumed by the blow of thy hand."
 2. This he amplifies by the similitude of a moth; and adds a second reason: "When thou with rebukes dost correct man, thou makest his beauty to consume away like the moth," which frets and destroys a garment. And, for confirmation, delivers his former opinion, which is to be considered as an incontrovertible maxim: "Surely, every man is vanity. Selah." Mark that!

3. To which he adds a *third*-the consideration of our present condition in this life. We and all our fathers are but pilgrims in this life: "I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." Therefore, spare me.

Faith has always to struggle with difficulties. Though he was confident, ^{<19307>}**Psalm 39:7**, that God was his hope; yet his calamities, his sickness, his enemies, the brevity, fugacity, and troubles of life, come ever into his memory; and, therefore, he prays again for them. And this rises by a climax or gradation:—

1. He prays for audience: "Hear my prayer, O Lord!"
2. That his cry, for such it was, be heard: "Give ear unto my cry."
3. For admission of his tears: "Hold not thy peace at my tears. The reason, as a *stranger*. Thy grace, thy favour.
4. For some relaxation and ease: "O spare me, that I may recover strength;" which he urges with this motive, "before I go hence, and be no more." Restore me to thy favour in *this life*. Hereafter, it will be too late to expect it. Let me not die *unsaved*!

PSALMS

PSALM 40

The benefit of confidence in God, 1-3. The blessedness of those who trust in God, 4, 5. The termination of the Jewish sacrifices in that of Christ, 6-8. The psalmist's resolution to publish God's goodness, 9, 10: he prays to be delivered from evils, 11-13; against his enemies, 14, 15; and in behalf of those who are destitute, 16, 17.

NOTES ON PSALM 40

The TITLE, "To the chief Musician," we have already seen, and it contains nothing worthy of particular remark. Concerning the *occasion* and *author* of this Psalm there has been a strange and numerous diversity of opinions. I shall not trouble the reader with sentiments which I believe to be ill founded; as I am satisfied the Psalm was composed by *David*; and about the same time and on the *same occasion* as the two preceding; with this difference, that *here* he magnifies God for having bestowed the mercy which he sought *there*. It is, therefore, a *thanksgiving* for his recovery from the *sore disease* by which he was afflicted in his body, and for his restoration to the Divine favour. The *sixth*, *seventh*, and *eighth* verses contain a remarkable prophecy of the incarnation and sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ. From the *eleventh* to the end contains a new subject and appears to have belonged to *another Psalm*. It is the same as the *seventieth* Psalm; only it wants the two first verses.

Verse 1. I waited patiently for the Lord] The two preceding Psalms are proofs of the *patience* and *resignation* with which David waited for the mercy of God. The reader is requested to consult the notes on them.

And heard my cry.] The two preceding Psalms show how he *prayed* and *waited*; *this* shows how he *succeeded*.

Verse 2. A horrible pit] Literally, the *sounding pit*; where nothing was heard except the howlings of wild beasts, or the hollow sounds of winds reverberated and broken from the craggy sides and roof.

The miry clay] Where the longer I stayed the deeper I sank, and was utterly unable to save myself. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* translate "The pit of perdition, and the mud of corruption." These are figurative expressions to

point out the dreary, dismal, ruinous state of sin and guilt, and the utter inability of a condemned sinner to save himself either from the guilt of his conscience, or the corruption of his heart.

Set my feet upon a rock] Thou hast changed my state from *guilt* to *pardon*; from *corruption* to *holiness*; in consequence of which *my goings are established*. I have now power over all sin, and can walk steadily in the way that leads to God's kingdom.

Verse 3. A new song] Cheerfulness and joy had long been strangers to him. He seemed to live to utter the most doleful complaints, and be a prey to suffering and wretchedness. *Praise* for a sense of God's favour was a *new* song to him. The word is often used to signify *excellence*: I will sing a most *excellent* and *eminent* song.

Many shall see it] I will publish it abroad; *and fear*-to sin against the Lord, knowing by my example what a grievous and bitter thing it is.

And shall trust in the Lord.] Even the worst of sinners shall not despair of mercy, being penitent, when they see that I have found favour in his sight.

Verse 4. Blessed is that man] The man must be blessed and happy who casts his soul, with all its burden of sin and wretchedness, at the footstool of God's mercy; for he will save all who come to him through the Son of his love.

Verse 5. Many-are thy wonderful works] The psalmist seems here astonished and confounded at the *counsels*, *loving-kindnesses*, and *marvellous works* of the Lord, not in *nature*, but in *grace*; for it was the mercy of God towards himself that he had now particularly in view.

Verse 6. Sacrifice and offering] The apostle, ^{<S1015>}**Hebrews 10:5**, &c., quoting this and the two following verses, says, *When he* (the Messiah) *cometh into the world*-was about to be incarnated, *He saith*-to God the Father, *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not*-it was never thy *will* and design that the sacrifices under thy own law should be considered as making atonement for sin; they were only designed to point out my incarnation and consequent sacrificial death: and therefore *a body hast thou prepared me*, by a miraculous conception in the womb of a virgin; according to thy word, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*.

A body hast thou prepared me.—The quotation of this and the two following verses by the apostle, ^{<8105>}**Hebrews 10:5**, &c., is taken from the *Septuagint*, with scarcely any variety of reading: but, although the general meaning is the same, they are widely different in verbal expression in the Hebrew. David's words are *yl tyrk μynza oznayim caritha lli*, which we translate, *My ears hast thou opened*; but they might be more properly rendered, *My ears hast thou bored*; that is, Thou hast made me *thy servant for ever*, to dwell in thine own house: for the allusion is evidently to the custom mentioned ^{<0210>}**Exodus 21:2**, &c.: "If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free: but if the servant shall positively say, I love my master, &c., I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him to the doorpost, and shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever."

But how is it possible that the *Septuagint* and the apostle should take a meaning so totally different from the sense of the Hebrew? Dr. Kennicott has a very ingenious conjecture here: he supposes that the *Septuagint* and apostle express the meaning of the words as they stood in the copy from which the Greek translation was made; and that the present Hebrew text is corrupted in the word *μynza oznayim*, *ears*, which has been written through carelessness for *hwg za az gevah*, THEN, a BODY The first syllable, *za az*, THEN, is the same in both; and the latter, *μyn*, which, joined to *za* makes *μynza oznayim*, might have been easily mistaken for *hwg gevah*, BODY; *n nun* being very like *g gimel*; *y yod* like *w vau*; and *h he* like final *μ mem*; especially if the line on which the letters were written in the MS. happened to be blacker than ordinary, which has often been a cause of mistake, it might then have been easily taken for the under-stroke of the *mem*, and thus give rise to a corrupt reading; add to this, the root *hrk carah* signifies as well to *prepare*, as to *open*, *bore*, &c. On this supposition the ancient copy translated by the *Septuagint*, and followed by the apostle, must have read the text thus: *yl tyrk hwg za az gevah charitha lli*; *Σωμα δε κατηρτισω μοι*, *Then a body thou hast prepared me*: thus the Hebrew text, the version of the *Septuagint*, and the apostle, will agree in what is known to be an indisputable fact in Christianity; namely, that Christ was *incarnated* for the sin of the world.

The *Æthiopic* has nearly the same reading: the *Arabic* has both, "A body hast thou prepared me, and mine ears thou hast opened." But the *Syriac*,

the *Chaldee*, and the *Vulgate*, agree with the present Hebrew text; and none of the MSS. collated by *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi* have any various reading on the disputed words.

It is remarkable, that all the offerings and sacrifices which were considered to be of an atoning or cleansing nature, offered under the law, are here enumerated by the psalmist and the apostle, to show that *none* of them, nor *all* of them, could take away sin; and that the grand sacrifice of Christ was that alone which could do it.

Four kinds are here specified, both by the psalmist and the apostle: viz. SACRIFICE, **j bz** *zebach*, **θυσια**; OFFERING, **hj nm** *minchah*, **προσφορα**; BURNT-OFFERING, **hl w[** *olah*, **ολοκαυτωμα**; SIN-OFFERING, **hacj** *chataah*, **περι αμαρτιας**. Of all these we may say, with the apostle, it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats, &c. should take away sin.

Thou hast had no pleasure.—Thou couldst never be pleased with the victims under the law; thou couldst never consider them as atonements for sin, as they could never satisfy thy justice, nor make thy law honourable.

Verse 7. In the volume of the book] **rps tl gmb** *bimegillath sepher*, “in the roll of the book.” Anciently, books were written on skins, and rolled up. Among the Romans, these were called *volumina*, from *volvo*, *I roll*; and the Pentateuch in the Jewish synagogues is still written in this way. There are two wooden rollers; on one they roll *on*, on the other they roll *off*, as they proceed in reading. One now lying before me, written on vellum, is *two feet two inches* in breadth and *one hundred and two feet long*. To roll and unroll such a MS. was no easy task, and to be managed must lie flat on a table. This contains the Pentateuch only, and is without *points*, or any other Masoretic distinction. The *book* mentioned here must be the *Pentateuch*, or five books of Moses; for, in David’s time no other part of Divine revelation had been committed to writing. This whole book speaks about Christ, and his accomplishing the *will* of God, not only in “the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent,” and “in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;” but in all the *sacrifices* and sacrificial rites mentioned in the law.

Verse 8. To do thy will] God *willed* not the sacrifices under the law, but he *willed* that a human victim of infinite merit should be offered for the redemption of mankind. That there might be *such a victim*, a *body* was

prepared for the eternal Logos, and in that body *he came* to do the *will of God*; that is, to suffer and die for the sins of the world.

1. Hence we see that the sovereign WILL of God is that Jesus should be incarnated; that he should suffer and die; or, in the apostle's words, *taste death for every man*; that all should believe on him, and be saved from their sins; for this is the WILL of God, our *sanctification*.

2. And as the apostle grounds this on the words of the Psalm, we see that it is the WILL of *God* that that system shall end; for as the essence of it is contained in its *sacrifices*, and God says he *will* not have these, and has appointed the *Messiah* to do his will, i.e., to *die for men*, hence it necessarily follows, from the psalmist himself, that the introduction of the Messiah into the world is the abolition of the law; and that his sacrifice is that which shall last for ever.

Verse 9. I have preached righteousness] I think it best to refer these words to Christ and his apostles. In consequence of his having become a sacrifice for sin, the Jewish sacrificial system being ended, the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the door of faith, the doctrine of justification by faith, opened to the Gentiles. Hence the Gospel was preached in all the world, and the mercy of God made known to the Gentiles; and thus *righteousness-justification by faith*, was preached *in the great congregation*-to Jews and Gentiles, throughout the Roman empire.

The great congregation, both in this and the following verse, I think, means the Gentiles, contradistinguished from the Jews.

The word *righteousness* means the plan or method of salvation by Jesus Christ-God's method of justifying sinners by faith, without the deeds of the law. See ⁴¹⁸²⁵**Romans 3:25, 26**, and the notes there.

Verse 10. Thy faithfulness] This means the exact fulfilment of the promises made by the prophets relative to the incarnation of Christ, and the opening of the door of faith to the *Gentiles*.

Loving-kindness] Shows the gift itself of Jesus Christ, the highest proof that God could give to a lost world of his *mercy, kindness, and loving-kindness*.

Verse 11. Thy tender mercies] Ĕymj r *rachameycha*, such propensities and feelings as a mother bears to her child; or animals in general to their young.

Let thy loving-kindness] Ĕdsj *chasdecha*, thy overflowing and superabundant mercy.

And thy truth] What is revealed in thy word: *continually preserve me*. *Mercy* to help me, *truth* to direct me; and, by the operation of both, I shall be continually preserved from sin and evil.

Verse 12. Innumerable evils have compassed me about] This part does not comport with the preceding; and either argues a former experience, or must be considered a part of another Psalm, written at a different time, and on another occasion, and, were we to prefix the two first verses of the *seventieth* Psalm to it we should find it to be a Psalm as complete in itself as that is.

They are more than the hairs of mine head] This could not be said by any person who was exulting in the pardoning mercy of God, as David was at the time he penned the commencement of this Psalm.

Verse 15. That say unto me, Aha, aha.] j ah j ah *heach, heach*. See on ~~1952~~ **Psalm 35:21**.

Verse 16. Let all those that seek thee-be glad] In making prayer and supplication to thee, let them ever find thee, that they may magnify thee for the blessings they receive.

Love thy salvation] Who earnestly desire to be saved from sin: saved in thy *own way*, and on thy *own terms*.

The Lord be magnified.] Let God be praised continually for the continual blessings he pours down.

Verse 17. But I am poor] yn[*ani*, afflicted, greatly depressed.

And needy] ^wyba *ebyon*, a *beggar*. One utterly destitute, and seeking help.

The Lord thinketh upon me] The words are very emphatic; *ynda Adonai*, my prop, my support, *thinketh*, *bvj y yachshab*, meditateth, *upon*

me. On which he concludes: “Thou art my help and deliverer.” Seeing that my miserable state occupies thy *heart*, it will soon *employ* thy *hand*. Thou, who meditatest upon me, wilt deliver me.

Make no tarrying] Seeing thou art *disposed to help*, and I am in such *great necessity*, delay not, but come speedily to my assistance. The old *Psalter* speaks to this effect: “Let us not be so long under distress and misery that we lose our patience, or our love to thee.”

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTIETH PSALM

There are *two* main parts in this Psalm:—

- I. A *thanksgiving*, ^{<1901>}**Psalm 40:1-11.**
- II. A *prayer*, from ^{<1902>}**Psalm 40:12-17.**

Thankfulness consists in the exercise of two virtues, *truth* and *justice*.

1. Truth calls upon us to acknowledge the *benefit*, and *him* from whom we receive it.

2. Justice obliges us to be grateful, and to perform some duties as evidences of our thankful minds; and both these we meet with in the first part.

I. David begins with a profession of thankfulness; shows his *confidence*: “I waited patiently for the Lord;” then shows the success, or what God did for him.

1. “He inclined his ear, and heard my cry.”
2. “He brought me out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay.”
3. “He set my feet upon a rock.” Being redeemed from danger, he set me in a safe place.
4. “He established my goings.” He confirmed my steps, so that I slipped and slid no more.
5. And he hath moved me to be thankful: “He hath put a new song in my mouth.” The deliverance was not common, and therefore the praise should not be common, but expressed by a new and exquisite song.

And in this he supposed his example would be a common document. Many shall see my deliverance and my thanksgiving, and shall fear God, and

acknowledge his *grace*, his *providence*, and *protection*; and be led thereby to put their trust in him. And then he produces his *form* of *thanksgiving*.

First, He pronounces the man blessed who relies on God. 1. “Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust.” 2. “And blessed is he who respects not the proud;” men proud of their wealth and power, or such as turn aside to lies.

Secondly, Then by exclamation admires God’s mercies, and goodness to his people. 1. For their grandeur and multitude: “Many, O Lord my God, are thy works.” 2. For their supernatural appearance: “Thy wonderful works.” 3. For the incomparable wisdom by which they are ordered: “Many, O Lord, are thy wondrous works; and thy thoughts to us-ward, they cannot be reckoned up,” &c.

And having acknowledged his thankfulness, he speaks of the other part, his gratitude; to which, in equity, he thought himself bound, viz., to be obedient to God’s voice, which is, indeed, the best sacrifice, and far beyond all those that are offered by the law; as is apparent in *Christ*, to whom these words and the obedience contained in them are principally attributed: by way of accommodation, they belong to every one of his members who means to be thankful for his redemption.

And, first, he tells us that outward worship is of little worth, if sincerity and true piety be wanting: “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not require.” Not these absolutely, but as subservient to the true piety, and significative of the obedience of Christ unto death.

2. To this end “mine ears hast thou opened;” bored, made docile, and taken me for thy servant.

3. And I will be thy voluntary and obedient servant: “Then said I, Lo, I come!” I am ready to hear thy commands.

4. He describes his ready obedience:—

1. That he performed it cheerfully: “I delight to do thy will.”

2. That he did it heartily: “Thy law is in my heart.” The obedience of eyes, hands, and feet may be hypocritical; that which is of the heart cannot. The heart thou requirest, and the heart thou shalt have; and to that purpose “I have put thy law in my heart.”

3. He did this for the benefit of others: he published the Gospel. 1. "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation." 2. "I have not refrained my lips; that thou knowest." 3. "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart." 4. "I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation." 5. "I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and truth from the great congregation."

In this verse we have the commendation of the gospel, that it is *righteousness*. Jesus, who is the sum and substance of it, *justifies* and *sanctifies*. It is God's *truth* and *faithfulness*, for in it his promises are performed. It is our *salvation*, freeing us from sin, death, the curse of the law, and hell-fire. It must, as such, be preached in the great congregation. And to it *obedience* must be yielded; and to this *four things* are necessary:—

1. The help of God's Spirit: "Thou hast opened mine ears."
2. A ready and willing mind: "Then said I, Lo, I come."
3. A ready performance in the work: "I delight to do thy will."
4. That respect be had to God's law: "Thy law is within my heart."

But all that is here spoken must be considered as resting on the sacrificial offering which Christ made; for we must be justified by his blood; and through him alone can we have remission of sins, the help of God's Spirit, or any power to do any kind of good.

II. This second part of the Psalm appears rather to be a part of another, or a Psalm of itself, as it relates to a different subject.

In the *first* part of the following prayer we have the sorrowful sighing of a distressed heart, vented in the most earnest petitions on account of the greatness of its sins, and the evils by which it was surrounded. A fear of being cut off causes the penitent to pray, "Withhold not thou thy mercy from me, O Lord." 1. "For innumerable evils have compassed me," &c. 2. "My iniquities have taken fast hold upon me," &c. 3. "Therefore my heart faileth me." My agony is great, my vital spirit fails; and therefore he prays again, 4. "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me! make haste to help me!"

The *second* part of his prayer is for the confusion of his *wicked enemies*: "Let them be ashamed and confounded together, that say, Aha! aha! "

The *third* part of the prayer is for *all good men*. Let all those who seek thee be joyful and glad in thee; let them say, “The Lord be magnified.”

In the *close* he prays for *himself*; and to move Divine mercy the sooner:—

1. He puts himself in the number of the poor and afflicted. He boasts not that he is a king, a prophet, a great man; but “I am poor and needy.”
2. He shows his hope and confidence: “Yet the Lord thinketh upon me.”
3. He casts himself wholly upon God: “Thou art my help and my deliverer.”
4. Therefore delay not: “Make no tarrying, O my God!”

PSALMS

PSALM 41

The blessedness of the man who is merciful to the poor, 1-3. The psalmist complains of his enemies, and prays for support, 4-10; and blesses God for having heard his prayer, and preserved him from his adversaries, 11, 12. A fine doxology closes the Psalm, 13.

NOTES ON PSALM 41

The *title* as before. The *Syriac* says it was “A Psalm of David, when he appointed overseers to take care of the poor.” The *Arabic* says, “It is a prophecy concerning the incarnation; and also of the salutation of Judas.” It appears to me to have been written on the same occasion as the three former, and to relate to David’s malady and cure, and the evil treatment he had from his enemies during his affliction. Our Lord, by accommodation, applies the ninth verse to the treachery of Judas, ~~Eccl 13:18~~ **John 13:18**; but as to any other direct reference to Christ, or his history, I believe the Psalm has none.

Verse 1. Blessed is he that considereth] God is *merciful*; he will have man to *resemble* him: as far as he is *merciful*, feels a *compassionate heart*, and uses a *benevolent hand*, he *resembles* his Maker; and the mercy he shows to others God will show to him. But it is not a *sudden impression* at the sight of a person in distress, which obliges a man to give something for the relief of the sufferer, that constitutes the *merciful character*. It is he *who considers the poor*; who endeavours to find them out; who looks into their circumstances; who is in the habit of doing so; and actually, according to his power and means, *goes about to do good*; that is the merciful man, of whom God speaks with such high approbation, and to whom he promises a rich reward.

Verse 2. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive] It is worthy of remark, that *benevolent persons*, who *consider the poor*, and especially the *sick poor*; who *search cellars, garrets, back lanes, and such abodes of misery*, to find them out, (even in the places where contagion keeps its seat,) very seldom fall a prey to their own benevolence. The Lord, in an especial manner, keeps them *alive*, and preserves them; while many, who

endeavour to keep far from the contagion, are assailed by it, and fall victims to it. God loves the merciful man.

Verse 3. The Lord will strengthen him] Good, benevolent, and merciful as he is, he must also die: but he shall not die as other men; he shall have peculiar consolations, refreshment, and support, while passing *through the valley of the shadow of death*.

Thou wilt make all his bed] *tkph haphachta*, thou hast *turned up, tossed, and shaken* it; and thou wilt do so to *all his bed*- thou wilt not leave one *uneasy place* in it-not one *lump*, or any *unevenness*, to prevent him from sleeping. Thou wilt do every thing, consistently with the accomplishment of the great decree, “Unto dust thou shalt return,” to give him ease, refreshment, and rest. We may sum up the privileges of the merciful man: 1. He is generally *blessed*, ^{<194101>}**Psalm 41:1**. 2. He will be *delivered in the time of trouble*, ^{<194101>}**Psalm 41:1**. 3. He will be *preserved* by a particular providence, ^{<194102>}**Psalm 41:2**. 4. He shall be *kept alive* amidst infection and danger, ^{<194102>}**Psalm 41:2**. 5. He *shall be blessed on the earth* in his temporal concerns, ^{<194102>}**Psalm 41:2**. 6. His enemies shall not be able to spoil or destroy him, ^{<194102>}**Psalm 41:2**. 7. He shall be *strengthened on a bed of languishing*, to enable him to bear his afflictions, ^{<194103>}**Psalm 41:3**. 8. He shall have *ease, comfort, and support* in his *last hours*, ^{<194103>}**Psalm 41:3**.

Verse 4. I said, Lord, be merciful unto me] I need thy mercy especially, because I have sinned against thee, and my sin is a *deadly wound* to my *soul*; therefore *heal my soul, for it has sinned against thee*.

Verse 5. Mine enemies speak evil] It is often a good man’s lot to be evil spoken of; to have his *motives*, and even his most *benevolent acts*, misconstrued.

Verse 6. And if he come to see me] This may relate to *Ahithophel*; but it is more likely that it was to some other person who was his secret enemy, who pretended to come and inquire after his health, but with the secret design to see whether death was *despatching his work*.

When **he goeth abroad, he telleth** it.] He makes several observations on my dying state; intimates that I am suffering deep remorse for secret crimes; that God is showing his displeasure against me, and that I am full of sorrow at the approach of death.

Verse 7. All that hate me whisper together against me] This is in consequence of the *information* given by the *hypocritical friend*, who came to him with the *lying tongue*, and whose *heart gathereth iniquity to itself*, which, when *he went abroad*, he told to others as ill-minded as himself, and they also drew their wicked inferences.

Verse 8. An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him] **wb qwxy**
I [yl b rbd *debar beliyaal yatsuk bo, a thing, word, or pestilence of Belial, is poured out upon him.* His disease is of no common sort; it is a *diabolical* malady.

He shall rise up no more.] His disease is incurable without a miracle; and he is too much hated of God to have one wrought for him. Some apply this to the death and resurrection of Christ; he *lieth*-he is *dead* and buried; he shall never *rise again* from the dead.

Verse 9. Mine own familiar friend] This is either a direct prophecy of the treachery of Judas, or it is a fact in David's distresses which our Lord found so similar to the falsity of his treacherous disciple, that he applies it to him, ^{<BIBIS>}**John 13:18.** What we translate *mine own familiar friend*, **ymwl v vya** *ish shelomi, is the man of my peace.* The man who, with the **Ël μwl v shalom lecha, peace be to thee!** kissed me; and thus gave the agreed-on signal to my murderers that I was the person whom they should seize, hold fast, and carry away.

Did eat of my bread] Was an *inmate in my house.* Applied by our Lord to Judas, when eating with him out of the same dish. See ^{<BIBIS>}**John 13:18, 26.** Possibly it may refer to *Ahithophel*, his counsellor, the *man of his peace*, his prime minister; who, we know, was the strength of Absalom's conspiracy.

Verse 10. Raise me up] Restore me from this sickness, *that I may requite them.* This has also been applied to our Lord; who, knowing that he *must die*, prays that he *may rise again*, and thus disappoint the malice of his enemies.

Verse 11. By this I know that thou favourest me] If thou hadst not been on my side, I had perished by this disease; and then my enemies would have had cause to triumph.

This also has been applied to our Lord; and *Calmet* says it is the greatest proof we have of the divinity of Christ, that he did not permit the malice of the Jews, nor the rage of the devil, to prevail against him. They might persecute, blaspheme, mock, insult, crucify, and slay him; but his *resurrection* confounded them; and by it he gained the victory over sin, death, and hell.

Verse 12. Thou upholdest me] I am still enabled to show that my heart was upright before God.

Settest me before thy face for ever.] Thou showest that thou dost *approve* of me: that I stand *in thy presence*, under the smiles of thy approbation.

This also has been applied to our Lord, and considered as pointing out his *mediatorial office* at the right hand of God.

Verse 13. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel] By all these circumstances and events glory shall redound to the name of God for ever; for the *record* of these things shall never perish, but be published from one generation to another; and it has been so.

From everlasting, and to everlasting.] מל ו[h d[w מל ו[hm *mehaolam vead haolam*; *From the hidden time to the hidden time*; from that which had no beginning to that which has no end.

To which he subscribes, *Amen and Amen. Fiat, fiat.*—*Vulgate.* Γενοιτο, γενοιτο.—*Septuagint.* The *Chaldee* says, “And let the righteous say, Amen, and Amen.” [Anglo-Saxon] “Be blessed, Lord God of Israel, from world, and in world. Be it! So be it!”—*Anglo-Saxon.* To which the *Old Psalter* approaches very nearly: *Blýssted Lord God of Isrel, fra werld, and in werld: Be it done! be it done.* Thus illustrated by the same, *Fra werld in werld; that es, fra the bygynnyng of this wereld, in til wereld that lastes ay. Be it done, be it done.* This dubblyng schews that it es at do of al men. In Latyn, it es, *fiat, fiat!* in *Ebru*, *Amen Amen* es writyn: tharfore that *Aquila* translated *vere*, *vel fideliter*, that es, *sothfastly* or *trew*.

Thus ends what the Hebrews call the *first book* of Psalms; for the reader will recollect that this book is divided by the Jews into *five* books, the first of which ends with this Psalm.

This *doxology*, Dr. *Kennicott* supposes, may have been added by the collector of this book; and he thinks that the division into *books* is *not arbitrary*; and that the Psalms were collected at different times by different persons. See the *Introduction*. There is certainly a considerable *variety* in the *style* of the several books; in the examination of which the Hebrew critic will not lose his labour.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-FIRST PSALM

In this Psalm David shows how men should, and how commonly they do, carry themselves towards men in affliction and trouble.

I. They should behave compassionately and kindly, which would tend to their own happiness, and cause them to find mercy from God, ^{<19410>} **Psalm 41:1-4.**

II. But they commonly behave unkindly, and afflict the afflicted, ^{<19410>} **Psalm 41:4-10.**

III. On which unkindness he flies to God, and prays for mercy, ^{<19411>} **Psalm 41:11**; shows his hope and confidence in God, ^{<19411>} **Psalm 41:11, 12.**

I. He begins with an excellent grave sentence: “Blessed is he who considereth the poor;” that is, any man in trouble and want, &c. This is a happy man. His particular comforts and privileges are *six*:—

1. “The Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble.”
2. The Lord will *preserve* him, “that he faint not in his troubles.”
3. The Lord will *keep him alive*. Prolong his life and days.
4. “He shall be blessed upon earth: “God shall enrich him, and bless his substance.
5. He shall not be delivered unto the will of his enemies,—never to their full desires, though often into their hands.
6. “The Lord will strengthen him upon a bed of languishing,” and make all his bed in his *sickness*: he shall have comfort and assurance of God’s favour.

II. He begins the second part with an ejaculation:—

1. “I said, The Lord be merciful unto me!” pardon my sin.

2. "Heal my soul:" extract the sting of sin, and all inward corruption.

3. He prays thus, because he is sensible that he "has sinned against the Lord."

The complaint against himself being ended, he begins to complain of others.

1. Of their hatred and malice: "Mine enemies speak evil of me."

2. Of their cruelty; they longed for his death: "When shall he die, and his name perish?" they would have even his memorial cut off.

3. Their perfidious dealing and dissimulation. They came to visit him: but it was fraudulently to search out his counsels, and to entrap him in his words; and then to detail them abroad: "If he come to see me," &c.

4. Of their plots and conspiracies: "All they that hate me whisper," &c.

5. Their exultation at his misery: "An evil disease, say they, cleaveth unto him," &c.

6. Of the perfidiousness of some particular friend, perhaps Ahithophel: "Yea, mine own familiar friend hath lifted up his heel against me."

III. And then, against all these evils, and in his own defence, he prays: "But thou, O Lord, be merciful unto me, and raise me up." For which he gives these reasons:—

1. That thereby, as a king, he should have power to do justice on traitors: "That I may requite them."

2. By this he should have experience of God's favour: "By this I know thou favourest me," &c.

3. It will be a testimony unto me that thou favourest not only my person, but my cause: "As for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever."

The Psalm, and with it the *first book* of the Psalms, according to the Jewish division, is closed with a doxology to God: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen."

PSALMS

PSALM 42

The psalmist earnestly longs for the ordinances of the Lord's house, 1-4; describes his deep distress, 5-7; endeavours to take comfort from the consideration that the Lord would appear in his behalf, 8, 9; speaks of the insults of his enemies, 10; and again takes encouragement, 11.

NOTES ON PSALM 42

The title, *To the chief Musician giving instruction to the sons of Korah*. This is the first of the Psalms that has this title prefixed, and it is probable that such Psalms were composed by the *descendants of Korah* during the Babylonish captivity, or by some eminent person among those descendants, and that they were used by the Israelites during their long captivity, as means of consolation: and, indeed, most of the Psalms which bear this inscription are of the consoling kind and the sentiments appear to belong to that period of the Jewish history, and to none other. The word **lykcm** *maskil*, from **lk** *sakal*, signifies to *make wise*, to *direct wisely*, to *give instruction*; and here is so understood by our translators, who have left this signification in the *margin*; and so the *Versions* in general.

The *Syriac* says, "It is a Psalm which David sung when he was an exile, and desired to return to Jerusalem." The *Arabic* says: "A Psalm for the backsliding Jews."

Verse 1. As the hart panteth after the water brooks] The *hart* is not only fond of feeding near some water for the benefit of *drinking*, "but when he is hard hunted, and nearly spent, he will take to some river or brook, in which," says *Tuberville*, "he will keep as long as his breath will suffer him. Understand that when a hart is spent and sore run, his last refuge is to the water; and he will commonly descend down the streame and swimme in the very midst thereof; for he will take as good heede as he can to touch no boughes or twygges that grow upon the sides of the river, for feare lest the hounds should there take sent of him. And sometimes the hart *will lye under the water*, all but *his very nose*; and I have seene divers lye so until the hounds have been upon them, before they would rise; for *they are constrayned to take the water as their last refuge*."—*Tuberville's Art of Venerie*, chap. xl. Lond. 4to., 1611.

The above extracts will give a fine illustration of this passage. The hart feels himself almost entirely spent; he is nearly hunted down; the dogs are in full pursuit; he is parched with thirst; and in a burning heat pants after the water, and when he comes to the river, plunges in *as his last refuge*. Thus pursued, spent, and nearly ready to give up the ghost, the psalmist *pants for God, for the living God!* for him who can give *life*, and save from *death*.

Verse 2. When shall I come] When, when shall I have the privilege of appearing in his courts *before God*? In the mouth of a *Christian* these words would import: “*When shall I see my heavenly country? When shall I come to God, the Judge of all, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant?*” He who is a *stranger* and a *pilgrim* here below, and feels a heart full of piety to God, may use these words in this sense; but he who feels himself here at home, whose soul is not spiritual, wishes the earth to be eternal, and himself eternal on it—feels no panting after the *living God*.

Verse 3. My tears have been my meat day and night] My longing has been so intense after spiritual blessings, that I have forgotten to take my necessary food; and my sorrow has been so great, that I have had no appetite for any. I feel more for the honour of my God and his truth than for myself, when the idolaters, who have thy people in captivity, insultingly cry, *Where is thy God?*

Verse 4. When I remember these things] Or, *these things I shall remember*. They often occur to me, and sharpen my distressful feelings. My soul is dissolved, becomes weak as water, when I reflect on what I have had, and on what I have lost. Or, *I pour out my soul to myself* in deep regrets and complaints, when reflecting on these things. I once enjoyed all the ordinances of God, and now I have none. I once had the joyous communion of saints in God’s ordinances; but that communion no longer exists, for there are no ordinances to support it. There was a *multitude* to worship God in public; with these *I often went*: but, alas, this is no more; now there are found only a few *solitary individuals* who sigh for the desolations of Zion. *There* we had our holy days, our appointed *feasts*, to commemorate the wonderful works of the Lord; now there are no processions, no festivals, no joyous assemblies; all is desolation in Zion, and all is mourning in our captivity. I have endeavoured to give a general sense to this verse, but there are several difficulties in it; and different commentators and critics have given it a great variety of translations, and

as many different meanings. My plan will not permit me to follow them. Much may be seen in Dr. *Horsley's* work on this verse.

Verse 5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul?] Bad as the times are, desolate as Jerusalem is, insulting as are our enemies, hopeless as in the sight of man our condition may be, yet there is no room for *despair*. All things are possible to God. We have a promise of restoration; he is as good as he is powerful; hope therefore in him.

I shall yet praise him] For my restoration from this captivity. He is the health of my soul. I shall have the *light and help of his countenance*, his approbation, and a glorious deliverance wrought by his right hand.

Verse 6. O my God, my soul is cast down] It is impossible for me to lighten this load; I am full of discouragements, notwithstanding I labour to hope in thee.

Therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan] That is, from Judea, this being the chief river of that country.

And of the Hermonites] $\mu\gamma\eta\omega\mu\epsilon\rho\eta$ the *Hermons*, used in the *plural* because Hermon has a *double* ridge joining in an angle, and rising in many summits. The river *Jordan*, and the mountains of *Hermon*, were the most striking features of the holy land.

From the hill Mizar.] $\rho[\chi\mu\rho\eta\mu$ *mehar mitsar*, from the little hill, as in the margin. The little hill probably means *Sion*, which was little in comparison of the Hermons.—Bishop *Horsley*. No such hill as Mizar is known in India.

Verse 7. Deep calleth unto deep] One wave of sorrow rolls on me, impelled by another. There is something *dismal* in the sound of the original; $\alpha\rho\omega\kappa\mu\omega\eta\tau\iota\alpha\mu\omega\eta\tau\epsilon\eta\omicron\mu\epsilon\lambda\tau\epsilon\eta\omicron\mu\kappa\omicron\rho\epsilon$; something like “And hollow howlings hung in air.” *Thompson's Ellenore*. Or like *Homer's* well known verse:—

$\beta\eta\delta\alpha\kappa\epsilon\omega\nu\ \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\ \theta\iota\nu\alpha\ \pi\omicron\lambda\upsilon\phi\lambda\omicron\iota\sigma\beta\omicron\iota\omicron\ \theta\alpha\lambda\alpha\sigma\sigma\eta\varsigma.$

“*He went silently along the shore of the vastly-sounding sea.*”
Il. i., ver. 34.

The rolling up of the waves into a swell, and the break of the top of the swell, and its *dash* upon the shore, are surprisingly represented in the sound of the two last words.

The psalmist seems to represent himself as cast away at sea; and by wave impelling wave, is carried to a rock, around which the surges dash in all directions, forming *hollow* sounds in the creeks and caverns. At last, several waves breaking over him, tear him away from that rock to which he clung, and where he had a little before found a resting-place, and, apparently, an escape from danger. "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me;" he is then whelmed in the deep, and God alone can save him.

Waterspouts] A large tube formed of clouds by means of the electric fluid, the base being uppermost, and the point of the tube let down perpendicularly from the clouds. This tube has a particular kind of *circular motion* at the point; and being hollow within, attracts vast quantities of water, which it pours down in torrents upon the earth. These spouts are frequent on the coast of Syria; and Dr. *Shaw* has often seen them at *Mount Carmel*. No doubt the psalmist had often seen them also, and the ravages made by them. I have seen vast gullies cut out of the sides of mountains by the fall of *waterspouts*, and have seen many of them in their fullest activity.

Verse 8. The Lord will command] Every day the Lord will give an especial commission to his loving-kindness to visit me. During the night I shall sing of his mercy and goodness; and alternately mingle my *singing* with *prayer* for a continuance of his mercy, and for power to make the best use of these visitations.

Verse 9. I will say unto God my rock] God, my Fortress and Support.

Why hast thou forgotten meat] This and the following verse is badly pointed in our Bibles: "Why go I mourning as with a sword in my bones because of the oppression of the enemy? Mine enemies reproach me daily, while they say unto me, Where is thy God?" See on ^{<99E18>} **Psalm 42:3**. Their reproaches are to my soul as cutting and severe as a sword thrust into my body, and separating between my bones; because these reproaches are intended to fall on thee, my God, as if thou hadst not power to save us from the hands of our oppressors.

Verse 11. Why art thou cast down] There is no reason why thou shouldst despair. God will appear and release thee and thy brother captives and soon thy sighing and sorrowing shall flee away.

Who is **the health of my countenance]** As a healthy state of the constitution shows itself in the appearance of the face; God will so rejoice thy heart, heal all thy spiritual maladies, that thy face shall testify the happiness that is within thee.

There is a curious gloss on the first verse of this Psalm in my old *Psalter*, which I cannot withhold from the reader. The author translates and paraphrases the verse thus:—

Trans. Als the Hert yernes til the welles of waters; so my saule yernes til the God.

Par. This Psalm es al of perfite men, that er brinnand in the flamme of Goddes luf, and passes in til the contemptlyf lif: and tharfore it es sungen in the office of the dede men: for than haf thai, that thai yearned; that es, the syght of God. Far thi, sais he, *als the Hert that has eten the nedder, gretely yernes to com til the welles of waters for to drynk and wax yong opayne*: so destroyed in me vices and unclennes, my saule desyres with brinnand yernyng, to come til the God.

Ælian, Appian, Aristotle, Nicander, and Pliny, all inform us that one cause why the hart thirsts for the waters is, that *they eat serpents*, and that the *poison* of them diffused through their entrails produces a *burning heat* and *fever*, to ease and cure themselves of which they have recourse to *water*. Many of the *fathers* tell the same tale, and from them the paraphrast in the old *Psalter* has borrowed what is inserted above: “Like as the hart, which has eaten the adder, greatly longs to come to the fountains of water to drink, that he may grow young again.” The hart is undoubtedly a *cunning* animal; but it would be as difficult to believe that he *eats serpents* as it would be to believe that he seeks for and eats the *fresh water crab* or *cray fish*, in order to cure and make him grow young again, as *Eusebius, Didymus, Theodoret, Jerome, Epiphanyes, Gregory Nyssen*, and others of the primitive fathers gravely inform us.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-SECOND PSALM

The psalmist, driven from the assemblies of Modes people, complains; and as men overwhelmed with troubles are also oppressed with grief, so is he; and as they abruptly express their thoughts, so does he; for sometimes he

expostulates, sometimes he *complains!* sometimes he *corrects* and *checks* himself for his weakness. One while he opens his *doubts*, and presently again sets forth his *confidence* in God. It is difficult on this account to analyze this Psalm; but it may be reduced to these *four heads*:—

I. The zeal of the psalmist to serve God in God's own house; ^{<19401>}**Psalm 42:1, 2, 4, 6.**

II. His complaint and expressions of grief for his absence, for his affliction, and his enemies' insults on that ground; ^{<19403>}**Psalm 42:3, 4, 7, 10.**

III. His expostulation with his soul for its diffidence, ^{<19405>}**Psalm 42:5, 6;** and again with God for his desertion, ^{<19409>}**Psalm 42:9.**

IV. His faith and confidence in God's promises; ^{<19408>}**Psalm 42:5, 8, 11.**

I. 1. He begins with an expression of his grief for his exile from the ordinances of God, and the assemblies of his people. And he sets forth his zeal and longing desire under the expressive similitude of a hard-hunted and thirsty stag: "As the hart panteth," &c.; ^{<19401>}**Psalm 42:1, 2.**

2. He shows the state he was in. 1. "My tears have been my meat day and night;" ^{<19403>}**Psalm 42:3.** 2. And the cause was the bitter sarcasm of his enemies: "Where is now thy God?" Where is thy Protector? him in whom thou trustest?

II. That which added to his grief was that which gave occasion to this sarcasm, his banishment from the sanctuary.

1. When I remember these things, my absence, their insults, I pour out my heart to myself; *tear* follows *tear*, and one complaint succeeds to another.

2. And much reason I have to grieve when I compare my present with my former condition. Formerly "I went with the multitude to the house of God,—with the voice of joy and praise," &c. I had *gone; now I cannot and must not go.*

III. Hitherto he had expressed his zeal, his sorrow, and his complaints, with their causes. These put his soul in a sad condition; and thus he expostulates with himself:—

1. Blaming himself for his weakness and diffidence: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul," &c.

2. Then presently fortifies himself in God's promises: "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him," &c.

In all which is described the combat that a good man has when he is in heaviness through manifold temptation, and finds great difficulty to struggle between hope and despair; but at last conquers by faith, and inherits the promises.

3. But his conflict is not yet over; he exclaims again, and still more affectingly, "O my God, my soul is cast down." Of which he assigns two causes:—

1. That though he was ready to remember and serve God, yet he was forced to do it in an improper place. He remembered the pleasant *land of Palestine*, the stately *mountains of Hermon*, and the *little hill of Sion*: but *there* he could not worship; he was in an enemy's country, and in captivity in that country.

2. The greatness and continual succession of his troubles: "Deep calleth unto deep." Calamity on calamity, one trial on the heels of another; so that he might well say, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."

3. And yet he despairs not, he encourages himself in the Lord: "Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness," &c. 1. "His song shall be with me." 2. "And my prayer unto the God of my life."

IV. On which he grows more confident and courageous, and again expostulates, not now with his *soul*, as before, but with his GOD: "I will say unto God my rock."

1. "Why hast thou forgotten me?"

2. "Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

3. Why am I wounded with grief, "as with a sword in my bones," while they use the sarcasm, "Where is now thy God?"

But in the conclusion, after all his complaints and expostulations, he gains a full assurance of God's favour and protection.

1. Chiding himself for his discontent and diffidence, "Why art thou cast down?"

2. Then he encourages his heart in God's goodness and faithfulness: "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

The *forty-third* is most probably a part of this Psalm: they should be read and expounded together, as the subject is not complete in either, taken as separate Psalms. See, therefore, on the following.

PSALMS

PSALM 43

The psalmist begs God to take his part against his enemies, 1, 2; to send his light and truth to guide him to the tabernacle, 3; promises, if brought thither, to be faithful in the Divine service, 4; chides himself for despondency, and takes courage, 5.

NOTES ON PSALM 43

There is no *title* to this Psalm in the *Hebrew*, nor in the *Chaldee*. The *Syriac* says it was composed “by David when Jonathan told him that Saul intended to slay him.” The *Arabic* says of this, as of the preceding, that it is a *prayer for the backsliding Jews*. It is most evidently on the same subject with the *forty-second* Psalm, had the same author or authors, and contains the remaining part of the complaint of the captive Jews in Babylon. It is written as a part of the *forty-second* Psalm in *forty-six* of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS.

Verse 1. Judge me, O God, and plead my cause] *ybyr hbyr ribah ribi*, a forensic term, properly enough translated, *plead my cause, be my counsellor and advocate*.

Ungodly nation] The Babylonians; the impious, perfidious, wicked, and deceitful Babylonians.

The deceitful and unjust man.] Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 2. For those art the God of my strength] The psalmist speaks here, as in other places, in the person of the whole Israelitish people then captive in Babylon. We still acknowledge thee for our God. *Why are we cast off?* Now that we are humbled and penitent, why are we not enlarged? Why are we not saved from this oppression of the Babylonians?

Verse 3. O send out thy light and thy truth] We are in *darkness* and *distress*, O send *light* and *prosperity*; we look for the fulfilment of thy *promises*, O send forth thy *truth*. Let thy *light* guide me to thy *holy hill*, to the country of my fathers; let thy *truth* lead me to thy tabernacles, there to worship thee in *spirit* and in *truth*.

Verse 4. Then will I go unto the altar] When thy *light*-a favourable turn on our affairs, leads us to the land of our fathers, and thy *truth*-the fulfillment of thy gracious promises, has placed us again at the door of thy tabernacles, then will we go to thy altar, and joyfully offer those sacrifices and offerings which thy law requires, and rejoice in thee with exceeding great joy.

Verse 5. Why art thou cast down] Though our deliverance be delayed, God has not forgotten to be gracious. The vision, the prophetic declaration relative to our captivity, was for an appointed time. Though it appear to tarry, we must wait for it. In the end it will come, and will not tarry; why then should we be discouraged? Let us still continue to trust in God, for we shall yet praise him for the fullest proofs of his approbation in a great outpouring of his benedictions.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-THIRD PSALM

This Psalm, which is of the same nature with the former, and properly a part or continuation of it, contains *two chief* things:—

I. A *petition*, which is double. 1. One in the *first* verse. 2. The other in the *fourth* verse.

II. A *comfortable apostrophe* to his own soul, ^{<986>}**Psalm 43:5.**

First, He petitions God,—

1. That, being *righteous*, he would be his Judge: “Judge me, O Lord.”

2. That, being *merciful*, he would plead his cause: “Plead my cause.”

3. That, being *almighty*, he would deliver him: “Deliver me,” ^{<980>}**Psalm 43:1.**

For this petition he assigns *two* reasons:—

1. The unmerciful disposition of his enemies. 1. They were a factious, bloody, inhuman people: “Plead my cause against an ungodly nation,” *dysj al ywg goi lo chasid*, “a people without mercy.” 2. They were men of deceit and iniquity: “Deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man,” ^{<980>}**Psalm 43:1.**

2. The other reason he draws from the nature of God, and his relation to him: “For thou art the God of my strength.” Thou hast promised to defend

me. On this he expostulates: 1. “Why hast thou cast me off?” For so, to the eye of sense, it at present appears. 2. “Why go I mourning, because of the oppression of the enemy?” ^{<194B>}**Psalm 43:2.**

Secondly, The second part of his petition is, that he may be restored to God’s favour, and brought back to his own country, ^{<194B>}**Psalm 43:3.**

1. “O send forth thy light and thy truth,” the light of thy favour and countenance, and make thy promises true to me: “Let them lead me,” ^{<194B>}**Psalm 43:3.**

2. “Let them guide me;”—whither? To dignity and honours? No, I ask not those: I ask to be guided to thy holy hill and tabernacles, where I may enjoy the exercises of piety in thy pure worship, ^{<194B>}**Psalm 43:3.**

Thirdly, That he might the better move God to hear his petition, he does as good as *vow* that he would be thankful, and make it known how good God had been to him.

1. “Then will I go unto the altar of God, my exceeding joy.” The joy and content he would take in this should not be of an ordinary kind.

2. “Yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God.” His joy should be expressed outwardly by a Psalm, doubtless composed for the occasion; the singing of which should be accompanied by the *harp*, or such instruments of music as were *then* commonly used in the Divine worship.

The petitions being ended, and now confident of audience and favour, he thus addresses his heavy and mournful heart as in the former Psalm: 1. Chiding himself. 2. Encouraging himself.

1. “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?” Chiding.

2. “Hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.” Encouraging. See notes and analysis of the preceding Psalm.

PSALMS

PSALM 44

The psalmist recounts the mercies of God; shows to his people how God in ancient times gave them the victory over all their enemies, 1-8; points out their present miserable state, 9-16; asserts that they have not apostatized, and appeals to God for the truth of his assertion, 17-22; and calls upon the Lord for deliverance from their enemies, 23-26.

NOTES ON PSALM 44

The *title* here is the same as that in ^{<1920>}Psalm 42:1; which see. The *Syriac* says it was “A Psalm of the sons of Korah, which the people and Moses sung at Horeb.” Such titles are fancies to which no credit should be attached. Like the preceding, it appears to belong to the time of the *captivity*.

Verse 1. We have heard with our ears] The psalmist begins with recounting the marvellous interpositions of God in behalf of the Jewish people, that he might the better strengthen his confidence, and form a ground on which to build his expectation of additional help.

Verse 2. Thou didst drive out the heathen] The Canaanites were as a bad tree planted in a good soil, and bringing forth bad fruit with great luxuriance. God plucked up this bad tree from the roots, and in its place planted the Hebrews as a good tree, a good vine, and caused them to take root, and fill the land.

Verse 3. For they got not the land] Neither by their valour, nor cunning, nor for their merit; yet, they were obliged to fight. But how did they conquer? By the right hand of the Lord, and by his arm; by his strength alone, and the *light of his countenance*-his favour most manifestly shown unto them.

Verse 4. Thou art my king] What thou wert to *them*, be to *us*. We believe in thee as they did; we have sinned and are in captivity, but we repent and turn unto thee; command, therefore, deliverances to Jacob, for we are the descendants of him in whose behalf thou hast wrought such wonders.

Verse 5. Through thee will we push down] *Through thy* WORD, *armymb* *bemeimra*, “Thy substantial Word.”—*Chaldee*. If thou be with us, who can be successfully against us? Literally “We will toss them in the air with our horn;” a metaphor taken from an ox or bull tossing the dogs into the air which attack him.

Through thy name] Jehovah; the infinite, the omnipotent, the eternal Being; whose power none is able to resist.

Verse 6. I will not trust in my bow] As he is speaking of what God had already done for his forefathers, these words should be read in the *past* tense: “We have not trusted,” &c.

Verse 8. In God we boast] We have told the heathen how great and powerful our God is. If thou do not deliver us by thy mighty power, they will not believe our report, but consider that we are held in bondage by the superior strength of their gods.

Verse 9. But thou hast cast off] Our enemies have dominion over us.

And goest not forth with our armies.] Were we to attempt to muster our several tribes, and form a *host*, like our fathers when they came out of Egypt, thou wouldst not accompany us as thou didst them: the horses and chariots of the Babylonians would soon overtake and destroy us.

Verse 10. Thou makest us to turn back] This thou didst: and our enemies, profiting by the occasion, finding our strength was departed from us, made us an easy prey, captivated our persons, and spoiled us of our property.

Verse 11. And hast scattered us among the heathen.] This most evidently alludes to the captivity. From the successful wars of the kings of Assyria and Chaldea against the kings of Israel and Judah, and the dispersion of the tribes under Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, and Nebuchadnezzar, Jews have been found in every province of the east; there they settled, and there their successors may be found to the present day.

Verse 12. Thou sellest thy people for nought] An allusion to the mode of disposing of slaves by their proprietors or sovereigns. Instead of seeking profit, thou hast made us a present to our enemies.

Verse 14. Thou makest us a byword] We are evidently abandoned by thee, and are become so very miserable in consequence, that we are a

proverb among the people: “See the Hebrews! *see their misery and wretchedness! see how low the wrath of God has brought down an offending people!*” And the worst curse that can be imprecated against a wicked nation is: “*Mayest thou become as wretched as the Jews;*” or as the old *Psalter*: “*Thou has seet us reprove til our neghburs: scornynge and hethynge til tha that er in our umgang. That es, gref, tourment that es of our neghburs, and that hethynge es nocht sone gave or passand, that we suffer of tha, that er al aboute us. When men sais so byfal ye, als byfel him.*”

Verse 17. Yet have we not forgotten thee] These are bold words; but they must be understood in a qualified sense. We have not *apostatized* from thee, we have not *fallen into idolatry*. And this was strictly true: the charge of idolatry could never be brought against the Jewish nation from the time of the captivity, with sufficient evidence to support it.

Verse 19. Thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons] Thou hast delivered us into the hands of a fierce, cruel, and murderous people. We, as a people, are in a similar state to one who has strayed into a wilderness, where there are no human inhabitants; who hears nothing round about him but the hissing of serpents, the howling of beasts of prey, and the terrible roaring of the lion; and who expects every moment to be devoured.

Verse 20. If we have forgotten the name of our God] *That name, hwhy Jehovah,* by which the true God was particularly distinguished, and which implied the exclusion of all other objects of adoration.

Or stretched out our hands] Made supplication; offered prayer or adoration to any *strange god*-a god that we had not known, nor had been acknowledged by our fathers. It has already been remarked, that from the time of the Babylonish captivity the Jews never relapsed into idolatry.

It was customary among the ancients, while praying, to *stretch out their hands* towards the *heavens*, or the *image* they were worshipping, as if they expected to *receive* the favour they were asking.

Verse 21. Shall not God search this out?] We confidently appeal to the true God, the searcher of hearts, for the truth of this statement.

Verse 22. For thy sake are we killed all the day long] Because of our attachment to thee and to thy religion, we are exposed to continual death; and some of us fail a daily sacrifice to the persecuting spirit of our enemies, and we all carry our lives continually in our hands. In the same state were

the primitive Christians; and St. Paul applies these words to their case,
~~<5186>~~ **Romans 8:36.**

Verse 23. Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?] That is, Why dost thou appear as one asleep, who is regardless of the safety of his friends. This is a *freedom of speech* which can only be allowed to inspired men; and in their mouths it is always to be *figuratively* understood.

Verse 24. Wherefore hidest thou thy face] Show us the cause why thou withdrawest from us the testimony of thy approbation.

Verse 25. Our soul is bowed down] Our life is drawing near to the grave. If thou delay to help us, we shall become extinct.

Verse 26. Arise for our help] Show forth thy power in delivering us from the hands of our enemies.

Redeem us] Ransom us from our thralldom.

For thy mercies' sake.] Ēdsj ^ [ml *lemaan chasdecha, On account of thy mercy.* That we may have that proper view of thy mercy which we should have, and that we may magnify it as we ought to do, redeem us. The Vulgate has, Redime nos, propter nomen tuum, "Redeem us on account of thy name;" which the old *Psalter* thus paraphrases: "Help us in ryghtwysness, and by us (buy,) that es, delyver us, that we be withouten drede; and al this for thi name Jehsu; nocht for oure merite."

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-FOURTH PSALM

In this Psalm are livelily expressed the sufferings, the complaints, the assurances, the petitions which are offered to God by good men, who suffer, together with others, in the common afflictions that God brings on his people.

The parts are *two*:—

I. A *petition*, ~~<19424>~~ **Psalm 44:24-26.**

II. The *arguments* by which the petition is quickened, ~~<19440>~~ **Psalm 44:1-24.**

First, He begins with the *arguments*, of which the first is drawn from God's goodness, of which he gives in particular, his benefits and miracles done for their fathers; as if he had said, "This thou didst for them; why art thou so estranged from us?"

I. “We have heard with our ears, O God, and our fathers have told us what works thou didst in their days, and in the times of old.” The particulars of which are,—

1. “How thou didst drive out the heathen,” namely, the Canaanites.
2. “How thou plantedst them.”
3. “How thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out,” ^{<1941D>}**Psalm 44:2**.

II. This we acknowledge to be thy word; expressed thus:—

1. “How thou didst drive out the heathen;” negatively, by remotion of what some might imagine: “They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither was it their own arm that helped them,” ^{<1941B>}**Psalm 44:3**. “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise.”

2. “How thou plantedst them;” positively: “For it was thy right hand and thy arm, and the light of thy countenance.” A mere *gratuito*: “because thou hadst a favour unto them;” no other reason can be assigned but that, ^{<1941B>}**Psalm 44:3**.

3. Upon this consideration, by an apostrophe, he turns his speech to God, and sings a song of triumph, of which the strains are,—

1. An open confession: “Thou art my king, O God.”
2. A petition: “Send help unto Jacob,” ^{<1941B>}**Psalm 44:4**.
3. A confident persuasion of future victory; but still with God’s help and assistance, ^{<1941B>}**Psalm 44:5-7**. 1. “Through thee will we push down our enemies.” 2. “Through thee will we tread them under that rise up against us.” All through thee; *in thy name, by thy power*.

4. An abrenunciation of his own power or arm: “For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.”

5. A reiteration, or a second ascription of the whole victory to God: “But thou hast saved us from our enemies; thou hast put them to shame that hated us,” ^{<1941B>}**Psalm 44:7**.

6. A grateful return of thanks; which is indeed the tribute God expects, and which we are to pay upon our deliverance. “In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever.”

Secondly, The second argument by which he wings his petition is drawn from the condition which, for the present, God's people were in, before he had done wonders for their deliverance; but now he had delivered them to the will of their enemies. This would move a man to think that his good will was changed toward them: "But thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame, and goest not forth with our armies."

Of which the consequences are many and grievous, although we acknowledge that all is from thee, and comes from thy hand and permission.

1. The *first* is: "Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy," ^{<19410>}**Psalm 44:10**.
2. The *second*, We become a prey: "They which hate us spoil for themselves," ^{<19410>}**Psalm 44:10**.
3. The *third*, We are devoured: "Thou hast given us as sheep appointed for meat," killed cruelly, and when they please, ^{<19411>}**Psalm 44:11**.
4. The *fourth*, We are driven from our country, and made to dwell where they will plant us: "Thou hast scattered us among the heathen; " (inter gentes,) and that is a great discomfort, to live among people *without God in the world*.
5. The *fifth*, We are become slaves, sold and bought as beasts; and that for any price, upon any exchange: "Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase thy wealth by their price," ^{<19412>}**Psalm 44:12**; puts them off as worthless things.
6. The *sixth*, We are made a scorn, a mock; and to whom? To our enemies: but that might be borne; but even to our friends and neighbours: "Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us."

And this he amplifies:—

1. From the circumstance that they are a proverb of reproach: "Thou makest us a byword among the heathen."
2. That in scorn any one that would, used a scornful gesture toward them: "We are become a shaking of the head among the people."
3. That this insulting is continual: "My confusion is daily before me."

4. It is superlative; shame so great that he had not what to say to it: “The shame of my face hath covered me.”

5. It is public; their words and gestures are not concealed; they speak out what they please: “Ashamed I am for the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; for the enemy and avenger.”

Thirdly, And yet he useth a third argument, that the petition may be the more grateful, and more easily granted; drawn from the constancy and perseverance of God’s people in the profession of the truth, notwithstanding this heavy loss, persecution, and affliction: “All this is come upon us;”—thus we are oppressed, devoured, banished, sold, derided; *yet* we continue to be thy servants still, we retain our faith, hope, service.

1. *We have not forgotten thee*, not forgotten thou art our God. We acknowledge no idols.

2. *We have not dealt falsely in thy covenant*. We have not juggled in thy service, dealing with any side for our advantage, renouncing our integrity.

3. *Our heart is not turned back*. Our heart is upright, not turned back to the idols our fathers worshipped.

4. *Our steps are not gone out of thy way*. Slip we may, but not revolt; no, not though great calamities are come upon us. 1. *Broken*. 2. *Broken in the place of dragons*, i.e., enemies fierce as dragons. 3. *Though covered with the shadow of death*. Now, that all this is true we call our God to witness, who knoweth the very secrets of the heart, and is able to revenge it: “We have not forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands,” &c. “Shall not God search it out? for he knows the very secret of the heart.”

Fourthly. But the last argument is more pressing than the other three. It is not for any thing we have done to those that oppress us that we are thus persecuted by them; it is for thee, it is because we profess thy name, and rise up in defence of thy truth: “Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; for thy sake are we counted as sheep for the slaughter.” The sum then is: Since thou hast been a good God to our fathers; since we suffered great things under bitter tyrants; since, notwithstanding all our sufferings, we are constant to thy truth; since these our sufferings are for thee, *for thy sake*, thy truth; therefore *awake, arise, help us*, for upon these grounds he commences his petition.

II. This is the *second* part of the Psalm, which begins at ^{<19423>}**Psalm 44:23**, and continues to the end, in which petition there are these degrees:—

1. That God, who to flesh and blood, in the calamities of his Church, seems to sleep, would awake and put an end to their trouble: “Awake why sleepest thou, O Lord,” ^{<19423>}**Psalm 44:23**.

2. That he would arise and judge their cause, and not seem to neglect them as objects: “Arise cast us not off for ever,” ^{<19423>}**Psalm 44:23**.

3. That he would show them some favour, and not seem to forget their miseries: “Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and oppression?”

4. *Lastly*, That he would be their helper, and actually deliver them: “Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies’ sake.”

And that this petition might be the sooner and more readily granted, he briefly repeats the second argument: “For our soul is bowed down to the dust, our belly cleaveth to the earth,” ^{<19425>}**Psalm 44:25**. Brought we are as low as low may be, even to the dust, to death, to the grave.

PSALMS

PSALM 45

The contents of this Psalm are generally summed up thus: The majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom; or an epithalamium of Jesus Christ and the Christian Church; the duty of this Church, and its privileges. The Psalm contains a magnificent description of the beauty, ornaments, valour, justice, and truth of the Divine Bridegroom; the beauty, magnificence, and riches of the bride, who was to become mother of a numerous and powerful posterity. The preamble is found in the title and verse 1. The description and character of the Bridegroom, 2-9. The address to the bride by her companions, 10-15. A prediction of her numerous and glorious descendants, 16, 17.

NOTES ON PSALM 45

The title is nearly the same with that of Psalm 69. and 80. "To the chief musician, *or master of the band of those who played on the six-stringed instruments, giving instruction for the sons of Korah; a song of loves, or amatory ode; or a song of the beloved maids.*" The *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* have, *For those who shall be changed, or brought into another state, which some have interpreted as relating to the resurrection of the just; but if I could persuade myself that the title came by Divine inspiration, I would say it more properly belonged to the calling and conversion of the Gentiles, and bringing them over from idolatry to the worship of the true God. By some the word מַשְׁנֵנִים shoshannim, is translated lilies; and a world of labour has been spent to prove that these lilies mean the saints, Jesus Christ himself, and the Divine light which is a banner to them that fear him. I cannot believe that any such meaning is intended, and, consequently, I cannot attempt to interpret the Psalm after this model. I believe it to be an epithalamium, or nuptial song, which primarily respected Solomon's marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh; and that it probably has a prophetic reference to the conversion of the Gentiles, and the final aggrandizement of the Christian Church.*

Verse 1. My heart is inditing a good matter] *vj r rachash*, boileth or bubbleth up, as in the margin. It is a metaphor taken from a fountain that sends up its waters from the earth in this way. The *Vulgate* has *eructavit*, which is most literally translated by the old Psalter: *Æli hert rƿfted gude word.* [Anglo-Saxon] *My heart belcheth.*—Anglo-Saxon.

I speak of the things which I have made touching the king] *Ēl ml yv[m yna rma*, literally, “I dedicate my work unto the king.” Or, as the *Psalter*, *I say my werkes til the kyng*. This was the general custom of the Asiatic poets. They repeated their works before princes and honourable men; and especially those parts in which there was either a direct or constructive compliment to the great man. Virgil is reported to have a part of his *Æneid* before Augustus, who was so pleased with it that he ordered *ten sestertia* to be given him for every line. And the famous Persian poet Ferdusi read a part of his *Shah Nameh* before Sultan Mahmoud, who promised him *thirty thousand* denars for the poem.

My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.] I shall compose and speak as fluently the Divine matter which is now in my heart, as the most expert scribe can write from my recitation. *My tung of maister swyttly wrytand*. “That es, my tung is pen of the Haly Gast; and nout but als his instrument, wham he ledis als he wil. For I speke nocht bot that he settis on my tung; als the pen dos nocht withouten the writer. *Swyttly wrytand*, for the vertu of goddess inspiracioun is nocht for to thynk with mons study, that he schewes til other of the purete of heven; that es some for to com that he wrytes.”—Old *Psalter*.

Verse 2. Thou art fairer than the children of men] By whom are these words spoken? As this is a regular epithalamium, we are to consider that the bride and bridegroom have compliments paid them by those called the friends of the bridegroom, and the companions or maids of the bride. But it seems that the whole Psalm, except the first verse, was spoken by those who are called in the title *t dydy yedidoth*, the *beloved maids*, or *female companions*, who begin with his perfections, and then describe hers. And afterwards there is a prophetic declaration concerning his issue. We may, therefore, consider that what is spoken here is spoken by companions of the bride, or what are called *yedidoth* in the *title*. It would be unauthenticated to say Solomon was the most beautiful man in the universe; but to the perfections of the Lord Jesus they may be safely applied.

Grace is poured into thy lips] This probably refers to his speech, or the gracious words which he spoke. Solomon was renowned for wisdom, and especially the wisdom of his conversation. The queen of Sheba came from the uttermost parts of the land to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and so far did she find him exceeding all his fame, that she said *one half had not been*

told her: but behold, a greater than Solomon is here. No man ever spoke like this man, his enemies themselves being judges.

God hath blessed thee for ever.] This, I am afraid, could in no sense be ever spoken of Solomon; but of the man Christ Jesus it is strictly true.

Verse 3. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty] This clause should be translated, *O hero, gird thy sword upon thy thigh!* This, I think, cannot be spoken of Solomon. He was not a warlike prince: he never did any feats of arms. It has been said he would have been a warrior, if he had had enemies; it might have been so: but the words more properly apply to Christ, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords; whose sword with two edges, proceeding from his mouth, cuts all his adversaries to pieces.

With thy glory and thy majesty.] Be as war-like as thou art glorious and majestic. Solomon's court was splendid, and his person was majestic. These words may be well said of him. But the majesty and glory of Christ are above all: he is higher than all the kings of the earth; and has a name above every name; and at it every knee shall bend, and every tongue confess.

Verse 4. In thy majesty ride prosperously] These words cannot be spoken of Solomon; they are true only of Christ. His *riding* is the prosperous progress of his Gospel over the earth. He uses no sword but the sword of the Spirit; and what religion, system of truth, pretended or real, ever made such progress as the religion of Christ has done, without one sword being ever drawn to propagate it from the first introduction of Christianity to the present time? His Gospel is TRUTH, proclaiming HUMILITY, *hwn* [*anvah*, and RIGHTEOUSNESS. This, indeed, is the *sum* of the Gospel; and an *epitome* of its operations in the hearts of men. 1. The Gospel is a revelation of *eternal* TRUTH, in opposition to all *false* systems of religion, and to all *figurative* and *ceremonial representations* of the true religion. It is *truth* concerning GOD, his NATURE, and his WORKS. It is *truth* concerning MAN, his ORIGIN, his INTENTS, his DUTIES, and his END. It is truth in what it says concerning the *natural*, the *moral*, and the *invisible world*. 2. It teaches the doctrine of *meekness* or HUMILITY; opposes *pride* and *vain glory*; strips man of his *assumed merits*; proclaims and enforces the *necessity* of *humiliation* or *repentance* because of sin, *humiliation* under the providential hand of God, and *humility* in imitation of the character of the Lord Jesus Christ throughout life. 3. The Gospel teaches

RIGHTEOUSNESS: shows the nature of *sin*, *wrong*, *injustice*, *transgression*, &c.; works *righteousness* in the *heart*; and *directs* and *influences* to the *practice* of it in all the *actions of life*. The Gospel leads him who is under its influences to *give to all their due*; to GOD, to his *neighbour*, to *himself*. And it is by the propagation of *truth*, *humility*, and *righteousness*, that the earth has become so far *blessed*, and the kingdom of Christ become extended among men.

And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.] The *Chaldee* is different: “And the Lord will teach thee to perform terrible things by thy right hand.” The *Arabic*: “And with admiration shall thy right hand direct thee.” The *Septuagint*: “And thy right hand shall lead thee wonderfully.” To the same purpose are the *Vulgate*, *Anglo-Saxon*, and the old *Psalter*. The meaning is, Nothing shall be able to resist thee, and the judgments which thou shalt inflict on thine enemies shall be terrible.

Verse 5. Thine arrows are sharp] The arrows here may mean the convictions produced in the hearts of men by the preaching of the Gospel. The King is God himself; his enemies are sinners of all sorts. The people, the Jews, thousands of whom were pricked in their hearts under the preaching of *Peter* and others. All *fall* before Christ; those who received the word rose again by repentance and faith; those who did not, fell down—all down!

Verse 6. Thy throne, O God, is for ever] $d[w \mu l w[\mu y h l a \text{ Ēask}$ *kisacha Elohim olam vaed*. “O God, thy throne is for ever, and eternal!” The word *Elohim* here is the very *first* term or *name* by which the Supreme God has made himself known to the children of men. See ^{<010101>}**Genesis 1:1**; and this very verse the apostle, ^{<80108>}**Hebrews 1:8**, has applied to Jesus Christ. On this I shall make a very short remark, but it shall be conclusive: If the apostle did not believe Jesus Christ to be the true and eternal God, he has utterly misapplied this Scripture.

The translation in the old *Psalter*, and the paraphrase will, on this controverted text, be considered of some importance: **Thi settil God in werld of werlde: wande of ryghtyng wande of thi kyngedome**. Here he loues [celebrates] God Crist — of dome. **Thi settil** of demyng and of kynges pouste. God es werld of werld for al that he demes es nocht changed and that byfalles the, for the wande that es ceptre and the governyng of thi kyngdom **es wande of ryghtyng**, that ryghtes croked men this es the wand of goddes evenes that

ay es ryght and never croked that reules ryghtwis men and smytes wiked men. The reader will observe a blank space between the word **Crist** and of **dome**: it is the same in the original. A word has been so carefully erased with the *scalpel* in the above place, that not a vestige of a letter is left. From the following words I should suspect it to have been **kyng** or **lord**. *Here he praises God, Christ, king of judgment.* However this may be, it is evident that this ancient commentator understood the word *God* to be applied to Christ. I have given the sentence as it is *pointed* in the original.

Verse 7. Oil of gladness] As an evidence that all causes of *mourning*, *sorrow*, and *death*, were at an end; as in the state of mourning the ancients did not anoint themselves.

I have mentioned above that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, ^{<8010>}**Hebrews 1:8, 9**, quotes ^{<1950>}**Psalm 45:6, 7**, of this Psalm. I shall subjoin the substance of what I have written on these verses in that place:—

“Verse 8. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.*—If this be said of the Son of God, i.e., Jesus Christ, then Jesus Christ must be God; and indeed the design of the apostle is to prove this. The words here quoted are taken from ^{<1950>}**Psalm 45:6, 7**, which the ancient Chaldee paraphrast, and the most intelligent rabbins, refer to the Messiah. On the third verse of this Psalm, ‘Thou art fairer than the children of men,’ the *Targum* says: ‘Thy beauty, **aj yvm akl m malca Meshicha, O King Messiah**, is greater than the children of men.’ *Aben Ezra* says: ‘This Psalm speaks of David, or rather of his Son the *Messiah*, for this is his name, ^{<3924>}**Ezekiel 34:24**: *And David my servant shall be a prince over them for ever.*’ Other rabbins confirm this opinion.

“This verse is very properly considered a proof, and indeed a strong one, of the divinity of Christ; but some late versions of the New Testament have endeavoured to avoid the evidence of this proof by translating the word thus: ‘God is thy throne for ever and ever;’ and if this version be correct, it is certain that the text can be no proof of the doctrine. Mr. Wakefield vindicates this translation at large in his *History of Opinions*; and **ο Θεος** being the *nominative* case is supposed to be sufficient justification of this version. In answer to this it may be stated that the *nominative* case is often

used for the *vocative*, particularly by the Attics, and the whole scope of the place requires it should be so used here; and with due deference to all of a contrary opinion, the original Hebrew cannot be consistently translated any other way; $\delta[\omega \mu \iota \omega [\mu \eta \eta \lambda \alpha$
Ēask *kisacha Elohim olam vaed*, ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and to eternity.’ It is in both worlds, and extends over all time, and will exist through all endless duration. To this our Lord seems to refer, ^{<42818>}**Matthew 28:18**: ‘All power is given unto me, both in HEAVEN and EARTH.’ My *throne*, i.e., my *dominion*, extends from the creation to the consummation of all things. These I have made, and these I uphold; and from the end of the world, throughout eternity, I shall have the same *glory-sovereign* unlimited power and authority, which I had with the Father before the world began; ^{<43175>}**John 17:5**. I may add that none of the ancient Versions has understood it in the way contended for by those who deny the Godhead of Christ, either in the Psalm from which it is taken, or in this place where it is quoted. Aquila translates $\mu \eta \eta \lambda \alpha$ *Elohim*, by $\Theta \epsilon \epsilon$, *O God*, in the *vocative* case; and the Arabic adds the sign of the *vocative* [Arabic] *ya*, reading the place thus: [Arabic] *korseeyallahoh ila abadilabada*, the same as in our Version. And even allowing that $\omega \Theta \epsilon \omega \varsigma$ here is to be used as the *nominative* case, it will not make the sense contended for without adding $\epsilon \sigma \tau \iota$ to it, a reading which is not countenanced by any *Version*, nor by any MS. yet discovered. Wiclif, Coverdale, and others, understood it as the *nominative*, and translated it so; and yet it is evident that this *nominative* has the power of the *vocative*: **Forsothē to the sone God thi troone into the world of worlde: a gerde of equite the gerde of thi reume.** I give this, pointing and all, as it stands in my old MS. Bible. **Wiclif** is nearly the same, but is evidently of a more modern cast: **But to the sone he seith, God thy trone is unto the world of world, a gherd of egypte is the gherd of thi reume.** **Coverdale** translates it thus: ‘But unto the sonne he sayeth: God, thi seate endureth for ever and ever: the cepter of thy kyngdome is a right cepter.’ **Tindal** and others follow in the same way, all reading it in the *nominative* case, with the force of the *vocative*; for none of them has inserted the word $\epsilon \sigma \tau \iota$ *is*, because not authorized by the original; a word which the opposers of the Divinity of our Lord are obliged to *beg*, in order to support their interpretation.

“A *sceptre of righteousness*.—The sceptre, which was a sort of staff or instrument of various forms, was the ensign of government, and is here used for government itself. This the ancient Jewish writers understand also of the Messiah.

“Verse 9. *Thou hast loved righteousness*.—This is the characteristic of a just governor; he abhors and suppresses iniquity; he countenances and supports righteousness and truth.

“*Therefore God, even thy God*.—The original, **δια τουτου εχρισε δε, ο θεος, ο θεος σου**, may be thus translated: ‘Therefore, O God, thy God hath anointed thee.’ The form of speech is nearly the same with that in the preceding verse; but the sense is sufficiently clear if we read: ‘Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee,’ &c.

“*With the oil of gladness*.—We have often had occasion to remark that anciently *kings, priests, and prophets*, were consecrated to their several offices by anointing, and that this signified the gifts and influences of the Divine Spirit. Christ, **ο Χριστος**, signifies *The anointed One*, the same as the Hebrew Messiah; and he is here said to be ‘anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows.’ None was ever constituted *prophet, priest, and king*, but himself: some were kings only, prophets only, and priests only; others were kings and priests, or priests and prophets, or kings and prophets; but none had ever the *three offices* in his own person but Jesus Christ; and none but himself can be a King over the universe, a Prophet to all intelligent beings, and a Priest to the whole human race. Thus he is infinitely exalted *beyond his fellows*-all that had ever borne the regal, prophetic, or sacerdotal offices.

“Some think that the word **μετοχους**, *fellows*, refers to *believers* who are made partakers of the same Spirit, but cannot have its infinite plenitude. The first sense seems the best. *Gladness* is used to express the *festivities* which took place on the inauguration of kings,” &c.

Verse 8. All thy garments smell of myrrh] The Asiatics are very partial to perfumes; every thing with them is perfumed, and especially their garments. And the *ivory palaces* mentioned are the *wardrobes* inlaid with ivory, in which their numerous changes of raiment were deposited. *Myrrh* and *aloes* are well known; *cassia* is probably the bark or wood of the

cinnamon tree. These with *frankincense*, *galbanum* and other odoriferous drugs, were and are frequently used in the perfumes of the Asiatic nations.

Whereby they have made thee glad.] Referring to the effect of strong perfumes refreshing and exhilarating the spirits.

Verse 9. Kings' daughters were among] Applied to Solomon, these words have no difficulty. We know he had *seven hundred* wives, *princesses*; and the mention of those here may be intended only to show how highly respected he was among the neighbouring sovereigns, when they cheerfully gave him their daughters to constitute his harem. If we apply it to Solomon's marriage with the daughter of the king of Egypt, it may signify no more than the *princesses* and *ladies of honour* who accompanied her to the Israelitish court. Applied to Christ, it may signify that the Gospel, though preached particularly to the *poor*, became also the means of salvation to many of the *kings*, *queens*, and *nobles*, of the earth. The *Chaldee* interprets the *queen standing at his right hand*, by the *law*; and the *honourable women*, by the different *regions* and *countries* coming to *receive that law from his right hand*. Perhaps by *kings' daughters* may be meant different regions and countries, which are represented as constituting the *families* of potentates. Whole nations shall be converted to the Christian faith; and the *queen*-the Christian Church, shall be most elegantly adorned with all the graces and good works which at once constitute and adorn the Christian character.

Verse 10. Hearken. O daughter, and consider] This is the beginning of the address by the *companions of the bride* to their mistress; after having, in the preceding verses, addressed the bridegroom; or, rather, given a description of his person, qualities, and magnificence. Suppose the daughter of Pharaoh to be intended, the words import: Thou art now become the spouse of the most magnificent monarch in the universe. To thee he must be all in all. *Forget* therefore *thy own people*-the Egyptians, and take the Israelites in their place. *Forget* also *thy father's house*; thou art now united to a new family. *So shall the king*-Solomon, *greatly desire thy beauty*-thou wilt be, in all respects, pleasing to him. And it is right thou shouldst act so; for he is now become *thy lord*-thy supreme governor. *And worship thou him*-submit thyself reverently and affectionately to all his commands.

Taken in reference to *Christ* and the *Gospel*, this is an address to the Gentiles to forsake their idolatrous customs and connexions, to embrace

Christ and his Gospel in the spirit of reverence and obedience, with the promise that, if beautified with the graces of his Spirit, Christ will delight in them, and take them for his peculiar people; which has been done.

Verse 12. The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift] The Tyrians shall pay tribute to thy spouse, and assist him in all his grand and magnificent operations.

As, at this time, Tyre was the greatest maritime and commercial city in the world, it may be here taken as representing those places which lay on the coasts of the sea, and carried on much traffic such as parts of Syria, Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, France, the British Isles, &c., which first received the Gospel of Christ and were the instruments of sending it to all the other nations of the earth.

Rich among the people] The most powerful and opulent empires, kingdoms, and states, shall embrace Christianity, and entreat the *favour* of its Author.

Verse 13. The king's daughter is all glorious within] This, in some sense, may be spoken of Solomon's bride, the daughter of the king of Egypt; and then the expression may refer either to the cultivation of her mind, or the ornaments and splendour of her palace. The Asiatic queens, sultanas, and begums, scarcely ever appear in public. They abide in the harem in the greatest luxury and splendour; and to this, as its literal meaning, the text may possibly refer.

Her clothing is of wrought gold.] Of the most costly embroidery: her palace, and her person, are decorated in the very highest state of elegance and magnificence.

Spiritually, the *king's daughter* may mean the *Christian Church* filled with the mind that was in Christ, and adorned with the graces of the Holy Spirit; while the whole of its outward conduct is pure and holy, ornamented with the works of faith and love, and always bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit.

Verse 14. She shall be brought unto the king] When an Asiatic princess is brought to her spouse, she is inclosed in a *palakee*, and no part of her person is visible. She is attended by her principal friends and companions, who *follow* the *palakee*, and the ceremony is accompanied with great *rejoicing*; and thus they *enter into the palace of the king*.

This part of this parabolical Psalm may refer to the glories of a future state. The Christian Church shall be brought to the KING eternal in the *great day*, adorned with the graces of the Divine Spirit; and thus shall all the redeemed of the Lord enter *into the king's palace*-into the everlasting joy of their Lord.

Verse 16. Instead of thy fathers shalt be thy children] This is the *third* part, or prophetic declaration relative to the numerous and powerful issue of this marriage. Instead of the kindred, which thou hast left behind in Egypt, thou shalt have numerous children. This cannot refer either to Solomon, or to the daughter of Pharaoh; for there is no evidence that he ever had a child by Pharaoh's daughter; and it is very certain that Rehoboam, Solomon's successor, was not son to the daughter of Pharaoh; nor did any princes of that line ever occupy a foreign throne; nor by successive generations ever continue the remembrance of Solomon and his Egyptian queen. The *children* mentioned here are generally supposed to mean the *apostles* and their *successors in the Christian ministry*; founding Churches all over the world, by whom the Christian name becomes a memorial through all the earth.

Verse 17. Therefore shall the people praise thee] They shall magnify the heavenly Bridegroom, and sing the wonderful displays of his love to the Church, his spouse. And the constant use of this Psalm in the Christian Church is a literal fulfillment of the prophecy.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-FIFTH PSALM

The type of the *Messiah* is *Solomon*; of the *Church*, especially of the *Gentiles* to be espoused, *Pharaoh's daughter*.

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

I. A preface, ^{<19450>}**Psalm 45:1, 2.**

II. The body of this Psalm contains two commendations,—

1. Of the bridegroom, ^{<19453>}**Psalm 45:3-9.**

2. Of the bride, ^{<194510>}**Psalm 45:10-15.**

III. The conclusion promissory and laudatory, ^{<194516>}**Psalm 45:16, 17.**

I. In the preface the prophet commends the subject he is to treat of,—

1. Signifying that it is *a good thing; good*, as speaking of the Son of God, who is the *chief good*.

2. And *good* for us; for, on our union with the Church, and Christ's union with that, depends our eternal good.

That the author of this Psalm, and the subject of it, is God: the psalmist was but the pen to write, for he was full of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, his heart was inditing, and his tongue followed the dictate of his heart, and presently became the instrument of a ready writer, viz., of the Holy Spirit: "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer."

Thus, having endeavoured to gain over his auditory, 1. By the commendation of the matter of which he is to treat, viz., that it is *good*. 2. That it tends to a good end, viz., the *honour of the King*, that is, Christ, the King of the Church: he then enters on the main business, which has two particulars.

II. 1. He turns his speech to Christ, the King, and commends him for many eminent and excellent endowments:—

1. His beauty: "Thou art fairer than the children of men."

2. His elocution: "Grace is poured into thy lips."

3. For his valour: "O hero, gird thy sword upon thy thigh."

4. For his prosperity in his kingdom: "In thy majesty ride prosperously."

5. For his just administration of public affairs. "Ride on, because of truth, meekness, and righteousness."

6. For his battles and conquests: "Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thy arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies, whereby the people shall fall under thee."

7. For the stability and eternity of his power: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

8. For his justice and equity: "The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity."

9. For the fulness of his gifts and graces, beyond all others: "Therefore God-hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

10. For the splendour of his apparel and buildings. “All thy garments smell of myrrh, &c., out of the ivory palaces.” There is nothing we can call good, great, or excellent; nothing praiseworthy in a prince; that may not be found in this king.

2. From the bridegroom he proceeds to the bride, which here means the universal Church; whom he sets forth:—

1. By her attendants; no mean persons: *kings’ daughters* and *honourable women*.

2. By her name, title, and dignity: a *queen*.

3. By her place: she *stood on the right hand*, the place of confidence and respect.

4. By her attire and vesture: *she stood in a gesture of gold of Ophir*.

In the midst of this great *encomium* he breaks off and, by an *apostrophe*, turns his speech to the Church lest she should forget herself in the height of her honour; giving her this good counsel:—

1. “Hearken, O daughter!” mark what Christ saith unto thee.

2. “Consider.” Look about, and see what is done for thee.

3. “Incline thine ear.” Be obedient.

4. “Forget thine own people, and thy father’s house.” Leave all for Christ; leave thy old way, old opinions, and old companions.

5. The consequence of which will be, “The king shall greatly desire thy beauty.”

6. And there is the utmost reason that thou shouldst hear, and be obedient, and conformable to his will. 1. For, “He is the Lord thy God, and thou shalt worship him.” 2. This will promote thy interest: “Tyre shall be there with a gift, and the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.”

This counsel and admonition being ended, he returns again to the encomium of the spouse, and commends her,—

1. For her inward virtues and endearments: “The king’s daughter (that is, the Church) is all glorious within.”

2. For her externals; whether doctrine, morals, offices, which are, as it were, her clothing: “It is of wrought gold.”

3. For her rites and ceremonies,—they are a *needlework* of divers colours, in divers Churches.

4. Her maids of honour, *virgins*; holy and sincere souls. Believers, pure in heart, life, and doctrine, living in every particular Church. These, *her companions, shall follow her*: 1. These shall be brought to thee (the Church) from all nations. 2. They shall be brought with joy and gladness, and enter into the king’s palace. Gladly and willingly, shall they enter her courts here below, and afterwards be received to mansions in heaven.

5. For her fruitfulness. She shall have many children, good, and great. For the fathers, patriarchs, prophets, and priests, under the *Old Law*; apostles, evangelists, and their successors, under the *New*; that they may be made princes in all lands. Her officers are not contemptible.

III. The conclusion which is gratulatory. For this honour the Church would,

1. Set up a memorial to the honour of the Bridegroom: “I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations.”

2. The praise of the heavenly Bridegroom shall be ever perpetuated: “Therefore, shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.”

The Christian Church shall ever proclaim the name of Jesus, as the name alone in which salvation is to be found; and as the eternal Fountain of all blessings.

PSALMS

PSALM 46

The confidence of believers in God, 1-3. The privileges of the Church, 4, 5; her enemies, and her helper, 6, 7. God's judgments in the earth, 8, 9. He will be exalted among the heathen, and throughout the earth, 10, 11.

NOTES ON PSALM 46

The *title* in the *Hebrew* is, “To the chief musician for the sons of Korah; an ode upon *Alamoth*, or *concerning the virgins*.” possibly meaning a choir of *singing girls*. Some translate the word *secrets* or *mysteries*; and explain it accordingly. *Calmet* thinks it was composed by the descendants of Korah, on their return from the Babylonian captivity, when they had once more got peaceably settled in Jerusalem; and that the disturbances to which it refers were those which took place in the *Persian empire* after the death of *Cambyses*, when the *Magi* usurped the government. Many other interpretations and conjectures are given of the occasion of this fine ode. *Houbigant* thinks it was made on occasion of an *earthquake*, which he supposes took place on the *night* that all *Sennacherib's* army was destroyed, *Dr. Kennicott* thinks that *alamoth* means a musical instrument. All I can pretend to say about it is, that it is a very *sublime ode*; contains much consolation for the Church of God; and was given by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit.

Verse 1. God is our refuge] It begins abruptly, but nobly; ye may trust in whom and in what ye please: but GOD (ELOHIM) *is our refuge and strength*.

A very present help] A help found to be very powerful and effectual in straits and difficulties. The words are very emphatic: **dam axmn twrxb hrz** [*ezerah betsaroth nimtsa meod*, “He is found an exceeding, or superlative help in difficulties.” Such we have found him, and therefore celebrate his praise.

Verse 2. Therefore will not we fear] Let what commotions will take place in the earth, we will trust in the all-powerful arm of God. Probably the *earthquake* referred to, here means *political commotions*, such as those

mentioned under the title; and by *mountains*, kings or secular states may be intended.

Verse 3. Though the waters thereof roar] *Waters*, in prophetic language, signify people; and, generally, people in a state of political commotion, here signified by the term *roar*. And by these strong agitations of the people, the *mountains*-the secular rulers, *shake with the swelling thereof*-tremble, for fear that these popular tumults should terminate in the subversion of the state. This very people had seen all Asia in a state of war. The Persians had overturned Asia Minor, and destroyed the Babylonian empire: they had seen Babylon itself sacked and entered by the Persians; and Cyrus, its conqueror, had behaved to them as a father and deliverer. While their oppressors were destroyed, themselves were preserved, and permitted to return to their own land.

Verse 4. There is a river, the streams whereof] The Chaldee understands the *river*, and its *streams* or *divisions*, as pointing out various peoples who should be converted to the faith, and thus make glad the city of God, Jerusalem, by their flowing together to the worship of the true God.

But the *river* may refer to the vast Medo-Persian army and its divisions: those branches which took Babylon; and, instead of ruining and destroying the poor Jews, preserved them alive, and gave them their liberty; and thus the city of God, and the tabernacle of the Most High, were gladdened.

Verse 5. God is in the midst of her] God will not abandon them that trust in him; he will maintain his own cause; and, if his Church should at any time be attacked, he will help her, *and that right early*-with the utmost speed. As soon as the onset is made, God is there to resist. As by the day-break the shadows and darkness are dissipated; so by the bright rising of Jehovah, the darkness of adversity shall be scattered.

Verse 6. The heathen raged] There had been terrible wars on all hands, and mighty states were crushed, when the poor Jews were, by the especial favour of God, kept in peace and safety. Kingdoms were moved while they were preserved.

He uttered his voice] These words seem to refer to thunder, lightning, and earthquake. The expressions, however, may be figurative, and refer to the wars and desolations already mentioned. God gave the command; and one empire was cast down, and another was raised up.

Verse 7. The Lord of hosts is with us] We, feeble Jews, were but a handful of men; but the *Lord of hosts*-the God of armies, was on our side. Him none could attack with hope of success, and his legions could not be over-thrown.

The God of Jacob] The God who appeared to Jacob in his distress, and saved him out of all his troubles, appeared also for us his descendants, and has amply proved to us that he has not forgotten his covenant.

Verse 8. Come, behold the works of the Lord] See empires destroyed and regenerated; and in such a way as to show that a supernatural agency has been at work. By the hand of God alone could these great changes be effected.

Verse 9. He maketh wars to cease] By the death of Cambyses, and setting Darius, son of Hystaspes, upon the Persian throne, he has tranquillized the whole empire. That same God who for our unfaithfulness has delivered us into the hands of our enemies, and subjected us to a long and grievous captivity and affliction, has now turned our captivity, and raised us up the most powerful friends and protectors in the very place in which we have been enduring so great a fight of afflictions.

He breaketh the bow] He has rendered useless all the implements of war; and so profound and secure is the general tranquillity, that the *bow* may be safely *broken*, the *spear snapped asunder*, and the *chariot burnt in the fire*.

Verse 10. Be still, and know that I am God] *wprh harpu*, Cease from your provocations of the Divine justice; cease from murmuring against the dispensations of his providence; cease from your labour for a season, that ye may deeply reflect on the severity and goodness of God-severity to those who are brought down and destroyed; goodness to you who are raised up and exalted:—cease from sin and rebellion against your God; let that disgrace you no more, that we may no more be brought into distress and desolation.

Know that I am God] Understand that I am the Fountain of power, wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth.

I will be exalted among the heathen] By the dispensation of punishments, the heathen shall know me to be the God of justice; by the publication of my Gospel among them, they shall know me to be the God of goodness.

I will be exalted in the earth.] I will have my salvation proclaimed in every nation, among every people, and in every tongue.

Verse 11. The Lord of hosts is with us] Having heard these declarations of God, the people cry out with joy and exultation, The Lord of hosts, the God of armies, is with us; we will not fear what man can do unto us.

The God of Jacob is our refuge.] He who saved our fathers will save us, and will never abandon his people in distress.

Selah.] This is a firm, lasting, unshaken, well-tried truth.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-SIXTH PSALM

Two things especially are to be considered in this Psalm:—

I. The confidence the Church has in God, ^{<9460>}**Psalm 46:1-8.**

II. The exhortation to consider him as the Lord of hosts, the Punisher of the refractory and disobedient nations, often by means of *war*; and the only Giver of peace and tranquillity, ^{<9468>}**Psalm 46:8-10.**

I. He begins with a maxim which is the ground of all the confidence which the people of God can have. God is our *Asylum*, or place of *refuge* to fly to; our *Strength, Stay, Munition*, on which to rely: “A very present help to deliver us in time of trouble.”

From which maxim this conclusion is drawn: “therefore will we not fear;” not even in the greatest calamities, nor in the midst of the most numerous adversaries. This he expresses, first, *metaphorically*; next, in *plain terms*:—

1. Though the earth on which the Church is seated be moved or removed.
2. “Though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;” that is, the greatest and strongest empires and kingdoms should be ruined and overwhelmed.
3. “Though the waters roar and be troubled.” Though multitudes of people threaten, and join their forces to ruin the Church.
4. “Though the mountains (i.e., kingdoms) shake with the swelling thereof.” *Waters* mean people, ^{<66715>}**Revelation 17:15.**

More plainly, for we have the interpretation of these metaphors, ^{<9416>}**Psalm 46:6**: “Though the heathen raged, and the kingdoms were moved,” yet we were not afraid, nor will we fear. We have a fine illustration of this bold feeling (from a consciousness of rectitude, and consequently Divine protection) from the pen of a heathen poet:—

*ustum et tenacem propositi virum
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni,
Mente quatit solida: Neque Auster,
Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ,
Nec fulminantis magna Jovis manus.
Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.
HOR. Car. lib. iii., od. 3.*

*“The man, in conscious virtue bold,
Who dares his secret purpose hold,
Unshaken hears the crowd’s tumultuous cries;
And the impetuous tyrant’s angry brow defies.
Let the wild winds that rule the seas,
Tempestuous all their horrors raise;
Let Jove’s dread arm with thunders rend the spheres;
Beneath the crush of worlds, undaunted he appears.”
FRANCIS.*

2. Of this undaunted state of mind he next descends to show the reasons:—

1. “There is a river,” &c. The *city of God* was *Jerusalem*, the type of the *Church*; and the *holy place of the tabernacles* was the *temple*. The little *Shiloh*, that ran softly, watered *Jerusalem*; and the *promises* of the Gospel, that shall always flow in the Church, shall make glad the hearts of God’s people.
2. “God is in the midst of her,” to keep, to defend her; “therefore she shall not be moved,” i.e., utterly removed, but “shall remain for ever.”
3. “God shall help her and deliver her;” *right early*-in the proper season.
4. “He uttered his voice, and the earth melted.” The hearts of the men of the earth, that exalted themselves against his Church, at the least word uttered from his mouth, *melted*-were struck with fear and terror.

5. “The Lord of hosts is with us.” And even the armies of our *enemies* are at *his* command, and will fight for us whenever he pleases: “He is the Lord of all hosts.”
6. “The God of Jacob is our refuge.” He is our *Asylum*, and he will save us, ~~<19407>~~ **Psalm 46:7, 11.**

II. The *second* part contains two *exhortations*:—

1. He calls on all to *behold the works of the Lord*; and he produces two instances worthy of observation: 1. JUDGMENT is his work, and he afflicts refractory and sinful nations by WAR: “See what desolations he hath made in the earth!” 2. PEACE is his work: “He maketh war to cease to the end of the earth.”
2. Then, in the person of God, he exhorts the enemies of the Church to be quiet; for their endeavours are vain, and their rage is to no purpose: “Be still, and know that I am God.”
3. And he concludes with a gracious promise, of being celebrated *among the heathen, and through the whole earth.*

PSALMS

PSALM 47

The Gentiles are invited to celebrate the praises of God as the Sovereign of the world, 1, 2. The Jews exalt in his kindness to them, 3, 4. All then join to celebrate his Majesty, as reigning over the heathen, and gathering the dispersed Jews and Gentiles together into one Church, 5-9.

NOTES ON PSALM 47

The *title*, “A Psalm for the sons of Korah,” has nothing remarkable in it. The Psalm was probably written about the same time with the preceding, and relates to the happy state of the Jews when returned to their own land. They renewed their praises and promises of obedience, and celebrate him for the deliverance they had received. See the *introduction* to the preceding Psalm. {<1940> **Psalm 46:1**} In a spiritual sense, it appears to relate to the *calling of the Gentiles* to be made partakers of the blessings of the Gospel with the converted Jews.

Verse 1. O clap your hands, all ye people] Let both Jews and Gentiles magnify the Lord: the Jews, for being *delivered* from the *Babylonish captivity*; the *Gentiles*, for being called to enter into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Verse 2. For the Lord most high is terrible] He has insufferable majesty, and is a *great King*-the mightiest of all emperors, for he is Sovereign over the whole earth.

Verse 3. He shall subdue the people under us] He shall do again for us what he had done for our forefathers-give us dominion over our enemies, and establish us in our own land. I would rather read this in the *past tense*, relative to what God did for their fathers in destroying the Canaanites, and giving them the promised land for their possession, and taking the people for his own inheritance. This is also applied to the *conversion of the Gentiles*, who, on the rejection of the Jews, have become his inheritance; and whom he has chosen to inherit all those spiritual blessings typified by the sacrifices and other significant rites and ceremonies of the Jewish Church.

Verse 5. God is gone up with a shout] Primarily, this may refer to the rejoicing and sounding of trumpets, when the ark was lifted up to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites. But it is generally understood as a *prophetic declaration of the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ*; and the *shout* may refer to the exultation of the evangelists and apostles in preaching Christ crucified, buried, risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, ever to appear in the presence of God for us. This was the *triumph of the apostles*; and the conversion of multitudes of souls by this preaching was the *triumph of the cross of Christ*.

Verse 6. Sing praises] **wrmz** *zammeru*: this word is *four* times repeated in this short verse, and shows at once the *earnestness* and *happiness* of the people. They are the words of *exultation* and *triumph*. Feel your obligation to God; express it in thanksgiving: be thankful, be eternally thankful, to God your King.

Verse 7. For God is the King of all the earth] He is not *your* King only, but the King of the *universe*. He has no *limited power*, no *confined* dominion.

Sing ye praises with understanding] **lykcm wrmz** *zammeru maskil*, *sing an instructive song*. Let *sense* and *sound* go together. Let your *hearts* and *heads* go with your *voices*. *Understand* what you *sing*; and *feel* what you *understand*; and let the *song* be what will *give instruction in righteousness* to them that hear it. [Anglo-Saxon], *Sing wisely*.—Anglo-Saxon. Multitudes *sing foolishly*.

Verse 8. God reigneth over the heathen] Though this is literally true in God's universal dominion, yet *more* is here meant. God *reigns over the heathen* when, by the preaching of the Gospel, they are brought into the Church of Christ.

God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.] He is a holy God; he proclaims holiness. His laws are holy, he requires holiness, and his genuine people are all holy. The *throne of his holiness* is the *heaven of heavens*; also the *temple* at Jerusalem; and, lastly, the *hearts of the faithful*.

Verse 9. The princes of the people are gathered together] **μym[ybydn** *nedibey ammim*. The *voluntary people*—the *princely*, *noble*, or *free-willed people*; those who gladly receive the word of life; those who, like the *Bereans*, were of a *noble* or *liberal disposition*; and, when they heard the

Gospel, searched the Scriptures to see whether these things were so. It is a similar word which is used ~~<980B>~~ **Psalm 110:3**; and I believe both texts speak of the same people—the *Gentiles who gladly come unto his light*, and present themselves a *free-will offering* to the Lord.

The people of the God of Abraham] Who were Abraham’s people? Not the *Jews*; the covenant was made with him while yet in *urcircumcision*. Properly speaking, the *Gentiles* are those whom he *represented*; for the covenant was made with him while yet a *Gentile*; and in his seed all the *nations*—the *Gentiles*, of the earth were to be *blessed*. The *people of the God of Abraham* are the *Gentiles*, who, receiving the Gospel, are made partakers of the *faith of Abraham*, and are his *spiritual children*. The God of Abraham has Abraham’s spiritual posterity, the believing *Gentiles*, for his own people.

The shields of the earth belong unto God.] The *Septuagint* translate this οἱ κραταῖοι, *the strong ones of the earth*. The *Vulgate* reads, Quoniam dii fortes terræ vehementer elevati sunt; “Because the strong gods of the earth are exceedingly exalted.” These are supposed to mean *kings* and *rulers of provinces* which were present at the dedication of the temple; (for some suppose the Psalm to have been composed for this solemnity;) and that they are said here to be *greatly exalted*, because they exercised a very high degree of power over their respective districts. The words refer to something by which the inhabitants of the earth are defended; God’s providence, guardian angels, &c., &c.

He is greatly exalted.] Great as secular rulers are, God is greater, and is above all; King of kings and Lord of lords; and the hearts of kings and governors are in his hand; and he turns them whithersoever he pleases.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH PSALM

This Psalm, under the figure of the ark being brought into the temple, foretells the ascension of Christ to heaven; who was the true ark of the covenant, and the propitiatory or mercy-seat. It contains a prophecy of Christ’s kingdom, and has *two* especial parts:—

First, An invitation to sing praises to Christ.

Secondly, The reasons why we should do it.

1. The ascension of Christ is typified under the ark's ascension, ^{<1970>}**Psalm 47:1**: "God is gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."

2. On which he invites the people to do now what was then done, "that we clap our hands, and sing praises." This should be done, 1. Cheerfully: "Clap your hands;" for this is a sign of inward joy, **#Na 3:19**. 2. Universally: "O clap your hands, all ye people." 3. Vocally: "Shout unto God with the voice of triumph." 4. Frequently: "Sing praises-sing praises-sing praises-sing praises," ^{<1970>}**Psalm 47:6**, and again "sing praises," ^{<1970>}**Psalm 47:7**. It cannot be done too frequently. 5. Knowingly and discreetly: "Sing ye praises with understanding;" know the reason why ye are to praise him.

3. Now these reasons are drawn from his *greatness* and from his *goodness*.

1. He is GREAT. 1. He is the Lord Most High; 2. He is terrible; 3. He is a great King over all the earth. All power, at his ascension, was given unto him in heaven and earth.

2. He is GOOD. 1. In collecting his Church by subduing the nations, not by the *sword*, but by his word and Spirit, by which he would subdue their iniquities, the iniquity of the *Jew* first, and then of the *Gentile*; for the law was to come out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. To the discipline of that religion both were to submit; and therefore both might well be said "to be subdued to us, and brought under our feet."

2. In honouring and rewarding his Church: "He shall choose out our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved."

1. His Church was his *choice*: "It is a chosen generation, a peculiar people."

2. His *heritage*; for he will dwell among them, and provide an inheritance for them; blessings on earth and glory in heaven.

3. This is "the excellency of Jacob;" of Jacob after the Spirit; the kingdom, priesthood, and all the promises made unto Jacob and the fathers being theirs.

4. The cause: "His love only-he chose-the excellency of Jacob whom he loved."

3. In the increase and amplification of his Church: “God is *now* the king of all the earth;” not of the *Jews* only, for he “reigns over the heathen” also. He “sits upon a throne of holiness;” rules by his holy word and Spirit. 1. Making them holy who were unholy. 2. They are “a willing people” also. For the princes-the volunteers, among the people, are gathered together; even the people of the God of Abraham-the Gentiles, converted and reconciled to God.

4. In protecting his Church; whether by himself, or by the princes he raises up; by his *providence*, or his *angels*, or all together. For the “shields of the earth belong *unto* God.” Secular rulers, and ecclesiastical governors, are shields of the Church. But God is the *Head* of it, and the *Chief*: “He is greatly exalted.”

PSALMS

PSALM 48

The ornaments and the privileges of the Church, 1-8. The duty of God's people, 9-14.

NOTES ON PSALM 48

The *title*: *A Song and Psalm for the sons of Korah*. To which the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* add, *for the second day of the week*; for which I believe it would be difficult to find a meaning. It is evidently of the same complexion with the two preceding, and refers to the Jews returned from captivity; and perhaps was sung at the dedication of the second temple, in order to return thanks to the Lord for the restoration of their political state, and the reestablishment of their worship.

Verse 1. Great is the Lord] This verse should be joined to the last verse of the preceding Psalm, as it is a continuation of the same subject; and indeed in some of *Kennicott's MSS.* it is written as a part of the foregoing. *That* concluded with *He is greatly exalted; this* begins with *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;* i.e., He should be praised according to his greatness; no common praise is suited to the nature and dignity of the Supreme God.

In the city of our God] That is, in the *temple*; or in Jerusalem, where the temple was situated.

The mountain of his holiness.] Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built. The ancient city of Jerusalem, which David took from the Jebusites, was on the *south* of Mount Zion, on which the temple was built, though it might be said to be more properly on Mount *Moriah*, which is one of the *hills* of which Mount Zion is composed. The temple therefore was to the *north* of the city, as the psalmist here states, ^{<1981D>} **Psalm 48:2:** “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.” But some think that it is the *city* that is said to be on the *north*, and *Reland* contends that the temple was on the *south* of the city.

Verse 2. The joy of the whole earth] Commentators have been greatly puzzled to show in what sense Zion, or the temple, could be said to be the *joy of the whole earth*. If we take the earth here for the *habitable* globe, there is no sense in which it ever was the joy of the whole earth; but If we take **xrah l k col haarets**, as signifying the *whole of this land*, (and it has no other meaning,) the assertion is plain and easy to be understood, for the temple was considered the *ornament* and *glory* of the whole *land* of Judea.

Verse 3. God is known in her palaces for a refuge.] All those who worship there in spirit and truth, find God for their refuge. But the words may be understood: God is known for the defence of her palaces; and with this view of the subject agree *the three* following verses.

Verse 4. For, lo, the kings were assembled] Many of the neighbouring potentates, at different times, envied the prosperity of the Jewish nation, and coveted the riches of the temple; but they had no power against it till the cup of Jewish transgression was full. In vain did they *assemble*-confederate, and invade the land. *Saw it*-reconnoitered the place; *marvelled* at its excellence and strength, for *they were troubled*-struck with fear; *hasted away* for fear of destruction, for *fear took hold on them* as pains seize on a *woman in travail*. Those who came to destroy were glad to make their own escape.

Verse 7. Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish] *Calmet* thinks this may refer to the discomfiture of *Cambyses*, who came to destroy the land of Judea. "This is apparently," says he, "the same *tempest* which struck dismay into the land-forces of *Cambyses*, and wrecked his fleet which was on the coasts of the Mediterranean sea, opposite to his army near the port of *Acco*, or the *Ptolemais*; for *Cambyses* had his quarters at *Ecbatana*, at the foot of Mount Carmel; and his army was encamped in the valley of *Jezeel*." *Ships of Tarshish* he conjectures to have been large stout vessels, capable of making the voyage of *Tarsus*, in Cilicia.

Verse 8. As we have heard, so have we seen] Our fathers have declared what mighty works thou didst in their time; and we have seen the same. God has often interposed and afforded us a most miraculous defence. So it was when they were invaded by the Assyrians, Syrians, Egyptians, Babylonians, Persians and the Greeks under Alexander.

The city of the Lord of hosts] His *hosts* defended the city, and it was known to be *the City of the great King*.

God will establish it for ever.] This must refer to the true temple, the Christian Church, of which the Jewish Church was a type. The *type* perished, but the *antitype* remained, and will remain till time shall be no more.

Selah.] So be it; and so it will be for evermore.

Verse 9. We have thought of thy loving-kindness] We went to thy temple to worship thee; we meditated on thy goodness; we waited for a display of it; and the panic that in the first instance struck *us*, was transferred to our *enemies*; and *fear took hold upon them, they marvelled, were troubled, and hasted away.*

Verse 10. According to thy name] As far as thou art known, so far art thou praised; and where thou art known, thou *wilt* have praise to the end of the earth. And why? “Thy right hand is full of righteousness.” Thou art continually dispensing thy blessings to the children of men.

Verse 11. Let Mount Zion rejoice] The temple is restored in majesty, which was threatened with total destruction; it is again repaired.

Let the daughters of Judah be glad] That thou hast turned her captivity, and poured out thy judgments upon her oppressors.

Verse 12. Walk about Zion] Consider the beauty and magnificence of the temple, count the towers by which it is fortified.

Verse 13. Mark ye well her bulwarks] See the *redoubts* by which she is defended.

Consider her palaces] See her *courts, chambers, altars, &c., &c.*; make an exact register of the whole, that ye may have to tell to your children how Jerusalem was built in troublesome times; how God restored you; and how he put it into the hearts of the heathen to assist to build, beautify, and adorn the temple of our God.

Verse 14. For this God] Who did all these wonderful things,—

Is **our God]** He is our portion, and he has taken us for his people.

He will be our guide] Through all the snares and difficulties of life,—

Even **unto death]** He will never leave us; and we, by his grace, will never abandon him. He is just such a God as we need; infinite in *mercy*,

goodness, and truth. He is our Father, and we are the sons and daughters of God Almighty. Even unto and in death, he will be our portion.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH PSALM

Under the type of Jerusalem is set down the happiness of the Church, which is always protected by the Divine favour. There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

I. The excellences and privileges of the city of God, ^{<1980>}**Psalm 48:1-3.**

II. A narration of a miraculous deliverance she obtained, and the terror that fell upon her enemies, ^{<1980>}**Psalm 48:4-8.**

III. An exhortation to consider it, and to praise God, ^{<1980>}**Psalm 48:9-14.**

I. The psalmist begins with a *maxim*: “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.” Great in himself; and greatly to be praised for *all things*, in *all places*; but especially in the *city of our God*, in the *mountain of holiness*.

Then he descends to set forth the excellences and ornaments of the Church.

1. It is “the city of God,” built and governed by him, and in it he resides.
2. “It is a holy mountain:” The *religion* in it is holy; the *people*, a holy people.
3. “It is beautiful for situation:” God has put his beauty upon it.
4. “The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion:” The joy and ornament of all the land of Judea then, and afterwards of the whole world, because the law was to come out of Zion.
5. “It is the city of the great King,” i.e., God. He founded, and rules in it.
6. “God is known in her palaces:” In her is the knowledge of God; yea, and by an experimental knowledge, he is found to be an asylum, a *sure refuge*.

II. And it is well that it is so; for Jerusalem, i.e., the Church, has many and great enemies, which (^{<1980>}**Psalm 48:5**) the prophet begins to describe; and desires that notice may be taken of them, for he points them out with “Lo! or Behold!”

1. They are many and powerful. They were “kings,” a plurality of them.

2. Confederate kings: “The kings were assembled.” United power is the more effectual.

But all the endeavours of those kings, those confederate kings, came to nothing.

1. “They passed by together:” together they came, together they vanished.

2. “They saw-they marvelled:” They saw the strength of this city, and wondered how it could be so strangely delivered out of their hands.

3. On this they were troubled, they trembled, and hasted away. *Fear* took hold upon them; which the prophet illustrates by a double similitude: 1. By a travailing woman; “Fear took hold upon them, and pain, as of a woman in travail.” 2. By the fear of mariners at sea, when euroclydon threatens to destroy their ship; their amazement was such “as when thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.”

III. In this third part of the Psalm there are *two* especial points:—

A grateful acknowledgment of God’s protection of his Church: “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our God.” We have heard that he will protect this city, and we see that he hath done it; and persuaded we are that he will always do it: “God will establish it for ever.”

2. And this shall never be forgotten by us: “We have thought of thy loving-kindness in the midst of thy temple.”

3. And so thought of it as to praise thee for it: “According to thy name so is thy praise; thy right hand is full of righteousness.” All the earth shall know that thou dost help with thy powerful hand thy afflicted and oppressed people. Thou wilt punish their adversaries, “for thy right hand is full of righteousness-and justice.”

The second point of this third part is an exhortation to God’s people.

1. That they exult and rejoice for what God does for them: “Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments,” in defending thy Church, and punishing their enemies.

2. That they take especial notice of his miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem; that, notwithstanding the army was great that lay against it, yet no harm was done: “Walk about Zion, tell the towers thereof; mark well

her bulwarks, and her palaces.” See whether they be not all standing and entire.

3. And do it for this end: “That you may tell it to the generation following.” Leave it on record how miraculously God hath delivered you.

4. For this there are *two* strong reasons: 1. “For this God,” who protects and defends us, “is our God for ever.” 2. “He will be our guide unto death.” He will not leave us when all the world leaves us. In the time in which we need him most, we shall find him most powerfully present to help us. Therefore, exult, rejoice, mark it; and make it known to the generations to come.

PSALMS

PSALM 49

All men are invited to attend to lessons of wisdom relative to the insufficiency of earthly good to save or prolong life; to secure the resurrection from the dead, 1-9. Death is inevitable, 10. The vain expectations of rich men, 11-13. Death renders all alike, 14. The psalmist encourages and fortifies himself against envying the apparently prosperous state of the wicked, who are brutish, and die like beasts, 15-20.

NOTES ON PSALM 49

The title, *To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah*, has nothing particular in it; and the *Versions* say little about it. One of the descendants of the children of Korah might have been the author of it; but *when* or on *what occasion* it was made, cannot now be discovered. The author aimed to be *obscure*, and has succeeded; for it is very difficult to make out his meaning. It is so much in the style of the Book of Job, that one might believe they had the same author; and that this Psalm might have made originally a part of that book. "It seems," says Dr. *Dodd*, "to be a meditation on the vanity of riches, and the usual haughtiness of those who possess them. As a remedy for this, he sets before them the near prospect of death, *from* which no riches can save, *in* which no riches can avail. The author considers the subject he is treating as a kind of wisdom concealed from the world; a mystery, an occult science with respect to the generality of mankind." Dr. *Kennicott* has given an excellent translation of this Psalm, which is very literal, simple, and elegant; and by it the reader will be convinced that a good translation of a difficult passage is often better than a comment.

Verse 1. Hear this, all ye people] The four first verses contain the author's exordium or introduction, delivered in a very pompous style and promising the deepest lessons of wisdom and instruction. But what was *rare* then is *common-place* now.

Verse 4. I will incline mine ear to a parable] This was the general method of conveying instruction among the Asiatics. They used much figure and metaphor to induce the reader to study deeply in order to find out the meaning. This had its use; it obliged men to *think* and *reflect*

deeply; and thus in some measure taught them the use, government, and management of their *minds*.

My dark saying upon the harp.] Music was sometimes used to soothe the animal spirits, and thus prepare the mind for the prophetic influx.

Verse 5. The iniquity of my heels] Perhaps *ybyq* [*akebai*, which we translate *my heels*, should be considered the contracted plural of *μybyq* [*akebim, supplanters*. The verse would then read thus: “Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, though the iniquity of my supplanters should compass me about.” The *Syriac* and *Arabic* have taken a similar view of the passage: “Why should I fear in the evil day, when the iniquity of my enemies compasses me about.” And so Dr. *Kennicott* translates it.

Verse 7. None of them can by any means redeem his brother] Wealth cannot save from death; brother, however rich, cannot save his brother; nor will God accept *riches* as a ransom for the *life* or *soul* of any transgressor. To procure health of body, peace of mind, redemption from death, and eternal glory, riches are sought for and applied in vain.

Verse 8. For the redemption of their soul is precious] It is of too high a price to be redeemed with corruptible things, such as *silver* or *gold*, and has required the sacrificial death of Christ.

And it ceaseth for ever] This is very obscure, and may apply to the *ransom* which *riches* could produce. That ransom must be for ever unavailable, because of the *value of the soul*. Or this clause should be added to the following verse, and read thus: “And though he cease to be, (*l dj w vechadal*,) during the hidden time, (*μl w l leolam*,) yet he shall live on through eternity, (*j xnl dw l yj yw vichi od lanetsach*,) and not see corruption.” This is probably the *dark saying* which it was the design of the author to utter in a parable, and leave it to the ingenuity of posterity to find it out. The verb *l dj chadal* signifies a *cessation of being* or *action*, and *μl w l olam* often signifies *hidden time*, that which is not *defined*, and the *end* of which is not *ascertained*, though it is frequently used to express *endless duration*. This translation requires no alteration of the original text, and conveys a precise and consistent meaning.

Verse 10. For he seeth that wise men die] Though they may be rich, and their wisdom teach them the best method of managing their riches so as to

derive all the good from them they can possibly produce, yet *they* die as well as the *fool* and the poor ignorant man; and their wealth is left to others who will be equally disappointed in their expectation from it.

Verse 11. Their inward thought is, that **their houses** shall continue **for ever**] Thus, by interpolation, we have endeavoured to patch up a sense to this clause. Instead of μbrq *kirbam*, their *inward part*, the *Septuagint* appear to have used a copy in which the second and third letters have been transposed μrbq *kibram*, their *sepulchres*; for they translate: $\text{Και οι ταφοι αυτων οικιαι αυτων εις τον αιωνα}$, “For their graves are their dwellings for ever.” So six or seven feet long, and two or three wide, is sufficient to hold the greatest conqueror in the universe! What a small house for the quondam possessor of numerous palaces and potent kingdoms!

They call their lands after their own names.] There would have been no evil in this if it had not been done on an infidel principle. They expected no state but the *present*; and if they could not continue themselves, yet they took as much pains as possible to perpetuate their *memorial*.

Verse 12. Man being in honour abideth not] However rich, wise, or honourable, they must die; and if they die not with a sure hope of eternal life, they die like beasts. See on ^{<19420>} **Psalm 49:20**.

Verse 13. Their posterity approve their sayings.] Go the same way; adopt their maxims.

Verse 14. Like sheep they are laid in the grave] $l wavl$ *lishol*, into *sheol*, the place of *separate* spirits.

Death shall feed on them] $\mu [ry twm$ *maveth yirem*, “Death shall feed them!” What an astonishing change! All the good things of life were once their portion, and they lived only to eat and drink; and now they *live in sheol*, and *Death himself feeds them!* and with what? Damnation. *Houbigant* reads the verse thus: “Like sheep they shall be laid in the place of the dead; death shall feed on them; their morning shepherds rule over them; and their flesh is to be consumed. Destruction is to them in their folds.”

Verse 15. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave] $l wav dym$ *miyad sheol*, “from the hand of sheol.” That is, by the plainest

construction, I shall have a resurrection from the dead, and an entrance into his glory; and death shall have no dominion over me.

Verse 16. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich] Do not be envious; do not grieve: it will do you no harm; it will do him no good. All he gets will be left behind; he can carry nothing with him. Even his glory must stay behind; he shall mingle with the common earth.

Verse 18. He blessed his soul] He did all he could to procure himself animal gratifications, and he was applauded for it; for it is the custom of the world to praise them who pay most attention to their secular interest; and he who attends most to the concerns of his soul is deemed weak and foolish, and is often persecuted by an ungodly world.

Verse 19. They shall never see light.] Rise again they shall; but they shall never see the light of glory, for there is prepared for them the *blackness of darkness* for ever.

Verse 20. Man that is in honour] The rich and honourable man who has no spiritual understanding, is a *beast* in the sight of God. The spirit of this maxim is, A man who is in a dignified official situation, but destitute of learning and sound sense, is like a beast. The important place which he occupies reflects no honour upon him, but is disgraced by him. Who has not read the fable of the beautifully carved head? It was every thing that it should be, but had no *brains*.

This verse has been often quoted as a proof of the *fall of man*; and from *yl yalin*, (in ^{<9912>}**Psalm 49:12**,) which signifies *to lodge for a night*, it has been inferred that Adam fell on the same day on which he was created, and that he did not spend a single night in the terrestrial paradise. Adam, who was in a state of glory, did not remain in it one night, but became stupid and ignorant as the beasts which perish. But we may rest assured this is no meaning of the text.

ANALYSIS OF THE FORTY-NINTH PSALM

The doctrine taught by this Psalm is the following: That rich men be not proud of their wealth, nor poor men dejected nor humbled at their mean estate, since all men are mortal; and it is not the wealth of the one can make them happy, nor the poverty of the others can make them unhappy, there being another life by which the condition of both is to be judged.

The Psalm has *three* parts:—

- I. An *exordium* or *preface*: ^{<1940>}**Psalm 49:1-4.**
- II. The *matter* proposed, debated, and argued, ^{<1940>}**Psalm 49:5-16.**
- III. The *advice* or *admonition* given, ^{<19416>}**Psalm 49:16-20.**

I. In the *exordium*:—

1. He calls together his auditory: “All people, all nations, low, high, rich, and poor;” because what he speaks concerns all.
2. Then he calls them to be attentive. “Hear, give ear.”
3. He labours to make them teachable, by commending the matter of which he treats; they are not frivolous, but weighty and important things: 1. “My mouth shall speak of wisdom,” &c. I will speak of what I know, and speak so that others may understand. 2. “I will incline my ear.” I will teach you nothing but what I teach myself. 3. It is a *parable* which I am about to deliver, and will require all your attention. 4. That it may be brought to your ear with more delight, I shall accompany it with the *harp*: “I will open my dark saying upon the harp.”

II. Having now assembled his congregation; endeavoured to make them attentive, docile, and well-disposed, lest any should suppose that he was envious at the prosperity of the wicked, or had so little trust in God that he lived in terror of his adversaries; he says, “Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, though the iniquity of my supplanters surrounds me?” He had no reason thus to fear; but the wealthy and ambitious had. And this he demonstrates *two ways*: for he takes away happiness from the *one*, ^{<19406>}**Psalm 49:6-15**, and places happiness in the other, ^{<19416>}**Psalm 49:16**.

1. They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, are not happy, ^{<19406>}**Psalm 49:6**. For wealth will not deliver in the evil day.
 1. It will save no man’s life: “None of them (the rich men) can redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.” God will not be bribed to save any man’s life.
 2. It will save no man’s soul. The ransom required for that is more valuable than any thing the earth can produce.

3. Suppose he was wise, and a long-lived man, yet he must die at last: "For he seeth that wise men die; likewise the fool, and the brutish."

4. Which sufficiently shows the vanity of their riches: 1. They leave them. 2. They leave these great riches. 3. They leave them to others; sometimes to children, but often to strangers, such as they thought never would have entered into their labours.

5. "Their thoughts are vain." For, 1. "Their inward thoughts are that their houses shall continue," &c. 2. To this end, "They call their lands after their own names;" they not only study to be rich, but they are *vain-glorious* also.

But their study is, 1. Vanity. 2. Folly.

1. *Vanity*: "Nevertheless, man being in honour, abideth not;" a change there will be, and the most glorious man will be *like the beasts that perish*.

2. *Folly*: "This their way is their foolishness." A great foolery to place their chief good in riches; yet their posterity act in the same way, tread in their steps, and pant after riches and honours.

To correct this propensity, he lays before them certain considerations relative to their future condition:—

1. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave." That is their common condition; like sheep they are fatted for slaughter.

2. "Death shall feed on them." The second death; for, like *Dives*, they *shall be burned in hell*; and the *fire that cannot be extinguished* shall feed upon their souls and bodies.

3. In the morning of the resurrection, the "upright shall have power over them." The *righteous* shall shine like the sun, when *they* shall be Christ's footstool. The *godly* shall be placed on the right hand, and seated on thrones to judge them; when *they* shall be seated on the left, and be condemned.

4. "Their beauty shall consume in the grave." Their riches, power, and glory, shall wax old as doth a garment: "For the figure of this world passeth away." Therefore the *rich* of this world, and the *possessors of great glory, are not happy*. He therefore sets down the *happy man*: the man who trusts in God, and lives to him, he is happy in life,

notwithstanding his afflictions, and he shall be happy for ever. Therefore he says, “God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave,” &c.

1. He shall redeem me. All good men’s souls.

2. Not from the grave, for die we must; but from the *hand*, that is, the dominion and power, of death: “Death shall not reign over them.”

3. The reason is, For *he shall receive me*—adopt me into his family, and make me a partaker of the Divine nature.

III. On these considerations, relative to good and bad men, and their different conditions, he admonishes the good that they be not troubled at the prosperity of the wicked: “Be not thou afraid,” &c.

1. Not at the great wealth of the rich: “Be not afraid when one is made rich.”

2. Not at the glory and honour of the mighty: “Nor when the glory of his house is increased.”

And he repeats the former reason: “For when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him.” Their happiness, such as it was, was only momentary.

This he amplifies: Be it granted that they flattered themselves, and were flattered by others.

1. “Though while he lived he blessed his own soul.” “Soul, take thy ease,” &c.

2. Though men will praise thee, and sound in thy ears, Well done! “so long as thou doest well to thyself,”—heapest up riches, and followest after honour.

1. A mortal thou art, short-lived as all that went before thee: “He shall go to the generation of his fathers.” And,

2. If wicked, be cast into utter darkness: “They shall never see the light.”

3. Surely any man, however rich, however great, who understands not thus much, must be a beast; and with this sentiment concludes the Psalm; and it is doubled that it may be remembered: “Man who is in honour, and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish.” Even while he lives, without this understanding, his life is little more than the life of the beast.

PSALMS

PSALM 50

God, the Sovereign Judge, cites before his throne all his people, and the priests and the judges, 14; and reproaches them for their vain confidence in the sacrifices they had offered, 7-13; and shows them the worship he requires, 14, 15; and then enters into a particular detail of their hypocrisy, injustice, and union with scandalous transgressors; all of whom he threatens with heavy judgments, 16-22. The blessedness of him who worships God aright, and walks unblamably, 23.

NOTES ON PSALM 50

In the *title* this is said to be *A Psalm of Asaph*. There are *twelve* that go under his name; and most probably he was author of each, for he was of high repute in the days of David, and is mentioned *second* to him as a composer of psalms: *Moreover Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord, with the WORDS of DAVID, and of ASAPH the SEER*. His band, sons or companions, were also eminent in the days of David, as we learn from ^{<13250>}**1 Chronicles 25:1**, &c. *Asaph* himself was one of the *musicians* who *sounded with cymbals of brass*, ^{<131519>}**1 Chronicles 15:19**. And he is mentioned with great respect, ^{<161246>}**Nehemiah 12:46**: *And in the days of DAVID and ASAPH of old there were CHIEF of the SINGERS, and SONGS of PRAISE and THANKSGIVING unto God*. He was certainly a *prophetic* man: he is called a *seer*-one on whom the *Spirit of God rested*; and seems from this, his education, and natural talent, to be well qualified to *compose* hymns or psalms in the honour of God. Persons capable of judging, on a comparison of those Psalms attributed to *Asaph* with those known to be of *David*, have found a remarkable *difference* in the *style*. The style of David is more *polished, flowing, correct, and majestic*, than that of Asaph, which is more *stiff and obscure*. He has been compared to *Persius* and to *Horace*; he is *keen, full of reprehensions*, and his subjects are generally of the *doleful* kind; which was probably caused by his living in times in which there was great corruption of manners, and much of the displeasure of God either *threatened* or *manifested*. It is not known on what particular *occasion* this Psalm was written; but at most times it was suitable to the state of the Jewish Church.

Verse 1. The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken] Here the *essential names* of God are used: **hwwhy myhl a l a** EL, ELOHIM, YEHOUAH, *hath spoken*. The *six first verses* of this Psalm seem to contain a description of the *great judgment*: to any minor consideration or fact it seems impossible, with any propriety, to restrain them. In this light I shall consider this part of the Psalm, and show,—

First, The preparatives to the coming of the great Judge. *El Elohim Jehovah hath spoken, and called the earth—all the children of men from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, (ypy l l km michlal yophi, the beauty where all perfection is comprised,) God hath shined,* ^{<1950B>}**Psalm 50:1, 2**. 1. He has sent his Spirit to convince men of sin, righteousness, and judgment. 2. He has sent his WORD; has made a revelation of himself; and has declared both his law and his Gospel to mankind: “Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined,” ^{<1950B>}**Psalm 50:2**. For out of Zion the law was to go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. ^{<230B>}**Isaiah 2:3**.

Secondly, The accompaniments. 1. His approach is proclaimed, ^{<1950B>}**Psalm 50:3**: “Our God shall come.” 2. The trumpet proclaims his approach: “He shall not keep silence.” 3. Universal nature shall be shaken, and the earth and its works be burnt up: “A fire shall devour before him and it shall be very tempestuous round about him,” ^{<1950B>}**Psalm 50:3**.

Thirdly, The witnesses are summoned and collected, and collected from all quarters; some from heaven, and some from earth. 1. Guardian angels. 2. Human associates: “He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people,” ^{<1950B>}**Psalm 50:4**.

Fourthly, The procedure. As far as it respects the righteous, orders are issued: “Gather my saints,” those who are saved from their sins and made holy, “together unto me.” And that the word saints might not be misunderstood, it is explained by “those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice;” those who have entered into union with God, through the sacrificial offering of the Lord Jesus Christ. All the rest are passed over in silence. We are told who they are that shall enter into the joy of their Lord, viz., only the *saints*, those who have made a covenant with God by sacrifice. All, therefore, who do not answer this description are excluded from glory.

Fifthly, The final issue: all the angelic host, and all the redeemed of the Lord, join in applauding acclamation at the decision of the Supreme Judge. The heavens (for the earth is no more, it is burnt up) shall declare his righteousness, the exact justice of the whole procedure, where justice alone has been done without partiality, and without severity, nor could it be otherwise, *for God is Judge himself*. Thus the assembly is dissolved; the righteous are received into everlasting glory, and the wicked turned into hell, with all those who forget God. Some think that the sentence against the wicked is that which is contained, ^{<195016>} **Psalm 50:16-22**. See the *analysis* at the end, **See Clarke** ^{<195123>} **“Psalm 50:23”**, and particularly on the six first verses, in which a somewhat different view of the subject is taken.

Verse 7. Hear, O my people] As they were now amply informed concerning the nature and certainty of the general judgment, and were still in a state of probation, Asaph proceeds to show them the danger to which they were exposed, and the necessity of repentance and amendment, that when that great day should arrive, they might be found among those who had made a covenant with God by sacrifice. And he shows them that the sacrifice with which God would be well pleased was quite different from the bullocks, he-goats, &c., which they were in the habit of offering. In short, he shows here that God has intended to abrogate those sacrifices, as being no longer of any service: for when the people began to trust in them, without looking to the thing signified, it was time to put them away. When the people began to pay Divine honours to the *brazen serpent*, though it was originally an ordinance of God’s appointment for the healing of the Israelites, it was ordered to be taken away; called *nehushtan*, a bit of brass; and broken to pieces. The sacrifices under the Jewish law were of God’s appointment; but now that the people began to put their trust in them, God despised them.

Verse 8. I will not reprove thee] I do not mean to find fault with you for not offering sacrifices; you have offered them, they *have been continually before me*: but you have not offered them in the proper way.

Verse 10. Every beast of the forest is mine] Can ye suppose that ye are laying me under *obligation* to you, when ye present me with a part of my own property?

Verse 12. The world is mine, and the fulness thereof.] Ye cannot, therefore, give me any thing that is not my own.

Verse 13. Will I eat the flesh of bulls] Can ye be so simple as to suppose that I appointed such sacrifices for my own gratification? All these were significative of a spiritual worship, and of the sacrifice of that Lamb of God which, in the fulness of time, was to take away, in an *atonement manner*, the sin of the world.

Verse 14. Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High] *j bz zebach*, “sacrifice unto God, *pyhl a Elohim*, the *hdwt todah*, *thank-offering*,” which was the same as the *sin-offering*, viz. *a bullock, or a ram, without blemish*; only there were, in addition, “unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil; and cakes of fine flour mingled with oil and fried,” ^{<18712>} **Leviticus 7:12**.

And pay thy vows] *Ëyrdn nedareycha*, “thy vow-offering, to the Most High.” The *neder* or *vow-offering* was *a male without blemish, taken from among the beeves, the sheep, or the goats*. Compare ^{<18219>} **Leviticus 22:19** with ^{<18712>} **Psalm 50:22**. Now these were offerings, in their spiritual and proper meaning, which God required of the people: and as the sacrificial system was established for an especial end—to show the *sinfulness of sin*, and the *purity of Jehovah*, and to show how sin could be *atoned for, forgiven, and removed*; this system was now to end in the thing that it signified,—the grand sacrifice of Christ, which was to make *atonement, feed, nourish, and save* the souls of believers unto eternal life; to excite their praise and thanksgiving; *bind* them to God Almighty by the most solemn *vows* to live to him in the spirit of *gratitude* and *obedience* all the days of their life. And, in order that they might be able to hold fast faith and a good conscience, they were to make continual *prayer to God*, who promised to hear and *deliver them, that they might glorify him*, ^{<18515>} **Psalm 50:15**.

From the 16th to the 22nd verse Asaph appears to refer to the final rejection of the Jews from having any part in the true *covenant sacrifice*.

Verse 16. But unto the wicked] The bloodthirsty priests, proud Pharisees, and ignorant scribes of the Jewish people.

Verse 17. Seeing thou hatest instruction] All these rejected the counsel of God against themselves; and refused to receive the instructions of Christ.

Verse 18. When thou sawest a thief] Rapine, adulteries, and adulterous *divines*, were common among the Jews in our Lord's time. The Gospels give full proof of this.

Verse 21. These things hast thou done] My eye has been continually upon you, though my judgments have not been poured out: and because I was *silent*, thou didst suppose *I was such as thyself; but I will reprove thee*, &c. I will visit for these things.

Verse 22. Now consider this] Ye have forgotten your God, and sinned against him. He has marked down all your iniquities, and has them *in order* to exhibit against you. Beware, therefore, *lest he tear you to pieces, when there is none to deliver*; for none can deliver you but the *Christ* you reject. And how can ye escape, if ye neglect so great a salvation?

Verse 23. Whoso offereth praise] These are the very same words as those in ^{<9014>}Psalm 50:14, *hdwt j bz*; and should be read the same way independently of the *points, zebach todah*, "sacrifice the thank-offering." JESUS is the great *eucharistic sacrifice*; offer him up to God in your faith and prayers. By this sacrifice is God *glorified*, for in him is God *well pleased*; and it was by the *grace or good pleasure of God* that he *tasted death for every man*.

Ordereth his conversation] *Ērd μc sam derech*, DISPOSETH *his way*.—*Margin. Has his way THERE, Ērd μv sham derech*, as many MSS. and old editions have it; or *makes that his custom*.

Will I show the salvation of God.] *wnara arennu*, I will cause him to see [*vyb beyesha*, into the salvation of God; into God's method of saving sinners by Christ. He shall witness my saving power even to the uttermost; such a salvation as it became a God to bestow, and as a fallen soul needs to receive; the salvation from all sin, which Christ has purchased by his death. *I shall s̄cheu til him, the hele of God*; that es JESHU, that he se him in the faired of his majeste.—*Old Psalter*.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTIETH PSALM

The prophet, by a *prosopopœia*, brings in God prescribing rules for his own worship. The point in debate is: *How God will be honoured in his own Church?* And as none can teach this but God, he brings him in speaking to his people.

The Psalm has *two* general parts:—

I. The *majesty* and *authority* of the person who is to judge this debate, ^{<9501>}**Psalm 50:1-6.**

II. The *sentence* which he pronounces, ^{<9507>}**Psalm 50:7-23.**

The prophet begins with calling an *assize*. He summons a *court*, presents us with a *judge*, produces *witnesses*, cites those who are to *answer*, and, having seated the Judge on his throne, gives forth his *charge*.

I. *First*. He *presents*, 1. The *Judge*, in authority and majesty: “The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken,” ^{<9501>}**Psalm 50:1.**

2. The *place* to which he comes to hold his court—the *Church*: “Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty; God hath shined.” To Zion the *law* was given; and *out of Zion* the law was to come, by which he would judge; and therefore it was rightly said, “Out of Zion the Lord hath shined.”

3. His *appearance*, which is *terrible*. It was so when he gave his *law* on Mount *Sinai*; and it will be so when he comes to require it: “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.” See ^{<60810>}**2 Peter 3:10**; ^{<42125>}**Luke 21:25, 26.**

Secondly. Those who are *cited* to appear before him—his *saints*—those who had undertaken to worship him as he had appointed: “Gather my saints together; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.”

Thirdly. Against these he produces his *witnesses*, whom he collects, 1. From *heaven*; 2. From *earth*. “He shall call the heavens from above, and the earth, that he may judge his people.” Including the inhabitants of the whole earth, “from the rising of the sun until the going down thereof.” And his *award* shall be universally approved: “The heavens shall declare his righteousness—his just method of procedure; for God himself is Judge.”

II. Next follows the *charge* given by God himself the Judge; and, to engage attention, he proclaims: “Hear, O my people, and I will speak,” &c.

1. “I am God;” therefore, worship and obedience are due to me from all creatures.

2. “I am thy God; and thou art my people;” therefore, due from thee especially.

3. "I will speak." I will judge and determine this controversy about my worship.

4. "I will testify against thee," and convict thee of what thou hast done amiss.

There is a *twofold worship*: 1. *Ceremonial* and external. 2. *Spiritual* and moral. And I will *speak* and *testify* of both.

It was the *duty* of the people to bring the sacrifice, and perform the ceremonies appointed by the law: but God is not pleased with the outward act merely; nothing pleases him where the heart and affections are wanting.

1. "I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices." These thou bringest, and these I accept. But in this I reprove thee, because thou thinkest that I must be pleased with the *external service*, howsoever performed; and that thou hast a right to expect pardon and all other blessings.

2. Unless the heart be penitent, and the offerings be made in faith, I will not accept them: "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goat," &c. And this for *two* reasons:—

1. I do not need them: "Every beast of the forest is mine—the cattle on a thousand hills—the fowls of the mountain—the wild beasts of the field—the world and its fulness."

2. My perfection is such that I could not use them: "Thinkest thou that I will eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?"

The heathen priests taught the people that the gods *fed* on the *odour* of the sacrifices; and they represented them as complaining of being *starved*, when they were withheld!

For these reasons the sacrifices, as you have performed them, do not please me; but I shall acquaint you with those that do please me; *thanksgiving* and *prayer* or *invocation*.

1. *Thankfulness*: "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows," &c.

2. *Invocation*: "Call upon me in the day of trouble."

Which being done, he makes an *indenture* with us:

1. On *his* part, that he will *save us*: "I will deliver thee."

2. On *our* part, that we give him the *glory* of our *salvation*: “Thou shalt glorify me.”

3. And yet he makes an *exception* to some men’s *prayers* and *praises*, *hypocrites* and *impious men*. *Praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner*, and petitions offered by the *profane* shall not be heard.

1. “To the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes,” &c.

2. The reason is: Thou professest to love me, but in works thou deniest me: for thou hatest instruction, and hast cast my words behind thee: how then can I be pleased with thee? I shall now prove this against thee.

1. Thou hast broken the *eighth* commandment: “Thou sawest the thief, and consentedst to him,”—joinedst with him to carry off the spoil; or, when he *stole*, thou didst *receive*.

2. Thou hast broken the *seventh* commandment. “Thou hast been a partaker with the adulterers.”

3. And the *ninth*: “Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit;—thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, and slanderest thy own mother’s son.” Thou didst do all this deliberately. Thou didst *sit* and *speak*.

4. Thou hast broken the *first* commandment. Because I did not execute judgment upon thy evil works, “thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself;” or, in a word, that there was *no God*, or none worthy of fear and reverence.

This wickedness I will not suffer to go unpunished; for the day will come when “I will reprove thee,—set thy sins in order before thee, and punish the wickedness which thou hast attempted to hide. Yet in *judgment* God remembers *mercy*; he gives warning to the wicked, and threatens that he may spare, and that they may repent and perish not.

1. *Now*, while you have respite, *consider this*, that God is not pleased with outward rites and formalities, and that they who trust in merely having performed them are far from being in a safe state. They do the outward work, and *forget God*. Take heed, lest as a lion he rush out upon you, and *tear you to pieces*.

2. To the pure and spiritual worshippers he makes a gracious promise of *defence, help, and salvation. He who sacrifices the thank-offering, with an humble, believing heart, glorifies me; and to him who places his feet in that path, and THERE determinately abides, going the right way which God's word directs, I will show the salvation of God-he shall be saved; and shall know that he worships not God in vain. See the preceding notes on this Psalm.*

PSALMS

PSALM 51

The psalmist, with a deeply penitent heart, prays for remission of sins, 1-4; which he confesses, and deeply deplores, 5-14; states his willingness to offer sacrifice, but is convinced that God prefers a broken heart to all kinds of oblations, 15-17; prays for the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem, and promises that then the Lord's sacrifice shall be properly performed, 18, 19.

NOTES ON PSALM 51

The *title* is long: "To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba." The propriety of this title has been greatly suspected, says Bishop *Horsley*: "That this Psalm was not written on the occasion to which the title refers, is evident from the 4th and 18th verses. The 4th verse {^{<195104>} **Psalm 51:4**} ill suits the case of David, who laid a successful plot against Uriah's life, after he had defiled his bed: and the 18th {^{<195118>} **Psalm 51:18**} verse refers the Psalm to the time of the captivity, when Jerusalem lay in ruins." Dr. *Kennicott* is of the same mind. He says: "The title is misplaced; that it was written during the *captivity*, and the cessation of the temple worship; the author under great depression of mind, arising from the guilt of some crime, probably some compliance with heathen idolatry, not *murder* nor *adultery*; is plain from the 4th verse, "Against THEE ONLY have I sinned."

The crime mentioned in the *title* was not only against God, but against the whole order of civil society; against the life of the noble and valiant captain whose wife Bath-sheba was, and against every thing sacred in friendship and hospitality. It was a congeries of sins against God and society. Were it not for the 4th, 18th, and 19th verses, the rest of the Psalm would accord well enough with the *title*, and the deep penitence it expresses would be suitable enough to David's state. But see on ^{<195104>} **Psalm 51:4, 18, 19.**

Verse 1. Have mercy upon me, O God] Without mercy I am totally, finally ruined and undone.

According to thy loving-kindness] Mark the gradation in the sense of these three words, *Have MERCY on me, ynnj chonneni; thy LOVING-KINDNESS, Ēdsj chasdecha;—thy TENDER MERCIES, Ēymj r*

rachameycha, here used to express the Divine compassion. The propriety of the order in which they are placed deserves particular observation.

The *first*, rendered *have mercy* or *pity*, denotes that kind of affection which is expressed by moaning over an object we love and pity; that natural affection and tenderness which even the brute creation show to their young by the several noises they respectively make over them.

The *second*, rendered *loving-kindness*, denotes a strong proneness, a ready, large, and liberal disposition, to goodness and compassion, powerfully prompting to all instances of *kindness* and bounty; flowing as freely as waters from a perpetual fountain. This denotes a higher degree of goodness than the former.

The *third*, rendered *tender mercies*, denotes what the Greeks called *σπλαγχνιζεσθαι*, that *most tender pity* which we signify by the moving of the heart and bowels, which argues the highest degree of compassion of which nature is susceptible. See *Chandler*.

Blot out my transgressions] *h j m mecheh*, *wipe out*. There is a reference here to an *indictment*: the psalmist knows what it contains; he pleads guilty, but begs that the writing may be *defaced*; that a proper fluid may be applied to the parchment, *to discharge the ink*, that no record of it may ever appear against him: and this only the *mercy*, *loving-kindness*, and *tender compassions* of the Lord can do.

Verse 2. Wash me thoroughly] *ynsbk hbrh harbeh cabbeseni*, “Wash me again and again,—cause my washings to be multiplied.” My stain is deep; ordinary purgation will not be sufficient.

Verse 3. For I acknowledge my transgressions] I know, I feel, I confess that I have sinned.

My sin is ever before me.] A true, deep, and unsophisticated mark of a genuine penitent. Wherever he turns his face, he sees his sin, and through it the eye of an angry God.

Verse 4. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned] This verse is supposed to show the impropriety of affixing the above *title* to this Psalm. It could not have been composed on account of the matter with Bath-sheba and the murder of Uriah; for, surely, these sins could not be said to have been committed against God ONLY, if we take the words of this verse in their

common acceptation. That was a *public* sin, grievous, and against society at large, as well as against the peace, honour, comfort, and *life* of an innocent, brave, and patriotic man. This is readily granted: but see below.

That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest] Perhaps, to save the propriety of the *title*, we might understand the verse thus: David, being *king*, was not liable to be called to account by any of his *subjects*; nor was there any *authority* in the land by which he could be *judged* and *punished*. In this respect, *God ALONE was greater than the king*; and to *him ALONE*, as king, he was responsible. *Nam quando rex deliquit, SOLI DEO reus est; guia hominem non habet qui ejus facta dijudicet, says Cassiodorus.* “For when a king transgresses, he is accountable to GOD ONLY; for there is no person who has authority to take cognizance of his conduct.” On this very maxim, which is a maxim in all countries, David might say, *Against thee only have I sinned.* “I cannot be called to the bar of my subjects; but I arraign myself before thy bar. They can neither judge nor condemn me; but thou canst: and such are my crimes that thou wilt be justified in the eyes of all men, and cleared of all *severity*, shouldst thou inflict upon me the heaviest punishment.” This view, of the subject will reconcile the Psalm to the *title*. As to the eighteenth and nineteenth verses, we shall consider them in their own place; and probably find that the objection taken from *them* has not much weight.

Verse 5. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity] A genuine penitent will hide nothing of his state; he sees and bewails, not only the *acts* of sin which he has committed, but the *disposition* that led to those acts. He deplores, not only the *transgression*, but the *carnal mind*, which is enmity against God. The light that shines into his soul shows him the very source whence transgression proceeds; he sees his fallen nature, as well as his sinful life; he asks *pardon* for his transgressions, and he asks *washing* and *cleansing* for his inward defilement. Notwithstanding all that *Grotius* and others have said to the contrary, I believe David to speak here of what is commonly called *original sin*; the propensity to evil which every man brings into the world with him, and which is the fruitful source whence all transgression proceeds. The word **ytl l wj cholalti**, which we translate *shapen*, means more properly, *I was brought forth from the womb*; and **yntmj y yechemathni** rather signifies *made me warm*, alluding to the whole process of the formation of the *fetus in utero*, the formative heat which is necessary to develop the parts of all embryonic animals; to incubate the *ova* in the

female, after having been impregnated by the male; and to bring the whole into such a state of maturity and perfection as to render it capable of subsisting and growing up by aliment received from *without*. “As my parts were developed in the womb, the sinful principle diffused itself through the whole, so that body and mind grew up in a state of corruption and moral imperfection.”

Verse 6. Behold, thou desirest truth] I am the very reverse of what I should be. *Thou desirest truth in the heart*; but in me there is nothing but sin and falsity.

Thou shalt make me to know wisdom.] Thou wilt teach me to restrain every inordinate propensity, and to act according to the dictates of sound wisdom, the rest of my life.

Verse 7. Purge me with hyssop] *ynacj t techatteeni*, “thou shalt make a sin-offering for me;” probably alluding to the cleansing of the leper:

^{<B140>}**Leviticus 14:1**, &c. The priest took two clean birds, cedar-wood, scarlet, and hyssop; one of the birds was killed; and the living bird, with the scarlet, cedar, and hyssop, dipped in the blood of the bird that had been killed, and then sprinkled over the person who had been infected. But it is worthy of remark that this ceremony was not performed till the plague of the leprosy had *been healed* in the leper; (^{<B141B>}**Leviticus 14:3**;) and the ceremony above mentioned was for the purpose of *declaring* to the people that the man was healed, that he might be restored to his place in society, having been healed of a disease that the finger of God alone could remove. This David seems to have full in view; hence he requests the *Lord to make the sin-offering for him*, and to show to the people that he had accepted him, and cleansed him from his sin.

Verse 8. Make me to hear joy] Let me have a full testimony of my reconciliation to thee; that the soul, which is so deeply distressed by a sense of thy displeasure, may be healed by a sense of thy pardoning mercy.

Verse 9. Hide thy face from my sins] The sentiment here is nearly the same as that in ^{<9510B>}**Psalm 51:3**: *His sin was ever before his own face*; and he knew that the eye of God was constantly upon him, and that his purity and justice must be highly incensed on the account. He therefore, with a just horror of his transgressions, begs God to *turn away his face from them*, and to blot them out, so that they may never more be seen. See **Clarke’s note on** ^{<9510B>}**Psalm 51:1**”.

Verse 10. Create in me a clean heart] *Mending* will not avail; my heart is altogether corrupted; it must be *new made*, made as it was in the beginning. This is exactly the sentiment of St. Paul: *Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation*; and the salvation given under the Gospel dispensation is called a being *created anew in Christ Jesus*.

A right spirit within me.] ^{^wkn j wr} *ruach nachon*, a constant, steady, determined spirit; called ^{<49512>} **Psalm 51:12**, ^{hbydn j wr} *ruach nedibah*, a noble spirit, a free, generous, princely spirit; cheerfully giving up itself to thee; no longer *bound* and *degraded* by the sinfulness of sin.

Verse 11. Cast me not away from thy presence] Banish me not from thy house and ordinances.

Take not thy Holy Spirit from me.] I know I have sufficiently grieved it to justify its departure for ever, in consequence of which I should be consigned to the blackness of darkness,—either to utter despair, or to a hard heart and seared conscience; and so work iniquity with greediness, till I fell into the pit of perdition. While the Spirit stays, painfully convincing of sin, righteousness, and judgment, there is hope of salvation; when it departs, then the hope of redemption is gone. But while there his any godly sorrow, any feeling of regret for having sinned against God, any *desire* to seek mercy, then the case is not hopeless; for these things prove that the light of the Spirit is not withdrawn.

Verse 12. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation] This is an awful prayer. And why? Because it shows he *once HAD the joy of God's salvation; and had LOST it by sin!*

Uphold me with thy free spirit.] Prop me up; support me with a princely spirit, one that will not stoop to a mean or base act. See on ^{<49510>} **Psalm 51:10**.

Verse 13. Then will I teach transgressors] I will show myself to be grateful; I will testify of thy loving-kindness; I will call on transgressors to consider the error of their ways; and shall set before them so forcibly thy *justice* and *mercy*, that sinners shall be converted unto thee. With a little change I can adopt the language of Dr. *Delaney* on this place: “Who can confide in his own strength, when he sees David fall? Who can despair of Divine mercy when he sees *him* forgiven? Sad triumph of sin over all that is

great or excellent in man! Glorious triumph of grace over all that is shameful and dreadful in sin!"

Verse 14. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness] This is one of the expressions that gives most colour to the propriety of the title affixed to this Psalm. Here he may have in view the *death of Uriah*, and consider that *his blood* cries for vengeance against him; and nothing but the mere mercy of God can wipe this blood from his conscience. The prayer here is earnest and energetic: *O God! thou God of my salvation! deliver me!* The *Chaldee* reads, "Deliver me (*l wq̄ ḡydm middin ketol*) from the judgment of slaughter."

My tongue shall sing aloud] My tongue shall praise thy righteousness. I shall testify to all that thou hast the highest displeasure against sin, and wilt excuse it in no person; and that so merciful art thou, that if a sinner turn to thee with a deeply penitent and broken heart, thou wilt forgive his iniquities. None, from my case, *can ever presume*; none, from my case, *need ever despair*.

Verse 15. O Lord, open thou my lips] My heart is believing unto righteousness; give me thy peace, that my tongue may make confession unto salvation. He could not praise God for pardon till he felt that God had pardoned him; then his lips would be opened, and his tongue would show forth the praise of his Redeemer.

Verse 16. For thou desirest not sacrifice] This is the same sentiment which he delivers in ^{<9116>}**Psalm 40:6**, &c., where see the notes. There may be here, however, a farther meaning: Crimes, like mine, are not to be expiated by any sacrifices that the law requires; nor hast thou appointed in the law any sacrifices to atone for deliberate murder and adultery: if thou hadst, I would cheerfully have given them to thee. The matter is before thee as Judge.

Verse 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit] As my crimes are such as admit of no legal atonement, so thou hast reserved them to be punished by exemplary acts of justice, or to be pardoned by a sovereign act of mercy: but in order to find this mercy, thou requirest that the heart and soul should deeply feel the transgression, and turn to thee with the fullest compunction and remorse. This thou hast enabled me to do. I have the broken spirit, *hrbv̄n j wr ruach nishbarah*; and the broken and contrite

heart, **hkdnw rbvn bl** *leb nishbar venidkeh*. These words are very expressive. **rbv** *shabar* signifies exactly the same as our word *shiver*, *to break into pieces*, *to reduce into splinters*; and **hkd** *dakah*, signifies *to beat out thin*,—*to beat out masses of metal, &c., into laminæ or thin plates*. The spirit broken all to pieces, and the heart broken all to pieces, stamped and beaten out, are the sacrifices which, in such cases, thou requirest; and these “thou wilt not despise.” We may now suppose that God had shone upon his soul, healed his broken spirit, and renewed and removed his broken and distracted heart; and that he had now received the answer to the preceding prayers. And here the Psalm properly ends; as, in the two following verses, there is nothing similar to what we find in the rest of this very nervous and most important composition.

Verse 18. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion] This and the following verse most evidently refer to the time of the *captivity*, when the *walls of Jerusalem were broken down*, and the *temple service entirely discontinued*; and, consequently, are long posterior to the times of David. Hence it has been concluded that the Psalm was not composed by David, nor in his time and that the *title* must be that of some other Psalm inadvertently affixed to this. The fourth verse has also been considered as decisive against this *title*: but the note on that verse has considerably weakened, if not destroyed, that objection. I have been long of opinion that, whether the *title* be properly or improperly affixed to this Psalm, these *two verses* make no part of it: the subject is totally dissimilar; and there is no rule of analogy by which it can be interpreted as belonging to the *Psalm*, to the *subject*, or to the *person*. I think they originally made a Psalm of themselves, a kind of *ejaculatory prayer* for the *redemption of the captives from Babylon*, the *rebuilding of Jerusalem*, and the *restoration of the temple worship*. And, taken in this light, they are very proper and very expressive.

The 117th Psalm contains only *two verses*; and is an *ejaculation of praise from the captives who had just then returned from Babylon*. And it is a fact that this Psalm is written as a *part* of the *cxvith* in no less than *thirty-two* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS.; and in some early editions. Again, because of its smallness, it has been absorbed by the *cxviiiith*, of which it makes the *commencement*, in *twenty-eight* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. In a similar way I suppose the two last verses of this Psalm to have been absorbed by the preceding,

which originally made a complete Psalm of themselves; and this absorption was the more easy, because, like the cxviith it has no *title*. I cannot allege a similar evidence relative to these two verses, as ever having made a distinct Psalm; but of the fact I can have no doubt, for the reasons assigned above. And I still think that Psalm is too dignified, too energetic, and too elegant, to have been the composition of any but David. It was not Asaph; it was not any of the sons of Korah; it was not Heman or Jeduthun: the hand and mind of a greater master are here.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM

In general the Psalm contains David's prayer,—

- I. For himself, ^{<19510>}**Psalm 51:1-12.**
- II. Three vows or promises, ^{<19513>}**Psalm 51:13-18.**
- III. For the Church, ^{<19518>}**Psalm 51:18, 19.**

I. David being in deep distress on account of his sins, prays to God for *mercy*: and while he feels that he is unworthy of the name of *king*, or *God's anointed*, of *his son*, or of *his servant*, he uses *no plea of his own merit*, but, 1. Of the loving-kindness of God: "According to thy loving-kindness." 2. Of the compassion of God: "According to the multitude of thy tender mercies."

The general petition for mercy being offered, next he offers *three* particular petitions:—

First. He prays for *forgiveness of sins*. The fact was past, but the guilt remained: therefore, he earnestly petitions: "Put away mine iniquities;" my sin is a deep stain: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquities, and cleanse me from my sin," *multiply* washing; my sin is a *deep* defilement.

To this petition he joins *confession of sin*; from which we may learn the conditions requisite in a genuine confession:—

He considers the *nature* of his sin; he feels the *weight* of it, the *burden*, and the *anguish* of it; and *abhors* it.

1. "I know mine iniquity." It is no longer hidden from me.
2. "It is ever before me;" and the sight breaks my heart.
3. He uses different *epithets* for it, in order to aggravate the guilt, and deepen the repentance. 1. It is *transgression*, [vp *peshah*, rebellion. 2. It is

iniquity, [^]w[*avon*, crooked dealing. 3. It is *sin*, **tacj** *chattath*, error and wandering.

Then he begins his earnest *confession*: “I have sinned.” And this he aggravates by several circumstances:—

1. Of the *person*. It is “against thee;” a good and gracious God, who of a *shepherd* made me a *king* over thy own people. *Against thee*, the great and terrible God. The people are my *subjects*, and they cannot judge me: it is against *thee* I have sinned, and to *thee* I must give account, and by *thee* be judged and punished.

2. Of the *manner*. It was an *impudent* sin; not committed by *surprise*, but done openly: “In thy sight.” Therefore, the threatenings by thy prophet are all right. Whatever punishment thou mayest inflict upon me, both thy justice and mercy will stand clear: “That thou mightest be justified,” &c.

3. He shows from what *root* his sin sprang; from his *original corruption*: “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” I am all corruption *within*, and defilement *without*. The evil fountain hath sent forth bitter waters.

4. Another aggravation of his sin was, that he was in *principle* devoid of that which God *loves*: “Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.”

5. The greatest aggravation of all was, his having sinned against light and knowledge. God had endued him with *wisdom in the hidden part*, by the motions of his own Spirit; but he had permitted his passions to obscure that light, and had quenched the Spirit.

Having made this general confession, he names the *particular sin* that lay heaviest on his conscience: “Deliver me from blood-guiltiness.” And then renews his petition for *pardon* under a *type* then in use, and a *metaphor*. The type, *hyssop*; the metaphor, *wash me*.

1. “Purge me with hyssop.” With a bunch of hyssop, dipped in the blood of the paschal lamb, the Israelites sprinkled their doors. It was also used in the sprinkling of the *leper*, and in the *sacrifice for sin*: and the *blood* and *sprinkling* were a *type of Christ’s blood*, and the pardon and holiness that came through it. Sprinkled with this, David knew he must be clean; “for the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin;” and it is “the blood of Christ that justifies.”

2. *Sanctified* also he wishes to be; and there, he says, *Wash me*. And this is done by the influence of God's Spirit: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean," ~~Amos~~ **Ezekiel 36:25**.

Secondly. David, having ended his *petitions* for *pardon*, proceeds,—

1. To pray that the *evil effects* which had been produced by his sin might be removed: "Make me to hear joy and gladness," &c.

2. That his *body*, which was in a pining condition, might be restored: "That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice."

3. A *third* evil effect of his sin was, that God's face, that is, his favour, was turned away from him: he therefore begs,—

(1) "Hide thy face from my sins." Remember them not against me.

(2) "And blot out mine iniquities." I know there is a long and black catalogue in thy book against me; blot it out; blot out the handwriting of ordinances that is against me.

Thirdly. Now follows David's *last* petition; in which he again craves more particularly the grace of *sanctification*. He first prayed for *remission*; next for *reconciliation*; and now for *renovation*, which he asks of God in the *three* following verses: 1. "Create in me a clean heart." 2. "Renew a right spirit within me." 3. "Cast me not away from thy presence." 4. "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." 5. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." 6. "Uphold me with thy free spirit." In which petitions we are to consider,—

1. The *subject* on which the work is to be done. The *heart-the spirit*. For as the heart is that part that first lives in nature; so it is the first that lives in grace. The work must begin *within*, else *outward* renovation will be to little purpose.

2. The *work* itself, which is,—

1. A *creation*. Sin had reduced David's heart to *nothing* in respect to heavenly affections and things; and to bring it into a state in which it would answer the *end of its creation*, was to bring *something* out of *nothing*; which, in all cases, is the work of Almighty God: "Create in me, O God," &c.

2. It is a *renovation*. All in David was the *old man*, nothing left of the *new man*. He prays, therefore, to be renewed in the spirit of his mind: “Renew a right spirit within me.”

3. *Reconciliation* and *restitution*. Cast me not away—as a dead man; nor take away thy Spirit from me, by which I live: “Cast me not away—take not thy Holy Spirit from me.”

4. A *confirmation* in what was good. *Uphold—confirm me*.

3. WHO was to do this work? Not *himself*; GOD alone. Therefore, he prays: “O God, create;—O Lord, renew;—uphold by thy Spirit.”

4. The *quality* of this. A *cleansing*—implied in these remarkable words:—a *right spirit*,—a *holy spirit*,—a *free spirit*; in which some have thought they saw the *mystery* of the HOLY TRINITY.

1. A *right spirit*. He felt that he might easily go *wrong*; a *crooked* and *perverse* spirit had prevailed within him, which had led him out of the *right way* to salvation: “Renew in me a RIGHT spirit.”

2. A *holy spirit*; one opposed to the *carnal spirit* that was *enmity* against God, the motions and desires of which were from the flesh, and tended only to its gratification: “Take not thy Holy Spirit from me.” It is God’s Holy Spirit that makes the spirit of man *holy*. *Holiness of heart* depends on the indwelling of the *Holy Ghost*.

3. A *free spirit*. A *noble*, a *princely* spirit. Ever since his fall he felt he did nothing good; but by *constraint*, he was in *bondage* to corruption. There was no *dignity* in his mind, sin had *debased* it. “Ennoble me by a birth from above,” and by thy *noble Spirit uphold me!*

II. He had now presented his *three petitions*, and now he makes his *vows*:

1. To teach others; 2. To praise God; and, 3. To offer him such a sacrifice as he could accept.

His *first* vow. 1. *Then*, after pardon obtained, “I shall teach;” for a man under guilt is not able to declare *pardon* to others.

2. “I will teach thy way to sinners;” viz.: that to the *stubborn* thou wilt show thyself *froward*; but to the *penitent* thou wilt show *mercy*.

The *effect* of which will be: “Sinners shall be converted unto thee.” They who hear of thy justice and mercy, as manifested in my case, will *fear*, and turn from *sin*; have *faith*, and turn to THEE.

His *second* vow and promise is to *praise God*: “My tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.” But to this he was 1. *Unapt*; and must be so till received into *favour*. And, 2. *Unable*, till he received the healthful Spirit of the grace of God. Therefore he prays for a capacity to do both: 1. “Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God; then my tongue shall sing.” 2. “O Lord, open my lips-and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.”

His *third* promise is about a *sacrifice*, not of any *animal*, but of a “broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart,” which he knew God would not despise. 1. “Thou desirest no sacrifice, else I would give it thee.” No *outward* sacrifice can be of any avail if the *heart* be not offered. 2. Nor will the *heart* be accepted if it be *not sacrificed*. “The broken spirit and contrite heart,” this sacrifice he vowed to bring.

III. Having finished his *prayers* and *vows* for himself, he forgets not *Jerusalem*. He petitions for God’s Church; and the reason might be, that he was afraid Jerusalem would suffer because of his sins; for *peccant reges, plectuntur Achivi*, “the king sins, the people suffer.” This was the case when he sinned against God by numbering the people.

His *method* and his *charity* in this are both instructive.

1. His *method*. 1. To be reconciled to God himself; and then, 2. To pray for others. “The prayers of the righteous avail much.”

2. His *charity*, for we are always bound “to remember the afflictions of Joseph, and pray for the peace of Jerusalem.” He prays,

1. That God, who out of his good pleasure did choose a Church, would out of his mere good will *do it good*, and preserve it: “Do good, in thy good pleasure, to Zion.”

2. That he would have a special favour, even to the *building*: “Build thou the walls of Jerusalem;” for these fall not alone; religion and the service of God fall, when the people permit their churches and chapels to be dilapidated or get out of repair. Of this there are multitudes of proofs.

3. For the consequence of Jerusalem’s prosperity would be this, that “religion would flourish with it;” then there would be *sacrifices*,

burnt-offerings, and *holocausts*: “Then they shall offer bullocks upon thine altar.”

4. And, what is yet *more* and *better*, we shall offer. and THOU wilt accent: “Then thou shalt be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness.” Being reconciled to thee, justified, and sanctified; and righteous in all our conduct; all our sacrifices, springing from thy own grace and love in us, shall find a gracious acceptance. **See Clarke’s note on “~~19518~~ Psalm 51:18”**.

PSALMS

PSALM 52

The psalmist points out the malevolence of a powerful enemy, and predicts his destruction, 1-5. At which destruction the righteous should rejoice, 6, 7. The psalmist's confidence on God, 8, 9.

NOTES ON PSALM 52

The *title* is, “To the chief Musician, an instructive Psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and informed Saul, and said to him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.” The history to which this alludes is the following: David, having learned that Saul was determined to destroy him, went to take refuge with Achish, king of Gath: in his journey he passed by *Nob*, where the tabernacle then was, and took thence the sword of Goliath; and, being spent with hunger, took some of the shewbread. *Doeg*, an Edomite, one of the domestics of Saul, being there, went to Saul, and informed him of these transactions. Saul immediately ordered Ahimelech into his presence, upbraided him for being a partisan of David, and ordered Doeg to slay him and all the priests. Doeg did so, and there fell by his hand eighty-five persons. And Saul sent and destroyed *Nob* and all its inhabitants, old and young, with all their property; none escaping but *Abiathar*, the son of Ahimelech, who immediately joined himself to David. The account may be found ^{<02101>} **1 Samuel 21:1-7; 22:9-23**. All the Versions agree in this title except the *Syriac*, which speaks of it as a Psalm directed against vice in general, with a prediction of the destruction of evil.

Though the Psalm be evidently an invective against some great, wicked, and tyrannical man, yet I think it too mild in its composition for a transaction the most barbarous on record, and the most flagrant vice in the whole character of Saul.

Verse 1. Why boastest thou thyself] It is thought that Doeg *boasted* of his loyalty to Saul in making the above discovery; but the information was aggravated by circumstances of falsehood that tended greatly to inflame and irritate the mind of Saul. Exaggeration and lying are common to all informers.

O mighty man?] This character scarcely comports with Doeg, who was only *chief of the herdsmen of Saul*, ^{<02107>} **1 Samuel 21:7**; but I grant this is

not decisive evidence that the Psalm may not have Doeg in view, for the chief *herdsman* may have been a man of credit and authority.

Verse 2. Deviseth mischiefs] Lies and slanders proceeding from the tongue argue the desperate wickedness of the heart.

Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.] Which instead of taking off the beard, cuts and wounds the flesh; or as the operator who, when pretending to trim the beard, cuts the throat.

Verse 3. Thou lovest evil] This was a finished character. Let us note the particulars: 1. He boasted in the power to do evil. 2. His tongue devised, studied, planned, and spoke mischiefs. 3. He was a deceitful worker. 4. He loved evil and not good. 5. He loved lying; his delight was in falsity. 6. Every word that tended to the destruction of others he loved. 7. His tongue was deceitful; he pretended friendship while his heart was full of enmity, ~~<1950>~~ **Psalm 52:1-4.** Now behold the *punishment*:—

Verse 5. God shall likewise destroy thee] 1. God shall *set himself* to destroy thee; **Ëxty** *yittotscha*, “he will pull down thy building;” he shall unroof it, dilapidate, and dig up thy foundation. 2. He shall bruise or break thee to pieces for ever; thou shalt have neither strength, consistence, nor support. 3. He will mow thee down, and sweep thee away like dust or chaff, or light hay in a whirlwind, so that thou shalt be scattered to all the winds of heaven. Thou shalt have no residence, no tabernacle: *that* shall be entirely destroyed. Thou shalt be rooted out for ever from the land of the living. The bad fruit which it has borne shall bring God’s curse upon the tree; it shall not merely wither, or die, but it shall be plucked up from the roots, intimating that such a sinner shall die a violent death. *Selah*. So it shall be, and so it ought to be.

Verse 6. The righteous also shall see, and fear] The thing shall be done in the sight of the saints; they shall see God’s judgments on the workers of iniquity; and they shall *fear* a God so holy and just, and feel the necessity of being doubly on their guard lest they fall into the same condemnation. But instead of **waryyw** *veyirau*, “and they shall fear,” three of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS., with the *Syriac*, have **wj mcyw** *veyismachu*, “and shall rejoice;” and, from the following words, “and shall laugh at him,” this appears to be the true reading, for *laughing* may be either the consequence or accompaniment of *rejoicing*.

Verse 7. Made not God his strength] Did not make God his *portion*.

In the abundance of his riches] Literally, in the *multiplication of his riches*. He had got much, he hoped to get more, and expected that his *happiness* would *multiply* as his *riches* multiplied. And this is the case with most rich men.

Strengthened himself in his wickedness.] Loved money instead of God; and thus his depravity, being increased, was *strengthened*.

Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.

“In proportion to the increase of wealth, so is the love of it.”

Where is the religious man, in whose hands money has multiplied, who has not lost the spirit of piety in the same ratio? To prevent this, and the perdition to which it leads, there is no way but opening both hands to the *poor*.

Verse 8. But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God] *I shall be in the house of God*, full of spiritual vigour, bringing forth evergreen leaves and annual fruit, as the *olive* does when planted in a proper soil and good situation. It does not mean that there were *olive-trees* planted in God’s house; but *he* was in God’s house, as the olive was in *its* proper place and soil.

I trust in the mercy of God] The *wicked man* trusts in his riches: *I* trust in my God. *He*, like a bad tree, bringing forth poisonous fruit, shall be cursed, and pulled up from the roots; *I*, like a healthy olive in a good soil, shall, under the influence of God’s mercy, bring forth fruit to his glory. As the olive is ever green, so shall I flourish in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

Verse 9. I will praise thee for ever] Because I know that all my good comes from thee; therefore, will I ever praise thee for that good.

I will wait on thy name] I will expect all my blessings from the all-sufficient *Jehovah*, who is *eternal* and *unchangeable*.

It is **good before thy saints.]** It is right that I should expect a continuation of thy blessings by *uniting with thy saints in using thy ordinances*. Thus I shall *wait*.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-SECOND PSALM

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

I. An *invective* against Doeg, and a *prediction* of his fall, ^{<195301>}**Psalm 52:1-5.**

II. The *comfort* which God's people should take in this, ^{<195316>}**Psalm 52:6, 7.**

III. The *security* and *flourishing* state of those who trust in Good, and the psalmist's thanks for it, ^{<195318>}**Psalm 52:8, 9.**

I. David begins with an abrupt *apostrophe* to Doeg: "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, thou mighty man?" And answers that this boasting was but vain; because *the goodness of God* endureth *continually*. This was sufficient to quiet all those who might be afraid of his *boasting*. Having given a *general character* of this man, as having a *delight* in *mischief*, he enters into *particulars*; and especially he considers the bad use he made of his *tongue*.

1. *Thy tongue deviseth mischief, like a razor working deceitfully.* Perhaps there may be here a reference to a case where a man, employed to take off or trim the beard, took that opportunity to cut the throat of his employer. In this manner had Doeg often acted; while pretending by his *tongue* to favour, he used it in a deceitful way to ruin the character of another.

2. "Thou lovest evil more than good:" his wickedness was *habitual*; he *loved* it.

3. "Thou lovest lying more than righteousness:" he was an *enemy* to the *truth*, and by lies and flatteries a destroyer of *good men*.

4. This is expressed more fully in the next verse: "Thou lovest all deceitful words, O thou false tongue!" he was all *tongue*; a *man of words*: and these the most deceitful and injurious.

This is his character; and now David foretells his fall and destruction, which he amplifies by a congeries of words. 1. "God shall likewise destroy thee for ever." 2. "He shall take thee away." 3. "He shall pluck thee out of thy dwelling place." 4. "He shall root thee out of the land of the living." See the notes.

II. Then follows how God's people should be affected by Doeg's fall.

1. "The righteous shall see it and fear:" they shall reverence God more than formerly, as taking vengeance on this singularly wicked man.

2. They shall *laugh at him*, using this bitter sarcasm, "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength," &c.; he trusted in his *gold* more than in his *God*.

III. But such a fearful end shall not fall on any good man: while the wicked is plucked up from the roots, the righteous shall flourish like a healthy olive-tree.

1. "As for me, I am like the green olive-tree;" ever fruitful and flourishing.

2. I am planted in the house of the Lord; and derive all my nourishment from him; through his ordinances.

3. The olive is perhaps one of the most useful trees in the world. Its *fruit* and its *oil* are of great use to the inhabitants of those countries where the olive is cultivated; and are transported to most parts of the world, where the culture of the olive is unknown.

4. The reason why he shall be like the olive: his faith in God: "I trust in the mercy of God for ever."

Hence, the psalmist's *conclusion* is full of confidence:—

1. "I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it."

2. "I will wait on thy name:" I will continue to use those means by which thou communicatest thy grace to the soul.

3. I shall do this because it is my duty, and because it is right in the sight of thy people: "For it is good before thy saints."

PSALMS

PSALM 53

The sentiments of atheists and deists, who deny Divine Providence; their character: they are corrupt, foolish, abominable, and cruel, 1-4; God fills them with terror, 5; reproaches these for their oppression of the poor, 5. The psalmist prays for the restoration of Israel, 6.

NOTES ON PSALM 53

The title, *To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, an instructive Psalm of David.* The word **t l j m** *machalath*, some translate the *president*; others, the *master or leader of the dance*; others, *hollow instruments*; others, the *chorus*. A *flute pipe*, or *wind instrument with holes*, appears to be what is intended. “To the chief player on the flute;” or, “To the master of the band of pipers.”

Verse 1. The fool hath said in his heart] The whole of this Psalm, except a few inconsiderable differences, is the same as the *fourteenth*; and, therefore, the same *notes* and *analysis* may be applied to it; or, by referring to the *fourteenth*, the reader will find the subject of it amply explained. I shall add a few short notes.

Have done abominable iniquity] Instead of **l w** [*avel, evil or iniquity*, eight of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS. have **hl yl** [*alilah, work*, which is nearly the same as in ^{<1940>}**Psalm 14:1**, &c.

Verse 4. Have the workers of iniquity] For **yl** [*p, poaley, workers* seventy-two of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS., with several ancient editions, the *Chaldee*, though not noticed in the Latin translation in the *London Polyglot*, the *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and the *Arabic*, with the *Anglo-Saxon*, add the word **l k col**, *all*,—ALL the *workers of iniquity*; which is the reading in the parallel place in ^{<1943>}**Psalm 14:3, 4**. It may be necessary to observe, that the *Chaldee*, in the *Antwerp* and *Paris Polyglots*, and in that of *Justinianus*, has not the word **l k col**, ALL.

Have not called upon God] **pyhl a** *Elohim*; but many MSS. have **hwby** *Jehovah*, LORD.

Verse 5. For God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.] The reader will see, on comparing this with the fifth and sixth verses of ^{<191405>}**Psalm 14:5, 6**, that the words above are mostly *added* here to what is said *there*; and appear to be levelled against the *Babylonians*, who sacked and ruined Jerusalem, and who were now sacked and ruined in their turn. The sixth verse of ^{<191406>}**Psalm 14:6**, “Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge,” is added here by more than twenty of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS.

Verse 6. O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!] I have already shown that the proper translation is, “Who shall give from Zion salvation to Israel?” The word *salvation* is in the *plural* here, *deliverances*: but many MSS., with the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*, have it in the *singular*.

When God bringeth back] *When Jehovah bringeth back*, is the reading of more than twenty of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS., with the *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, and *Chaldee*, and *Justinianus’* Polyglot Psalter.

For larger notes and an analysis, the reader is requested to refer to ^{<191401>}**Psalm 14:1**, &c.; and for a comparison of the two Psalms he may consult Dr. *Kennicott’s* Hebrew Bible, where, under ^{<191401>}**Psalm 14:1**, &c., in the lower margin, the variations are exhibited at one view.

PSALMS

PSALM 54

The psalmist complains that strangers were risen up against him to take away his life, 1-3; expresses his confidence in God that he will uphold him, and punish his enemies, 4, 5; on which he promises to sacrifice to God, 6; he speaks of his deliverance, 7.

NOTES ON PSALM 54

The title is, “To the chief Musician upon Neginoth, an instructive Psalm of David, when the Ziphites came to Saul, and said, Doth not David conceal himself among us?”

Ziph was a village in the southern part of Palestine. David having taken refuge in the mountains of that country, the Ziphites went to Saul, and informed him of the fact. Saul, with his army, immediately went thither, and was on one side of a mountain while David was on the other. Just when he was about to fall into the hands of his merciless pursuer, an express came to Saul that the Philistines had invaded Israel, on which he gave up the pursuit, and returned to save his country, and David escaped to En-gedi. See the account in ^{<02319>} **1 Samuel 23:19-29**. It is supposed to have been after this deliverance that he composed this Psalm. *Neginoth*, from ḡn *nagan*, to *strike* or *play* on some kind of instrument, probably signifies *stringed instruments*, such as were played on with a *plectrum*.

Verse 1. Save me, O God, by thy name] Save me by *thysself* alone; so *name* here may be understood. The *name of God* is often *God himself*. David was now in such imminent danger of being taken and destroyed, that no human means were left for his escape; if God therefore had not interfered, he must have been destroyed. See the *introduction* above.

Verse 2. Hear my prayer] In his straits he had recourse to God; for from him alone, for the reasons alleged above, his deliverance must proceed.

Verse 3. Strangers are risen up against me] The *Ziphites*.

And oppressors] Saul, his courtiers, and his army.

They have not set God before them.] It is on *no religious account*, nor is it to accomplish any *end*, on which they can ask the *blessing* of God.

Selah.] This is true.

Verse 4. Behold, God is mine helper] This would naturally occur to him when he saw that Saul was obliged to leave the pursuit, and go to defend his territories, when he was on the very point of seizing him. God, whose providence is ever watchful, had foreseen this danger, and stirred up the Philistines to make this inroad just at the time in which Saul and his army were about to lay hands on David. Well might he then say, “Behold, God is mine helper.”

Is **with them, that uphold my soul.]** *yvpn naphshi*, my *life*. This may even refer to the *Philistines*, who had at this time made an inroad on Israel. God was even with his own enemies, by making them instruments to save the life of his servant.

Verse 5. He shall reward evil] Saul and his courtiers, instead of having God’s approbation, shall have his curse.

Cut them off in thy truth.] Thou hast *promised* to save me; these have purposed to destroy me. Thy *truth* is engaged in my defence; they will destroy me if permitted to *live*: to save *thy truth*, and to accomplish its *promises*, *thou must cut them off*.

Verse 6. I will freely sacrifice unto thee] Or, *I will sacrifice nobly unto thee*. Not only with a *willing mind*, but with a *liberal hand* will I bring sacrifice unto thee.

For it is good] Thy *name* is *good*; it is descriptive of thy nature; full of goodness and mercy to man. And *it is good* to be employed in such a work: whoever worships thee in sincerity is sure to be a gainer. To him who orders his conversation aright, thou dost show thy salvation.

Verse 7. For he hath delivered me] Saul had now decamped; and was returned to save his territories; and David in the meanwhile escaped to En-gedi. God was most evidently the author of this deliverance.

Mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.] It is not likely that this Psalm was written after the *death of Saul*; and therefore David could not say that *he had seen his desire*. But there is nothing in the text for *his desire*; and the words might be translated, *My eye hath seen my enemies*—they have been so near that I could plainly discover them. Thus almost all

the *Versions* have understood the text. *I have seen them*, and yet they were not permitted to approach me. God has been my Deliverer.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PSALM

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

- I. David's prayer for help and salvation, ^{<19540>}Psalm 54:1-3.
- II. His confidence that he should have help, ^{<19540>}Psalm 54:4, 5.
- III. His *gratitude* and *obedience*, ^{<19540>}Psalm 54:6, 7.

1. David's petition: 1. "Save me." 2. "Plead my cause." 3. "Hear my prayer." 4. "Give ear to my words." He is much in earnest; and yet does not desire his prayer to be heard unless his *cause be just*. If just, then let *God plead it*.

2. He produces *two* grounds upon which he petitions: 1. God's *name*. 2. God's *strength*. 1. He that calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved; I call: "Save me in thy name!" 2. Thou art a *powerful* God, able to do it: "Save me in thy strength."

The greatness of his danger causes him to urge his prayer.

1. His enemies were *strangers*; from whom no favour could be expected.
2. They were *violent oppressors*—formidable, cruel tyrants, from whom he could expect no mercy.
3. They were such as could be satisfied with nothing less than his blood: "They rise to seek after my life."
4. They had no *fear of God*: "They have not set God before them."

II. Notwithstanding they are all that I have already stated; and, humanly speaking, I have nothing but destruction to expect; yet I will not fear: because, 1. God is *with me*. 2. He is *against them*.

1. "God is my helper:" as he has promised, so he has done, and will do, to me.
2. "God is with them also who uphold my soul. Selah." *Behold this!*

But he opposes them who oppose me; is an enemy to them who are mine enemies.

1. "He shall reward evil" to such: of this being assured, he proceeds to imprecate.

2. Destroy thou them: "Cut them off in thy truth." Thou hast promised that *it shall be well with the righteous*; and that *snares, fire, and brimstone, shall be rained on the wicked*. Let God be true: *Fiat justitia; ruat cœlum, pereat mundus*. They *must be cut off*.

III. For such a mercy David promises not to be unthankful.

1. For this he would offer a *princely sacrifice*: "I will freely sacrifice."

2. He would praise the name of the Lord: "I will praise thy name."

For this he gives *two* reasons:—

1. That which *internally* moved him: "For it is good."

2. That which was *outwardly impulsive*; his *deliverance*. 1. His deliverance was great and effectual: "Thou hast delivered me out of all my trouble." 2. His danger was so *imminent* that, humanly speaking, there was no escape. The enemy was within sight who was bent on his destruction; yet *he* was delivered; and *they* were confounded. On these accounts it was right that he should sing praise, and offer sacrifice. To the grateful, God is bountiful.

PSALMS

PSALM 55

David, in great danger and distress from the implacable malice of his enemies, calls on God for mercy, 1-5; wishes he had the wings of a dove, that he might flee away, and be at rest, 6-8; prays against his enemies, and describes their wickedness, 9-11; speaks of a false friend, who had been the principal cause of all his distresses, 12-14; again prays against his enemies, 15; expresses his confidence in God, 16-18; gives a farther description of the deceitful friend, 19-21; encourages himself in the Lord, and foretells the destruction of his foes, 22, 23.

NOTES ON PSALM 55

The *title*, “To the chief Musician upon Neginoth, A *Psalm* of David, giving instruction.” This is the same as the preceding, which see. { <195401> **Psalm 54:1** }

Verse 1. Give ear to my prayer] The frequency of such petitions shows the great earnestness of David’s soul. If God did not hear and help, he knew he could not succeed elsewhere; therefore he continues to knock at the gate of God’s mercy.

Verse 2. I mourn in my complaint] *yj ycb besichi*, in my sighing; a strong *guttural* sound, expressive of the natural accents of sorrow.

And make a noise] I am in a *tumult*—I am strongly *agitated*.

Verse 3. They cast iniquity upon me] To give a colourable pretense to their rebellion, they charge me with horrible crimes; as if they had said: Down with such a wretch; he is not fit to reign. Clamour against the person of the sovereign is always the watch-word of *insurrection*, in reference to *rebellion*.

Verse 4. The terrors of death are fallen upon me.] I am in hourly expectation of being massacred.

Verse 5. Fearfulness] How natural is this description! He is in *distress*;—he *mourns*;—*makes a noise*;—*sobs* and *sighs*;—his *heart is wounded*—he expects nothing but *death*;—this produces *fear*;—this produces *tremor*, which terminates in that *deep apprehension* of *approaching* and *inevitable*

ruin that *overwhelms* him with *horror*. No man ever described a wounded heart like David.

Verse 6. O that I had wings like a dove!] He was so surrounded, so hemmed in on every side by his adversaries, that he could see no way for his escape unless he had wings, and could take flight. The *dove* is a bird of very rapid wing; and some oil them passing before his eyes at the time, might have suggested the idea expressed here.

And be at rest.] Get a *habitation*.

Verse 7. Would I wander far off] He did escape; and yet his enemies were *so near*, as to *throw stones at him*: but he escaped beyond Jordan.

<10172> **2 Samuel 17:22, 23.**

A passage in the *Octavia* of SENECA has been referred to as being parallel to this of David. It is in the answer of *Octavia* to the *Chorus*, Acts v., ver. 914-923.

**Quis mea digne deflere potest
 Mala? Quæ lacrymis nostris quæstus
 Reddet Aedon? cujus pennas
 Utinam miseræ mihi fata darent!
 Fugerem luctus ablata meos
 Penna volucris, procul et coetus
 Hominum tristes sedemque feram.
 Sola in vacuo nemore, et tenui
 Ramo pendens, querulo possem
 Gutturæ moestum fundere murmur.**

*My woes who enough can bewail?
 O what notes can my sorrows express?
 Sweet Philomel's self e'en would fail
 To respond with her plaintive distress.*

*O had I her wings I would fly
 To where sorrows I ne'er should feel more,
 Upborne on her plumes through the sky,
 Regions far from mankind would explore.*

*In a grove where sad silence should reign,
On a spray would I seat me alone;
In shrill lamentations complain,
And in wailings would pour forth my moan.*
J. B. CLARKE.

Verse 8. The windy storm] From the sweeping wind and tempest—Absalom and his party and the mutinous people in general.

Verse 9. Destroy, O lord] *Swallow them up*—confound them.

Divide their tongues] Let his counsellors give opposite advice. Let them never agree, and let their devices be confounded. And the prayer was heard. Hushai and Ahithophel gave opposite counsel. Absalom followed that of *Hushai*; and *Ahithophel*, knowing that the steps advised by Hushai would bring Absalom's affairs to ruin, went and hanged himself. See ^{<101501>}2 Samuel 15:1-17:29.

Violence and strife in the city.] They have been concerting violent measures; and thus are full of contention.

Verse 10. Day and night they go about] This and the following verse show the state of Jerusalem at this time. Indeed, they exhibit a fair view of the state of any city in the beginning of an *insurrection*. The leaders are plotting continually; going about to strengthen their party, and to sow new dissensions by misrepresentation, hypocrisy, calumny, and lies.

Verse 12. It was not an enemy] It is likely that in all these *three* verses Ahithophel is meant, who, it appears, had been at the bottom of the conspiracy from the beginning; and probably was the first mover of the vain mind of Absalom to do what he did.

Verse 14. Walked unto the house of God in company.] Or with haste; for the rabbins teach that we should walk *hastily* TO the temple, but *slowly* FROM it.

Verse 15. Let death seize upon them] This is a prediction of the sudden destruction which should fall on the ringleaders in this rebellion. And it was so. *Ahithophel*, seeing his counsel rejected, *hanged* himself. *Absalom* was defeated; and, fleeing away, he was suspended by the hair in a tree, under which his mule had passed; and being found thus by Joab, he was despatched with *three darts*; and the *people* who espoused his interests

were almost all cut off. They fell by the sword, or perished in the woods. See ^{<10188>}**2 Samuel 18:8**.

Let then go down quick into hell] Let them go down alive into the pit. Let the earth swallow them up! And something of this kind actually took place. Absalom and his army were defeated; *twenty thousand* of the rebels were slain on the field; and *the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured*, ^{<10187>}**2 Samuel 18:7, 8**. The words might be rendered, “Death shall exact upon them; they shall descend alive into sheol.” And death did *exact* his debt upon them, as we have seen above.

Verse 16. I will call upon God] He foresaw his deliverance, and the defeat of his enemies, and therefore speaks confidently, “The Lord shall save me;” or, as the *Targum*, “The WORD of the Lord shall redeem me.”

Verse 17. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray] This was the custom of the pious Hebrews. See ^{<27050>}**Daniel 6:10**. The Hebrews began their day in the *evening*, and hence David mentions the *evening first*. The rabbins say, Men should pray three times each day, because the day changes three times. This was observed in the primitive Church; but the times, in different places, were various. The old *Psalter* gives this a curious turn: “At *even* I sall tel his louing (*praise*) what tim Crist was on the Crosse: and at *morn* I sall schew his louing, what tim he ros fra dede. And sua he sall here my voyce at *mid day*, that is sitand at the right hand of his fader, wheder he stegh (*ascended*) at mid day.”

Verse 18. He hath delivered my soul] My *life* he has preserved in perfect safety from the sword; *for there were many with me*: “for in many afflictions his WORD was my support.”—*Targum*. Or David may refer to the *supernatural assistance* which was afforded him when his enemies were so completely discomfited.

Verse 19. Because they have no changes] At first Absalom, Ahithophel, and their party, carried all before them. There seemed to be a very general defection of the people; and as in their first attempts they suffered no *reverses*, therefore they feared not God. Most of those who have few or no afflictions and trials in life, have but little religion. They become sufficient to themselves, and call not upon God.

Verse 20. He hath put forth his hands] A farther description of Ahithophel. He betrayed his friends, and he broke his covenant with his

king. He had agreed to serve David for his own emolument, and a stipulation was made accordingly; but while receiving the king's pay, he was endeavouring to subvert the kingdom, and destroy the life of his sovereign.

Verse 21. Were smoother than butter] He was a complete courtier, and a deep, designing hypocrite besides. His words *were as soft as butter, and as smooth as oil*, while he meditated war; and the fair words which were intended to *deceive*, were intended also to *destroy*: they *were drawn swords*. This is a literal description of the words and conduct of Absalom, as we learn from the inspired historian, ^{<0152>}**2 Samuel 15:2**, &c. He was accustomed to wait at the gate; question the persons who came for justice and judgment; throw out broad hints that the king was negligent of the affairs of his kingdom, and had not provided an effective magistracy to administer justice among the people, and added that if he were appointed judge in the land, justice should be done to all. He bowed also to the people, and kissed them; and thus *he stole the hearts of the men of Israel*. See the passages referred to above.

Verse 22. Cast thy burden upon the Lord] Whatever cares, afflictions, trials, &c., they may be with which thou art oppressed, lay them upon him.

And he shall sustain thee] He shall bear both thee and thy burden. What a glorious promise to a tempted and afflicted soul! God will carry both *thee* and thy *load*. Then cast *thyself* and *it* upon *him*.

He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.] While a man is righteous, trusts in and depends upon God, he will never suffer him to be shaken. *While he trusts in God, and works righteousness*, he is as safe as if he were in heaven.

Verse 23. But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction] The *Chaldee* is emphatic: "And thou, O Lord, by thy WORD (*Ērmymb bemeymerach*) shalt thrust them into the deep gehenna, the bottomless pit, whence they shall never come out; the *pit of destruction*, where all is amazement, horror, anguish, dismay, ruin, endless loss, and endless suffering."

Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days] So we find, if there be an appointed time to man upon earth, beyond which he cannot pass; yet he may so live as to provoke the justice of God to cut him off

before he arrives at that period; yea, before he has reached *half way* to that limit. According to the decree of God, he might have lived the *other half*; but he has not done it.

But I will trust in thee.] Therefore I shall not be moved, and shall live out all the days of my appointed time.

The fathers in general apply the principal passages of this Psalm to our Lord's sufferings, the treason of Judas, and the wickedness of the Jews; but these things do not appear to me fairly deducible from the text. It seems to refer plainly enough to the rebellion of Absalom. "The consternation and distress expressed in ^{<19570>}**Psalm 55:4-8**, describe the king's state of mind when he fled from Jerusalem, and marched up the mount of Olives, weeping. The *iniquity cast upon the psalmist* answers to the complaints artfully laid against the king by his son of a negligent administration of justice: and to the reproach of *cruelty* cast upon him by Shimei, ^{<10152>}**2 Samuel 15:2, 4; 16:7, 8**. The *equal*, the *guide*, and the *familiar friend*, we find in *Ahithophel*, the confidential counsellor, first of David, afterwards of his son Absalom. The *buttery mouth* and *oily words* describe the insidious character of *Absalom*, as it is delineated, ^{<10155>}**2 Samuel 15:5-9**. Still the believer, accustomed to the double edge of the prophetic style, in reading this Psalm, notwithstanding its agreement with the occurrences of David's life, will be led to think of David's great *descendant*, who endured a bitter agony, and was the victim of a baser treachery, in the same spot where David is supposed to have uttered *these complaints*."—*Bishop Horsley*.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PSALM

There are *five* general parts in this *Psalm*:—

- I. The psalmist entreats God to hear his prayer, ^{<19570>}**Psalm 55:1, 2**.
- II. He complains of his trouble, ^{<19573>}**Psalm 55:3-8**.
- II. He prays against his enemies, and shows the causes, ^{<19578>}**Psalm 55:8-15**.
- IV. He takes courage upon assurance of God's help, and his enemies' overthrow, ^{<19515>}**Psalm 55:15-21**.
- V. An epilogue, in which he exhorts all men to rely upon God, ^{<19522>}**Psalm 55:22, 23**.

I. He begs audience.

1. "Give ear—hide not thyself—attend—hear me."

2. "My prayer—supplication—that I mourn—complain—make a noise." Affected he was with the sense of what he prayed for, and he was therefore earnest in it.

II. This in general; but next, in particular, he mentions the causes of his complaint, and earnestness to God, that he might be heard both in regard of his enemies, and the condition he was now in. The danger he was in was very great; escape he could not without God's help, for his enemies persecuted him very sore.

1. They slandered and calumniated him, and threatened him: "Because of the voice," &c.

2. They vexed, pressed upon him, and oppressed him: "Because of the oppression of the wicked."

3. They plotted his ruin, devolved, and *cast iniquity upon him*—charged him home.

4. They were implacable, angry, and hated him: "In wrath they hate me."

Then, as to his own person, he was in a sad, heavy, doleful condition.

1. "My heart is sore pained within me." His grief was inward.

2. "The terrors of death are fallen upon me." He saw nothing but death before him.

3. "Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me." Which are the outward effects of fear.

4. "And a horrible dread within hath overwhelmed me." Amazement followed his fear.

And he illustrates this his condition by the counsel he took with his own heart. Upon the deliberation the result was, that he would speedily fly away, fly into the wilderness, as if he might be safer among beasts than such men.

1. "And I said." That was the result upon his debate with himself.

2. “O that I had wings like a dove!” It is a fearful creature of a swift wing. In fear he was, and he would fly as fast and as far as the dove from the eagle.

3. As far, even to some remote land, where I should have rest from these wicked men.

And he amplifies and explains himself again:—

1. That he would fly far away, even to some desolate place out of their reach: “Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness.”

2. That he would do it with speed: “I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.” Such turbulent and impetuous creatures his enemies were that threw down all before them, as a wind, storm, and tempest.

III. To his prayer he adds an imprecation:—

1. “Destroy them, O Lord; destroy them in their own counsels.”

2. Or else, “divide their tongue.” Let them not agree in their counsels.

Of this he gives the reason in the following words: viz., that they were a band of violent, contentious, ungodly, troublesome, crafty, and fraudulent people.

1. Violent they were, and litigious: “I have seen violence and strife in the city.”

2. Ungodly, and workers of iniquity they were; and incessant in it: “Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.”

3. Crafty and fraudulent also: “Deceit and guile depart not from her streets.” It was then a city, a corporation, a society of evil doers.

And of this he produces an instance, which whether it were some bosom friend of *David* who stole out of the city of *Keilah*, and betrayed his counsels to *Saul*; or else *Ahithophel*, who, being formerly his great favourite and counsellor, fell to *Absalom*, it is uncertain. Whoever it was, such a treacherous person there was, and of him he complains: and well he might; for ουδεν μειζον ελκος η φιλος αδικων, “there is not a greater sore than a treacherous friend.” This treachery he exaggerates most

eloquently by an incrementum and apostrophe, drawing his aggravation from the laws of friendship, which he had broken. Had it been an enemy, he could have borne it; but that it was a friend was intolerable, and also inexcusable. Thus the climax stands:—

1. “For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it.”

2. “Neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself,” that is, arise and insult me; “then I would have hid myself from him,” never admitted him to my bosom.

But mark this emphatic adversative, for now he turns his speech to the man:—

1. “It was thou,” emphatically *thou*, principally and beyond all others. None *but thou*.

2. “A man,” according to my own rank, mine equal; my guide or counsellor; my acquaintance, my own familiar friend.

3. “We took sweet counsel together.” One to whom I communicated my secrets.

4. “And walked unto the house of God in company.” Professors we were of the same religion.

Now all these circumstances much heighten and aggravate the treachery: that thou, my equal, my director, my familiar friend, one whom I made the master of all my secrets, one who was a great professor of the same religion with me, that *thou* shouldst betray me, even break my heart. σὺ ἔκβουλον; *Judas—betrayest thou?*

Being thus much wronged and moved, as he had just reason, he begins again with an imprecation, not only on him, but on all who believed him, even upon the whole faction: “Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell,” have *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram’s* wages. And he adds the reason. They are signally and incorrigibly wicked: “For wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.”

IV. Hitherto hath *David* prayed, complained, imprecated; but now he shows how he recovered courage again, being certain of God’s help, and a revenge to be taken on his enemies.

1. "As for me, I will call upon God fervently, and the Lord shall save me."
2. "Evening, and morning, and at noon-day," incessantly, "will I pray and cry aloud; and he shall hear me."
3. And I pray in faith; experience I have of his deliverance; he hath done it, and he will do it again. "He hath redeemed my soul in peace from the battle which was against me." Even in the midst of the battle, I was as safe as in a time of peace; miraculously delivered, as if there had been no danger.
4. "For there were many with me." *Many enemies*, say some; others, *many angels*. Those refer it to the danger; these, to the protection. Many enemies round about me, and then it is a wonder I should be delivered. Many angels press to help me, and then it was no wonder that my life was saved. But as for the ungodly, it was not so with them; for this *verse* is opposed to the former.

1. "God shall hear," viz., me and my prayers, and the wrongs they do me.
2. "And shall afflict them," i.e., my enemies.
3. "Even he that abideth of old. Selah." Mark that, for He is immutable. His power and strength is the same, and his care and love to his people; therefore, he will afflict them.

And, besides, there are those who will provoke him to it,—

1. Because "they have no changes." Obstinate they are, impertinent, and change not their ways. Or else they prosper, they have perpetual success, and meet with no alteration; this makes them secure and proud.
2. "They fear not God." They ask, "Who is the Lord, that we should let Israel go?"
3. They are truce-breakers, violators of oaths, leagues, covenants, articles of war. "He (that is, some chief commander among them) hath put forth his hands, made war, imbrued his hands in blood, against such as are at peace with him." He hath broken and profaned his covenant—his oath.
4. He is a gross hypocrite; his deeds answer not to his words: "The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords."

V. In the *epilogue* of the Psalm he exhorts good men to rely upon God: “Cast thy burden (the cares, troubles, &c., with which thou art loaded) on the Lord;” and he fits it to his present purpose, both as it concerns the godly and the ungodly.

1. To the godly he gives this comfort: 1. “He (that is, God) shall sustain thee.” He will uphold thee, and give thee strength under the heaviest burdens. “Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden.” 2. “He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” With the temptation he will also give the issue; pressed they may be, but not oppressed so as finally to be overthrown.

2. To the ungodly. 1. Overthrown they shall be, and utterly destroyed: “Thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction;” the grave—hell. 2. “Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.” They come commonly to some untimely death, as *Absalom* and *Ahithophel*, concerning whom the Psalm was composed.

He concludes with the use he would make of it; as if he had said: Let these bloody and deceitful men repose their confidence in their armies, in their violence, in their crafty and subtle ways; I will take another course: “But I will trust in thee.”

PSALMS

PSALM 56

David prays for support against his enemies, whose wickedness he describes, 1-6; and foretells their destruction, 7; expresses his confidence in God's mercy, expects deliverance, and promises thanksgiving and obedience, 8-13.

NOTES ON PSALM 56

The *title* of this Psalm is very long: "To the conqueror, concerning the dumb dove in foreign places: golden Psalm of David." The *Vulgate* translates the original thus: "to the end. For the people who were afar off from holy things." "This inscription David placed here for a title when the Philistines—took him in Gath;" so the *Septuagint* and *Æthiopic*. The *Chaldee* is profuse: "To praise, for the congregation of Israel, which are compared to the silence of a dove, when they were afar off from their cities; but being returned, they praise the Lord of the world; like David, contrite and upright, when the Philistines kept him in Gath." The *Syriac*: "A thanksgiving of the righteous man, because he was delivered from his enemy, and from the hand of Saul. Also concerning the Jews and Christ." *Bochart* translates, "To the tune of the dove in the remote woods."

If the title be at all authentic, David may mean himself and his companions by it, when he escaped from the hands of the Philistines; particularly from the hands of Achish, king of Gath. $\mu\lambda$ *a elem* signifies to *compress* or *bind together*; also, a *small band* or *body of men*: and tnwy *yonath*, from hny *yanah*, to *oppress* or *afflict*, is properly applied to the *dove*, because of its being so *defenseless*, and often becoming the *prey* of ravenous birds. It is possible, therefore, that the title may imply no more than—"A prayer to God in behalf of himself and the *oppressed band* that followed him, and shared his misfortunes in *distant places*."

Others will have it to mean a simple direction "To the master of the band, to be sung to the time of a well-known ode, called 'The dumb dove, in distant places.'" "There is no end to conjectures, and all the *titles* in the whole book are not worth one hour's labour. Perhaps there is not one of them *authentic*. They may have been *notices* that such a Psalm was to be sung to *such and such a tune*; giving the *catch-words* of some well-known

song or ode: a custom that prevails much among us in songs and hymns, and is to be found even among the Asiatics.

Verse 1. Be merciful unto me] I am assailed both at home and abroad. I can go nowhere without meeting with enemies: unless thou who art the Fountain of mercy and the *Most High*, stand up in my behalf, my enemies will most undoubtedly prevail against me. *They fight against me continually*, and I am in the utmost danger of *being swallowed up* by them.

Verse 2. O thou Most High.] pwr̄m *marom*. I do not think that this word expresses any attribute of God, or indeed is at all addressed to him. It signifies, literally, *from on high*, or *from a high or elevated place*: “For the multitudes fight against me from the high or elevated place;” the place of *authority*—the court and cabinet of Saul.

Most of the *Versions* begin the next verse with this word: “From the light of the day, though I fear, yet will I trust in thee.” From the time that *persecution waxes hot against me*, though I often am seized with fear, yet I am enabled to maintain my trust in thee. Dr. *Kennicott* thinks there is a corruption here, and proposes to read: “I look upwards all the day long.”

Verse 4. In God I will praise his word] pyhl ab *belohim* may mean here, *through God*, or *by the help of God*, *I will praise his word*. And, that he should have cause to do it, he says, “In God I have put my trust,” and therefore he says, “I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.” Man is but FLESH, *weak and perishing*; God is an infinite SPIRIT, *almighty and eternal*. He repeats this sentiment in the *tenth* and *eleventh* verses. {^{<195610>} **Psalm 56:10, 11**}

Verse 5. Every day they wrest my words] They have been spies on my conduct continually; they collected all my sayings, and wrested my words out of their proper sense and meaning, to make them, by *inuendos*, speak treason against Saul. They are full of evil purposes against me.

Verse 6. They gather themselves together] They form cabals; have secret meetings and consultations how they may most effectually destroy me, under the pretense of justice and safety to the state.

They hide themselves] They do all secretly.

They mark my steps] They are constantly at my heels.

They wait for my soul.] They lie in wait for my *life*. Our translators have missed the meaning of **נפש** *nephesh* and **ψυχη**, which generally signify the *animal life*, not the immortal spirit,—more than any other words in the Old or New Testament.

Verse 7. Shall they escape by iniquity?] Shall such conduct go unpunished? Shall their address, their dexterity in working iniquity, be the means of their escape? No. “In anger, O God, wilt thou cast down the people.”

Verse 8. Thou tellest my wanderings] Thou seest how often I am obliged to *shift the place* of my *retreat*. I am hunted every where; but thou *numberest* all my *hiding-places*, and seest how often I am in danger of losing my life.

Put thou my tears into thy bottle] Here is an allusion to a very ancient custom, which we know long obtained among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, of putting the tears which were shed for the death of any person into small phials, called *lacrymatories* or *urnæ lacrymales* and offering them on the tomb of the deceased. Some of these were of *glass*, some of *pottery*, and some of *agate*, *sardonyx*, &c. A small one in my own collection is of *hard baked clay*.

Are they **not in thy book?]** Thou hast taken an exact account of all the tears I have shed in relation to this business; and thou wilt call my enemies to account for *every tear*.

Verse 9. When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back] As soon as they know that I call upon thee, then, knowing that thou wilt hear and save, my enemies will immediately take flight. The cry of faith and prayer to God is more dreadful to our spiritual foes than the war-whoop of the Indian is to his surprised brother savages.

This I know] I have often had experience of the Divine interposition; and I know it will be so now, *for God is with me*. He who has *God WITH him* need not fear the face of any adversary.

Verses 10. - 11. See on ^{49504E} **Psalm 56:4**, where the same words occur.

Verse 12. Thy vows are upon me] I have promised in the most solemn manner to be thy servant; to give my whole life to thee; and to offer for my preservation sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.

Reader, what hast thou *vowed* to God? To renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful desires of the flesh; to keep God's holy word and commandment, and to walk before him all the days of thy life. These things hast *thou vowed*; and these *vows* are *upon thee*. Wilt thou *pay* them?

Verse 13. Thou hast delivered my soul from death] My *life* from the *grave*, and my *soul* from *endless perdition*.

My feet from falling] Thou hast preserved me from taking any false way, and keepest me steady in my godly course; and so supportest me that I may continue to *walk before thee in the light of the living*, ever avoiding that which is evil, and moving towards that which is good; letting my light shine before men, that they may see my good works, and glorify my Father which is in heaven. *To walk before God* is to please him; the *light of the living* signifies the whole course of human life, with all its *comforts* and *advantages*.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PSALM

David, in banishment among the Philistines, and being then in great danger of his life, complains, and professes his confidence in God.

The contents of this Psalm are the following:—

- I. David's *prayer*, ^{<15601>}**Psalm 56:1, 7, 8.**
- II. The *cause*; the fear of his enemies, whom he describes, ^{<15601>}**Psalm 56:1, 2, 5, 6.**
- III. His *confidence* in God's word, ^{<15603>}**Psalm 56:3, 4, 9-11.**
- IV. His *thankfulness*, ^{<15604>}**Psalm 56:4, 10, 12, 13.**

I. He begins with a prayer for mercy. Little was he likely to find from man; from his God he expected it; and therefore he prays: "Be merciful unto me, O God."

II. And then presently he subjoins the *cause*; the danger he was in by his bloody and cruel enemies, whom he begins to describe:—

1. From their *insatiable rapacity*. Like a wolf they would *swallow me up*. Enemies at home and abroad would swallow me up.

2. From the *time*. Daily they would do it; without intermission.

3. From their *number*: "Many there be that fight against me."

Of these he gives us a farther description in the fifth and sixth verses:—

1. From their *incessant malice*: “Every day they wrest my words. All their thoughts are against me for evil.”
2. From their *secret treachery, craft, and vigilance*: “They gather themselves together, they hide themselves;” their counsels lying, as it were, in ambush for me. “They mark my steps.” Go where I will, they are at my heels.
3. From their *implacable hatred*; nothing could satisfy them but his blood: “They lay wait for my soul.”

In the very midst of this complaint, he inserts his courage and confidence.

1. “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”
2. “I will not fear.” He rises higher: even when he fears, he will not fear. His word, his promise, is passed to me for protection; and I will trust in it: “In God will I praise his word; in God have I put my trust, I will not fear what flesh, (for the proudest, the mightiest enemy I have, is but flesh, *and all flesh is grass,*) I will not then fear what flesh can do unto me.”

This *reason* he repeats again, ^{<195610>} **Psalm 56:10, 11.**

1. “In God I will praise his word; in the Lord I will praise his word.”
2. “In God have I put my trust, I will not fear what man can do to me.”

III. And this, his *confidence*, he quickens and animates,—

1. From his assurance that God would punish and bring down his enemies: “Shall they escape for their iniquity?” No, no; “in thine anger thou wilt cast them down.”
2. From his *assurance* of God’s *tutelage*, and paternal eye over him in all his dangers, griefs, complaints, petitions, and banishment.

Men think God does not meddle with little things: he knew otherwise.

1. “Thou tellest,” and hast upon account, “my wanderings;” my flights, exile.
2. “Thou putttest my tears into thy bottle; “ preservest them as rich wine.
3. Thou keepest a record for them: “Are they not in thy book?”

4. Thou puttest my enemies to flight: “When I cry unto thee, then I know mine enemies shall be turned back; for God is with me.”

IV. And therefore, at last, he concludes with thanks, to which he holds himself bound by *vow*.

1. “Thy vows are upon me:” I owe thee thanks by vow, and I will pay them. “I will render praises unto thee.”

2. The reason is, “For thou hast delivered my soul from death.”

3. Thou wilt deliver me: “Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling?”

4. The end is, “That I may walk before God in the light of the living.” That I may live awhile, and walk as before thy eye; as in thy sight, uprightly, sincerely, and prosperously. That in me men may behold how powerfully thou hast saved both my body and soul.

PSALMS

PSALM 57

David cries to God for mercy, with the strongest confidence of being heard, 1-3; he describes his enemies as lions, 4; thanks God for his deliverance, 5; and purposes to publish the praises of the Lord among his people, 6-11.

NOTES ON PSALM 57

The title is, *To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, (destroy not,) a golden Psalm of David, (or one to be engraven,) where he fled from Saul in the cave.* It is very likely that this Psalm was made to commemorate his escape from Saul in the cave of *En-gedi*, where Saul had entered without knowing that David was there, and David cut off the skirt of his garment. And it is not improbable that, when he found that Saul was providentially delivered into his hand, he might have formed the hasty resolution to take away his life, as his companions counselled him to do; and in that moment the Divine monition came, **tj ct l a al tascheth! Destroy not! lift not up thy hand against the Lord's anointed!** Instead, therefore, of taking away his life, he contented himself with taking away his *skirt*, to show him that he had been in his power. When, afterwards, he composed the Psalm, he gave it for *title* the words which he received as a Divine warning. See the history ~~1 Samuel 24:1-22~~. See also my note upon the *fourth* verse of that chapter. See Clarke “~~1 Samuel 24:4~~”.

Verse 1. Be merciful unto me] To show David's deep earnestness, he repeats this *twice*; he was in great danger, surrounded by implacable enemies, and he knew that God alone could deliver him.

My soul trusteth in thee] I put my *life* into thy hand; and my *immortal spirit* knows no other portion than thyself.

In the shadow of thy wings] A metaphor taken from the brood of a hen taking shelter under her wings when they see a bird of prey; and there they continue to *hide themselves* till their *enemy disappears*. In a *storm*, or *tempest of rain*, the mother covers them with her wings to afford them shelter and defence. This the psalmist has particularly in view, as the following words show: “Until these calamities be overpast.”

Verse 2. I will cry unto God most high] He is the *Most High*; and therefore far above all my enemies, though the *prince of the power of the air* be at their head.

Unto God, I al lael, unto the *strong God*, one against whom no human or diabolic might can prevail. David felt his own *weakness*, and he knew the *strength* of his adversaries; and therefore he views God under those *attributes* and *characters* which were suited to his state. This is a great *secret* in the Christian life; few pray to God *wisely*; though they may do it *fervently*.

That performeth all things for me.] Who works for me; *rmg gomer*, he who *completes* for me, and will bring all to a happy issue.

Verse 3. He shall send from heaven, and save me] Were there no human agents or earthly means that he could employ, he would send his angels from heaven to rescue me from my enemies. Or, He will give his command from heaven that this may be done on earth.

Selah] I think this word should be at the *end* of the verse.

God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.] Here *mercy* and *truth* are personified. They are the *messengers* that God will send from heaven to save me. His *mercy* ever inclines him to help and save the distressed. This he has *promised* to do; and his *truth* binds him to fulfil the promises or engagements his mercy has made, both to saints and sinners.

Verse 4. My soul is among lions] *μabl Ēwtb bethoch lebaim*. I agree with Dr. *Kennicott* that this should be translated, “My soul dwells in *parched places*,” from *bal laab*, he thirsted. And thus the *Chaldee* seems to have understood the place, though it be not explicit.

I lie even among them that are set on fire] I seem to be among *coals*. It is no ordinary rage and malice by which I am pursued: each of my enemies seems determined to have my life.

Verse 5. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens] Let the glory of thy mercy and truth be seen in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath. Several of the fathers apply what is said above to the *passion* of our Lord, and what is said here to his *resurrection*.

Verse 6. They have prepared a net for my steps] A gin or springe, such as huntsmen put in the places which they know the prey they seek frequents: such, also, as they place in *passages in hedges*, &c., through which the game creeps.

They have digged a pit] Another method of catching game and wild beasts. They dig a pit, cover it over with weak sticks and turf. The beasts, not suspecting danger where none appears, in attempting to walk over it, fall through, and are taken. Saul digged a pit, laid snares for the life of David; and fell into one of them himself, particularly at the cave of *En-gedi*; for he entered into the very pit or cave where David and his men were hidden, and his life lay at the generosity of the very man whose life he was seeking! The rabbins tell a curious and instructive tale concerning this: “God sent a spider to weave her web at the mouth of the cave in which David and his men lay hid. When Saul saw the spider’s web over the cave’s mouth, he very naturally conjectured that it could neither be the haunt of *men* nor *wild beasts*; and therefore went in with confidence to repose.” The *spider* here, a vile and contemptible animal, became the instrument in the hand of God of saving David’s life and of confounding Saul in his policy and malice. This may be a *fable*; but it shows by what apparently insignificant *means* God, the universal ruler, can accomplish the greatest and most beneficent *ends*. Saul continued to dig pits to entrap David; and at last fell a prey to his own obstinacy. We have a proverb to the same effect: *Harm watch, harm catch*. The *Greeks* have one also: **Ἡ τε κακη βουλη τω βουλευσαντι κακιστη**, “An evil advice often becomes most ruinous to the adviser.” The *Romans* have one to the same effect:—

*Neque enim lex justior ulla est
Quam necis artificem arte perire sua.*

“There is no law more just than that which condemns a man to suffer death by the instrument which he has invented to take away the life of others.”

Verse 7. My heart is fixed] My heart is *prepared* to do and suffer thy will. It is *fixed*—it has made the *firmest purpose* through his strength by which I can do all things.

Verse 8. Awake up, my glory] Instead of **ydwbk** *kebodi*, “my glory,” one MS., and the *Syriac*, have **yrwnk** *kinnori*, “my harp.” Dr. *Kennicott* reads **yrwbk** *kebori*, which he supposes to be some instrument of music; and adds that the instrument used in church-music by the Ethiopians is now

called **rbk** *kaber*. I think the *Syriac* likely to be the true reading: “Awake up, my harp; awake, psaltery and harp: I will awake early.” Such *repetitions* are frequent in the Hebrew poets. If we read *my glory*, it may refer either to his *tongue*; or, which is more likely, to his *skill in composition*, and in *playing on different instruments*. The *five* last verses of this Psalm are nearly the same with the *five* first verses of ^{<19480>}**Psalm 108:1-5**. The reason of this may be, the *notes* or *memoranda* from the *psalmist’s diary* were probably, through mistake, twice copied. The insertion at the beginning of the 118th Psalm seems to bear no relation to the rest of that ode.

Rabbi Solomon Jarchi tells us that *David had a harp at his bed’s head, which played of itself when the north wind blew on it; and then David arose to give praise to God*. This account has been treated as a *ridiculous fable* by grave Christian writers. I would however hesitate, and ask one question: Does not the account itself point out an instrument then well known, similar to the comparatively lately discovered *Æolian harp*? Was not *this* the instrument hung at David’s bed’s head, which, when the night breeze (which probably blew at a certain time) began to act upon the cords, sent forth those dulcet, those heavenly sounds, for which the *Æolian harp* is remarkable? “Awake, my harp, at the *due time*: I will not wait for thee *now*, I have the strongest cause for gratitude; I will awake earlier than usual to sing the praises of my God.”

Verse 9. Among the people] The *Israelites*.

Among the nations.] The *Gentiles* at large. A prophecy either relating to the Gospel times, Christ being considered as the Speaker: or a prediction that these Divine compositions should be sung, both in synagogues and in Christian churches, in all the nations of the earth. And it is so: wherever the name of Christ is known, there is David’s known also.

Verse 10. Thy mercy is great unto the heavens] It is as far above all human description and comprehension as the heavens are above the earth. See the notes on ^{<19365>}**Psalm 36:5, 6**, where nearly the same words occur.

Verse 11. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens] The same sentiments and words which occur in ^{<19575>}**Psalm 57:5**. See **Clarke’s note there**, “^{<19575>}**Psalm 57:5**”.

David was not only in a happy state of mind when he wrote this Psalm, but in what is called a state of *triumph*. His confidence in God was unbounded; though encompassed by the most ferocious enemies, and having all things against him except God and his innocence. David will seldom be found in a more blessed state than he here describes. Similar faith in God will bring the same blessings to every true Christian in similar circumstances.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PSALM

The contents of this Psalm are,—

- I. David's *petition*, ^{<1957D>} **Psalm 57:1**.
- II. The *reasons* which induced him to offer it, ^{<1957D>} **Psalm 57:2-6**.
- III. His resolution to give God due praise, ^{<1957B>} **Psalm 57:5, 7-11**.

I. His *petition* is ardent. The *repetition* shows this: it is for grace and protection: "Be merciful unto me, be merciful unto me, O God!"

II. He adduces his *reasons* to persuade the Lord to be merciful.

First reason. The faith and confidence he had in God: "My soul trusteth in thee; and under the shadow of thy wings," as the chicken does under those of the hen, "shall be my refuge until these calamities be overpast."

Second reason. The sufficiency and efficiency of God: "I will call upon God."

1. He is the *Most High*; then he is sufficient and able to deliver me.
2. He will perform all things for me: therefore he will effect this.

In the following verse he insists on this argument.

"He shall send from heaven." He will do it in a miraculous way, if there be no other way: "He will send from heaven, and save me. He will send forth his mercy and his truth;" he will *perform* his *word*, and *graciously* save me.

The *third reason* of his petition is the extreme danger he was then in by a cruel and merciless enemy.

1. "My soul is among the lions," a ravenous, strong, and bloody creature.
2. "I lie even among those who are set on fire." Their anger and hatred to me are implacable.

3. Even among those whose “teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.” They wound by calumniating me. A *spear* wounds near; an *arrow*, afar off; a *sword*, at hand: *near* or *far off*, they spare not to disgrace me.

He now brings another *argument*, stronger than all the rest, viz., *God’s glory*. It will be to his glory to be merciful, to save, and to deliver; and therefore he prays: “Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let thy glory,” &c. That is, Let not the wicked triumph; but display thy power, and assert thy glory; which, if thou do, thy glory will be conspicuous above—in the heavens, and *below*—over all the earth.

He then begins his complaint, describing the practices of his enemies:—

1. “They have prepared a net for my feet.” They lay *snares* as fowlers do.
2. Through which “my soul is bowed down.” My life is in extreme danger.
3. “They have digged a pit before me,” intending to take me like some wild beast, but, praised be God I foresee the event. “They are fallen into the pit themselves.”

III. In confidence of this David gives thanks, which may be considered a *fourth* argument; for there is no such way to procure a new favour as to be *thankful*. Our thanksgiving: should consist of *two* especial points: 1. Commemoration; 2. Declaration.

1. He that will be thankful should treasure up in his *heart* and *memory* the kindness that is done to him. This David had done: “My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed.”

2. After he remembers it, he should be *affected* by it, and *resolve* on it. So does David. My heart is *ready, prepared, fixed*. I will be thankful. I am *determined*.

3. It is not enough that a man have a thankful heart; he must *declare* it, and make publicly known what God has done for him: “I will sing, and give praise.”

4. He should use all means in his power to make it known; *tongue, psaltery, harp*, are all little enough. To these he addresses himself: “Awake, tongue, lute, harp,” &c.

5. He must not do it carelessly: “Awake! Awake! Myself will awake.”

6. He must take the first opportunity, and not delay it: “I will awake EARLY.”

7. He should do it in such a way as most tends to God’s glory: “I will praise thee among the people—I will sing of thee among the nations.”

That all this may be done, David gives a sufficient reason,—God’s *mercy* and *truth*. His infinite *mercy* in *promising*, his *truth* in *performing*: “Thy mercy is great unto the heavens; thy truth unto the clouds.”

And then he concludes with a repetition of the *fifth* verse: “Be thou exalted above the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.” Let all give thee the glory due to thy name.

PSALMS

PSALM 58

David reproves wicked counsellors and judges, who pervert justice, and stir up the strong against the weak and innocent, 1-5. He foretells their destruction, and describes the nature of it, 6-9. The righteous, seeing this, will magnify God's justice and providence, 10, 11.

NOTES ON PSALM 58

The *title* seems to have no reference to the subject of the Psalm. See the introduction to the preceding. { ¹⁹⁵⁰ **Psalm 57:1** } Saul having attempted the life of David, the latter was obliged to flee from the court, and take refuge in the deserts of Judea. Saul, missing him, is supposed by Bishop *Patrick* to have called a council, when they, to ingratiate themselves with the monarch, adjudged David to be guilty of treason in aspiring to the throne of Israel. This being made known to David was the cause of this Psalm. It is a good lesson to all kings, judges, and civil magistrates; and from it they obtain maxims to regulate their conduct and influence their decisions; and at the same time they may discern the awful account they must give to God, and the dreadful punishment *they* shall incur who prostitute justice to serve sinister ends.

Verse 1. Do ye indeed speak righteousness] Or, O cabinet seeing ye profess to act according to the principles of justice, why do ye not give righteous counsels and just decisions, ye sons of men? Or, it may be an irony: What excellent judges you are! well do ye judge according to law and justice, when ye give decisions not founded on any law, nor supported by any principle of justice! To please your master, ye pervert judgment; and take part against the innocent, in order to retain your places and their emoluments. Saul's counsellors appear to have done so, though in their consciences they must have been satisfied of David's innocence.

Verse 2. Yea, in heart ye work wickedness] With their *tongues* they had spoken maliciously, and given evil counsel. In their *hearts* they meditated nothing but wickedness. And though in their *hands* they held the *scales of justice*, yet in their use of them they were *balances of injustice and violence*. This is the *fact* to which the psalmist alludes, and the *figure* which he uses is that of *justice with her scales or balances*, which, though

it might be the emblem of the court, yet it did not prevail in the *practice* of these magistrates and counsellors.

Verse 3. The wicked are estranged from the womb] “This,” says Dr. *Kennicott*, “and the next *two* verses, I take to be the answer of Jehovah to the question in the *two* first verses, as the 6th, 7th, and 8th, are the answer of the psalmist, and the remainder contains the decree of Jehovah.” He calls these *wicked* men, men who had been always wicked, originally and naturally bad, and brought up in falsehood, flattery, and lying. The part they acted now was quite in character.

Verse 4. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent] When they bite, they convey poison into the wound, as the serpent does. They not only injure you by outward acts, but by their malevolence they poison your reputation. They do you as much evil as they can, and propagate the worst reports that others may have you in abhorrence, treat you as a bad and dangerous man; and thus, as the poison from the bite of the serpent is conveyed into the whole mass of blood, and circulates with it through all the system, carrying death every where; so they injurious speeches and vile insinuations circulate through society, and poison and blast your reputation in every place. Such is the *slanderer*, and such his influence in society. *From* such no reputation is safe; *with* such no character is sacred; and against such there is no defence. God alone can shield the innocent from the envenomed tongue and lying lips of such inward monsters in the shape of men.

Like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear] It is a fact that cannot be disputed with any show of reason, that in ancient times there were persons that charmed, lulled to inactivity, or professed to charm, serpents, so as to prevent them from biting. See ^{<1101>}**Ecclesiastes 10:11**; ^{<4017>}**Jeremiah 8:17**. The prince of Roman poets states the fact, VIRG. Ecl. viii., ver. 71.

Frigidus in prati cantando rumpitur anguis.

“In the meadows the cold snake is burst by incantation.”

The same author, *Æn.* vii., ver. 750, gives us the following account of the skill of Umbro, a priest of the Marrubians:—

*Quin et Marrubia venit de gente sacerdos,
Fronde super galeam, et felici comptus oliva,
Archippi regis missu, fortissimus Umbro;
Vipereo generi, et graviter spirantibus hydris,
Spargere qui somnos cantuque manuque solebat,
Mulcebatque iras, et morsus arte levabat.*

*“Umbro, the brave Marubian priest, was there,
Sent by the Marsian monarch to the war.
The smiling olive with her verdant boughs
Shades his bright helmet, and adorns his brows.*

*His charms in peace the furious serpent keep,
And lull the envenomed viper’s race to sleep:
His healing hand allayed the raging pain;
And at his touch the poisons fled again.”*

PITT.

There is a particular sect of the Hindoos who profess to bring serpents into subjection, and deprive them of their poison, by *incantation*. See at the end of this Psalm. See Clarke “~~19811~~ Psalm 58:11”.

Verse 5. Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers] The old Psalter translates and paraphrases these two verses curiously:—

Vulg. Furor illis secundum similitudinem serpentis; sicut aspidis surdæ et obturantis aures suas: Quæ non exaudiet vocem incantantium et venefici in cantantis sapienter.

Trans. ~~W~~oddes (madness) til thaim aftir the liking of the neddre, as of the snake dounb and stoppand her eres.

Paraph. Right calles he thaim ~~w~~od, (*mad*), for that hafe na witte to se whider that ga: for that louke thair eghen, and rennys till the are thaire wodness til clumsthed that wil nocht be turned as of the snake that festis (*fastens*) the ta ere til the erth, and the tother ere stoppis with hir taile: Sua do thai that thai here not Godis word; that stope thair eris with luf of erthli thing that thai delite thaim in; and with thair taile, that es with all synnes, that that will nocht amend.

Trans. The whitk salle nocht here the voyce of charmand, and of the venim in akare of charmand wisli.

Paraph. This snake stopis hir eres that she be noight broth to light; for if she herd it, she come forth sone, he charmes swa wysli in his craft. Swa the wikkid men wit noight here the voyce of Crist and his lufers that are wys charmes; for thi wild (*would*) bring them till light of heven. Wyt ye well (*know*) that he (i.e., *Christ*) lufes noight charmars and venim makers but be (*by*) vices of bestes, he takes lickening of vices of men.

It seems as if there were a species of *snake* or *adder* that is *nearly deaf*, and as their instinct informs them that if they listen to the sounds which charmers use they shall become a prey; therefore they stop their ears to prevent the little hearing they have from being the means of their destruction. To this the *Old Psalter* refers. We have also an account of a species of *snake*, which, if it cast its eye on the charmer, feels itself obliged to come out of its hole; it therefore keeps close, and takes care neither to *see* nor be *seen*. To this also the *Old Psalter* alludes; and of this *fact*, if it be one, he makes a good use.

Verse 6. Break their teeth] He still compares Saul, his captains, and his courtiers, to *lions*; and as a lion's power of doing mischief is greatly lessened if all his teeth be broken, so he prays that God may take away their power and means of pursuing their bloody purpose. But he may probably have the serpents in view, of which he speaks in the preceding verse; *break their teeth—destroy the fangs* of these serpents, in which *their poison* is contained. This will amount to the same meaning as above. Save me from the *adders*—the sly and poisonous slanderers: save me also from the *lions*—the tyrannical and blood-thirsty men.

Verse 7. Let them melt away as waters] Let them be minished away like the waters which sometimes run in the desert, but are soon evaporated by the *sun*, or absorbed by the *sand*.

When *he bendeth* his bow] When my adversaries aim their envenomed shafts against me, let their arrows not only fall short of the mark, but be broken to pieces in the flight. Some apply this to GOD. When he bends his bow against them, they shall all be exterminated.

Verse 8. As a snail which melteth] The *Chaldee* reads the verse thus: “They shall melt away in their sins as water flows off; as the creeping snail that smears its track; as the untimely birth and the blind mole, which do not see the sun.”

The original word **l wl bv shablul**, a *snail*, is either from **l ybv shebil**, a *path*, because it leaves a *shining path* after it by emitting a portion of *slime*, and thus *glaring* the ground; and therefore might be emphatically called the *pathmaker*; or from **bvy yashab** to *dwell*, **b be, in, l wl lul**, a *winding* or *spiral shell*, which is well known to be its house, and which it always *inhabits*; for when it is not coiled up within this shell, it carries it with it wheresoever it goes. See *Bochart*. These figures need no farther explanation.

Verse 9. Before your pots can feel the thorns] Ye shall be destroyed with a sudden destruction. From the time that the fire of God's wrath is kindled about you, it will be but as a moment before ye be entirely consumed by it: so very short will be the time, that it may be likened to the heat of the first blaze of dry thorns under a pot, that has not as yet been able to penetrate the metal, and warm what is contained in it.

A whirlwind] Or the suffocating *simoon* that destroys life in an instant, without previous warning: so, without *pinning sickness*—while ye are *living*—lively and active, the whirlwind of God's wrath shall sweep you away.

Verse 10. The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance] He shall have a strong proof of the Divine providence, of God's hatred against sinners, and his continual care of his followers.

He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.] This can only mean that the slaughter would be so great, and at the same time so very nigh to the dwelling of the righteous, that he could not go out without dipping his feet in the blood of the wicked. The *Syriac, Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon*, read *hands* instead of *feet*. Every thing that is *vindictive* in the Psalms must be considered as totally alien from the spirit of the Gospel, and not at all, under our dispensation, to be imitated. If the passage above be *really* vindictive, and it certainly will admit of the interpretation given above, it is to be considered as not belonging to that state in which the Son of man is come, not to *destroy* men's lives, but to *save*.

Verse 11. So that a man shall say] That is, people, seeing these just judgments of God, shall say, There is a reward (**y rp peri, fruit**) to the righteous man. He has not sown his seed in vain; he has not planted and

watered in vain: he has the fruit of his labours, he eats the fruit of his doings. But wo to the wicked, it is ill with him; for the reward of his hands has been given him.

He is a God that judgeth in the earth] There is a God who does not entirely defer judgment till the judgment-day; but executes judgment now, even in this earth; and thus continues to give such a proof of his hatred to sin and love to his followers that every considerate mind is convinced of it. And hence arise the indisputable maxims: “There is, even *here*, a reward for the righteous;” “There is a God who, even *now*, judgeth in the earth.”

I have seen Indian priests who professed to charm, not only serpents, but the most ferocious wild beasts; even the enraged elephant, and the royal tiger! Two priests of *Budhoo*, educated under my own care, repeated the *Sanscrit incantations* to me, and solemnly asserted that they had seen the power of them repeatedly and successfully put to the test. I have mislaid these incantations, else I should insert them as a curiosity; for to *charms* of the same nature the psalmist most undoubtedly alludes.

The term **rbwj** *chober*, which we translate *charmer*, comes from **dbj** *to join*, or *put together*; i.e., certain unintelligible words or sentences, which formed the *spell*.

I once met with a man who professed to remove diseases by pronouncing an unintelligible jingling jargon of words oddly tacked together. I met with him one morning proceeding to the cure of a horse affected with the *farcin*. With a very grave countenance he stood before the diseased animal, and, taking off his hat, devoutly muttered the following words; which, as a matter of peculiar favour, he afterwards taught me, well knowing that *I* could never use them successfully, *because not taught me by a woman*; “for,” said he, “to use them with success, a *man* must be taught them by a *woman*, and a *woman* by a *man*.” What the genuine orthography may be I cannot pretend to say, as I am entirely ignorant of the language, if the words belong to any language: but the following words exactly express his sounds:—

Murry fin a liff cree
Murry fin a liss cree
Ard fin deriv dhoo
Murry fin firey fu
Murry fin elph yew.

When he had repeated these words *nine* times, he put on his hat and walked off, but he was to return the next morning, and so on for *nine* mornings successively, always *before he had broken his fast*. The *mother* of the above person, a very old woman, and by many reputed a *witch*, professed to do miracles by pronouncing, or rather *muttering*, certain *words* or *sounds*, and by measuring with a cord the diseased parts of the sick person. I saw her practice twice: 1st, on a person afflicted with a violent headache, or rather the effects of a *coup de soleil*; and, 2ndly, on one who had got a dangerous mote or splinter in his eye. In the *first* case she began to measure the head, round the temples, marking the length; then from the vertex, under the chin, and so up to the vertex again, marking that length. Then, by observing the dimensions, passed judgment on the *want of proportion* in the two admeasurements, and said the brain was compressed by the sinking down of the skull. She then began her incantations, *muttering* under her breath a supplication to certain divine and angelic beings, *to come and lift up the bones, that they might no longer compress the brain*. She then repeated her admeasurements, and showed how much was gained towards a restoration of the *proportions* from the spell already *muttered*. The spell was again *muttered*, the *measurements* repeated, and at each time a comparison of the first measurement was made with the succeeding, till at last she said she had the due proportions; that the disease, or rather the *cause* of it, was removed; and that the operations were no longer necessary.

In the case of the *diseased eye*, her manner was different. She took a cup of clean pure water, and washed her mouth well. Having done so, she filled her mouth with the same water, and walked to and fro in the apartment (the patient sitting in the midst of the floor) *muttering* her *spell*, of which nothing could be heard but a *grumbling noise*. She then emptied her mouth into a clean white bason, and showed the motes which had been conveyed out of the patient's eye into the water in her mouth, while engaged in *muttering the incantation!* She proffered to teach me her wonder-working words; but the sounds were so very uncouth, if not barbarous, that I know no combination of letters by which I could convey the pronunciation.

Ridiculous as all this may appear, it shows that this incantation work is conducted in the present day, both in *Asia* and *Europe*, where it is professed, in precisely the same manner in which it was conducted formerly, by pronouncing, or rather *muttering certain words* or *sounds*, to which they attach *supernatural power* and *efficiency*. And from this came

the term *spell*: Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], a *word*, a *charm*, composed of such supposed *powerful words*; and [A.S.] *wyrkan spell* signified among our ancestors *to use enchantments*.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PSALM

David deprecates the danger that hung over his head from Saul and his council.

The Psalm is divided into *three* parts:—

I. A sharp invective, or reprehension of his enemies, ^{<19801>}**Psalm 58:1.**

II. An imprecation, or denunciation of God's judgment on them, ^{<19806>}**Psalm 58:6-9.**

III. The benefits that from thence redound to the righteous, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 58:10, 11.**

I. 1. David begins with an apostrophe, and figures it with an *erotesis*, which makes his reproof the sharper. 1. "O congregation;" O ye counsel of Saul. 2. "Do you indeed speak righteously?" 3. "Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?" By which he intimates that indeed they do neither.

2. Which in the next verse he affirms in plain terms, and brings home to their charge: "Yea in heart you work wickedness; you weigh the violence of your hands in the earth;" heart and hand are bent to do evil, which the words, well considered, do exaggerate. 1. They were iniquities, a plurality of them. 2. It was their work. 3. Their hearty work. 4. Their handy work. 5. Weighed out by their scale of justice. 6. Which, indeed, under the colour of justice, was but violence. 7. And it was in this earth—in *Israel*, where no such thing was to be done.

3. This, their wickedness, he amplifies, both from their origin and progress:—

1. The root of it was very old; brought into the world with them: 1. "The wicked are estranged from the womb;" from God and all goodness. 2. "They go astray;" from their cradle they take the wrong way. 3. "As soon as they be born, speaking lies;" from their birth inclined to falsehood.

2. And in this their falsehood they are malicious and obstinate. 1. *Malicious*. The poison of their tongue is like the poison of a serpent, innate, deadly. 2. *Obstinate*. For they will not be reclaimed by any counsel

or admonition: They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, “charm he never so wisely.”

II. Their wickedness, malice, and obstinacy, being so great, he now prays against and devotes them to God’s judgment. He prays, in general, for their ruin, esteeming them no better than lions. Saul, the *old lion*; and his council, *lions’ whelps*.

1. To God he turns his speech; and prays against their means to hurt, whether near or afar off.

2. And thence, against their persons: “O God, break their teeth in their mouth; break out the great teeth of the lions.” O Lord, remove their strength; their nearest instruments to hurt, to destroy: “O God, when they purpose to harm us, let it be in vain; when he bends his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.”

Thus let it fall to their arms: but as for their persons:—

1. “Let them melt away as waters.” Great brooks, that run with great force from the mountains, and overrun for a little while the valleys; but run quickly into the channels, and thence to the sea, and are swallowed up.

2. Let them be *as a snail* that melts in her passage, and leaves a slimy track behind, which yet quickly passeth away. So let them be like a snail, which, when its shell is taken off, grows cold and dies.

3. Let them be “like the untimely fruit of a woman, that they may not see the sun.”

4. “Before your pots can feel the thorns”—ere they do mischief, “He shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living and in his wrath.”

III. The *benefits* which, from his judgment upon the wicked, shall flow to the righteous.

1. Joyfulness: “The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance.”

2. Amendment. Being warned thus, “He shall wash his footsteps in their blood.” Their slaughter shall be great; and he shall be near it, yet unhurt.

3. Confirmation of their faith, and giving glory to God: “So that a man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the righteous: doubtless; there is a God that judgeth in the earth.”

PSALMS

PSALM 59

The psalmist prays for deliverance from his enemies, whose desperate wickedness he describes, 1-7; professes strong confidence in God, 8-10; speaks of the destruction of his enemies, 11-15; praises God for benefits already received; and determines to trust in him, 16, 17.

NOTES ON PSALM 59

The *title*, “To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David,” has already occurred: and perhaps means no more than that the present Psalm is to be sung as ^{<19570>}**Psalm 57:1-11**, the *first* which bears this title. But there is here added the supposed occasion on which David made this Psalm: it was, “when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.” When the reader considers the whole of this Psalm carefully, he will be convinced that the *title* does not correspond to the contents. There is scarcely any thing in it that can apply to the circumstances of Saul’s sending his guards by night to keep the avenues to the house of David, that when the morning came they might seize and slay him; and of his being saved through the information given him by his wife Michal, in consequence of which he was let down through a window, and so escaped. See ^{<091910>}**1 Samuel 19:10, 11**. There is not in the whole Psalm any positive allusion to this history; and there are many things in it which show it to be utterly inconsistent with the facts of that history. The Psalm most evidently agrees to the time of Nehemiah, when he was endeavouring to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, when the enterprise was first mocked; then opposed by Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, who watched day and night that they might cause the work to cease; and laid ambuscades for the life of Nehemiah himself. Every part of the Psalm agrees to this: and I am therefore of *Calmet’s* opinion, that the Psalm was composed in that time, and probably by *Nehemiah*, or by *Esdras*.

Verse 1. Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God] A very proper prayer in the mouth of Nehemiah, when resisted in his attempts to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem by Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, who opposed the work, and endeavoured to take away the life of the person whom God had raised up to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. I conceive the Psalm to have

been made on this occasion; and on this hypothesis alone I think it capable of consistent explanation.

Verse 2. The workers of iniquity] Principally Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian; who were the chief enemies of the poor returned captives.

Bloody men.] The above, who sought the destruction of the Israelites; and particularly, that of Nehemiah, whom *four* several times they endeavoured to bring into an ambush, that they might take away his life. See

<600>**Nehemiah 6:1-4.**

Verse 3. For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul] For my *life*. See the passages referred to above.

Verse 4. They run and prepare themselves] They leave no stone unturned that they may effect my destruction and prevent the building.

Verse 5. O Lord God of hosts] This was a proper view to take of God. when Israel, a *handful* of poor distressed captives were surrounded and oppressed by the heathen chiefs above mentioned, and their several tribes. But Jehovah, *God of hosts*, was the *God of Israel*; and hence Israel had little to fear.

Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors.] Do not favour the cause of these wicked men. They are *wa ydgb bogedey aven*, “changers of iniquity:” they go through the whole round of evil; find out and exercise themselves in all the *varieties of transgression*. How exactly does this apply to Nehemiah’s foes! They sought, by open attack, wiles, flattery, foul speeches, fair speeches, threats, and ambuscades, to take away his life. Do not show them favour, that they may not succeed in their wicked designs. The prayer here is exactly the same in sentiment with that of Nehemiah, <600>**Nehemiah 4:4, 5.** Hear, our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach upon their own heads;—cover not their iniquity, “and let not their sin be blotted out.”

Verse 6. They return at evening] When the beasts of prey leave their dens, and go prowling about the cities and villages to get offal, and entrap domestic animals, these come about the city to see if they may get an entrance, destroy the work, and those engaged in it.

Verse 7. They belch out with their mouth] They use the lowest insult, the basest abuse. They deal in sarcasm, ridicule, slander, and lies.

Verse 8. Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them] They have mocked us; God will turn them and their schemes into ridicule and contempt: “Thou shalt have all these heathenish nations in derision.”

Verse 9. Because of **his strength will I wait upon thee]** With this reading, I can make no sense of the passage. But instead of **wz** [*uzzo*, “his strength,” **yz** [*uzzi*, “my strength,” is the reading of *fourteen* of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s MSS.*, of the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Chaldee*, and, in effect, of the *Æthiopic*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*; and also of the *Anglo-Saxon*. *To thee I commit all MY strength*; all I have I derive from thee, and all the good I possess I attribute to thee. The old Psalter translates, ~~My strenght I shall kepe till the, for myn uptaker thou art.~~ See on ~~18917~~ **Psalm 59:17.**

Verse 10. The God of my mercy shall prevent me] The mercy of God shall go before me, and thus help me in all my doings.

God shall let me see my desire] The sentence is short. *God will let me see concerning my enemies*, i.e., how he will treat them.

Verse 11. Slay them not, lest my people forget] I believe the Chaldee gives the true sense of this verse: “Do not slay them suddenly, lest my people should forget. Drive them from their habitations by thy power, and reduce them to poverty *by the loss* of their property.” Preserve them long in a state of chastisement, that Israel may see thou hast undertaken for them: that thy hand is on the wicked for evil, and on them for good. The Canaanites were not suddenly destroyed; they were left to be pricks in the eyes and thorns in the sides of the Israelites. It is in a sense somewhat similar that the words are used here.

Verse 12. For the sin of their mouth] This verse has puzzled all the commentators. If we take **tacj** *chattath* for *sin-offering* instead of *sin*, we shall get a better sense. Some of Nehemiah’s enemies made a profession of the Jewish religion. Tobiah and his son were allied by marriage to the Jews; for Eliashib the priest had married his grandson to the daughter of *Sanballat*; and this produced a connexion with *Tobiah*, the fast friend of *Sanballat*. Besides this very priest had given *Tobiah* one of the *great chambers in the house of the Lord*, where formerly the

meat-offerings, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithe of the corn and wine and oil were kept; ^{<161304>}**Nehemiah 13:4, 5, 7-9**. And there were *children of Tobiah* (probably the same family) who professed to be of the *Levites, Nethinim, or children of Solomon's servants*; but as they could not show *their father's house and their seed*, whether they were of Israel; these, and others which were children of the priests, were put out of the priesthood, and out of the sacred service, as polluted; as having sprung from intermarriages with heathens. See ^{<151259>}**Ezra 2:59-62**. Tobiah was expelled from the house of the Lord by Nehemiah, and all his household stuff thrown out of doors: ^{<161307>}**Nehemiah 13:7, 8**. And this was doubtless one ground of the enmity of Tobiah to Nehemiah; and in this verse of the Psalm he may allude particularly to his occupancy of the chamber of offerings, which offerings, instead of being given to the Levites, were consumed by Tobiah and his household. This may be fairly gathered from ^{<161306>}**Nehemiah 13:6, 10, 11**. Here then we have the *sin of their mouth*; their *eating* the offerings that belonged to the Levites; so that the temple service was deserted, the Levites being obliged to go and till the ground in order to obtain the means of life. And if we take **tacj** *chattath* for *sin-offering*, it may refer to *promises* of sacrifice and offering which Tobiah and his family made, but never performed. They ate instead of offering them; and here was the *sin of their mouth*, in connexion with the *words of their lips*, and their *cursing and lying which they spake*, for which the psalmist calls upon the Lord *to consume them, that they may not be*, ^{<19913>}**Psalm 59:13**.

Verse 14. At evening let them return] He had mentioned before, ^{<19916>}**Psalm 59:6**, that these persons came like beasts of prey round the city striving to get in, that they might take possession. Now, being fully assured of God's protection, and that they shall soon be made a public example, he says, *Let them return and make a noise like a dog, &c.*, like dogs, jackals, and other famished creatures, who come howling about the city-walls for something to eat, and wander up and down for meat, grumbling because they are not satisfied, ^{<19915>}**Psalm 59:15**. Nehemiah had made up all the breaches; and had the city guarded so well day and night, by watches who continually relieved each other, that there was no longer any fear of being taken by surprise: and now they must feel like the hungry beasts who were disappointed of their prey.

Verse 16. I will sing of thy power] For it was because thy *hand* was upon me for good, that I have thus succeeded in my enterprises.

Yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy] I shall publish abroad what thou hast done; and done not for *my worthiness*, nor for the *worthiness* of the *people*; but for thy own *mercy's* sake.

In the day of my trouble.] When I came with small means and feeble help, and had the force and fraud of many enemies to contend with, besides the corruption and unfaithfulness of my own people; *thou* wast then *my defence*; and in all attacks, whether *open* or *covered*, *my sure refuge*. I will, therefore, *sing of thy mercy in the morning*—I will *hasten* to acquit myself of a duty I owe to thee for such singular interpositions of mercy and power.

Verse 17. Unto thee, O my strength] A similar sentiment to that expressed, ^{<1989>}**Psalm 59:9**. But the words are very emphatic: *God is my strength; God is my elevation. My God is my mercy*. I have nothing good but what I have from God. And all springs from his dwelling in me. God, therefore, shall have all the glory, both now and for ever.

As many persons may still think that the inscription to this Psalm is correct, the following analysis may be applied in that way; or considered as containing a general resolution of the Psalm, without referring it to any particular occasion.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIFTY-NINTH PSALM

The contents of this Psalm are:—

I. The psalmist's prayer for deliverance, ^{<1990>}**Psalm 59:1, 2**, and against his foes, ^{<1995>}**Psalm 59:5**.

II. He complains of and expresses his enemies' cruelty and improbity, ^{<1998>}**Psalm 59:3-8**.

III. He comforts himself, being confident of his own preservation, ^{<1998>}**Psalm 59:8-10**.

1. And of their punishment, for which he prays, ^{<1994>}**Psalm 59:14**.

2. And of their vain endeavours, for which he insults over them, ^{<1994>}**Psalm 59:14, 15**.

IV. He concludes with thanks, ^{<199>16} **Psalm 59:16, 17.**

I. He begins with a petition for deliverance, defence, salvation; and urges it from the qualities of his enemies.

1. “Deliver me, defend me from mine enemies:” 1. “Them that rise up against me.” 2. “From the workers of iniquity.” 3. “From bloody men.” These considerations make him pray, “O my God, deliver,” &c.

2. And yet, more particularly, he expresses their cruelty and treachery; to aggravate which he pleads his innocence towards them.

II. 1. Their cruelty: “Lo, they lie in wait for my soul.”

2. Their treachery: “The mighty are gathered against me.” They run and prepare themselves.

3. 1. They are diligent about it: “They return at evening.” 2. *Mad*, and set to do it: “They make a noise like a dog,” and threaten boldly. 3. Unwearied and obdurate in their purpose: “They go round about the city.” 4.

Impudent, and brag what they will do to me: “Behold, they belch out with their mouth.” 5. And their words are bloody: “Swords are in their lips.”

4. And the cause of this is, that they are proud and atheistical. *Who*, say they, *doth hear*? They think themselves secure, supposing they may contemn God and man; neither regarding what is done or becomes of poor *David*.

5. In the midst of which aggravations he asserts his own innocence: “They gather themselves together, not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O Lord.”

Then he renews his petition:—

1. Awake to help me, and behold: “Thou, therefore, the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel.” 1. The Lord God of hosts; therefore, powerful. 2. The God of Israel; therefore, merciful.

2. “Awake to visit all the heathen,” i.e., punish the heathen; and the Israelites, in this no better.

3. And be not merciful to any wicked transgressors, i.e., obstinate nations.

III. To this rage and implacable hatred of his enemies he now begins to oppose the comfort he had in God’s promises. This I know,—

1. "Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them." As it were in sport, destroy them, be their power never so great; "Thou wilt laugh them to scorn."

2. Them and all that are like them: "Thou shalt have all the heathen in derision."

3. I confess that Saul's strength is great; but my Protector is greater: "Because of his strength will I wait upon thee, for God is my defence."

4. This I am assured also, "that the God of my mercy," that hath hitherto showed me mercy, "shall prevent me," come in season to my help. "And God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies."

And to the 16th verse he expresses what his desires were:—

1. Negatively; he would not have them slain and eradicated; and he gives his reason for it: "Slay them not, lest my people forget;" for a dead man is quickly out of mind, and his punishment also, and few the better for it.

2. Positively; the first degree of which is dispersion, vagrancy, banishment. *Scatter them*, which however severe a judgment, let *the Jews* witness.

2. Humiliation: "Bring them down, O Lord, our shield." Bring them from their power, command, honour, to a low degree, which is no small heart-breaking to a great spirit. *Fuimus Troes*, is never remembered without a groan.

And now he assigns the cause why he would have them scattered, and brought low; that their blasphemies and lies may never be forgotten, but stand as a terror to all liars and blasphemers.

1. "For the sin of their mouth, and the words of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride;" the Jews cried Beelzebub, *nolumus hunc*; and they were taken.

2. "And for cursing and lying which they speak." They cursed themselves: "His blood be upon us;" and upon them, indeed, it was.

3. He goes on in his desires. "Consume them, O Lord," emphatically, "consume them in wrath, that they may not be;" which, at first sight, appears contrary to the first desire, "Slay them not:" but he speaks not of their life as if he would have it consumed; but he desires only a consumption of their power, royalty, command. And so these words are a farther explication of his second desire, "Bring them down." He would

have them brought down in their strength, dignity, command, wealth, riches, which made them proud; that they might never be able to oppose God any more, hurt his people, trample upon religion and his Church; but he would have them live.

4. And shows the end why he would have them live, and still remain—that they might know by their calamities and miseries, that “it is God that ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the earth;” that he doth wonderfully govern and preserve his Church that is scattered over all the earth.

5. And now by a bitter *epitrope*, or rather *synchoresis*, he insults over them. In the sixth verse he showed their double diligence to do mischief.

1. “They return at evening.” Well, *esto*; be it so; “At evening let them return.”

2. “They make a noise like a dog.” Well; “let them make a noise like a dog.”

3. “And go round about the city.” Well; “let them go round about the city.”

They know that they shall be in a miserable poor mean condition:—

1. “Let them wander up and down for meat.” Let them find no settled habitation, but seek necessary food in a strange nation.

2. “And grudge if they be not satisfied.” Let them be always grudging, if they have not content. If they be not satisfied, they will stay all night; be importunate and unmannerly beggars.

IV. The conclusion is a doxology, and contains David’s thanks that *God is his defence*, his refuge, his strength. Of him, therefore, he makes his song.

1. “I will sing of thy power.”

2. “I will sing of thy mercy.” 1. “Aloud.” 2. “In the morning.”

3. The reason he gives: “For thou hast been my refuge and defence in the day of my trouble.”

Both he repeats again:—

1. “Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing.”

2. The reason: “For God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.”

And he joins these two attributes, *strength* and *mercy*. Take away *strength* from him, and he cannot, remove *mercy*, and he will not, protect. Both must go together; *power* that he can, *mercy* that he will; otherwise it is in vain that we hope for help from him. David found God to be both, and for both he extols him.

PSALMS

PSALM 60

The psalmist complains of the desolation which had fallen on the land; prays for deliverance, 1-5; and promises himself victory over Shechem, Succoth, Gilead, Ephraim, Moab, Idumea, and the Philistines, by the special help and assistance of God, 6-12.

NOTES ON PSALM 60

The title, “To the chief Musician upon the *hexachord*, or *lily of the testimony*, a golden Psalm of David, for instruction; when he strove with Aram Naharaim, Syria of the two rivers (Mesopotamia) and Aram-Zobah, Syria of the watchmen, (Cœlosyria,) when Joab returned, and smote twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.” I have only to remark here that there is nothing in the contents of this Psalm that bears any relation to this title. According to the title it should be a *song of victory and triumph*; instead of which the first part of it is a tissue of *complaints of disaster and defeat*, caused by the Divine desertion. Besides, it was not *Joab* that slew *twelve thousand* men in the *Valley of Salt*; it was *Abishai*, the brother of Joab; and the number *twelve thousand* here is not correct; for there were *eighteen thousand* slain in that battle, as we learn from ^{<131812>}**1 Chronicles 18:12**. The *valley of salt* or *salt pits* is in Idumea. To reconcile the difference between the numbers, various expedients have been hit on; but still the insuperable objection remains; the *contents* of this Psalm and this *title* are in opposition to each other. That the Psalm deplores a *defeat*, is evident from the three first and two last verses. And the *Targumist* seems to have viewed it in this light, perhaps the proper one, by expressing the title thus: “To give praise for the ancient testimony, (*atwdhs sahadutha*,) of the sons of Jacob and Laban, (see ^{<013147>}**Genesis 31:47**,) an exemplar by the hand of David, to give instruction when he gathered together the people, and passed by the *heap of testimony*, (*atwdhs rgya ayegar sahadutha*,) and set the battle in array against Aram, which is by the Euphrates; and against Aram, which is by Izobah. And after this Joab returned and smote the Idumeans in the Valley of Salt; and of the armies of David and Joab there fell *twelve thousand* men.” The Psalm, therefore, seems to deplore this disastrous event; for although they had the victory at last, *twelve thousand* of the troops of Israel were justly considered too

great a sacrifice for such a conquest, and a proof that God had not afforded them that succour which they had long been in the habit of receiving. The latter part of the Psalm seems to be intended to put God in remembrance of his ancient promise of putting Israel in possession of the whole land by driving out the ancient iniquitous inhabitants. Others consider the Psalm as descriptive of the distracted state of the land after the fatal battle of Gilboa, till David was anointed king of the whole at Hebron.

This is the last of the *six Psalms* to which μtkm *michtam* is prefixed; the others are Psa. 16., 56., 57., 58., and 59. I have said something relative to this word in the introduction to ^{<1916>} **Psalm 16:1**, but some *observations* of Mr. Harmer lead me to consider the subject more at large. It is well known that there were *seven* most eminent Arabic *poets* who flourished *before* and at the commencement of the career of *Mohammed*: their names were *Amriolkais, Amru, Hareth, Tharafah, Zohair, Lebeid, and Antarah*. These poets produced *each a poem*, which because of its excellence was deemed worthy to be *suspended* on the walls of the *temple of Mecca*; and hence the collection of the seven poems was termed *Al Moallakat, The Suspended*; and *Al Modhahebat, The Gilded or Golden*, because they were written in *letters of gold* upon the Egyptian papyrus. The six *michtams* of David might have this title for the same reason; they might have been *written in letters of gold*, or on *gilded vellum*, or the *Egyptian papyrus*; for the word μtkm *michtam* is generally supposed to signify *golden*, and μtk *kethem* is used to signify *gold*, probably *stamped or engraven with figures or letters*. That the *Moallakat* were written in this way, there can be no question; and that the works of men of great eminence in Asiatic countries are still thus written, my own library affords ample evidence. Copies of the following works are written on paper all *powdered with gold, with gold borders, and highly illuminated anwans or titles*: The *MISNAVI* of *Jelaluddeen Raomy*; The *DEEVAN* of *Zuheer Faryabi*; The *HADIKATUSANI*, or *Garden of Praise*; The *SUH BET AL ABRAR*; The *DEEVAN* of *Hafiz*; *GULISTAN* of *Saady*; *DEEVAN* of *Shahy*, with many more, all works of eminent authors, written in the finest manner, ruled with gold borders, &c.

Copies of the *Koran* are often done in the same manner: one in 12mo., so thickly *powdered over with gold* that the *ground* on which the text is written appears to be almost *totally gilded*; another large *octavo*, all *powdered with gold*, and *golden flowers* down every margin; another small

octavo, that might be almost called the *Codex Aureus*, with rich *golden borders* on every page. And, lastly, one in large *folio*, which besides superbly illuminated *anwans*, has *three gold lines to every page*; one at the *top*, one in the *middle*, and one at the *bottom*. To the above may be added a small *folio*, that opens out about *eleven feet*, every page of which is like a plate of solid gold, with the characters engraven on it. It is a *collection of elegant extracts*. Another of the *same kind*, large *folio*, opens out *sixty-two feet*, on which every page is finished in the same manner, with a vast variety of borders, sprigs, and flowers. And to close the whole, a copy of the *Borda*, supposed to be the most elegant MS. in Europe, entirely covered with *gold flowers and lines*, the writing the most perfect I ever saw; so that of this MS. it might be truly said, splendid as it is, *materiam superabit opus*.

As Mr. Harmer has alluded to accounts which he has collected from other writers in order to illustrate the *nichtams* of David, I have above produced a number of *evidences* to bear witness to the *fact* that such is and such was the custom in the east, to write the works of the most eminent authors in *letters of gold*, or *on a page highly ornamented with the utmost profusion of golden lines, figures, flowers, &c.* In this way these Psalms might have been written, and from this circumstance they may have derived their name. I may just add, that I think these *titles* were made long after the Psalms were composed.

Verse 1. O God, thou hast cast us off] Instead of being our *general* in the battle, thou hast left us to ourselves; and then there was only the *arm of flesh* against the *arm of flesh*, numbers and physical power were left to decide the contest. We have been scattered, our ranks have been broken before the enemy, and thou hast caused the whole land to tremble at our bad success; the people are become divided and seditious. “Thou hast made the land to tremble, even the breaches of it, for it shaketh, it is all in commotion,” ^{<1911>} **Psalm 60:2.**

Verse 3. Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment] We reel as *drunken men*; we are *giddy*, like those who have drank too much wine; but *our giddiness* has been occasioned by the *astonishment* and *dismay* that have taken place in consequence of the prevalence of our enemies, and the unsettled state of the land. It has been remarked that the *three first verses* of this Psalm do not agree with the rest, and it also appears that the *three first verses* of ^{<1950>} **Psalm 85:1-3** do not agree with

the rest of *that* Psalm. But let them change places, and the three first verses of this be set instead of the three first verses of ^{<19801>}Psalm 85:1-3, and let those be placed here instead of these, and then the whole of each Psalm will be consistent. This was first suggested by Bishop *Hare*, and the supposition seems to be well founded. Some imagine that the whole of the Psalm refers to the distracted state of the land after the death of Saul till the time that David was anointed king over all Israel, at Hebron; others, to the disastrous war with the *Syrians*. See before.

Verse 4. Thou hast given a banner] *Sn nes*, a *sign*, something that was capable of being fixed on a pole.

That it may be displayed] *sswnthl lehithnoses*, that it may be unfurled.

Because of the truth.] *cvq ynpm mippeney koshet*, from the face of truth; which has been thus paraphrased: If we have displayed the *ensign of Israel*, and gone forth against these our enemies, who have now made such a terrible breach among us, (^{<19801>}Psalm 60:1-3,) it was *because of thy truth*-the *promises* of victory which we supposed would attend us at all times.

Mr. *Mudge*, thus: “Thou givest to them that fear thee a signal to be displayed before the truth. That thy favoured ones may be delivered, clothe thy right arm with victory, and answer us. God speaketh in his sanctuary, I will exult; I shall portion out Shechem, and measure the valley of Succoth.” The *fourth* verse seems to mean that God had appointed for the consolation of his people a certain *signal* of favour, with which therefore he prays him to answer them. This, accordingly, he does. *God speaketh in his sanctuary*, called *rybd debir* or *oracle* for that very reason. What he desires then, as he stands imploring the mercy of God before the oracle, is, that he may see the *usual signal of favour* proceed from it; a *voice*, perhaps joined with some *luminous emanations*, whence the phrase of *the light of God’s countenance*. The expression in the *sixth* verse seems to be proverbial, and means, “I shall divide the spoils of my enemies with as much ease as the sons of Jacob portioned out Shechem, and measured out for their tents the valley of Succoth.” Mr. *Harmer* gives a very ingenious illustration of the *giving the banner*. “*Albertus Aquensis* informs us that when Jerusalem was taken in 1099 by the crusaders, about *three hundred* Saracens got on the roof of a very high building, and earnestly begged for

quarter; but could not be induced by any *promises* of safety to come down, till they had received the *banner of Tanered*, one of the crusade generals, as a *pledge of life*. The event showed the faithlessness of these zealots, they put the whole to the sword. But the Saracens surrendering themselves upon the *delivering of a standard* to them, proves in how strong a light they looked upon the *giving a banner*, since it induced them to trust it, when they would not trust *any promises*. Perhaps the *delivery of a banner* was anciently esteemed in like manner an obligation to *protect*; and the psalmist might here consider it in this light when he says, *Thou hast shown thy people hard things; but thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee*. Though thou didst for a time give up thy Israel into the hands of their enemies, thou hast now given them an assurance of thy having received them under thy protection. Thus God *gave them a banner* or standard that it might be displayed, or *lifted up*; or rather, *that they may lift up a banner to themselves*, or encourage themselves with the confident persuasion that they are under the protection of God: *because of the truth—the word of promise, which is an assurance of protection—like the giving me and my people a banner, the surest of pledges.*—*Harmer's Observations*. See at the end of the chapter. **See Clarke “~~19612~~ Psalm 60:12”.**

Verse 6. God hath spoken] Judah shall not only be re-established in Jerusalem, but shall possess Samaria, where *Shechem is*, and the country beyond Jordan, in which is situated the valley of *Succoth*. *Dividing and meting out* signify *possession*.

Verse 7. Gilead is mine] This country was also beyond Jordan, and *Manasseh* and *Ephraim* are put for the *tribes* that formed the kingdom of Israel. All these, after the return from the captivity, formed but one people, the Jews and Israelites being united.

The strength of mine head] It shall be the principal support of the new-found kingdom, when all distinctions shall be buried.

Judah is my lawgiver] This tribe was chief of all those who returned from the captivity; and *Zerubbabel*, who was their leader, was *chief of that tribe*, and of the *family of David*. As this part of the Psalm appears to relate to the return of the captives from Babylon, and their repossession of their own land, the psalmist may refer, not only to the promises of their restoration, but also to the principal person under whose superintendence they returned.

Verse 8. Moab is my washpot] The Moabites shall be reduced to the *meanest* slavery.

Over Edom will I cast out my shoe] I will make a complete conquest of Idumea, and subject the Edomites to the meanest offices, as well as the Moabites.

Philistia, triumph thou because of me.] John *Hyrcanus* subdued the Idumeans, and caused them to receive circumcision, and profess the Jewish religion. The words here seem to predict their entire subjugation.

In an essay for a new translation of the Bible, there is what appears to me a correct paraphrase of the *seventh* and *eighth* verses: “Gilead and Manasseh have submitted unto me; Ephraim furnishes me with valiant men, and Judah with men of prudence and wisdom. I will reduce the Moabites to servitude; I will triumph over the Edomites, and make them my slaves; and the Philistines shall add to my triumph.”

Verse 9. Who will bring me into the strong city?] If this part of the Psalm, from the *sixth* to the *twelfth* verse, refer to *the return of the captives from Babylon*, as I think probable; then the *strong city* may mean either *Petra*, the capital of *Idumea*; *Bozra*, in Arabia, near the mountains of Gilead; *Rabba*, the capital of the Ammonites; or *Tyre*, according to the *Chaldee*, the capital of Phoenicia; or *Jerusalem* itself, which, although dismantled, had long been one of the strongest cities of the east. Or it may imply, Who shall give me the dominion over the countries already mentioned? who will lead me into Edom? who will give me the dominion over that people?

Verse 10. Wilt not thou, O God] It is God alone from whom we can expect our enlargement. He who has cast us off, and has abandoned us in battle; it is that very God alone from whom we expect complete enlargement, the repossession of our own land, and the subduction of the surrounding nations; and we expect this, because he has graciously *promised* these mercies.

Verse 11. Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.] We have done all we can do, and have trusted too much in ourselves; now, Lord, undertake for us.

Verse 12. Through God we shall do valiantly] Through thee *alone* shall we do valiantly; thou *alone* canst tread down our enemies; and to thee *alone* we look for conquest.

THE author to whom *Harmer* refers in the note on the *fourth* verse, is one of the writers in a work entitled *Gesta dei per Francos*, fol. Hanoviæ, 1611, 2 vols. And the places quoted by *Harmer* may be found in vol. i., p. 282; and as the passage is singular, and a good use has been made of it for the illustration of a difficult passage, I shall lay the words of the original before the reader: “Proxima ab hinc die sabbati clarescente, quidam Sarracenorum spe vitæ in summitatem tecti domus præcelsæ Solomonis ab armis elapsi, circiter trecenti, confugerant. Qui multa prece pro vita flagitantes, in mortis articulo positi, nullius fiducia aut promissione audebant descendere, *quousque vexillum Tankradi in signum protectionis vivendi susceperunt*. Sed minime misellis profuit. Nam plurimis super hoc indignantibus, et Christianis furore commotis, ne unus quidem illorum evasit.”

It is very properly added by *Albertus*, that the noble spirit of *Tancred* was filled with indignation at this most horrible breach of faith; and he was about to take a summary revenge on the instigators and perpetrators of this unprincipled butchery, when the *chiefs* interposed, and not only maintained the expediency of the massacre that had already been committed, *but the necessity of putting all the inhabitants to the sword*. On this the savage fiends, called *Christians*, flew to arms, and made a universal slaughter of all that remained of the inhabitants. They drew out the prisoners, chopped off their heads, stabbed all they met with in the streets, and—but I can translate no farther; it is too horrible. I shall give my author’s words, who was an ecclesiastic, and wrote down the account from eye-witnesses: “Concilio hoc accepto, (the determination of the *chiefs* to put all to the sword,) tertio die post victoriam egressa est sententia a *majoribus*: et ecce universi arma rapiunt, et miserabili cæde in omne vulgus Gentilium, quod adhuc erat residuum, exsurgunt, alios producentes e vinculis et decollantes: alios per vicos et plateas civitatis inventos trucidantes, quibus antea causa pecuniæ, aut humana pietate pepercerunt. Puellas vero, mulieres, matronas nobiles, et fætas cum puellis tenellis detruncabant, aut lapidibus obruebant, in nullis aliquam considerantes ætatem. E contra, puellæ, mulieres, matronæ, metu momentaneæ mortis angustiæ et horrore gravissimæ necis concussæ Christianos in jugulum utriusque sexus debacchantes ac sævientes, medios pro liberanda vita amplexabantur, quædam pedibus

eorum adolvebantur, de vita et salute sua illos nimium miserando fletu et ejulatu sollicitantes. Pueri vero quinquennes aut triennes matrum patrumque crudelem casum intuentes, una miserum clamorem et fletum multiplicabant. Sed frustra haec pietatis et misericordiae signa fiebant: nam Christiani sic neci totum laxaverunt animum, ut non lugens masculus aut fæmina, nedum infans unius anni vivens, manum percussoris evaderet. Unde plateæ totius civitatis *Jerusalem* corporibus extinctis virorum et mulierum, lacerisque membris infantium, adeo stratæ et opertæ fuisse referuntur, ut non solum in vicis, soliis et palatiis, sed etiam in locis desertæ solitudinis copia occisorum reperiretur innumerabilis.” *GESTA DEI* Vol. I., p. 283.

This is one specimen of the spirit of the crusaders, and is it any wonder that God did not shine on such villanous measures! No wonder that the Mohammedans have so long hated the name of *Christian*, when they had no other specimen of Christianity than what the conduct of these ferocious brutes exhibited; and these were called *Gesta Dei*, the *transactions* of God!

There are many difficulties in this Psalm; whether they are in general removed by the preceding notes, the reader must judge. The following analysis is constructed on the supposition that the Psalm speaks of the distracted state of the kingdom from the fatal battle of Gilboa, in which Saul fell, to the death of Ishbosheth, when the whole kingdom was united under David.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTIETH PSALM

Before David’s time, and in the beginning of his reign, Israel was in a distressed condition; he composed and quieted the whole. Edom only was not vanquished. In this Psalm he gives thanks for his victories, and prays for assistance for the conquest of Edom.

There are *three* general parts in this Psalm:—

I. A commemoration of the former lamentably distracted condition of the Israelites, ^{<9800>}**Psalm 60:1-3.**

II. The condition of it under his reign much better, ^{<9800>}**Psalm 60:4-9.**

III. His thankfulness in ascribing all his victories to God, ^{<9800>}**Psalm 60:9-12.**

I. In the first he shows that God was angry with Israel. On which he laments the effects of his anger. 2. And then prays for the aversion: 1. “O

Lord, thou hast (or hadst) cast us off.” 2. “Thou hast scattered us abroad; thou hast been displeased.” 3. “Thou hast made the earth to tremble.” 4. “Thou hast broken it.” 5. “Thou hast showed thy people hard things.” 6. “Thou hast given us to drink the wine of astonishment.” Every syllable of which *congeries* will appear to be most true when we examine the history of the Israelites before *Saul’s* reign, under his government, and upon his death; and the first entrance of *David* upon his reign; his wars with the house of *Saul*, until *Ish-bosheth* was taken out of the way.

All which wars, civil and external, with the calamities that flowed from them, he imputes to God’s anger: “Thou hast been displeased,” ^{<1960B>} **Psalm 60:1.**

2. And upon it he prays: “O turn thee to us again.” Let us again enjoy thy countenance. 2. “Heal the breaches of the land.” Close the wounds made by these contentions: they were not closed; for it adds, “It shaketh.”

II. And now the condition of it was much better; all being brought under one king, and he victorious over his foreign enemies.

1. “Thou hast now given a banner to them that fear thee.” *All Israel*—all those that are thy servants, are brought to acknowledge thee, and fight under one standard; in effect, have received me as their sole king, their factions and parties being quieted.

2. “That it may be displayed.” Set up, that Israel may know under whom to fight, and whose part to take.

3. “Because of thy truth.” Who by this hast made it appear that it was no fiction nor ambition of mine to set up this standard; but a *truth* that I was by *Samuel*, by thy special appointment, anointed to be king; and I am now invested with the crown for the performance of thy truth and promise.

4. And the end is especially, that I should bring deliverance to thy servants: it was that “thy beloved may be delivered.” That the godly and good men, and those that fear thee, living hitherto oppressed, and in these distractions kept low, might be delivered.

5. Which, that it may be done, he inserts a short ejaculation for himself and them: “Save with thy right hand, and hear thou me.” And now he begins to commemorate the *particulars* that God had done for him, and the several

victories he had obtained; also, in what manner he ruled this people. All which he prefaces with this *oracle*:—

“God hath spoken in his holiness.” He certainly and *truly* hath promised to save us: “I will be glad and rejoice in it.” With much joy and gladness I will enter upon the kingdom, being confirmed by his promise, which I will administer in a different manner; my government shall be *paternal* to the *Israelites*, which are his people; but more severe to the *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, *Edomites*, and *Syrians*, because they are aliens to the commonwealth of *Israel*.

1. “I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.” I will bring under my power those places of Israel; and, as a true lord of them, I will *divide* and *measure out* what portions I shall think fit to the inhabitants.
2. “Gilead also is mine, and Manasseh is mine.” The Israelites that followed the house of Saul are come into my power, and I will divide and apportion them also. Yet, as being mine, I will deal mildly with them.
3. Of *Ephraim* I shall make reckoning. Ephraim “shall be the strength of my head.” As this tribe had more *men* than any other, so they were great *soldiers*; and these he esteemed as his *life-guard*.
4. “Judah is my lawgiver.” His chief counsel were of this tribe, in whom, with himself, was the legislative power, according to the prophecy of Jacob: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come.” And thus, having showed his kingdom, and the administration over the Israelites, he passes to the *strangers* whom he had conquered, over whom he would carry a severe hand, putting them into a slavish subjection, and to base offices.
 1. “Moab is my washpot.” A servant to hold the bason, and to wash my feet.
 2. “Over Edom I will cast my shoe.” Trample on their necks.
 3. “Philistia, triumph thou because of me:” which is either spoken ironically, as if he would say: “O Philistine, whom I have subdued, go, go triumph because I have conquered thee.” Or else, “Triumph thou in the triumph I shall celebrate for my conquest; bear among the rest thy part, though unwillingly. Follow the train with acclamations, and proclaim me thy king.”

III. After the enumerations of his victories, and form of government, that no man should take this for a vain boast of his own strength, he thankfully ascribes all the glory to God, both of which he had done, and what he was yet to do. One people he had yet to conquer; and that could not be done except that God, who had hitherto gone out with his armies, would again vouchsafe to lead them; and, therefore, he asks,—

1. “Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?” No question, had *Joab*, *Abishai*, &c., or any of his worthies, been by, they would have striven who should have performed this service. Every one would have said, “I will be the man.”

2. But he prevents them all; and returns this answer to himself, that none but God should do it, and that he was persuaded that he would do it; even that God who was formerly displeased with them, had cast them off, but was now reconciled: “Wilt not thou, O God, lead us into the strong city which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, bring us into Edom, which didst not go forth with our armies.”

3. And to that purpose he prays, “Give us help from trouble.” And he adds his reason, that nothing can be well done without God’s assistance; for the strength, power, prudence, and skill of man, without God, are to little purpose: “Vain is the help of man.”

And he concludes all with this *epiphonema*: “In God we shall do great or valiant acts; for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.” In war these two must be joined, and indeed in all actions. HE, *we*; GOD and *man*.

1. “We shall do valiantly,” for God helps not remiss, or cowardly, or negligent men.

2. And yet, that being done, the work is *his*: “He shall tread down;” the blow and overthrow are not to be attributed to *us*, but to HIM.

PSALMS

PSALM 61

The psalmist's prayer for those who were banished from their own land, and from the ordinances of God, 1, 2. He praises God for his past mercies, 3; purposes to devote himself entirely to his service, 4, 5. He prays for the king, 6, 7; and promises to perform his vow to the Lord daily, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 61

The title, *To the chief Musician upon Neginath*, **tnygn**. The verb **gn** *nagan* signifies to *strike* or *play on a musical instrument*, especially one of the *stringed* kind; but the **tnygn** *neginoth*, as it is written in about *thirty* MSS., may signify either the *players* on the *instruments* or the *instruments* themselves. The Psalm appears to have been written about the close of the captivity, and the most judicious interpreters refer it to that period. On this supposition the notes are formed.

Verse 1. Hear my cry, O God] In the midst of a long and painful captivity, oppressed with suffering, encompassed with cruel enemies and insolent masters, I address my humble prayer to THEE, *O my God*.

Verse 2. From the end of the earth] **xra** *arets* should be here translated *land*, not *earth*, and so it should be in numerous places besides. But here it seems to mean the *country beyond the Euphrates*; as it is thought to do, ~~Psalm~~ **Psalm 65:5, 8**, called there also *the ends of the earth* or *land*. It may be remarked that the Jews were always more pious and devoted to God in their afflictions and captivities, than when in their own land, in ease and affluence. But who can bear prosperity? How many hearts filled with heavenly *ardour* in affliction and persecution have grown *cold* under the beams of the sun of prosperity!

Lead me to the rock that is higher than 1.] Direct me to a place of refuge and safety. It is a metaphorical expression; and *Calmet* interprets it of the liberty granted to the Jews by Cyrus to return to their own land. This was a privilege far *higher* than any thing they could expect. The fathers think Jesus Christ is meant by this *high rock*.

Verse 3. Thou hast been a shelter for me] During the whole duration of the captivity God marvellously dealt with the poor Jews; so that, although they were cast down, they were not utterly forsaken.

Verse 4. I will abide in thy tabernacle] The greater portion of those Psalms which were composed during and after the captivity, says *Calmet*, had *Levites* and *priests* for their authors. Hence we find the ardent desire so frequently expressed of seeing the *temple*; of *praising God there*; of spending their lives in that place, performing the functions of their sacred office. There I *shall sojourn*;—there I *shall dwell*,—*be at rest*,—*be in safety*,—*be covered with thy wings*, as a bird in its nest is covered with the wings of its mother. These simple comparisons, drawn from rural affairs and ordinary occurrences, are more pleasing and consolatory in the circumstances in question, than allegories derived from subjects the most noble and sublime.

Verse 5. Hast heard my vows] Often have I purposed to be wholly thine,—to serve thee alone,—to give up my whole life to thy service: and thou hast heard me, and taken me at my word; and given me that heritage, the privilege of enjoying thee in thy ordinances, which is the lot of them that *fear thy name*. The Psalm seems to have been composed either after the captivity, or at the time that Cyrus published his decree in their favour, as has been remarked before.

Verse 6. Thou wilt prolong the king's life] The words are very emphatic, and can refer to no ordinary person. Literally, “Days upon days thou wilt add to the king; and his years shall be like the generations of this world, and the generations of the world to come.” This is precisely the paraphrase I had given to this text before I had looked into the *Chaldee Version*; and to which I need add nothing, as I am persuaded no earthly king is intended: and it is Christ, as *Mediator*, that “shall abide before God for ever,”

<96107>**Psalm 61:7.** Neither to David, nor to any earthly sovereign, can these words be applied.

Verse 7. He shall abide before God for ever] Literally, “He shall sit for ever before the faces of God.” He shall ever appear in the presence of God for us. And he ever *sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high*; for he undertook this office after having, by his sacrificial offering, made atonement for our sins.

Prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.] As *Mediator*, his attendants will ever be *mercy* and *truth*. He will dispense the *mercy* of God, and thus fulfil the *truth* of the various promises and predictions which had preceded his incarnation. There is an obscurity in this clause, **wħr xny ʾm tmaw dsj** *chesed veemeth man yintseruhu*, owing to the particle ʾm *man*, which some translate *who* or *what*; and others, *number thou*, from **hnm** *manah*, to count. *Houbigant*, and he is followed by Bishop *Lowth*, would read **hwħym** *miyehovah*, *Mercy and truth from Jehovah shall preserve him*. The *Anglo-Saxon* has, [A.S.] *Mildheartedness*, and *soothfastness his*, *who seeketh?* which is nearly the rendering of the old Psalter: *Mercy and soothfastnes of him, wha sall seke?* Dr. *Kennicott* says, ʾm *man* is a *Syriasm*; and should be translated *quæsoutinam*, *I beseech thee,—I wish,—O that!* On this very ground *Coverdale* appears to have translated, © *let thy lobyngge mercy and faithfulness preserve him!* The sense I have given above I conceive to be the true one.

Verse 8. So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever] For the benefits which I have received, and hope to receive endlessly from thee, I will to all perpetuity praise thee.

That I may daily perform my vows.] While I live, I shall **ymy yom** *yom*, *yom*, “day by day,” each day as it succeeds, render to thee my vows—act according to what I have often *purposed*, and as often *promised*. The Chaldee ends remarkably: “Thus I will praise thy name for ever, when I shall perform my vows in the day of the redemption of Israel; and in the day in which the King Messiah shall be anointed, that he may reign.”

The *ancient Jews* were full of the expectation of the Messiah; the *Jews of the present day* have given up their *hope*.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-FIRST PSALM

The author of this Psalm prays and vows perpetual service to God. It is composed of *two* parts:—

I. His prayer, ^{<9610>}**Psalm 61:1-3.**

II. His vow, ^{<9610>}**Psalm 61:4-8.**

He begins with a prayer, in which he begs,—

1. Audience: “Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer,” ~~<9610>~~ **Psalm 61:1.**

2. The reason to enforce it.

1. He was in banishment, in the farther part of the land of Judah: “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee.”

2. He was in extremity: “When my heart is overwhelmed.”

3. For defence: “Lead me to the rock that is higher than I;” that is, To some safe and defenced place to which my enemies may have no access, whither without thy help I cannot ascend.

And he adds a reason to this part of his prayer drawn from his own experience: “For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.”

His faith now presents him as delivered; and, therefore, he *vows*,—

1. “I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever.” I will return, and adore thee in thy temple.

2. “I will trust in the covert of thy wings.” He alludes to the cherubim, whose wings cover the ark.

And for this he assigns many reasons also:—

1. “For thou, O God, hast heard my vows,” i.e., my prayers.

2. “Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name;” “made me king over thy people, and more fully performed to me the promise made to *Abraham*, in the land of Canaan.

3. “Thou wilt prolong the king’s life.”

4. “And his years,” i.e., in his posterity, “as many generations;” of which the beginning of the next verse is the prediction. “He shall abide before God for ever.”

And now David, assuring himself of the crown, and that his posterity should inherit it, puts forth an earnest vote for that which should establish it: “O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him; i.e., me thy king;” for these two *virtues*, *mercy*, i.e., *clemency*, and *truth*, do commend a king,

and make him dear to his subjects; for in the practice of these it is not possible that his government should be harsh, unjust, or tyrannical.

Which if it please God to bestow upon him, then he makes a new vow: "So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever."

Though here this appears to be a new vow, yet he had vowed it before, and engaged to discharge; for in singing praise to God's name, he should but pay what by vow he had often undertaken: "I will sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows."

PSALMS

PSALM 62

David, in imminent danger, flees to God for help and safety, 1, 2; points out the designs of his adversaries, 3, 4; encourages his soul to wait on God, 5-8; shows the vanity of trusting in man, and of trusting in riches, 9, 10; and concludes with asserting that power and mercy belong to God, and that he will give to every man according to his works, 11, 12.

NOTES ON PSALM 62

The *title*, “To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun,” may mean that the Psalm was sent to him who was the chief or leader of the band of the family of Jeduthun. It appears that *Asaph*, *Jeduthun*, and *Heman*, were chief singers in the time of David; that they, with their families, presided over different departments of the vocal and instrumental worship in the tabernacle, ^{<1320>}**1 Chronicles 25:1**, &c.; that they were holy men, full of the Divine Spirit, (a thing very rare among singers and performers in these latter days,) and that *they prophesied with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals*; that Jeduthun had *six* sons thus employed; that himself prophesied with a harp to give thanks and praise to God, ^{<1320>}**1 Chronicles 25:3**; and that the sons of Jeduthun were appointed by *lot* to the different courses. The *eighth* course fell to his son *Jeshaiah*, ^{<1325>}**1 Chronicles 25:15**; the *twelfth*, to *Hashabiah*, ^{<1329>}**1 Chronicles 25:19**; and the *fourteenth*, to *Mattithiah*, ^{<1321>}**1 Chronicles 25:21**.

Will our modern performers on instruments of music in churches and chapels, pretend to the *prophetic influence*? If they do not, and cannot, how dare they quote such passages in vindication of their practice, which can be no better than a dulcet noise without its original meaning, and alien from its primary use? Do they indeed *prophesy with harps, and psalteries, and cymbals*? or with their *play-house aggregate* of fiddles and flutes, bass-viols and bassoons, clarionets and kettle-drums? Away with such trumpery and pollution from the worship and Church of Christ!

Though it is not very clear from the Psalm itself on what occasion it was composed, yet it is most likely it was during the rebellion of Absalom; and perhaps at the particular time when David was obliged to flee from Jerusalem.

Verse 1. Truly my soul waiteth upon God] I do not think that the original will warrant this translation, *yvph hymwd µyhl a l a Ēa ak el Elohim dumiyah naphshi*, “Surely to God only is my soul dumb.” I am subject to God Almighty. He has a right to lay on me what he pleases; and what he lays on me is much less than I deserve: therefore am I *dumb* before God. The *Vulgate*, and almost all the Versions, have understood it in this sense: Nonne Deo subjecta erit anima mea? Shall not my soul be subject to God? In other words, God alone has a right to dispose of my *life* as he pleases.

Verse 2. I shall not be greatly moved.] Having God for my *rock*-strong fortified place, for my *salvation*-continual safety, and my *defence*-my elevated tower, which places me out of the reach of my enemies; *I shall not be greatly moved*-I may be *shaken*, but cannot be *cast down*.

Verse 3. How long will ye imagine mischief] The original word, *wt twh t tehothethu*, has been translated variously; *rush upon, rage against, stir yourselves up, thrust against*: the root is *tth hathath* or *hth hathah*, *to rush violently upon, to assault*. It points out the disorderly riotous manner in which this rebellion was conducted.

As a bowing wall-a tottering fence.] Ye are just ready to fall upon others, and destroy them; and in that fall yourselves shall be destroyed: “Ye shall be slain the whole of you.”

Verse 4. To cast him down from his excellency] They are consulting to dethrone me, and use treachery and falsehood in order to bring it about: “They delight in lies.”

They bless with their mouth] Probably alluding to Absalom’s blandishments of the people. He flattered them in order to get the sovereign rule. Or it may refer to the people of Jerusalem, whose perfidy he saw, while they were full of professions of loyalty, &c.; but he could not trust them, and therefore retired from Jerusalem.

Verse 5. Wait thou only upon God] There is none but him in whom thou canst safely trust; and to get his help, resign thyself into his hands; be subject to him, and be silent before him; thou hast what thou hast deserved. See on ^{<1960>}**Psalm 62:1**.

Verse 7. In God is my salvation] **pyhl a y[** *al Elohim*, “Upon God is my salvation;” he has taken it *upon himself*. And my glory—the preservation of my *state*, and the safety of my *kingdom*.

Verse 8. Trust in him-ye people] All ye who are faithful to your king, continue to trust in God. The usurper will soon be cast down, and your rightful sovereign restored to his government. Fear not the threatenings of my enemies, for *God will be a refuge for us*.

Verse 9. Men of low degree are vanity] **mda ynb** *beney Adam*, which we here translate *men of low degree*, literally, *sons of Adam*, are put in opposition to **vya ynb** *beney ish*, *men of high degree*, literally, the *sons of substance*, or children of substantial men. *Adam* was the name of the first man when formed out of the *earth*; *Ish* was his name when united to his wife, and they became one flesh. *Before*, he was the *incomplete* man; *after*, he was the *complete* man; for it seems, in the sight of God, it requires the male and female to make one *complete human being*. **vwna** *enosh* is another name given to man, but this concerns him in his low, fallen, wretched estate: it properly signifies *weak, poor, addicted, wretched man*.

Common men can give no help. They are vanity, and it is folly to trust in them; for although they may be *willing*, yet they have no *ability* to help you: “Rich men are a lie.” They promise much, but perform nothing; they cause you to *hope*, but mock your *expectation*.

To be laid to the balance] **twl [I pynzamb** *bemozenayim laaloth*, *In the balances they ascend*: exactly answerable to our phrase, *they kick the beam*.

They are altogether lighter than vanity.] Literally, *Both of them united are vanity*, **dj y l bhm hmh** *hemmah mehebel yachad*. Put both together in one scale, and *truth* in the opposite, and both will kick the beam. They weigh nothing, they avail nothing.

Verse 10. Trust not in oppression] Do not suppose that my unnatural son and his partisans can succeed.

Become not vain in robbery] If ye have laid your hands on the spoils of my house, do not imagine that these ill-gotten riches will prosper. God will soon scatter them to all the winds of heaven. All oppressors come to an untimely end; and all property acquired by injustice has God’s curse on it.

Verse 11. God hath spoken once] God has *once* addressed his people in giving the law on Mount Sinai. The *Chaldee* translates the whole passage thus: “God hath spoken one law, and twice have we heard this from the mouth of Moses the great scribe, that strength is before God: and it becomes thee, O God, to show mercy to the righteous; for thou renderest to man according to his works.”

Twice have I heard this] Except some of the *ancient* Versions, almost every version, translation, and commentary has missed the sense and meaning of this verse. I shall set down the text: *yt [mv wz μytv μyhl a rbd tj a achath dibber Elohim; shetayim zu shamati;* of which the true version is this: *Once hath God spoken; these two things have I heard.* Now what are the *two things* he had heard? 1. *μyhl al zw yk ki oz lelohim,* “That strength is the Lord’s;” that is, He is the *Origin of power.* 2. *dsj ynda Ēl w ulecha Adonai, chased;* “and to thee, Lord, is mercy;” that is, He is the *Fountain of mercy.* These, then, are the *two* grand truths that the *law*, yea, the whole *revelation* of God, declares through every page. He is the *Almighty*; he is the *most merciful*; and hence the *inference*: The powerful, just, and holy God, the most merciful and compassionate Lord, *will* by and by *judge the world*, and *will render to man according to his works.* How this beautiful meaning should have been unseen by almost every interpreter, is hard to say: these verses contain one of the most instructive truths in the Bible.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-SECOND PSALM

The intent of this Psalm is to teach men to trust in God; and not to trust in wealth, or strength, nor in the power or promise of men.

It may be divided into the *five* following parts:—

- I. David’s confidence in God, ^{<19610>}**Psalm 62:1, 2.**
- II. The mischievous but vain attempts of his enemies, ^{<19613>}**Psalm 62:3, 4.**
- III. He encourages himself and others in the same confidence, ^{<19615>}**Psalm 62:5-9.**
- IV. That no trust is to be put in men, nor riches, ^{<19619>}**Psalm 62:9, 10.**
- V. The grounds of our confidence in God, ^{<19621>}**Psalm 62:11, 12.**

I. In the first verses David expresses, or rather labours to express, as appears by his frequent repetition of the same thing in divers words, his trust, hope, and confidence in God:—

1. “Truly, my soul waiteth upon God.” I acquiesce in his will.
2. “From him comes my salvation.” If I be safe in my greatest troubles, it is from him.
3. “He only is my rock, and my salvation; he is my defence so that I shall not greatly be moved.” He is to me what a rock or tower or defence is to such as flee to them.

II. And upon this he infers that the mischievous attempts of his bitterest adversaries are but vain; with them he expostulates; them he checks, and over them he insults.

1. “How long will ye imagine mischief against a man?” i.e., *me*. He chides their obstinacy.
2. “Ye shall be slain all of you;” and their ruin he declares by a double similitude; “Ye shall be as a bowing wall;” whence when some stones begin to start out or fall, the rest follow: or *as a tottering fence*, that is easily thrown down.

Next, by the description of their manners, he intimates the cause of their ruin.

1. “They only consult to cast him down from his excellency;” their counsel is to destroy David.
2. “They delight in lies;” invent lies and tales to destroy him.
3. Flatterers and dissemblers are they: “They bless with their mouth but they curse inwardly;” no wonder then, if destined to the slaughter, “if they be as a broken wall,” &c.

III. And lest his heart faint and fail through the multitude of temptations, he first encourages himself to be confident still. Secondly, persuades others to do so.

1. He encourages himself, making use of the words of the first and second verses for reasons: “My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him: he only is my rock, and my salvation; he is my defence, I shall

not be moved. In God is my salvation, and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.”

2. He exhorts others to do the like: “Trust in him, ye people,” which he amplifies:—

1. By assignation of the time: “Trust in him at all times:” in prosperity, that he be not secure; in adversity, that he be not heartless.

2. And in our saddest occasions he shows what is to be done, that we bring our grievances and complaints before God, and with an honest heart open them: “Pour out your heart (that is, the griefs of your hearts) before him.”

3. Adding this reason: “God is a refuge for us.”

IV. So are not other things; whether, 1. *Men*. 2. *Wealth*, especially unjustly got.

1. Not men; there is no credit or trust to be put in them of *any degree*. 1. “Surely men of low degree are vanity,” 2. “And men of high degree are a lie.” The *low* are not *able*; the *high* *deceive* our hopes.

“Put them into the balance; they are altogether lighter than vanity.” Make trial of them, as of things in a scale, and you shall find them so vain and light that they carry no proportion to what is weighty, but ascend as an empty scale.

2. Nor *wealth*, nor *riches*; especially if unjustly heaped together: “Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.”

V. In the close, he sets down the grounds of his confidence, taken upon God’s word: “God hath spoken; twice have I heard the same;” or, “I have heard these two things:”—

1. “That power belongs to God;” and there fore he is to be trusted.

2. “That mercy belongs to God;” and therefore, also, you may have the utmost confidence in him.

The consequence of both is, “Thou renderest to every one according to his works,” *bonis vera, malis mala*: rely upon him. *Bad* work cannot have *good* wages; *good* work cannot have *bad* wages. “What a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” “The righteous shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the

promotion of fools.” A man may deserve hell by a wicked life; but he cannot merit heaven by a good life because he cannot do good but through the grace of God, and the merit of the work belongs to the grace by which it was wrought. Reader, hear God’s sentence on this subject: “The *wages* of sin is death.” This is desert. “But the *gift* of God is eternal life.” Here is no desert, for it is “by Jesus Christ our Lord.” To him be glory for ever. Amen.

PSALMS

PSALM 63

David's soul thirsts after God, while absent from the sanctuary, and longs to be restored to the Divine ordinances, 1, 2. He expresses strong confidence in the Most High, and praises him for his goodness, 3-8; shows the misery of those who do not seek God, 9, 10; and his own safety as king of the people, 11.

NOTES ON PSALM 63

The *title* of this Psalm is, *A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judea*; but instead of *Judea*, the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, several of the ancient *Latin Psalters*, and several of the *Latin fathers*, read *Idumea*, or *Edom*; still there is no evidence that David had ever taken refuge in the *deserts of Idumea*. The *Hebrew text* is that which should be preferred; and all the *MSS.* are in its favour. The *Syriac* has, “Of David, when he said to the king of Moab, My father and mother fled to thee from the face of Saul; and I also take refuge with thee.” It is most probable that the Psalm was written when David took refuge in the forest of *Hareth*, in the wilderness of *Ziph*, when he fled from the court of *Achish*. But *Calmet* understands it as a prayer by the captives in *Babylon*.

Verse 1. O God, thou art my God] He who can say so, and feels what he says, need not fear the face of any adversary. He has God, and all sufficiency in him.

Early will I seek thee] From the dawn of day. *Deuteronomy luce*, from the light, *Vulgate*; as soon as day breaks; and often before this, for his eyes prevented the night-watches; and he longed and watched for God more than they who watched for the morning. The old Psalter says, **God my God, til the fram light I wake**; and paraphrases thus: God of all, thurgh myght; thu is my God, thurgh lufe and devocion; speciali till the I wak. **ƿra light**, that is, fra thy tym that the light of thi grace be in me, that excites fra night of sine. And makes me wak till the in delite of luf, and swetnes in saul. **Thai wak** till God, that setes all thar thoght on God, and for getns the werld. **Thai step** till God, that settis thair hert on ani creatur.—**I wak** till the, and that gars me thirst in saule and body.

What first lays hold of the heart in the morning is likely to occupy the place all the day. First impressions are the most durable, because there is not a multitude of ideas to drive them out, or prevent them from being deeply fixed in the moral feeling.

In a dry and thirsty land] *xrab beerets*, IN a land: but several MSS. have *xrak keerets*, AS a dry and thirsty land, &c.

Verse 2. To see thy power and thy glory-in the sanctuary.] In his public ordinances God had often showed his *power* in the judgments he executed, in the terror he impressed, and in awakening the sinful; and his glory in delivering the tempted, succouring the distressed, and diffusing peace and pardon through the hearts of his followers. God shows his *power* and *glory* in his *ordinances*; therefore *public worship* should never be neglected. *We must see God*, says the old Psalter, *that he may see us*. In his temple he dispenses his choicest blessings.

Verse 3. Thy loving-kindness is better than life] This is the language of every regenerate soul. But O how few prefer the approbation of God to the blessings of life, or even to life itself in *any circumstances*! But the psalmist says, *Thy loving-kindness*, *Ēdsj chasdecha*, thy *effusive mercy*, is better *μϋϋϋ m mechaiyim*, than LIVES: *it is better than*, or *good beyond*, countless ages of human existence.

My lips shall praise thee.] Men praise, or *speak well*, of power, glory, honour, riches, worldly prospects and pleasures; but the truly religious *speak well* of GOD, in whom they find infinitely more satisfaction and happiness than worldly men can find in the possession of all *earthly good*.

Verse 4. I will lift up my hands in thy name.] I will take God for my portion. I will dedicate myself to him, and will take him to witness that I am upright in what I profess and do. Pious Jews, in every place of their dispersion, in all their prayers, praises, contracts, &c., *stretched out their hands towards Jerusalem*, where the true God had his temple, and where he manifested his presence.

Verse 5. My soul shall be satisfied] I shall have, in the true worshipping of thee, as complete a sensation of spiritual sufficiency and happiness, so that no desire shall be left unsatisfied, as any man can have who enjoys health of body, and a fulness of all the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of life.

Verse 6. When I remember thee upon my bed] I will lie down in thy fear and love; that I may sleep soundly under thy protection, and awake with a sense of thy presence and approbation; and when I awake in the *night watches*, or be awakened by them, I will spend the waking moments in meditation upon thee.

Verse 7. Therefore in the shadow of thy wings] I will get into the very secret of thy presence, into the holy of holies, to the *mercy-seat*, over which the *cherubs extend their wings*. If the psalmist does not allude to the *overshadowing* of the *mercy-seat* by the *extended wings of the cherubim*, he may have in view, as a metaphor, the young of fowls, seeking shelter, protection, and warmth under the wings of their mothers. See the same metaphor, ^{<19610>}**Psalm 61:4**. When a bird of prey appears, the chickens will, by natural instinct, run under the wings of their mothers for protection.

The old *Psalter* translates, *And in hiling of thi wenges I sall joy*. The paraphrase is curious. “Thou art my helper, in perels; and I can joy in gode dedes in thi hiling, (covering,) for I am thi bride, (bird,) and if thou hil (cover) me noight, the glede (kite) will rawis me, (carry me away.)”

Verse 8. My soul followeth hard after thee] *Ëyrj a yvpn hqbd dabekah naphshi achareycha*, “My soul cleaves (or) is glued after thee.” This phrase not only shows the *diligence* of the pursuit, and the *nearness* of the attainment, but also the *fast hold* he had got of the mercy of his God.

Verse 9. Lower parts of the earth.] They are appointed, in the just judgment of God, to destruction; they shall be slain and buried in the earth, and shall be seen no more. Some understand the passage as referring to the punishment of *hell*; which many supposed to be in the *centre of the earth*. So the old *Psalter*, *Thai sall entir in till lagher pine of hell. Lagher or laigher*, lower, undermost.

Verse 10. They shall fall by the sword] *They shall be poured out by the hand of the sword*, Heb. That is, their life’s blood shall be shed either in war, or by the hand of justice.

They shall be a portion for foxes.] They shall be left *unburied*, and the *jackals* shall feed upon their dead bodies. Or, being all cut off by utter destruction, their *inheritance* shall be left for the *wild beasts*. That which was their *portion* shall shortly be the *portion* of the wild beasts of the

forest. If he here refers to the destruction of the *Babylonians*, the prediction has been literally fulfilled. Where ancient Babylon stood, as far as it can be ascertained, is now the *hold of dangerous reptiles and ferocious beasts*. The *jackal*, or *chokal*, is a very ravenous beast, and fond of *human flesh*. It devours dead bodies, steals infants out of the lap of their mothers, devours alive the *sick* who are left by the side of the *Ganges*, and even in the streets of Calcutta has been known to eat persons who were in a state of intoxication. WARD'S *Customs*.

Verse 11. But the king shall rejoice] David shall come to the kingdom according to the promise of God. Or, if it refer to the *captivity*, the *blood royal* shall be preserved in and by *Zerubbabel* till the *Messiah* come, who shall be David's spiritual successor in the kingdom for ever.

That sweareth by him] It was customary to swear *by the life of the king*. The *Egyptians* swore *by the life of Pharaoh*; and *Joseph* conforms to this custom, as may be seen in the book of *Genesis*, ^{<04215>}**Genesis 42:15, 16**. See also ^{<00126>}**1 Samuel 1:26; 17:55**, and **Judith 11:7**. But here it may refer to GOD. He is THE KING, and *swearing by his name* signifies *binding* themselves by his *authority*, *acknowledging* his *supremacy*, and *devoting* themselves to his *glory* and *service* alone.

The *Chaldee* has: "And the King shall rejoice *ahl a rmymb bemeymar Eloha*, in the WORD of God;" or, in the WORD GOD; *Meymar*, WORD, being taken here *substantially*, as in many other places, by the Targumist.

The mouth of them that speak lies] The mouth of those who acknowledge *lying vanities*, that worship *false gods*, shall be *stopped*. All false religions shall be destroyed by the prevalence of the truth. For he, CHRIST, shall *reign* till all his enemies are put under his feet. "Thy kingdom come, and hell's o'erpower: and to thy sceptre all subdue." Amen and Amen.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-THIRD PSALM

The *contents* are,—

I. David's ardent desire to be in the assembly of the saints, ^{<19630>}**Psalm 63:1**. And the *reasons* on which this desire was founded, ^{<19612>}**Psalm 63:2-5**.

II. That though *absent* from God's ordinances, yet he forgot not his Maker, ^{<19636>}**Psalm 63:6-8**.

III. A double *prophecy*. 1. What should befall his enemies, ^{<19610>}**Psalm 63:9, 10**. And, 2. What should come to himself, ^{<19611>}**Psalm 63:11**.

I. 1. In the *first part* he states his confidence in God, as the foundation of his desires, contemplations, meditations, invocations, and consolations: “O God, thou art my God,” ^{<19612>}**Psalm 63:1**.

2. Then he expresses his fervent desire and ardent affection. 1. “Early will I seek thee.” THEE, not other things. 2. “My soul thirsteth for thee,” &c. There is no doubt that he wanted many things in this barren thirsty land; but of this he does not complain, but of his want of God in the sanctuary.

And so he expresses himself in the following verse: He *was about to see the power and glory of God in the sanctuary, as he had formerly done*. He gives the *reason* of this: “Because thy loving-kindness is better than life,” ^{<19613>}**Psalm 63:3**. To see thy goodness in the use of thy ordinances, I count far beyond all the *blessings of life*; and could I again be admitted there, these effects would follow:—

1. Praise: “My lips shall praise,” &c., ^{<19614>}**Psalm 63:4**.

2. Invocation and prayer: “I will lift up my hands,” &c., ^{<19615>}**Psalm 63:4**.

3. The satisfaction he should receive from these: “My mouth shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness,” &c., ^{<19616>}**Psalm 63:5**.

II. Though David is now in the wilderness, he does not forget his duty.

1. Even there he remembered God upon his bed; and meditated, &c., ^{<19617>}**Psalm 63:6**.

2. “Because thou hast been my help; therefore,” &c., ^{<19618>}**Psalm 63:7**.

3. “My soul followeth hard after thee,” &c., ^{<19619>}**Psalm 63:8**. It is evident, therefore, that even here David was not without comfort; for, 1. He meditates, and remembers what God had done for him. 2. He remembers that he had been his help; and therefore he rejoices. 3. He still adheres to him, and *follows hard after him* for help still.

III. And now, being secure of God’s protection, he foretells, 1. What would befall his *enemies*; and, 2. What would come to himself.

1. To his *enemies*, ruin: “Those who seek after my soul, they shall go (some) into the lower parts of the earth,” the grave or hell.

Others should “fall by the sword,” lie unburied, and be devoured by wild beasts.

-----⁵Ελωρια τευχε κυνεσσιν,
Οιωνοισι τε πασι.

Il., I. ver. 4.

*“Whose limbs, unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore.”*

POPE.

2. To *himself*, honour and a crown: “But the king (David) shall rejoice in God.” The reason is,—

1. “Every one that swears by him,” that is who worships and fears God, an oath being put by *synecdoche* for the whole worship of God. See the notes.

2. “The mouth of them that speak lies,” utter blasphemies, curses, and perjuries, or pray and confess to strange gods, “shall be stopped;” they shall be ashamed and confounded, and an end be put to their iniquity by a sudden and violent death. The *mouth of God’s people* shall *glory*; but the *mouth of the wicked* shall be *stopped*, and be silent in the dust.

PSALMS

PSALM 64

The psalmist prays for preservation from the wicked, 1, 2; whom he describes, 3-6; shows their punishment, 7, 8; and the effect that this should have on the godly, 9, 10.

NOTES ON PSALM 64

The title, *To the chief Musician, or conqueror, A Psalm of David*. The Syriac says, “composed by David when warned by Gad the prophet, who said, Stay not in Masrob, because Saul seeks thy life.” Some think it was composed by David when he was persecuted by Saul; or during the rebellion of Absalom. But *Calmet* thinks it is a complaint of the captives in Babylon.

Verse 1. Hear my voice] The psalmist feared for his life, and the lives of his fellow-captives; and he sought help of God. He *prayed*, and he lifted up his *voice*; and thus showed his *earnestness*.

Verse 2. Hide me from the secret counsel] They *plotted* his destruction, and then formed *insurrections* in order to accomplish it.

Workers of iniquity] Those who made *sin* their *labour*, their daily employment; it was their *occupation* and *trade*. It is supposed that by this title the Babylonians are intended. See ^{<1906B>} **Psalm 6:3; 14:4; 36:12; 53:4; 59:2.**

Verse 3. Who whet their tongue like a sword] They *devise* the evil they shall speak, and meditate on the most provoking, injurious, and *defamatory words*; as the soldier *whets* his sword that he may thereby the better cut down his enemies.

Their arrows-bitter words] Their defamatory sayings are here represented as deadly as *poisoned arrows*; for to such is the allusion here made.

Verse 4. That they may shoot in secret] They *lurk*, that they may take their aim the more surely, and not miss their mark.

Suddenly] When there is no fear apprehended, because none is seen.

Verse 5. They commune of laying snares] They lay snares to *entrap* those whom they cannot slay by *open* attack or private *ambush*.

Verse 6. They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search] The word **vpj** *chaphash*, which is used *three* times, as a noun and a verb, in this sentence, signifies *to strip off the clothes*. “They investigate iniquities; they perfectly investigate an investigation.” Most energetically translated by the old *Psalter*: **Thai ransaked wickednesses: thai failled ransakand in ransaking.** To *ransack* signifies to search every corner, to examine things part by part, to turn over every leaf, to leave no hole or cranny unexplored. But the word *investigate* fully expresses the meaning of the term, as it comes either from *in*, taken privately, and *vestire*, to *clothe*, *stripping the man bare*, that he may be exposed to all shame, and be the more easily wounded; or from the word *investigo*, which may be derived from *in*, *intensive*, and *vestigium*, the *footstep* or *track* of man or beast. A metaphor from hunting the stag; as the *slot*, or *mark of his foot*, is diligently sought out, in order to find whither he is gone, and whether he is *old* or *young*, for huntsmen can determine the age by the *slot*. *Tuberville*, in his *Treatise on Hunting*, gives rules to form this judgment, To this the next verse seems to refer.

Verse 7. But God shall shoot at them with an arrow] They endeavour to *trace* me out, that they may shoot me; but God will *shoot at them*. This, if the Psalm refer to the times of David, seems to be prophetic of Saul’s death. The archers pressed upon him, and sorely wounded him with their arrows. <ORIC> **1 Samuel 31:3.**

Verse 8. Their own tongue to fall upon them-selves] All the plottings, counsels, and curses, they have formed against me, shall come upon themselves.

Verse 9. And all men shall fear] They endeavoured to *hide* their mischief; but God shall so punish them that all shall *see* it, and shall acknowledge in their chastisement the just judgment of God. The wicked, in consequence, *shall fear*, and,

Verse 10. The righteous shall be glad] They shall see that God does not abandon his followers to the malice of bad men. The rod of the wicked may *come into the heritage of the just*; but *there* it shall not *rest*. *Calmet* thinks that this is a prediction of the destruction of the Chaldeans, in consequence of which the Jewish people became highly respected by all the surrounding

nations. But it may be applied more *generally* to the enmity of the wicked against the righteous, and how God counterworks their devices, and vindicates and supports his own followers.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-FOURTH PSALM

I. The psalmist, in danger, commends his cause to God, ^{<19640>}**Psalm 64:1, 2.**

II. Complains of his enemies, who are described by their inward devices, and outward conduct, ^{<19643>}**Psalm 64:3-6.**

III. He foretells their ruin, and the consequences, ^{<19647>}**Psalm 64:7-10.**

I. 1. He prays in general: "Hear my voice."

2. Then in special, that his life may be safe: "Hide me from the secret counsel," &c., ^{<19642>}**Psalm 64:2.**

He describes his enemies, generally:—

1. They were wicked men.
2. They were workers of iniquity.
3. They worked secret counsels against him.
4. They acted according to their counsels.

II. After this general character, he particularly describes their villany.

1. They were calumniators; no *sword* sharper than their tongue, no *arrow* swifter than their accusations.

They were *diligent* and *active* to wound his credit; and the evil of their conduct was aggravated by *two* circumstances: 1. It was in *secret*: 2. It was against the *innocent* and *upright*: "They whet their sword; and bend their bow, to shoot their arrows," &c.

2. They were *obstinate* and *confirmed* in mischief:—1. "They encourage themselves in an evil thing." 2. "They commune," lay their heads together how to lay snares, &c.

3. They are *impudent* and *atheistical*: "They say, Who shall see them?"

4. They are *indefatigable*—they are carried on with an earnest desire to do mischief; they invent all crafty ways to circumvent the righteous.

5. All this they do *subtly, craftily*: “Both the inward thought and heart of them is deep;” it is not easy to find out their snares.

III. Now he foretells, 1. Their *punishment*; and, 2. The *event*.

1. Their *punishment* was to be hasty, sharp, deadly, and very just. 1. “God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.” 2. Most just. For they shall “make their own tongues fall upon themselves.” By their *tongues* did they *mischief*; by their *tongues* shall they *fall*.

2. The *event* shall be *double*: 1. In *general*, to *all*; 2. In *particular*, to the *righteous*.

1. Universally: “All that see them shall flee away,”—fear, desert, forsake them.

2. All men “shall see and declare the work of the Lord, and consider it as his doing.”

The *effect* it shall have on the righteous. They shall acknowledge God’s justice; and farther,—

1. They *shall be glad* in the Lord—in the judgments he has shown.

2. They shall *trust in him*—that he will always protect and deliver them.

3. They shall glory—make their *boast* in God, and tell to all the wonders which in his justice and his mercy he has wrought for them.

PSALMS

PSALM 65

God is praised for the fulfilment of his promises, and for his mercy in forgiving sins, 1-,3. He is praised for the wonders that he works in nature, which all mankind must acknowledge, 4-8; for the fertilizing showers which he sends upon the earth, and the abundance thereby produced both for men and cattle, 9-13.

NOTES ON PSALM 65

The *title*, “To the chief Musician or conqueror, a Psalm and Song of David.” So the *Hebrew*; and, in effect, the *Chaldee*, *Æthiopic*, and best copies of the *Septuagint*. The *Arabic* has, “A Psalm of David concerning the transmigration of the people.”

The *Vulgate* is singular: “A Psalm of David. A hymn of Jeremiah and Ezekiel for the people of the transmigration, when they began to go out,” from Babylon, understood. This title is of no authority; it neither accords with the *subject* of the Psalm, nor with the *truth of history*. *Calmet* has very properly remarked that *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* were never found together, to compose this Psalm, neither *before*, *at*, nor *after* the captivity. It should therefore be utterly rejected. In the *Complutensian* edition *Haggai* is added to *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*, all with equal propriety.

It is supposed to have been written after a great drought, when God had sent a plentiful rain on the land. I rather think that there was no direct drought or rain in the prophet’s view, but a celebration of the praises of God for his giving rain and fruitful seasons, and filling men’s mouths with food, and their hearts with gladness. There is a particular providence manifested in the quantity of rain that falls upon the earth, which can neither be too much admired nor praised.

Verse 1. Praise waiteth for thee] Praise is *silent* or *dumb* for thee. *Thou* alone art worthy of praise; all other perfections are lost in thine; and he who considers *thee* aright can have no other subject of adoration.

Unto thee shall the vow be performed.] All offerings and sacrifices should be made to thee. All human spirits are under obligation to live to and serve thee. All Jews and Christians, by circumcision and baptism,

belong to thee; and they are all bound to *pay the vow* of their respective *covenants* to thee alone; and the spirit of this *vow* is, to love thee with all their powers and to serve thee with a perfect heart and willing mind, all the days of their life.

Verse 2. Unto thee shall all flesh come.] All *human beings* should pray to God; and from him alone the sufficient portion of human spirits is to be derived. It is supposed to be a prediction of the calling of the Gentiles to the faith of the Gospel of Christ. A minister, immensely *corpulent*, began his address to God in the pulpit with these words: “O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come!” and most unluckily laid a strong *emphasis* on ALL FLESH. The coincidence was ominous; and I need not say, the people were not edified, for the effect was ludicrous. I mention this fact, which fell under my own notice, to warn those who minister in righteousness to avoid expressions which may be capable, from a similar circumstance, of a ludicrous application. I have known many good men who, to their no small grief, have been encumbered with a preternatural load of muscles; an evil to be deprecated and deplored.

Verse 3. Iniquities prevail against me] This is no just rendering of the original, *ynm wrbg tnw[yrbd dibrey avonoth gaberu menni*; “iniquitous words have prevailed against me,” or, “The words of iniquity are strong against me.” All kinds of calumnies, lies, and slanders have been propagated, to shake my confidence, and ruin my credit.

Our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.] Whatsoever offences we have committed against thee, thou wilt pardon; *µrpkt tecapperem*, thou wilt make *atonement* for them, when with hearty repentance and true faith we turn unto thee. This verse has been abused to favour Antinomian licentiousness. The true and correct translation of the former clause will prevent this.

The old Scottish Version of this verse, in their *singing Psalms*, is most execrable:—

*“Iniquities, I must confess,
Prevail against me do:
And as for our trans-gres-si-ons
Them purge away wilt thou.”*

O David, if thou art capable of hearing such abominable doggerel substituted for the nervous words thou didst compose by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, what must thou feel, if chagrin can affect the inhabitants of heaven!

Verse 4. Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth] This is spoken in reference to the *priests* who were *chosen of God* to minister at the tabernacle; and who were permitted to *approach, draw nigh*, to the Divine Majesty by the various offerings and sacrifices which they presented.

We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house] Though *we* are not priests, and have not the great felicity to minister before thee in holy things; yet *we* can worship at thy temple, feel the outpouring of thy Spirit, and be made happy with the blessings which thou dispensest there to thy true worshippers.

Verse 5. By terrible things in righteousness] The *Vulgate* joins this clause to the preceding verse: “Thy holy temple is wonderful in righteousness: thou wilt hear us, O God of our salvation.” But the psalmist may refer to those wonderful displays of God’s providence in the change of seasons, and fertilization of the earth; and, consequently, in the sustenance of all animal beings.

The confidence of all the ends of the earth] Thou art the hope of thy people scattered through different parts of the world, and through the isles of the sea. This passage is also understood of the vocation of the Gentiles.

Verse 6. Setteth fast the mountains] It is by thy strength they have been raised, and by thy power they are girded about or preserved. He represents the mountains as being formed and pitched into their proper places by the mighty hand of God; and shows that they are preserved from splitting, falling down, or mouldering away, as it were, by a girdle by which they are surrounded. The image is very fine. They were hooped about by the Divine power.

Verse 7. Stilleth the noise of the seas] Thou art Sovereign over all the operation of sea and land. Earthquakes are under thy control: so are the flux and reflux of the sea; and all storms and tempests by which the great deep is agitated. Even the *headstrong multitude* is under thy control; for thou stillest the madness of the people.

Verse 8. Are afraid at thy tokens] Thunder and lightning, storms and tempests, eclipses and meteors, tornadoes and earthquakes, are proofs to all who dwell even in the remotest parts of the earth, that there is a Supreme Being who is wonderful and terrible in his acts. By these things an eternal power and Godhead become manifest even to the most barbarous. From this verse to the end of the Psalm there is a series of the finest poetic imagery in the world.

The outgoings of the morning, &c.] The *rising* and *setting* sun, the morning and evening twilight, the invariable succession of day and night, are all ordained by thee, and contribute to the happiness and continuance of man and beast. Or, All that fear thee praise thee in the *morning*, when they go to their work, and in the *evening*, when they return home, for thy great goodness manifested in the continuance of their strength, and the success of their labour.

Verse 9. Thou visitest the earth] God is represented as going through the whole globe, and examining the wants of every part, and directing the *clouds* how and where to deposit their fertilizing showers, and the *rivers* where to direct their beneficial courses.

The river of God] Some think the *Jordan* is meant; and the visiting and watering refer to rain after a long drought. But the *clouds* may be thus denominated, which properly are the origin of rivers.

Thou preparest them corn] Or, Thou wilt prepare them corn, because “thou hast provided for it.” Thou hast made all necessary provision for the fertilization of the earth. Thou hast endued the ground with a vegetative power. Rains, dews, and the genial heat of the sun enable it to put forth that power in providing grass for cattle, and corn for the service of man.

Verse 10. Thou waterest the ridges] In seedtime thou sendest that measure of rain that is necessary, in order to prepare the earth for the plough; and then, when the *ridges* are thrown into *furrows*, thou makest them *soft* with showers, so as to prepare them for the expansion of the seed, and the vegetation and development of the embryo plant.

Thou blessest the springing thereof.] Literally, *Thou wilt bless its germinations*-its *springing buds*. Thou watchest over the young sprouts; and it is by thy tender, wise, and provident care that the *ear* is formed; and

by thy bountiful goodness that *mature grains* fill the *ear*; and that *one* produces *thirty, sixty, or a hundred or a thousand* fold.

Verse 11. Thou crownest the year] A full and *plentiful harvest* is the *crown* of the year; and this springs from the unmerited *goodness* of God. This is the *diadem* of the earth; **trc[** *ittarta, Thou encirclest*, as with a *diadem*. A most elegant expression, to show the progress of the sun through the *twelve* signs of the zodiac, producing the seasons, and giving a sufficiency of light and heat alternately to all places on the surface of the globe, by its north and south declination (amounting to 23 28' at the solstices) on each side of the equator. A more beautiful image could not have been chosen; and the very appearance of the *space* termed the *zodiac* on a celestial globe, shows with what propriety the idea of a *circle* or *diadem* was conceived by this inimitable poet.

Thy paths drop fatness.] **Ëyl g[m** *magaleycha*, “thy orbits.” The various planets, which all have their revolutions within the zodiacal space, are represented as contributing their part to the general fructification of the year. Or perhaps the solar revolution through the *twelve* signs, dividing the year into *twelve* parts or months, may be here intended; the *rains* of *November* and *February*, the *frosts* and *snows* of *December* and *January*, being as necessary for the fructification of the soil, as the gentle *showers* of *spring*, the warmth of *summer*, and the *heat* and *drought* of *autumn*. The earth’s diurnal rotation on its axis, its annual revolution in its orbit, and the moon’s course in accompanying the earth, are all *wheels* or *orbits* of God, which drop fatness, or produce fertility in the earth.

Verse 12. The pastures of the wilderness] Even the places which are not cultivated have their *sufficiency of moisture*, so as to render them proper places of pasturage for cattle. The terms *wilderness* and *desert*, in the Sacred Writings, mean, in general, places *not inhabited* and *uncultivated*, though abounding with timber, bushes, and herbage.

The little hills rejoice] Literally, *The hills gird themselves with exultation*. The metaphor appears to be taken from the frisking of lambs, bounding of kids, and dancing of shepherds and shepherdesses, in the joy-inspiring summer season.

Verse 13. The pastures are clothed with flocks] Cattle are seen in every plain, avenue, and vista, feeding abundantly; and the *valleys* are *clothed*, and wave with the richest *harvests*; and transports of joy are heard every

where in the cheerful songs of the peasantry, the singing of the birds, the neighing of the horse, the lowing of the ox, and the bleating of the sheep. Claudian uses the same image:—

Viridis amictus montium.

“The green vesture of the mountains.”

Shout for joy, they also sing.] They are not loud and unmeaning sounds, they are both music and harmony in their different notes; all together form one great concert, and the *bounty of God* is the subject which they all celebrate. What an inimitable description! And yet the nervous Hebrew is not half expressed, even by the amended translation and paraphrase above.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-FIFTH PSALM

This is wholly a poem of thanksgiving; and teaches us *how*, and for *what*, we are to praise God. 1. For *spiritual*; 2. For *temporal* blessings; and, 3. This *publicly*; *in Zion*—in his *Church*.

It has *two* general parts:—

I. Praise to God for his blessings to his followers, ^{<1960>}**Psalm 65:1-5.**

II. His common benefits to all mankind, ^{<1960>}**Psalm 65:6-13.**

I. He sets forth God’s grace to his followers of which he reckons several particulars:—

1. He has established a public ministry among them, and *an atoning sacrifice*.

2. He directs and hears their prayers; and to him by sacrifice, prayer, and praise, may all human beings come.

3. Though evil tongues may prevail against them for a time, yet he will deliver them.

4. The *transgressions* committed against him he will accept an *atonement for*, and *pardon*, ^{<1960>}**Psalm 65:1-4.** See the notes.

5. All that truly worship him in his ordinances shall be made partakers of spiritual blessedness: “We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house,” ^{<1960>}**Psalm 65:4.**

6. He works powerfully and terribly, but righteously, in behalf of his followers, against their enemies: “By terrible things in righteousness,”

~~1968~~ **Psalm 65:5.** 1. He *answers* them when they call. 2. By *terrible* things,—as in *Egypt*, the *wilderness*, &c. 3. And the *motive* to it is, his *justice* or *righteousness*, by which he punishes his enemies, and gives retribution to his people.

All this he concludes with a double *eulogy* of God:

1. Showing what he is *peculiarly* to his people: “O God of our salvation.”
2. What he is to ALL; “the confidence of all the ends of the earth,” for he sustains all, be they where they may.

II. He descends from his *peculiar providence*,—the care he takes of, and the benefits he bestows on, his *Church*,—to his *general providence*, his ordering and sustaining the *whole world*; which he amplifies:—

1. “By his strength he setteth fast the mountains,” &c., which is true literally: but, *tropologically*, it may mean *kingdoms* and *states*.

2. He stilleth the noise of the sea,—and of the waves,—for to them he sets bounds: “And the tumult of the people.” He stills devils, tyrants, armies, seditions, &c.

3. He does this so, that even those who are in the *uttermost parts of the sea* are afraid at his tokens. They see from the phenomena of nature how powerful and fearful God is.

4. The *sun*, *moon*, *planets*, and *stars* are under his guidance. *Day* and *night* are ordered by him: “Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.”

5. The earth and its inhabitants are his peculiar care: “Thou visitest the earth,” &c., ~~1969~~ **Psalm 65:9-11.**

In all which the prophet shoves God’s mercy, 1. In the *rain*. 2. In the *rivers*. 3. In the *growing of the corn*. 4. In *providing grass for cattle*. 5. In providing *store* in the *summer* and *autumn*. 6. His *clouds* drop fatness upon the earth, and all nature rejoices. The meaning of all is, Man may plough, sow, dig, manure, prune, watch, fence, &c.; but it is God that gives the increase.

For an account of the *imagery* here employed, see the notes. The Psalm is grand beyond description, and can never be sufficiently admired.

PSALMS

PSALM 66

The psalmist exhorts all to praise God for the wonders he has wrought, 1-4; calls on Israel to consider his mighty acts in behalf of their fathers, 5-7; his goodness in their own behalf, 8-12; he resolves to pay his vows to God, and offer his promised sacrifices, 13-15; calls on all to hear what God had done for his soul, 15-20.

NOTES ON PSALM 66

There is nothing particular in the *title* of the Psalm. It is not attributed to *David* either by the *Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, or Æthiopic*. The *Arabic* alone prefixes the name of *David*. The *Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic*, call it a *psalm of the resurrection*: but for this there is no authority. By many of the ancients it is supposed to be a celebration of the restoration from the Babylonish captivity. Others think it commemorates the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, their introduction into the Promised Land, and the establishment of the worship of God in Jerusalem.

Verse 1. Make a joyfull noise] Sing aloud to God, *all ye lands*-all ye people who, from different parts of the Babylonish empire, are now on return to your own land.

Verse 2. The honour of his name] Let his glorious and merciful acts be the *subject* of your songs.

Verse 3. How terrible art thou] Consider the plagues with which he afflicted Egypt before he brought your fathers from their captivity, which obliged all his enemies to submit.

Thine enemies submit themselves] Literally, *lie unto thee*. This was remarkably the case with *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*. They promised again and again to let the people go, when the hand of the Lord was upon them: and they as frequently falsified their word.

Verse 4. All the earth] The whole land shall worship *thee*. There shall no more an *idol* be found among the tribes of Israel. This was literally true. After the Babylonish captivity the Israelites never relapsed into idolatry.

Selah.] Remark it: this is a well attested truth.

Verse 5. Come and see the works of God] Let every man lay God's wonderful dealings with us to heart; and compare our deliverance from *Babylon* to that of our fathers from *Egypt*.

Verse 6. He turned the sea into dry land] This was a plain miracle: no human art or contrivance could do this. Even in the bed of the waters *THEY did rejoice in him*. WE have not less cause to praise and be thankful.

Verse 7. He ruleth by his power] His *omnipotence* is employed to support his followers, and cast down his enemies.

His eyes behold the nations] He sees what they purpose, what they intend to do; and what they will do, if he restrain them not.

Let not the rebellious exalt themselves.] They shall not succeed in their designs: they have their own aggrandizement in view, but thou wilt disappoint and cast them down.

Selah.] Mark this. It is true.

Verse 8. O bless our God] Who have so much cause as you to sing praises to the Lord? Hear what he has done for you:

Verse 9. Which holdeth our soul in life] Literally, "he who placeth our soul בַּחַיִּים *bachaiyim*, in lives." We are preserved *alive*, have *health* of body, and feel the *life* of God in our hearts.

And suffereth not her feet to be moved.] Keeps us steadfast in his testimonies. We have our *life*, our *liberty*, and our *religion*. O, what hath the Lord wrought for us! "Make, therefore, the voice of his praise to be heard." Let God and man know you are thankful.

Verse 10. For thou, O God, hast proved us] This is a metaphor taken from *melting* and *refining metals*; afflictions and trials of various kinds are represented as a *furnace* where *ore* is melted, and a *crucible* where it is *refined*. And this metaphor is used especially to represent cases where there is *doubt* concerning the purity of the metal, the quantity of alloy, or even the nature or kind of metal subjected to the trial. So God is said to *try the Israelites* that he *might know what was in them*; and *whether they would keep his testimonies*: and then, according to the issue, his conduct towards them would appear to be founded on reason and justice.

Verse 11. Thou broughtest us into the net] This refers well to the case of the Israelites, when, in their departure from Egypt, pursued by the Egyptians, having the Red Sea before them, and no method of escape, Pharaoh said, “The wilderness hath shut them in,—they are entangled;” comparing their state to that of a *wild beast* in a *net*.

Affliction upon our loins.] Perhaps this alludes to that sharp *pain in the back and loins* which is generally felt on the apprehension of *sudden* and *destructive danger*.

Verse 12. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads] Thou hast permitted us to fall under the dominion of our enemies; who have treated us as broken infantry are when the cavalry dashes among their disordered ranks, treading all under the horses’ feet.

We went through fire and through water] Through afflictions of the most torturing and overwhelming nature. To represent such, the metaphors of *fire* and *water* are often used in Scripture. The old *Psalter* considers these trials as a proof of the uprightness of those who were tried—*We passid thurgh fire and watir*: that is, thurgh wa and wele, as a man that leves nocht his waye for hete na for kald, for dry na for wette; and *thou out lede us fra tribulacyon intill koling* (cooling) that is, in till endles riste, that we hope to hafe after this travell.

Wealthy place.] *Well watered* place, to wit, the land of *Judea*.

Verse 13. I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings] Now that thou hast restored us to our own land, and established us in it, we will establish thy worship, and offer all the various kinds of sacrifices required by thy law.

I will pay thee my vows] We often *vowed*, if thou wouldst deliver us from our bondage, to worship and *serve thee alone*: now thou hast heard our prayers, and hast delivered us; therefore will we fulfil our engagements to thee. The old *Psalter* gives this a pious turn:—*I sall yelde till the my woues*, that is, the vowes of louying (praising) the; whilk vowes my lipes dividid sayand, that I am nocht, and thou arte all: and I hafe nede of the, nocht thou of me. This is a right distinction—It is certainly a *good distinction*, and it is strictly true. The all-sufficient God needs not his *creatures*.

Verse 14. When I was in trouble.] This is generally the time when good resolutions are formed, and vows made; but how often are these forgotten when affliction and calamity are removed!

Verse 15. I will offer, &c.] Thou shalt have the best of the herd and of the fold; the lame and the blind shall never be given to thee for sacrifice.

The incense of rams] The fine effluvia arising from the burning of the pure fat.

Verse 16. Come and hear, all ye that fear God] While in captivity, the psalmist had sought the Lord with frequent prayer for his own personal salvation, and for the deliverance of the people; and God blessed him, heard his prayer, and turned the captivity. Now that he is returned in safety, he is determined to perform his vows to the Lord; and calls on all them that fear their Maker, who have any religious reverence for him, to attend to his account of the Lord's gracious dealings with him. He proposes to tell them his spiritual experience, what he needed, what he earnestly prayed for, and what God has done for him. Thus he intended to teach them by *example*, more powerful always than *precept*, however weighty in itself, and impressively delivered.

Verse 17. I cried unto him with my mouth] My prayer was fervent; he heard and answered; and my tongue celebrated his mercies; and he as graciously received my *thanksgiving*, as he compassionately heard my *prayer*.

Verse 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart] "If I have seen (*ytyar raithi*) iniquity in my heart," if I have known it was there, and *encouraged* it; if I *pretended* to be what I *was not*; if I *loved iniquity*, while I *professed to pray* and be *sorry for my sin*; the Lord, *ynda Adonai*, my Prop, Stay, and Supporter, would not have heard, and I should have been left without *help or support*.

Verse 19. Verily God hath heard me] A sure proof that my prayer was upright, and my heart honest, before him.

Verse 20. Blessed be God] I therefore praise God, who has not turned aside my prayer, and who has not withheld his mercy from me. Thus he told them what God had done for his soul.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-SIXTH PSALM

There are *five parts* in this Psalm:—

I. An *invitation*.

1. To praise God, ^{<1960>}**Psalm 66:1-4**.

2. To consider his works, ^{<1965>}**Psalm 66:5-7**.

II. A *repetition* of the *invitation*, ^{<1968>}**Psalm 66:8**, for the benefit and deliverance lately received, ^{<1969>}**Psalm 66:9-12**.

III. A *protestation* and *vow* for himself, that he would serve the Lord, ^{<1963>}**Psalm 66:13-15**.

IV. A *declaration* of *God's goodness* to him, which he invites all to come and hear, ^{<1966>}**Psalm 66:16-19**.

V. A *doxology*, with which he concludes, ^{<1961>}**Psalm 66:20**.

I. The invitation to praise God affectionately and heartily.

1. "Make a joyful song." 2. "Sing the honour of his name." 3. "Make his praise glorious." 4. "Say unto God," &c. Where he prescribes the *form* in which God shall be praised.

He calls all men to *consider his works*, and the double effect:—1. On God's *enemies*. 2. On his *people*.

1. On his enemies, a *feigned obedience*, ^{<1963>}**Psalm 66:3**. See the note.

2. On his people, a *willing service*, ^{<1964>}**Psalm 66:4**.

He calls on them again, ^{<1965>}**Psalm 66:5**, to consider God's works, specially in delivering his people: 1. At the *Red Sea*. 2. In *passing Jordan* on foot, ^{<1966>}**Psalm 66:6**.

He calls them to *behold God's power* and providence. 1. His *power* in ruling. 2. His *providence* in beholding, and, 3. His *justice* in punishing the rebellious, ^{<1967>}**Psalm 66:7**.

II. He again invites them to praise God for some *special* mercy, without which they would have been destroyed, ^{<1968>}**Psalm 66:8**. 1. He kept them *alive*. 2. *Suffered not their feet to slip*, ^{<1969>}**Psalm 66:9**. 3. He *tried*, that he might purify, them.

He illustrates this trial by *five* similes taken,—1. From *silver*. 2. From a *net*. 3. From a *burden* laid on the loins. 4. From *bondage and slavery*—men rode over us. 5. From *fire and water*; useful *servants*, but cruel *masters*,
^{<19610>}**Psalm 66:10-12.**

But the *issue* of all these trials was good:— they were brought *through* all, and profited by *each*.

III. For this he gives thanks, and purposes to *pay his vows*.

1. He would attend God's worship: "I will go into thy house," ^{<19613>}**Psalm 66:13.**

2. He would there present his offerings, ^{<19614>}**Psalm 66:14.**

3. These should be of the *best kind*, ^{<19615>}**Psalm 66:15.**

IV. He declares God's *goodness*, and *invites all that fear God to hear what he has got to say*. Not of what he was to *offer* to God, but of what God *had done for him*.

1. He cried to God, and he heard him.

2. He took care to *avoid iniquity*, that his prayers might not be cast out: "For God heareth not sinners."

V. He closes the Psalm with a doxology, blessing God that, not through his *merit*, but his own *mercy*, he had heard and answered him. He attributes nothing to himself, but all mercy to his God, ^{<19620>}**Psalm 66:20.**

PSALMS

PSALM 67

The psalmist prays for the enlargement of God's kingdom, 1, 2; calls upon all nations to serve him, because he judges and governs righteously, 3-5; promises prosperity to the faithful and obedient, 6, 7.

NOTES ON PSALM 67

The *title* here is the same with that of Psalm 4., where see the notes. **See Clarke** “^{<49040>}Psalm 4:1”. It is supposed to have been written at the return from the Babylonish captivity, and to foretell the conversion of the Gentiles to the Christian religion. The prayer for their salvation is very energetic.

Verse 1. God be merciful unto us] Show the Jewish people thy mercy, bless them in their bodies and souls and give a full evidence of thy approbation. This is nearly the same form of blessing as that used ^{<40625>}Numbers 6:25, where see the notes. **See Clarke** “^{<40625>}Numbers 6:25”.

Verse 2. That thy way may be known] That thy will, thy gracious designs towards the children of men, thy way of reconciling them to thyself, of justifying the ungodly, and sanctifying the unholy, may be known to all the nations upon the earth! God's *way* is God's *religion*; what *he walks in* before men; and in which men must *walk* before him. A man's religion is his *way* of worshipping God, and going to heaven. The whole Gospel is called *this way*, ^{<4190>}Acts 19:9.

Thy saving health] Ē t [wvy yeshuathecha, “thy salvation.” The great *work* which is performed in God's *way*, in destroying the power, pardoning the guilt, cleansing from the infection, of all sin; and filling the soul with holiness, with the mind that was in Christ. Let *all nations*-the whole Gentile world, know that *way*, and this *salvation*!

Verse 3. Let the people praise thee] When this is done, the *people*-the Gentiles, will praise thee; all will give thanks to God for his unspeakable gift.

Verse 4. Glad and sing for joy] They shall be made happy in thy salvation. Even their political state shall be greatly meliorated; for God will be acknowledged the supreme Judge; *their laws* shall be founded on *his*

word; and the nations of the earth shall be *governed* according to judgment, justice, and equity,

Selah.] This is true. There are innumerable facts to confirm it. All the nations who have received the Gospel of Christ have been benefited *politically*, as well as *spiritually*, by it.

Verse 5. Let the people praise thee] Seeing the abundance of the blessings which the Gentiles were to receive, he calls again and again upon them to magnify God for such mercies.

Verse 6. The earth yield her increase] As the ground was *cursed* for the sin of man, and the *curse* was to be *removed* by *Jesus Christ*, the fertility of the ground should be influenced by the preaching of the Gospel; for as the people's minds would become enlightened by the truth, they would, in consequence, become capable of making the most *beneficial discoveries* in *arts* and *sciences*, and there should be an especial blessing on the toil of the pious husbandman. Whenever true religion prevails, every thing partakes of its beneficent influence.

Verse 7. God shall bless us] He shall ever be *speaking good* to us, and ever showering down good things upon us.

The last clause of the *sixth verse* should be joined to the *seventh*, as it is in several of the *Versions*, and should be in all. Many of the *fathers*, and several *commentators*, have thought that there is a reference to the *Holy Trinity* in the triple repetition of the word GOD: "God, our God, shall bless us; God shall bless us;" thus paraphrased in the old *Psalter*: "Blis us God the Fader: and our God the sone: and blis us and multipli us God the Hali Gast; that swa drede him God, all the endis of erth; for he wil comme to deme rightwysly that unrightwysly was demed. He that kan drede him, he cesses nocht to lufe him."

When or by *whom* this Psalm was written cannot be ascertained. It seems to be simply a prophecy concerning the calling of the Gentiles, the preaching of the apostles, and the diffusion and influence of Christianity in the world. It is a fine piece of devotion; and it would be nearly impossible to read or repeat it with a cold and unaffected heart.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-SEVENTH PSALM

This Psalm may be divided into *three* parts:—

- I. A general prayer, ^{<1970I>}**Psalm 67:1**. And the *reason* of it, ^{<1970I>}**Psalm 67:2**.
- II. A double *vow*, ^{<1970B>}**Psalm 67:3, 4**. With the *reason*. The *vow* repeated, ^{<1970B>}**Psalm 67:6**.
- III. The *effects* that were to follow, ^{<1970B>}**Psalm 67:6, 7**.
1. The first part, a *prayer for mercy*: “God be merciful to us!” for *God’s mercy* is the fountain of all our blessings.
 2. Then *bless us* through that mercy with *temporal* and *spiritual* good.
 3. “Cause his face to shine.” Give us a sense of thy *approbation*.
 4. Let these blessings be extended *to all men*. For this reason: 1. “That thy way,” thy will, word, worship, &c., “may be known upon earth.” 2. “Thy saving health,” the redemption by Christ, “to all nations.”
- II. Then shall God be honoured; one will readily flow from the other; for *mercy* brings *knowledge* of God and his goodness; and this knowledge brings *praise*. This verse is emphatic:—
1. In respect of the object; “Thee,” not strange gods.
 2. *ALL shall praise*-not *mutter* or *meditate* praise, but make it illustrious.
 3. This should be done *frequently*, an example of which we have in this Psalm.
 4. It should be done *cheerfully*, with a glad heart; not *words* merely, but *affections* of praise.
- For this also he gives a *reason* which is two-fold:—
1. His *equity* in judging: “Thou shalt judge the people righteously.”
 2. His *wisdom* in governing. Thou shalt *lead them*, $\mu\text{j nt tanchem}$, thy government shall be full of *wise teaching*: “Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of his times.”
- III. The *effects* of his blessing, and our praise.
1. “The earth shall yield her increase:” the *people* shall be *multiplied*; the *harvests* shall be *ample*, and the *Church* shall *overflow* with converts.

2. God shall *bless this increase*; for, without this, temporal blessings may become a curse. He doubles this that it may not be forgotten.
3. The last and finest effect is, that God shall be worshipped over all the earth: “All the ends of the earth shalt fear him.” Amen. The *fear of God* is frequently Used to express the whole of his worship.

PSALMS

PSALM 68

The psalmist calls upon God to arise, bless his people, and scatter his enemies, 1-3; exhorts them to praise him for his greatness, tenderness, compassion, and judgments, 4-6; describes the grandeur of his march when he went forth in the redemption of his people, 7, 8; how he dispensed his blessings, 9, 10; what he will still continue to do in their behalf, 11-13; the effects produced by the manifestation of God's majesty, 14-18; he is praised for his goodness, 19, 20; for his judgments, 21-23; he tells in what manner the Divine worship was conducted, 24-27; how God is to be honoured, 28-31; all are invited to sing his praises, and extol his greatness, 32-35.

NOTES ON PSALM 68

In the *title* of this Psalm there is nothing particular to be remarked. It is probable that this Psalm, or a part of it at least, might have been composed by Moses, to be recited when the Israelites journeyed. See ^{<OHICES>}Numbers 10:35; and that David, on the same model, constructed this Psalm. It might have been sung also in the ceremony of transporting the ark from Kirjath-jearim, to Jerusalem; or from the house of Obed-edom to the tabernacle erected at Sion.

I know not how to undertake a comment on this Psalm: it is the most difficult in the whole Psalter; and I cannot help adopting the opinion of *Simon Deuteronomy Muis*: In hoc Psalmo tot ferme scopuli, tot labyrinthi, quot versus, quot verba. Non immerito crux ingeniorum, et interpretum opprobrium dici potest. "In this Psalm there are as many precipices and labyrinths as there are verses or words. It may not be improperly termed, the torture of critics, and the reproach of commentators." To attempt any thing *new* on it would be dangerous; and to say what has been so often said would be unsatisfactory. I am truly afraid to fall over one of those *precipices*, or be endlessly entangled and lost in one of these *labyrinths*. There are customs here referred to which I do not fully understand; there are *words* whose meaning I cannot, to my own satisfaction, ascertain; and allusions which are to me inexplicable. Yet of the composition itself I have the highest opinion: it is sublime beyond all comparison; it is constructed with an art truly admirable; it possesses all the dignity of the sacred language; none but David could have composed it; and, at this lapse of time, it would require no small influence of the Spirit that was upon him, to

give its true interpretation. I shall subjoin a few notes, chiefly philological; and beg leave to refer the reader to those who have written *profusely* and *laboriously* on this sublime Psalm, particularly *Venema*, *Calmet*, *Dr. Chandler*, and the writers in the *Critici Sacri*.

Verse 1. Let God arise] This was sung when the Levites took up the ark upon their shoulders; see ^{<04H035>}**Numbers 10:35, 36**, and the notes there.

Verse 4. Extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH] “Extol him who sitteth on the throne of glory, in the ninth heaven; YAH is his name; and rejoice before him.”—*Targum*.

twbr [b baaraboth, which we render *in the high heavens*, is *here* of doubtful signification. As it comes from the root **br [arab**, to mingle, (hence *ereb* the evening or *twilight*, because it appears to be formed of an *equal mixture of light and darkness*; the *Septuagint* translate it **δυσμων**, the *west*, or *setting* of the sun; so does the *Vulgate* and others;) probably it may mean the *gloomy desert*, through which God, in the chariot of his glory, led the Israelites. If this interpretation do not please, then let it be referred to the *darkness* in which God is said to dwell, through which the *rays of his power and love*, in the various dispensations of his power and mercy, shine forth for the comfort and instruction of mankind.

By his name Jah] hy Yah, probably a contraction of the word **hwhy** *Yehovah*; at least so the ancient Versions understood it. It is used but in a few places in the sacred writings. It might be translated *The Self existent*.

Verse 6. The solitary in families] yudj y yechidim, the *single persons*. Is not the meaning, God is the Author of marriage; and children, the legal fruit of it, are an inheritance from him?

Verse 7. O God, when thou wentest forth] This and the following verse most manifestly refer to the passage of the Israelites through the wilderness.

Verse 9. Didst send a plentiful rain] twbdn μvg geshem nedaboth, a *shower of liberality*. I believe this to refer to the *manna* by which God refreshed and preserved alive the weary and hungry Israelites.

Verse 10. Thy congregation hath dwelt therein] Etyj chaiyathecha, *thy living creature*; **τα ζωα**, *Septuagint*; *animalia*, *Vulgate*; so all the

Versions. Does not this refer to the *quails* that were brought to the camp of the Israelites, and *dwelt*, as it were, *round about it*? And was not *this*, with the *manna* and the *refreshing rock*, that *goodness which God had provided for the poor*-the needy Israelites?

Verse 11. Great was the company of those that published it.] *br abx twrcbmh hammebassereth tsaba rab*; “Of the female preachers there was a great host.” Such is the literal translation of this passage; the reader may make of it what he pleases. Some think it refers to the *women* who, with music, songs, and dances, celebrated the victories of the Israelites over their enemies. But the publication of *good news*, or of any *joyful event*, belonged to the *women*. It was they who announced it to the people at large; and to this universal custom, which prevails to the *present day*, the psalmist alludes. See this established in **Clarke’s note on “⁻²³⁴⁰⁹⁻Isaiah 40:9”**.

Verse 12. Kings of armies did flee] *Jabin* and the kings of the Canaanites, who united their forces to overwhelm the Israelites.

And she] Deborah the prophetess, a *woman* accustomed to *tarry at home*, and take care of the family; she divided the spoils, and vanquished their kings.

Verse 13. Though ye have lien among the pots] The prophet is supposed here to address the tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, who remained in their *inheritances*, occupied with *agricultural, maritime, and domestic affairs*, when the other tribes were obliged to go against *Jabin*, and the other Canaanitish kings. Ye have been thus occupied, while your brethren sustained a desperate campaign; but while you are inglorious, they obtained the most splendid victory, and dwell under those rich tents which they have taken from the enemy; coverings of the most beautiful colours, adorned with gold and silver. The words *xwrj qrqryb birakrak charuts, native gold*, so exceedingly and splendidly *yellow* as to approach to *greenness*-from *qry yarak, to be green*; and the doubling of the last syllable denotes an excess in the denomination-*excessively green-blistering green*. The *Targum* gives us a curious paraphrase of this and the following verse: “If ye, O ye kings, slept among your halls, the congregation of Israel, which is like a dove covered with the clouds of glory, divided the prey of the Egyptians, purified silver, and coffers full of the finest gold. And when it stretched out its hands in prayer over the sea, the Almighty

cast down kingdoms; and for its sake cooled hell like snow, and snatched it from the shadow of death.” Perhaps the Romanists got some idea of purgatory here. For the sake of the righteous, the flames of hell are extinguished!

Verse 15. The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan] This and the following verse should be read thus: “Is Mount Bashan the craggy mount, Mount Bashan, the mount of God? Why envy ye, ye craggy mounts? This is the mount of God in which he has desired to dwell.” The *Targum* countenances this translation: Mount *Moriah*, the place where our fathers of old worshipped God, is chosen to build on it the house of the sanctuary, and Mount *Sinai* for the giving of the law. Mount *Bashan*, Mount *Tabor*, and *Carmel* are rejected; they are made as Mount *Bashan*.”

Verse 16. Why leap ye, ye high hills?] “God said, Why leap ye, ye high hills? It is not pleasing to me to give my law upon high and towering hills. Behold, Mount Sinai is low; and the WORD of the Lord has desired to place on it the Divine majesty. Moreover, the Lord dwells for ever in the heaven of heavens.”—*Targum*.

The psalmist is speaking particularly of the mountains of Judea, and those of Gilead; the former were occupied by the Canaanites, and the others by Og, king of Bashan, and Sihon, king of the Amorites, whom Moses defeated.

Verse 17. The chariots of God are twenty thousand] *anv ypl a yytbr ribbothayim alpey shinan*, “two myriads of thousands doubled.” Does not this mean simply *forty thousand*? A myriad is 10,000; two myriads, 20,000; these doubled, 40,000. Or thus: $10,000 + 10,000 + 20,000 = 40,000$. The *Targum* says, “The chariots of God are two myriads; *two thousand* angels draw them; the majesty of God rests upon them in holiness on Mount Sinai.” But what does this mean? We must die to know.

Verse 18. Thou hast ascended on high] When the ark had reached the top of Sion, and was deposited in the place assigned for it, the singers joined in the following chorus. This seems to be an allusion to a *military triumph*. The conqueror was placed on a very elevated chariot.

Led captivity captive] The conquered kings and generals were usually tied behind the chariot of the conqueror—bound to it, bound together, and walked after it, to grace the triumph of the victor.

Thou hast received gifts for men] “And gave gifts unto men;”

4008 **Ephesians 4:8.** At such times the conqueror threw money among the crowd. *Thou hast received gifts among men, µdab baadam*, IN MAN, in human nature; and *God manifest in the flesh* dwells among mortals! *Thanks be to God for his unspeakable GIFT!* By establishing his *abode among the rebellious*, the prophet may refer to the conquest of the land of Canaan, and the country beyond Jordan.

Yea, for the rebellious also] Even to the rebellious. Those who were his enemies, who traduced his character and operations, and those who fought against him now submit to him, and share his munificence; for it is the property of a hero to be generous.

That the Lord God might dwell among them.] µyhl a hy *yah Elohim*, the *self-existing God*; see on **19808** **Psalms 68:4**. The conqueror now coming to fix his abode among the conquered people to organize them under his laws, to govern and dispense justice among them. The whole of this is very properly applied by St. Paul, **4006** **Ephesians 4:5**, to the *resurrection and glory of Christ*; where the reader is requested to consult the *note*.

Verse 19. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us] With benefits is not in the text. Perhaps it would be better to translate the clause thus: “Blessed be Adonai, our Prop day by day, who supports us.” Or, “Blessed be the Lord, who supports us day by day.” Or as the *Vulgate, Septuagint, and Arabic*: “Blessed be the Lord daily, our God who makes our journey prosperous; even the God of our salvation.” The *Syriac*, “Blessed be the Lord daily, who hath chosen our inheritance.” The word sm [*amas*, which we translate *to load*, signifies *to lift, bear up, support, or to bear a burden for another*. Hence it would not be going far from the ideal meaning to translate: “Blessed be the Lord day by day, who bears our burdens for us.” But *loadeth us with benefits* is neither a *translation* nor *meaning*.

Verse 20. The issues frown death.] The *going out* or *exodus* from *death*-from the land of Egypt and house of bondage. Or the expression may mean, Life and death are in the hand of God. “He can create, and he destroy.”

Verse 21. The hairy scalp] r [c dqdq *kodkod sear*. Does this mean any thing like the Indian *scalping*? Or does it refer to a *crest* on a *helmet* or *headcap*? I suppose the latter.

Verse 22. From the depths of the sea] All this seems to speak of the defeat of the Egyptians, and the miraculous passage of the Red Sea.

Verse 23. That thy foot may be dipped in the blood] God will make such a slaughter among his enemies, the Amorites, that thou shalt walk over their dead bodies; and beasts of prey shall feed upon them.

Verse 24. They have seen thy goings] These kings of the Amorites have seen thy terrible majesty in their discomfiture, and the slaughter of their subjects.

Verse 25. The singers went before] This verse appears to be a description of the procession.

Verse 26. Bless ye God] This is what they sung.

Verse 27. There is little Benjamin] This is a description of another part of the procession.

Verse 28. Thy God hath commanded] This and the following verses is what they sung.

Verse 30. Rebuke the company of spearmen] *hnq tyj chaiyath kaneh, the wild beast of the reed-the crocodile or hippopotamus*, the emblem of Pharaoh and the Egyptians; thus all the *Versions*. Our translators have mistaken the meaning; but they have put the true sense in the *margin*.

Verse 31. Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.] This verse had its literal fulfilment under Solomon, when Egypt formed an alliance with that king by his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter; and when the queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem to hear the wisdom of Solomon. But as this may be a *prophetic declaration* of the spread of Christianity, it was literally fulfilled after the resurrection of our Lord. There were *Egyptians* at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, who, St. Hilary tells us, on their return to their own country proclaimed what they had seen, and became in that country the ambassadors of Christ. The *Ethiopian eunuch* was one of the first among the Gentiles who received the Gospel. Thus *princes or chief men came out of Egypt, and Ethiopia stretched out her hands to God*. The words themselves refer to the sending ambassadors, and making alliances. The Hebrew is very emphatic: *pyhl al wydy xyrt vwk cush tarits yadiav lelohim; Cush will cause her hands to run out to God*. She will, with great *alacrity* and delight, surrender her *power and influence*

unto God. The *Chaldee* paraphrases well: “The sons of Cush will run, that they may spread out their hands in prayer before God.”

Verse 32. Sing unto God] All the inhabitants of the earth are invited to sing unto God, to acknowledge him as their God, and give him the praise due to his name.

Verse 33. Rideth upon the heavens] He who manages the heavens, directing their course and influence, he formed every orb, ascertained its motion, proportioned its solid contents to the orbit in which it was to revolve, and the other bodies which belong to the same system. As an able and skilful rider manages his horse, so does God the sun, moon, planets, and all the hosts of heaven.

He doth send out his voice] At his *word of command* they run, shed, or reflect their light; and without the smallest deviations obey his will.

Mighty voice.] He thunders in the heavens, and men tremble before him.

Verse 34. His strength is in the clouds.] This refers to the bursting, rattling, and pounding of thunder and lightning; for all nations have observed that this is an irresistible agent; and even the most enlightened have looked on it as an especial manifestation of the power and sovereignty of God.

Verse 35. O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places] The sanctuary and heaven. Out of the former he had often shone forth with consuming splendour; see the case of Korah and his company: out of the latter he had often appeared in terrible majesty in storms, thunder, lightning, &c.

He that giveth strength and power unto his people.] Therefore that people must be invincible who have this strong and irresistible God for their support.

Blessed be God.] He alone is worthy to be worshipped. Without him nothing is wise, nothing holy, nothing strong; and from him, as the inexhaustible Fountain, all good must be derived. His *mercy* over his creatures is equal to his *majesty* in the universe, and as he has all good in his possession, so is he willing to deal it out, to supply the utmost necessities of his creatures. Blessed be God! The *Arabic* adds, *Alleluiah!*

The best *analysis* I find of this Psalm is that by Bishop Nicholson. I shall give it at large; begging the reader to refer particularly to those passages

on which the preceding notes are written, as in some of them the analysis gives a different view of the subject. The old Psalter gives the whole Psalm a spiritual and mystical interpretation. And this is commonly the case in the commentaries of the *fathers*.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH PSALM

There are many conjectures as to the occasion of the composing of this Psalm; but the most probable is, that it was composed by *David* when he brought up the ark of God, which was the type of the Church and symbol of God's presence, to Jerusalem. After the ark was sent home by the Philistines, it rested first in the obscure lodge of *Aminadab*; it then for a time stayed with Obed-edom, nearly sixty years in both places. It was David's care to provide a fit room for it in the head of the tribes, even in his own city; and to express his joy, and honour the solemnity, David led the way, dancing with all his might in a linen ephod; and all the house of *Israel* followed with shouts and instruments of music in a triumphant manner. Now, that the choir might not want to know how to express their joyful affections, the sweet singer of Israel made this anthem, beginning the verse himself, as was commanded at the removal of the ark, ^{<04105>}**Numbers 10:35**. The Psalm has *six* parts:—

- I. The entrance, or exordium, ^{<19801>}**Psalm 68:1-4**.
- II. The invitation to praise God, ^{<19804>}**Psalm 68:4**.
- III. The confirmation of it by many arguments, ^{<19804>}**Psalm 68:4-24**.
- IV. A lively description of triumph, or pomp of the ark's deportation, ^{<19834>}**Psalm 68:24-28**.
- V. A petition, which has three parts, ^{<19838>}**Psalm 68:28-31**.
- VI. An exhortation to all nations to praise God, ^{<19831>}**Psalm 68:31-35**.

I. "Let God arise" is either a prayer or acclamation; a prayer that he would, or an acclamation that he does, show his power and presence. Of which the consequence would be double:—

1. Towards his enemies, destruction; for he prays, "Let his enemies be scattered; let those that hate him fly before him."

He illustrates it by a twofold comparison:—

(1) "As smoke (when it is at the highest) is driven away, so drive them away."

(2) “As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish in the presence of God.”

2. Towards good men, his servants; which is quite contrary to the other: “Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.” Thus it happened; for when the *ark* was taken by the *Philistines*, the glory was departed from *Israel*, and there was nothing but sadness and sorrow: but with the return of the *ark* the glory returned and all was joy and gladness.

II. And so, by an apostrophe, he turns his speech to all good men, and exhorts them to praise God.

1. “Sing unto God.” Let it be done with your voice publicly.

2. *Psallite*: “Sing praises to his name,” with Instruments of music.”

3. “Extol him.” Show his way, as in a triumph. Thus, when our Saviour rode into Jerusalem they cut down branches, and strewed their garments in the way.

III. And so David enters upon his confirmation, producing his reasons why they should praise God.

1. Drawn from his majesty: “He rideth upon the heavens;” that is, he rules in the heavens.

2. From the essence: “By his name Jah,” the contraction of Jehovah, *I am*. He gives essence to all things; therefore, “rejoice before him.”

3. From his general providence and goodness towards his Church.

(1) “He is the father of the fatherless.” Loves, cares, and provides an inheritance for them.

(2) “A judge of the widows.” He cares for his people when deserted, and for whom no man cares, and when exposed to injury. Such is God in his holy habitation; whose presence is represented by this ark.

(3) “God setteth the solitary in families.” He makes the barren woman to keep house, and to be the joyful mother of children. As also the barren woman-the Gentile Church that had no husband, to bring forth children to God.

(4) He brings forth those which are bound with chains; as Joseph, Jeremiah, Daniel, Peter, Paul.

4. On the contrary: “But the rebellious dwell in a dry land;” perish with want and hunger.

IV. From his special providence toward his people *Israel*, which he introduces by an elegant apostrophe: “O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people;” thus amplified:—

1. God’s going before them, and marching along with them in *Egypt*, in the wilderness. These signs manifested his presence: “The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.”

2. God’s provision for them after he gave them the possession of the good land. He fed, sustained them there, counted them his inheritance, and gave them rain and fruitful seasons: “Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary. The congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.”

3. The victories he gave them over their enemies, ^{<196812>}**Psalm 68:12**, which he prefaces by imitation of the song of the victory, sung usually by the women and damsels of those times, ^{<196811>}**Psalm 68:11**: “The Lord gave the word,” that is, either the *word of war*, or else the *song*; and then “Great was the company of those that published it.” As Miriam, Deborah, &c. And in these songs they sang, “Kings of armies did flee apace; and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.” So great was the prey.

4. The deliverance he sends from troubles, and the joy he gives after them. “Though ye have lien among the pots,” that is, cast aside as some useless or broken pot, the offscouring of all things; “yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold;” i.e., shining and glorious. The allusion seems to be taken from some standard, whose portraiture and device was a dove so overlaid. The Babylonian ensign was a dove. But see the note on this passage.

And this he farther declares by another similitude: “When the Almighty scattered kings in it:” or *for her*, i.e., his Church, *it was white-glittering*, glorious, to be seen afar off; “it was white as snow in Salmon,” with which it is generally covered.

5. From God's especial presence among them, which, that he might make it more evident, David enters upon the commendation of the hill of Sion to which the ark was at this time brought, comparing it with other hills, especially with *Bashan*. That is a hill of God; a high, plentiful, and fertile hill. As if he had said, So much I grant. But, "why leap ye, ye high hills?" Why are ye so proud? Why do ye boast your vines, your fruits, your pastures, your cattle? Sion has the pre-eminence of you all in two respects:—

1. For God's continual habitation and common presence is there: "This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever."

2. For his defence of it. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels;" and these are for the defence of Sion, his Church; "for God is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place;" in glory and majesty, to Sinai, and in Sion.

And yet he goes on to persuade us to praise God, 1. For his strange and wonderful works. 2. For the performance of his promises. Among his great works there was none so glorious as the ascension of our Saviour, of which the ark's ascension to Jerusalem at this time was a type.

First. 1. Before the ark David and the people used this acclamation: "Thou hast ascended on high." Thou, O God, whose presence is shadowed out by the ark, hast ascended from an obscure house to a kingly palace, *Sion*.

2. "Thou hast led captivity captive;" those that led us captives being captives themselves, and now led in *triumph*.

3. "Thou hast received gifts for men;" spoils and gifts from the conquered kings; or who may become homagers unto him, and redeem their peace.

4. "Yea, for the rebellious also: "Formerly so, but now tributaries.

5. "That the Lord God might dwell among them;" might have a certain place to dwell in; and the ark not be carried, as before, from place to place.

This is the literal sense; but the mystical refers to our Saviour's ascension. St. Paul says, ~~4048~~ **Ephesians 4:8**:

1. "Thou hast ascended on high:" when the cloud carried him from earth to heaven.

2. "Thou hast led captivity," those who captured us, "captive;" death, the devil, sin, the power of hell, the curse of the law.
3. "He received, and gave gifts to men:" The *apostles, evangelists, prophets, doctors, and teachers*, were these gifts-graces, gifts of the Spirit.
4. "Yea, for the rebellious also:" Paul, a persecutor; Austin, a Manichhæan.
5. "That the Lord God might dwell among them:" for to that end St. Paul says these gifts were given, "to the work of the ministry, to the edification of the Church, to the building up of the body of Christ." ⁴⁰⁴¹²**Ephesians 4:12**, &c.

The two effects of his ascension then were, one towards his enemies, the other for his friends: "When thou ascendest up on high:—"

1. "Thou ledest captivity captive:" this was the consequence to his enemies.
2. "Thou receivedst, and gavest gifts:" This for his friends. For which he sings, "Blessed be God;" for he comes over both again:—
 1. The gifts to his friends: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." He knows many ways to deliver in death itself, when there is no hope.
 2. The conquest of his enemies; for such he counts obstinate impenitent sinners; those he will destroy: "God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses."

Secondly, His last argument is, God's performance of his promise to save them. When you were in the wilderness; when you fought with *Og*, king of *Bashan*, when at the Red Sea, I delivered you. The Lord saith still to his people:—

1. "I will bring again from Bashan;" from equally great dangers.
2. "I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea:" when there is no hope.
3. And for thy enemies, they shall be destroyed by a great effusion of blood: "That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the

tongue of thy dogs in the same;" thou shalt waste, and make a great slaughter.

4. And now he descends to set before our eyes the pomp and show which was used in the ascent and bringing back of the ark, and the proceeding of it.

1. The people were present to witness it: "They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary."

2. The manner of the pomp: "The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing with timbrels."

3. In the pomp they were not silent; and that they be not, he exhorts them: "Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel,"—Jacob's posterity.

4. And he gives in the catalogue of the tribes that were present, but these especially,—

1. "There is little Benjamin," Jacob's youngest son, or now the least, wasted with war, "with their ruler," the chief prince of their tribe.

2. "The princes of Judah, and their council."

3. "The princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali," the farthest tribes, therefore the nearest.

V. And in the midst of the pomp he makes a prayer which has three vows, before which he prefixes the acknowledgment that all the power and strength of *Israel* was from God: "Thy God hath commanded thy strength." He then prays,—

1. For the confirmation, establishment, and continuance of this strength: "Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us; " and let this be evinced "by the kings and tributaries that shall bring gifts. Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee."

2. For the conquest and subduing of the enemy, until they become tributaries, and do homage: "Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people;" kings, princes, and their potent subjects; "till every one submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people that delight in war." See the note.

3. For the increase of Christ's kingdom, of which David was but a type, by the access of the *Gentiles*. "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." These, by a *synecdoche*, being put for all nations.

VI. This excellent Psalm draws now towards a conclusion; and it is a resumption of that which he principally intended; that is, that God be blessed, honoured, praised. He first exhorts, then shows the reasons for it.

1. He exhorts all nations to perform this duty: at first, the Jews, but now all universally: "Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord."

2. His reasons to induce them to do it.

The majesty of God testified,—

1. By his works: "To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which were of old."

2. His power, in his thunder, in his word: "He doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice."

3. His wise protection of and providence over his people: "Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds."

4. His communication of himself to his Church in particular: 1. "O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places." 2. "The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people." 3. "Blessed be God." With this *epiphonema* he concludes.

PSALMS

PSALM 69

The psalmist describes his afflicted state, and the wickedness of his adversaries, 1-21; he declares the miseries that should come upon his enemies, 22-28; enlarges on his afflicted state, and expresses his confidence in God, 29-34; prophesies the restoration of the Jews to their own land and temple, 35, 36.

NOTES ON PSALM 69

The *title* is: “To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, A *Psalm* of David.” See this title explained on ^{<19401>}**Psalm 45:1**.

The Psalm is supposed to have been written *during the captivity*, and to have been the work of some Levite Divinely inspired. It is a very fine composition, equal to most in the Psalter. Several portions of it seem to have a reference to our Lord; to his advent passion, resurrection, the vocation of the Gentiles, the establishment of the Christian Church, and the reprobation of the Jews. The *ninth* verse is quoted by St. John, ^{<81217>}**John 2:17**. The *twenty-first* verse is quoted by St. *Matthew*, ^{<102734>}**Matthew 27:34, 48**; by St. *Mark*, ^{<41523>}**Mark 15:23**; by St. *John*, ^{<81929>}**John 19:29**; and applied to the sufferings of our Lord, in the treatment he received from the Jews. St. *Paul* quotes the *twenty-second* as a prophecy of the wickedness of the Jews, and the punishment they were to receive. He quotes the *twenty-third* verse in the same way. See the marginal references. Those portions which the writers of the New Testament apply to our Lord, we may apply also; of others we should be careful.

Verse 1. **The waters are come in unto my soul.**] I am in the deepest distress. The waters have broken their dikes, and are just ready to sweep me away! Save me, Lord! In such circumstances I can have no other help.

In the *first, second, third, fourteenth, and fifteenth* verses, the psalmist, speaking in the person of the captives in Babylon, compares their captivity to an *abyss of waters*, breaking all bounds, and ready to swallow them up; to a *deep mire*, in which there was no solid bottom, and no *standing*; and to a *pit*, in which they were about to *be inclosed* for ever. This is strongly figurative, and very expressive.

Verse 3. I am weary of my crying] A pathetic description of the state of the poor captives for about *seventy* years.

Verse 4. Then I restored that which I took not away.] I think, with Calmet, that this is a sort of *proverbial* expression, like such as these, “Those who suffered the wrong, pay the costs.” *Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.* “Kings sin, and the people are punished.” “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.” Our fathers have grievously sinned against the Lord, and we their posterity suffer for it. See on ^{<18912>} **Psalm 69:12.** Some have applied it to our Lord. I restored, by my suffering and death, that image of God and the Divine favour, which I took not away. That is, In my *human nature* I expiated the crime that *human beings* had committed against God. But such applications are very gratuitous.

Verse 5. Thou knowest my foolishness] Though we have been brought into captivity in consequence of the crimes of our fathers, yet we have guilt enough of our own to merit a continuation of our miseries. How can such words as are in this verse be attributed to our blessed Lord, however they may be twisted or turned?

Verse 6. Be ashamed for my sake] The sins of the Jews were a great stumbling-block in the way of the conversion of the Gentiles. They had been the *peculiar people* of the Lord. “How,” say the Gentiles, “can a pure and holy Being love such people?” They were now *punished* for their crimes. “How,” say the Gentiles, “can God deal so hardly with those whom he professes to love?” The pious among the captives felt keenly, because this reproach seemed to fall upon their gracious and merciful God.

Verse 7. For thy sake I have borne reproach] The Gentiles have said, “Why such an obstinate attachment to the *worship* of a Being who treats you so rigorously, and who interests not himself in your comfort and deliverance?” And in these cutting reproaches some of the ungodly *Jews* took a part: “I am an alien to my mother’s children.”

Verse 9. The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up] The strong desire to promote thy glory has absorbed all others. All the desires of my *body* and *soul* are wrapped up in this. This verse is very properly applied to our Lord, ^{<18217>} **John 2:17**, who *went about doing good*; and gave up his life, not only for the redemption of man, but to “magnify the law, and make it honourable.”

Verse 12. They that sit in the gate] At the gates were the courts for public justice; *there* were complaints lodged, and causes heard. No doubt many vexatious complaints were made against the poor captives; and false accusations, through which they grievously suffered; so that, literally, they were often “obliged to restore that which they had not taken away.” See ~~1960~~ **Psalm 69:4.**

The song of the drunkards.] These poor miserable people were exposed to all sorts of indignities. Though the conduct is base, the exultation over a fallen enemy is frequent. How miserable was this lot! Forsaken by friends, scorned by enemies, insulted by inferiors; the scoff of libertines, and the song of drunkards; besides hard travail of body, miserably lodged and fed; with the burning crown of all, a deep load of guilt upon the conscience. To such a life any death was preferable.

Verse 13. My prayer is unto thee, O Lord, in an acceptable time] This seems to refer to the *end of the captivity*, which Jeremiah had said should last *seventy years*, ~~251~~ **Jeremiah 25:11, 12:** “The whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon,” &c. The conclusion of this period was the *accepted time* of which the psalmist speaks. *Now*, they incessantly pray for the fulfilment of the promise made by Jeremiah: and to hear them, would be the *truth* of God’s *salvation*; it would show the promise to be *true*, because the *salvation*-the *deliverance*, was granted.

Verse 16. Thy loving-kindness is good] The word **dsj** *chesed* signifies *exuberance of kindness*; and the word **μymj r** *rachamim*, which we translate *tender mercies*, signifies such *affection* as *mothers* bear to their *young*: and in God, there is **br** *rob*, a *multitude*, of such *tender mercies* towards the children of men!

Verse 18. Deliver me because of mine enemies.] Probably they now began to think that the redemption of these captives was not an impossible thing; that it was not far off; and therefore they had great rage, because they found their time was but short.

Verse 19. Thou hast known my reproach] This is one of the most forcible appeals to mercy and compassion that was ever made. The

language of these two verses is inimitable; and the sentiment cannot be mended. I can devise no comment that would not lessen their effect.

Verse 21. They gave me also gall for my meat] Even the *food*, necessary to preserve us in their slavery, was frequently mingled with what rendered it unpleasant and disgusting, though not absolutely unwholesome. And vinegar, sour small wines, was given us for our beverage. This is applied to our Lord, ^{<412734>}**Matthew 27:34**, where the reader is requested to consult the notes.

Verse 22. Let their table become a snare] The execrations here and in the following verses should be read in the *future* tense, because they are *predictive*; and not in the *imperative mood*, as if they were the offspring of the psalmist's resentment: "Their table SHALL become a snare;—their eyes SHALL be darkened; -thou WILT pour out thine indignation upon them;—thy wrathful anger SHALL take hold of them;—their habitation SHALL be desolate,—and none SHALL dwell in their tents."

The psalmist *prophesies* that the evils which they had inflicted on the Israelites should be visited on themselves; that as they had made them *eat, drink, labour, and suffer*, so God should in his judgment treat them.

Verse 27. Add iniquity unto their iniquity] מַנְוֹ [I [ׁw [הַנְּתֹ *tenah avon al avonam; give iniquity*, that is, the *reward* of it, *upon* or *for their iniquity*. Or, as the original signifies *perverseness*, treat their *perverseness* with *perverseness*: act, in thy judgments, as *crookedly* towards them as they dealt *crookedly* towards thee. They shall get, in the way of punishment, what they have dealt out in the way of oppression.

Verse 28. Let them be blotted out] They *shall* be blotted out from the land of the living. They shall *be cut off from life*, which they have forfeited by their cruelty and oppression. The psalmist is speaking of *retributive justice*; and in this sense all these passages are to be understood.

And not be written with the righteous.] They shall have no title to that *long life* which God has promised to his followers.

Verse 29. I am poor and sorrowful] Literally, *I am laid low, and full of pain* or *grief*. Hence the prayer, "Let thy salvation, O God set me on high!" My oppression has laid me *low*; thy salvation shall make me *high*!

Verse 31. An ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.] Oxen offered in sacrifice had their horns and hoofs *gilded*; and the psalmist might mention these parts of the victim more particularly, because they were more *conspicuous*. Others think that *full-grown* animals are intended, those that had perfect *horns*, in opposition to *calves* or *steers*. I think the first the preferable sense; for the horns, &c., of consecrated animals are thus ornamented in the east to the present day.

Verse 32. The humble shall see this, and be glad] Those who are *low*, pressed down by misfortune or cruelty, shall see this and take courage; expecting that thou wilt lift *them* up also; and thus the heart of those who seek the Lord shall be *revived*.

Verse 33. For the Lord heareth the poor] *μυνωβα ebyonim*, of the *beggars*. He perhaps refers here to the case of the captives, many of whom were reduced to the most abject state, so as to be obliged to beg bread from their heathen oppressors.

His prisoners.] The captives, shut up by his judgments in Chaldea, without any civil liberty, like culprits in a prison.

Verse 34. Let the heaven and earth praise him] The psalmist has the fullest confidence that God will turn their captivity, and therefore calls upon all creatures to magnify him for his mercy.

Verse 35. God will save Zion] This fixes the Psalm to the time of the captivity. There was no *Zion* belonging to the Jews in the time of *Saul*, when those suppose the Psalm to be written who make David the author; for David after he came to the throne, won the stronghold of *Zion* from the Jebusites. ^{<1087>}**2 Samuel 5:7;** ^{<3105>}**1 Chronicles 11:5.**

Will build the cities of Judah] This refers to the return from the captivity, when all the destroyed cities should be rebuilt, and the Jews repossess their forfeited heritages. Some apply this to the redemption of the human race; and suppose that *Zion* is the type of the Christian Church into which the Gentiles were to be called. What evangelists and apostles apply to our Lord, we safely may. What others see so clearly in this Psalm relative to Gospel matters, I cannot discern.

ANALYSIS OF THE SIXTY-NINTH PSALM

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

I. The psalmist's *prayer*, and the *reasons* for it, ^{<19601>}**Psalm 69:1-21.**

II. *Declaration* of God's *judgments* against his enemies, ^{<19622>}**Psalm 69:22-28.**

III. His *profession of thanks*, ^{<19629>}**Psalm 69:29-36.**

I. His *prayer*: "Save me, O God!" And then his reasons.

1. His present condition: "The waters are come in unto my soul."
2. "I sink in deep mire."
3. "I am come into deep waters."
4. "I am weary of my crying."
5. "My throat is dried" with calling on thee.
6. "Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God."

When he considered his enemies, he found reason to cry. They were,

1. *Malicious*: "They hate me without a cause."
2. *Numerous*: "More than the hairs of my head."
3. *Powerful*: "My enemies are mighty," ^{<19601>}**Psalm 69:1-4.**

1. He declares his innocence with respect to their accusations, and the oppression he suffered: "I restored that which I took not away."
2. Begs to be heard, lest he should be confounded before his enemies.
3. Shows that he *suffers* for God's *cause*.
4. He was *zealous* for the Divine worship.
5. He was a deep *penitent*.

On which account he was a subject of reproach:—

1. To the *high*—those who sat in the gate.
2. To the *low* and *base*: "I was the song of the drunkards."

He renews his *petition*, and presses on God to hear him:—

1. Because of his being *ready to sink*. ^{<19613>}**Psalm 69:13-15.**
2. Because of God's *goodness*, *mercy*, and *truth*: "In the multitude of thy mercies," &c.
3. Because he was God's *servant*, and would not desert his Master.
4. Because of his *enemies*, who would have a sinful triumph if he was not delivered.

And he pleads their *ill usage* as a reason why God should help him.

1. They were *scorners*, and God knew it: “They are all before thee,” ^{<19619>}**Psalm 69:19**.
2. *Reproach* had almost *broken his heart*.
3. His *friends* had *abandoned him*, ^{<19621>}**Psalm 69:20**.
4. His *enemies* were *inhuman*: “They gave me gall,” &c., ^{<19622>}**Psalm 69:22**.

II. *Prophetic declaration of God’s judgments* against them:—

1. Their “table should be a snare to them,” ^{<19622>}**Psalm 69:22**.
2. They should be given up to judicial *blindness*, ^{<19623>}**Psalm 69:23**.
3. They should be *enfeebled in their bodies*: “Make their loins shake,” ^{<19623>}**Psalm 69:23**.
4. God’s “wrath should be poured out upon them,” ^{<19624>}**Psalm 69:24**.
5. Their *country* should be *wasted*, ^{<19625>}**Psalm 69:25**.
6. They should have the *punishment* due to their *iniquity*, ^{<19627>}**Psalm 69:27**.
7. They should come to an *untimely* death: “Let them be blotted out,” ^{<19628>}**Psalm 69:28**.

III. His *profession of thanks*. Having spoken of his own condition, that he was *poor* and sorrowful, he now breaks out into praise:—

1. “I will praise the name of God,” ^{<19630>}**Psalm 69:30**.
2. This will be the most *acceptable sacrifice*, ^{<19631>}**Psalm 69:31**.

The *effect* of his *deliverance* would be *double*:—

1. It would “gladden the poor,” ^{<19632>}**Psalm 69:32, 33**.
2. All “creatures would take an interest in it,” ^{<19634>}**Psalm 69:34**. All shall praise God.

And for this he gives the following *reasons*:—

1. God’s *goodness* to his Church: “He will save Zion.”
2. He will *confirm his kingdom* among them: “He will build,” &c.
3. They shall have peace and security: “That they may dwell there, and have it in possession,” ^{<19635>}**Psalm 69:35**.
4. All that *love his name* should have it *perpetually*, ^{<19636>}**Psalm 69:36**.

The cruel, the oppressor, the scorner, the irreligious, the hypocrite, shall have nothing of God's approbation here, and shall be excluded from his heavenly kingdom for ever.

PSALMS

PSALM 70

The psalmist prays for speedy deliverance, 1; prays against those who sought his life, 2, 3; and for the blessedness of those who sought God, 4; urges his speedy deliverance, 5.

NOTES ON PSALM 70

The *title* in the Hebrew is, *To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance*. There seems little sense in this title. It seems to intimate that the Psalm was written as a memorial that David had been in sore affliction, and that God had delivered him. So the *Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic*. It is almost word for word the same with *the five last verses of* ^{<1904>} **Psalm 40:14-17**, to the notes on which the reader is referred.

Verse 1. Make haste to help me] I am in extreme distress, and the most imminent danger. *Haste to help me, or I am lost.*

Verse 2. Let them be turned backward] They are coming in a *body* against me. Lord, stop their progress!

Verse 3. That say, Aha, aha.] *hah hah heach! heach!* a note of supreme contempt. See on ^{<1905>} **Psalm 40:15**.

Verse 4. Let God be magnified.] Let his glory, mercy, and kindness, continually appear in the *increase* of his own work in the souls of his followers!

Verse 5. But I am poor and needy] *wybaw yn* [*ani veebyon*, I am a poor man, and a beggar-an *afflicted beggar*; a sense of my poverty causes me to beg.

Thou art my help] I know thou hast enough, and to spare; and therefore I come to *thee*.

Make no tarrying.] My wants are many, my danger great, my time short. O God, delay not!

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTIETH PSALM

The contents of this Psalm are the following:—

I. The prayer of David for himself, that he may be freed from his enemies,
~~<19701>~~ **Psalm 70:1**, repeated ~~<19705>~~ **Psalm 70:5**.

II. For the speedy overthrow of the wicked ~~<19702>~~ **Psalm 70:2, 3**.

III. For the prosperity of the godly, ~~<19704>~~ **Psalm 70:4**.

IV. The arguments he uses to induce God to answer his prayer.

1. His miserable condition: “I am poor and needy.”

2. God’s office: “Thou art my Helper and Redeemer.”

For a farther analysis, see at the end of the *fortieth* Psalm. See Clarke
~~<19407>~~ **Psalm 40:17**”.

PSALMS

PSALM 71

The prophet, in confidence, prays for God's favour, 1-5; recounts God's kindness to him from youth to old age, 6-9; shows what his adversaries plot against him, and prays for their confusion, 10-13; promises fidelity, and determines to be a diligent preacher of righteousness even in old age, 16-19; takes encouragement in God's mercy, and foresees the confusion of all his adversaries, 20-24.

NOTES ON PSALM 71

There is no *title* to this Psalm either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*; and the reason is, it was written as a part of the preceding Psalm, as appears by about *twenty-seven* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, have, "A Psalm of David for the sons of Jonadab, and the first of those who were led captives." For the *first*, *second*, and *third* verses, see the notes on their parallels, ^{<49310>} **Psalm 31:1-3**.

Verse 3. Be thou my strong habitation] Instead of [^] [m *maon*, *habitation*, many of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. read z [m *maoz*, *munition* or *defence*. Be thou my rock of defence.

Thou hast given commandment to save me] Thou hast determined my escape, and hast ordered thy angels to guard me. See ^{<49911>} **Psalm 91:11, 12**.

Verse 4. Out of the hand of the wicked] Probably his unnatural son *Absalom*, called here [vr *rasha*, the WICKED, because he had violated all laws, human and Divine.

The unrighteous and cruel man.] Probably *Ahithophel* who was the iniquitous counsellor of a wicked and rebellious son.

Verse 5. My trust from my youth.] When I was born into the world, thou didst receive me, and thou tookest me under thy especial care. "My praise shall be continually of thee." Rather, *I have always made thee my boast*.

Verse 7. I am as a wonder unto many] I am t p w m k *kemopheth*, "as a portent," or "type:" I am a *typical person*; and many of the things that

happen to *me* are to be considered in reference to *him* of whom I am a type. But he may mean I am a *continual prodigy*. My low estate, my slaying the lion and the bear, conquering the Philistine, escaping the fury of Saul, and being raised to the throne of Israel, are all so many *wonders* of thy providence, and effects of thy power and grace.

Verse 9. Cast me not off in the time of old age] The original might be translated and paraphrased thus: “Thou wilt not cast me off till the time of old age; and according to the failure of my flesh, thou wilt not forsake me.” My expectation of rest and happiness will not be deferred till the time that I shall be an aged man, Thou wilt not withdraw thy presence from me as my flesh decays, and as my natural strength abates; but, on the contrary, as my outward man decays, my inward man shall be renewed day by day. It was in David’s *old age* that the rebellion of Absalom took place.

Verse 10. Lay wait for my soul] They seek to destroy my *life*.

Verse 11. God hath forsaken him] “God, who has been his special help all through life, and who has guarded him so that no hand could be raised successfully against him, has now cast him off; therefore we shall easily prevail against him. His present adversity shows that God is no longer his friend.” Thus *men* judge. “Secular prosperity is a proof of God’s favour: adversity is a proof of his displeasure.” But this is not God’s way, except in especial judgments, &c. He never manifests his pleasure or displeasure by secular good or ill.

Verse 13. Let them be confounded] They *shall* be confounded: these are *prophetic* denunciations.

Verse 14. I will hope continually] I shall expect deliverance after deliverance, and blessing after blessing; and, in consequence, I will praise thee more and more. As thy blessings abound, so shall my praises.

Verse 15. I know not the numbers] I must be continually in the spirit of gratitude, praise, and obedience, for thy blessings to me are innumerable.

Verse 16. I will go] *awba abo*, I will enter, i.e., into the tabernacle, in the strength or *mightinesses of Adonai Jehovah*, the supreme God, who is my *Prop, Stay, and Support*.

I will make mention of thy righteousness] I will continually record and celebrate the *acts of thy mercy and goodness*. They are without number, (^{<19715>}**Psalm 71:15**,) and of these alone will I speak.

Verse 17. Thou hast taught me from my youth] I have had thee for my continual instructor: and thou didst begin to teach me thy fear and love from my tenderest infancy. Those are well taught whom God instructs; and when he teaches, there is no delay in learning.

Verse 18. Old and grey-headed] In the *ninth* verse {^{<19719>}**Psalm 71:9**} he mentioned the circumstance of *old age*; here he *repeats* it, with the addition of *hoary-headedness*, which, humanly speaking, was calculated to make a deeper impression in his favour. Though all these things are well known to God, and he needs not our information, yet he is pleased to say, “Come now, and let us *reason* together.” And when his children plead and reason with him, they are acting precisely as he has commanded.

Verse 19. Thy righteousness-is very high] $\mu w r m d$ [*ad marom*-is up to the exalted place, reaches *up to heaven*. The mercy of God fills all *space* and *place*. It crowns in the heavens what it governed upon earth.

Who hast done great things] $t w l d g$ *gedoloth*. Thou hast worked *miracles*, and displayed the *greatest acts of power*.

Who is like unto thee!] $\ddot{E} w m k y m$ *mi camocha*. God is alone,—who can resemble him? He is eternal. He can have none *before*, and there can be none *after*; for in the infinite *unity* of his *trinity* he is that eternal, unlimited, impartible, incomprehensible, and uncompounded ineffable Being, whose *essence* is hidden from all created intelligences, and whose *counsels* cannot be fathomed by any creature that even his own hand can form. WHO IS LIKE UNTO THEE! will excite the wonder, amazement, praise, and adoration of angels and men to all eternity.

Verse 20. Thou, which hast showed me great and sore troubles] *Multiplied straits* and difficulties. And thou hast only *showed* them. Hadst thou permitted them to have *fallen upon me* with all their own energy and natural consequences, they would have destroyed me. As it was, I was nearly buried under them.

Shalt quicken me again] Shalt revive me—put new life in me. This has been applied to the passion of our Lord, and his resurrection; for it is added, Thou—

Shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.] Death shall not prey upon my body; thy Holy One can see no corruption. As applicable to David, it might mean his being almost overwhelmed with afflictions; and his deliverance was like a life from the dead.

Verse 21. Thou shalt increase my greatness] Thou wilt restore me to my throne and kingdom; and it shall be done in such a way that all shall see it was the hand of God; and I shall have the more honour on the account.

Comfort me on every side.] I shall have friends in all quarters; and the *tribes* on all sides will support me.

Verse 22. I will also praise thee with the psaltery] *l bn yl kb bichli nebel*, with the instrument *nebel*. Unto thee will I sing with the harp; *rwnkb bechinnor*, with the *kinnor*. Both were *stringed instruments*, and the principal used in the Jewish worship; and with which, or any thing like them, in Divine worship, *we*, as *Christians*, have nothing to do.

Verse 23. My lips shall greatly rejoice—and my soul] My *lips* shall use words expressive of my *soul's* happiness and gratitude. Thou hast *redeemed* me; and thou shalt have the eternal praise.

Verse 24. Talk of thy righteousness] The *righteousness of God* is frequently used in this Psalm, and in other places, to signify his justice, judgments, faithfulness, truth, mercy, &c. There are few words of more *general* import in the Bible.

They are confounded] The counsel of Ahithophel is *confounded*, and turned to foolishness, and he was so *ashamed* that he went and hanged himself. As to the vain and wicked Absalom, he met with the fate that he had meditated against his father. Though not yet done, David sees all these things as actually accomplished; for he had got a Divine assurance that God would bring them to pass.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-FIRST PSALM

The *parts* of this Psalm, generally, are these *two*:—

I. A *prayer* that God would help and deliver him, which he urges by many arguments, ^{<19710>}**Psalm 71:1-21.**

II. His *vow of thanksgiving*, ^{<19712>}**Psalm 71:22-24.**

I. 1. His petition in general: "Let me never be put to confusion."

2. He intimates the cause: "I put my trust in thee," &c., ^{<19710>}**Psalm 71:2.**

To induce the Lord to hear, he uses many *arguments*, drawn,—

1. From his *justice* and *equity*: "Deliver me in thy righteousness."

2. From his *word* and *promise*: "Thou hast given commandment," &c.

3. From his *power*: "Thou art my rock," &c.

4. From his *relation* to him: "My God, my hope."

5. From the *qualities* of his *adversaries*: "They were wicked, unrighteous, and cruel."

6. From his *confidence*: "Thou art my hope."

7. From his *gracious providence*: "By thee have I been holden up," &c.

8. From his *thankful heart*: "My praise shall be continually," &c.

9. He had *none to trust to* but GOD: "Thou art my refuge."

3. He resumes his *prayer*: "Cast me not off in the time of old age," &c.

He describes his enemies:—

1. They were continual *calumniators*: "Mine enemies speak against me."

2. They *laboured* to take away his *life*.

3. They *studied mischief* against him: "They take counsel together."

4. Their *words* were *cruel*: "God hath forsaken him; persecute," &c.

4. He resumes his prayer, and predicts his enemies' downfall: "O my God, be not far from me; make haste for my help."

He prays against his enemies,—

1. "Let them be confounded," &c.: they shall be confounded.

2. He expresses his hope: "I will hope continually."

3. And his purpose of *gratitude*: "I will praise thee more and

more.”

4. He pleads from his *past experience* of God’s mercy to him.

1. God had “taught him from his youth” both by his word and Spirit.

2. Hitherto he had “declared God’s wondrous works.”

3. Therefore, “forsake me not now that I am old and grey-headed.”

4. I have still *much to do*: “Until I have showed thy strength,” &c.

From all these considerations he feels gratitude, and praises God.

1. Thy righteousness is very high. There is nothing like IT.

2. God is wonderful: “There is none like HIM.”

Of all this he had full and satisfactory proof.

1. Thou *hast showed me troubles*—“sore troubles.”

2. Yet thou *shalt revive me*.

3. Thou “shalt bring me from the depths of the earth.”

4. “Thou shalt increase my greatness.”

5. “Thou shalt support me on every side.”

II. The SECOND *part* contains David’s *thanksgiving*.

1. He will praise the *truth* of the “Holy One of Israel:” not only with *nebel* and *kinnor*—instruments of music then used,—

2. But with his *lips* and *soul*; *heart* and *mouth* going together.

3. With his *tongue*; speaking of God’s goodness to *others*.

4. And for this reason, “They are confounded, for they are brought to shame that seek my hurt.”

PSALMS

PSALM 72

David prays to God for Solomon, 1; prescribes Solomon's work, 2; the effects of his administration, 3-7; the extent of his dominion, 8-11; his mercy and kindness to the poor, and the perpetuity of his praise, 12-17. God is blessed for his power and goodness; and the psalmist prays that the whole earth may be filled with his glory, 18-20.

NOTES ON PSALM 72

The title **hml vl** *lishelomoh*, we translate, *A Psalm for Solomon*. The *Chaldee* says, "By the hand of Solomon, spoken prophetically." The *Syriac*, "A Psalm of David, when he had constituted Solomon king." All the other *Versions* attribute it to *Solomon* himself. But in the conclusion of the Psalm it appears to be attributed to *David*. "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." It is most probably a Psalm of David, composed in his last days, when he had set this beloved son on the throne of the kingdom. "Then," says *Calmet*, "transported with joy and gratitude, he addressed this Psalm to God, in which he prays him to pour out his blessings on the young king, and upon the people. He then, wrapped up in a Divine enthusiasm, ascends to a higher subject; and sings the glory of the Messiah, and the magnificence of his reign. Hence it is that we may see in this Psalm a great number of expressions which cannot relate to Solomon, unless in a hyperbolic and figurative sense; but, applied to Christ, they are literally and rigorously exact."

Verse 1. Give the king thy judgments] Let Solomon receive *thy law*, as the civil and ecclesiastical code by which he is to govern the kingdom.

And thy righteousness unto the king's son.] *Righteousness* may signify *equity*. Let him not only rule according to the *strict letter of thy law*, that being the *base* on which all his decisions shall be founded; but let him rule also according to *equity*, that *rigorous justice* may never become *oppressive*. Solomon is called here *the king*, because now set upon the Jewish throne; and he is called *the king's son*, to signify his *right* to that throne on which he now sat.

Verse 2. He shall judge thy people with righteousness] With justice and mercy mixed, or according to *equity*.

And thy poor with judgment.] Every one according to the *law* which thou hast *appointed*; but with especial tenderness to the *poor* and *afflicted*.

Verse 3. The mountains shall bring peace] Perhaps *mountains* and *hills* are here taken in their *figurative* sense, to signify *princes* and *petty governors*; and it is a prediction that all governors of provinces and magistrates should administer equal justice in their several departments and jurisdictions; so that universal peace should be preserved, and the people be every where *prosperous*; for $\mu\omega\lambda \vee$ *shalom* signifies both peace and prosperity, for without the former the latter never existed.

But what is the meaning of “the little hills by righteousness?” Why, it has no meaning: and it has none, because it is a false division of the verse. The word $hqdxb$ *bitsedakah*, in *righteousness*, at the end of verse 3, should begin verse 4, and then the sense will be plain. Ver. 3: “The mountains and the hills shall bring prosperity to the people.” Ver. 4: “In righteousness he shall judge the poor of the people: he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.”

The *effects*, mentioned in the *fourth* verse, show that King Solomon should act according to the law of his God; and that all officers, magistrates, and governors, should minister equal rights through every part of the land. The *Septuagint* has the true division: $\text{Αναλαβετω τα ορη ειρηνην τω λαω σου, και οι βουνοι, Εν δικαιοσυνη κρινει τους πτωχους του λαου, κ. τ. λ.}$ “The mountains shall bring peace to thy people, and the hills: In righteousness shall he judge the poor of thy people,” &c.

Verse 5. They shall fear thee] There is no sense in which this can be spoken of *Solomon*, nor indeed of any other man: it belongs to *Jesus Christ*, and to him alone. He is the *Prince of peace*, who shall be *feared* and *reverenced* “through all generations, and as long as the sun and moon endure.”

Verse 6. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass] The word zg *gez*, which we translate *mown grass*, more properly means *pastured grass* or *pastured land*; for the *dew* of the night is intended to restore the grass which has been eaten in the course of the day. This very idea the *Chaldee* has seized, and renders the place thus: “He shall descend gently, like rain upon the grass which has been eaten by the locust.” But there seems to be a reference to the *thick night dews* which in summer fall on the pasturages, and become the means of restoring the grass consumed in the

day-time by the cattle. This is finely expressed by the most accomplished of all poets and agriculturists:—

*Et quantum longis carpent armenta diebus,
Exigua tantum gelidus ros nocte reponet.
VIRG. Geor. ii., ver. 201.*

*“For what the day devours, the nightly dew
Shall to the morn by pearly drops renew.”
DRYDEN.*

Or to leave *poetry*, which always says *too much* or *too little*, the plain prose is:—

*“And as much as the flocks crop in the long days,
So much shall the cold dew restore in one short night.”*

As showers that water the earth.] The influence of the *doctrine* and *Spirit* of Christ on the soul of man shall be as *grateful*, as *refreshing*, and as *fructifying*, as the nightly dews on the cropped fields, and the *vernal showers* on the cultivated lands. Without his influence all tillage is vain; without him there can neither be seed nor fruit.

Verse 7. In his days shall the righteous flourish] There was nothing but peace and prosperity all the days of Solomon: for, “In his days Judah and Israel dwelt safely; every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba;” ^{<11025>}**1 Kings 4:25.**

So long as the moon endureth] j r y l b d[*ad beli yareach*, “Till there be no more moon.”

Verse 8. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea] The best comment on this, as it refers to Solomon, may be found in ^{<11021>}**1 Kings 4:21, 24:** “And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt; for he had dominion over all on this side the river, from Tiphshah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river; and he had peace on all sides round about him.”

Solomon, it appears, reigned over all the provinces from the river *Euphrates* to the land of the *Philistines*, even to the frontiers of *Egypt*. The *Euphrates* was on the *east* of Solomon’s dominions; the *Philistines* were *westward*, on the *Mediterranean sea*; and *Egypt* was on the *south*. Solomon had therefore, as tributaries, the kingdoms of *Syria*, *Damascus*,

Moab, and *Ammon*, which lay between the *Euphrates* and the *Mediterranean*. Thus he appears to have possessed all the land which God covenanted with Abraham to give to his posterity.

Unto the ends of the earth.] Or *land*, must mean the tract of country *along the Mediterranean sea*, which was the *boundary of the land* on that side: but, as the words may refer to Christ, every thing may be taken in its utmost latitude and extent.

Verse 9. They that dwell in the wilderness] The μϣϣ *tsiyim*, termed *Ethiopians* by the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*. The *Syriac* terms them *the islands*. But it is likely that those who dwell by the sea-coasts, and support themselves by navigation and fishing, are here intended.

His enemies shall lick the dust.] Shall be so completely subdued, that they shall be reduced to the most abject state of vassalage, till they shall become proselytes to the Jewish faith.

Verse 10. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shalt bring presents] Though Solomon did not reign over *Cilicia*, of which *Tarsus* was the capital, yet he might receive *gifts*, not in the sense of *tribute*; for h̄j nm *minchah*, the word here used, signifies a *gratitude* or *friendly offering*.

The kings of Sheba and Seba] Both countries of Arabia. From the former came the *queen of Sheba*, to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And she brought exceeding great *presents* or *gifts*, but not in the way of *tribute*, for Solomon had no jurisdiction in her country. And certainly many sovereigns, to obtain his *friendship*, sent him various presents of the choicest produce of their respective countries; and no doubt he did with them as with the queen of Sheba, gave them gifts in return. Hence the word rkva *eshcar* is used, which signifies “a *compensative present*, made on account of benefits received.”

Verse 11. All kings shall fall down before] They shall reverence him on account of his great wisdom, riches, &c.

All nations shalt serve him.] All the surrounding nations. This and the preceding verses are fully explained by ^{<111023>}**1 Kings 10:23-25**: “King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And all the earth sought unto Solomon to hear his wisdom. And they

brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments and armour, and spices, horses and mules, a rate year by year.” If we take these expressions to mean literally *all the habitable globe*, then they cannot be applied to Solomon; but if we take them as *they are most evidently used by the sacred writer*, then they are literally true. When all the earth shall be brought to receive the Gospel of Christ, then they may be applied to *him*.

Verse 12. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth] The poor and the rich shall, in the administration of justice, be equally respected; and the strong shall not be permitted to oppress the weak.

Verse 14. From deceit and violence] Because they are poor and uneducated, they are liable to be *deceived*; and because they are *helpless*, they are liable to *oppression*; but his equal justice shall duly consider these cases; and no man shall suffer because he is deceived, though the *letter of the law* may be against him.

And precious shall their blood be] If the blood or life of such a person shall have been spilt by the hand of violence, he shall seek it out, and visit it on the murderer, though he were the chief in the land. He shall not be screened, though he were of the blood royal, if he have wilfully taken away the life of a man.

Verse 15. To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba] The Arabians shall pay him tribute.

Prayer also shall be made for him continually] In all conquered countries *two* things marked the subjection of the people: 1. Their money was stamped with the name of the conqueror. 2. They were obliged to pray for him in their acts of public worship.

Daily shall he be praised.] He shall not act by the conquered like conquerors in general: he shall treat them with benignity; and shall give them the same laws and privileges as his natural subjects, and therefore “he shall be daily praised.” All shall speak well of him.

Verse 16. There shall be a handful of corn] The earth shall be exceedingly fruitful. Even a handful of corn sown on the top of a mountain shall grow up strong and vigorous; and it shall be, in reference to *crops* in *other times*, as the *cedars of Lebanon* are to *common trees* or *shrubs*: and

as the earth will bring forth in handfuls, so the *people* shall be *multiplied* who are to consume this great produce.

And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.] There have been many puzzling criticisms concerning this verse. What I have given I believe to be the *sense*.

Verse 17. His name shall endure for ever] Hitherto this has been literally fulfilled. Solomon is celebrated in the *east* and in the *west*, in the *north* and in the *south*; his writings still remain, and are received, both by *Jews* and by *Gentiles*, as a revelation from God; and it is not likely that the name of the author shall ever perish out of the records of the world.

All nations shall call him blessed.] Because of the extraordinary manner in which he was *favoured* by the Most High. I well know that all these things are thought to belong properly to Jesus Christ; and, in reference to him, they are all true, and *ten thousand* times more than these. But I believe they are all properly applicable to Solomon: and it is the business of the commentator to find out the literal sense, and historical fact, and not seek for allegories and mysteries where there is no certain evidence of their presence. Where the sacred writers of the New Testament quote passages from the Old, and apply them to our Lord, we not only *may* but *should* follow them. And I am ready to grant there may be many other passages equally applicable to him with those they have quoted, which are not thus applied. Indeed, HE is the sum and substance of the whole Scripture. HE spoke by his Spirit in the prophets; and *himself* was the subject of their declarations. See our Lord's saying, ^{<D244>}**Luke 24:44.**

Verse 18. Blessed be the Lord God] David foresaw all Solomon's *grandeur*; his *justice*, *equity*, and the *happiness* of the *subjects* under his government; and his soul has, in consequence, sensations of pleasure and gratitude to God, which even his own wondrous pen cannot describe. But it is worthy of remark, that God did not reveal to him the *apostasy* of this beloved son. He did not foresee that this once holy, happy, wise, and prosperous man would be the means of debasing the Divine worship, and establishing the grossest idolatry in Israel. God hid *this* from his eyes, that his heart might not be grieved, and that he might die in peace. Besides, there was still much *contingency* in the business. God would not predict a thing as *absolutely certain*, which was still poised between a *possibility of being and not being*; the scale of which he had left, as he does all contingencies, to the free-will of his creature to turn.

Who only doeth wondrous things.] God alone works *miracles*: wherever there is a *miracle*, there is God. *No creature can invert or suspend the course and laws of nature*; this is properly the work of God. Jesus Christ, most incontrovertibly, wrought such miracles; therefore, most demonstrably, Jesus Christ is GOD.

Verse 19. Let the whole earth be filled with his glory] Let the Gospel—the light, the Spirit, and power of Christ, fill the world.

Amen] So *let* it be.

And Amen.] So it *shall be*. Hallelujah!

Verse 20. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.] This was most probably the *last Psalm* he ever wrote. There may be several in the after part of this book which were written by him; but they were probably composed in a former period of his life, for this was the *end* of the *poetic prayers of David the son of Jesse*. Those that were found afterwards have got out of their proper connexion.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-SECOND PSALM

David being near his death, makes his prayer for his son Solomon, that he may be a just, peaceable, and great king, and his subjects happy under his government. But this is but the *shell* of the Psalm: the *kernel* is Christ and his kingdom, under whom righteousness, peace, and felicity shall flourish, and *unto whom all nations shall do homage for ever and ever*.

The parts of this Psalm are the following, viz.:—

- I. The petition, ^{<19720>}**Psalm 72:1.**
- II. The general declaration of the qualities of this kingdom, ^{<19721>}**Psalm 72:2-4.**
- III. The particular unfolding of these in their effects, ^{<19724>}**Psalm 72:4-18.**
- IV. The doxology, ^{<197218>}**Psalm 72:18-20.**

I. David, being taught by experience how hard a matter it is to govern a kingdom well, prays God to assist his son *Solomon*, to whom, being near death, he was to leave his crown and sceptre.

1. “Give the king thy judgments, O God;” the true knowledge of thy law.

2. "And thy righteousness unto the king's son;" that he may not decline to the right or left hand, but administer by justice, judge for God.

II. For then this will follow:—

1. Justice will flourish in his kingdom: "He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment."

2. And peace also, and prosperity: "The mountains," that is, the chief magistrates; "and the little hills,"—the lesser officers, shall bring peace to the people: but "by righteousness," for justice upholds the world.

III. And now he proceeds to unfold himself upon the two former generals: first, *justice*; then, *peace*.

Of justice he assigns two effects:—

1. The defence of good men: "He shall judge the poor of the people; he shall save the children of the needy."

2. The punishment of the wicked: "He shall break in pieces the oppressor."

The consequences of peace are,—

1. Fear, and reverence, and the service of God: "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations."

2. Plenty and abundance: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth."

3. Prosperity of good men: "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

Now he shows the greatness and amplitude of this kingdom, which will not be so true of *Solomon* as of *Christ* and his kingdom.

1. His kingdom will be very large: "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

2. His subjects shall be many. Some willingly, others against their will, shall obey him: "They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him. His enemies shall lick the dust,"—crouch at his feet.

3. Homage shall be done to him by Asiatic, European, and Arabian princes. 1. "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents, the kings of

Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.” 2. “Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him.”

He sets down many excellent qualities of this king:

1. He should be ready to do good; a gracious lord to the meanest subject: “For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also. and him that hath no helper.”

2. He should be far from loading his subjects with exactions: “He shall spare the poor and shall save the souls of the needy.”

3. Far from all tyranny: “He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence.”

4. Far from shedding innocent blood: “And precious shall their blood be in his sight.”

And as he shall be kind and loving to his subjects, so shall his subjects show great love and affection to him.

1. They shall pray for his life: “He shall live.”

2. And they shall offer him presents: “And to him shall be given of the gold of Arabia.”

3. They shall pray for him: “Prayer also shall be made for him continually.”

4. They shall speak well of him: “Daily shall he be praised.”

And that which would induce them to it might be, that besides the equity and justice, love and kindness he showed to all, they find that under him they enjoy great plenty and abundance of all things.

1. For the earth brought forth corn, and the mountains afforded them an ample harvest: “There shall be a handful of corn in the earth, upon the top (the highest part) of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake (stand so thick that the ears shall brush one against another) as the trees in Lebanon.”

2. The kingdom shall abound in people: “They of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth,” which is thick and green. In a word, the king shall be dear to his people; and they shall love his name when living, and honour him when dead, and continue it to all posterities.

1. "His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun."

2. "Men shall be blessed in him." God shall bless thee, as he did Solomon.

3. "All nations shall call him blessed." Acknowledge his happiness, and wish a blessing to themselves after Solomon's example.

IV. In the close of the Psalm, as usual, he gives thanks for taking into consideration the happiness that was to accrue to his people under such a king, even when he was laid in the grave. He breaks forth,

1. "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things;" for indeed such a king is a wonder, and it is the grace of God must make him such.

2. And again: "Blessed be his glorious name for ever."

3. And that not in Judea alone, but in all the world: "And let the whole world be filled with his glory. Amen, amen."

"The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." Of which some, indeed most, judge this was the last prayer David made. See the notes at the end of the Psalm. **See Clarke** "~~1972~~ **Psalm 72:20**".

With the *seventy-second* Psalm the SECOND BOOK of the Psalter ends, according to the division of the Jewish Masoretes. The THIRD BOOK commences with a series, chiefly composed by other inspired writers.

THE following poetical version of some of the principal passages of the foregoing Psalm was made and kindly given me by my much respected friend, *James Montgomery*, Esq., of Sheffield. I need not tell the intelligent reader that he has seized the spirit, and exhibited some of the principal beauties, of the Hebrew bard; though, to use his own words in his letter to me, his "hand trembled to touch the harp of Zion." I take the liberty here to register a wish, which I have strongly expressed to himself, that he would favour the Church of God with a metrical version of the whole book.

*Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son!
Hail! In the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun!*

*He comes to break oppression,
To let the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And reign in equity.*

*He comes with succour speedy
To those who suffer wrong;
To help the poor and needy,
And bid the weak be strong;*

*To give them songs for sighing,
Their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, in misery dying,
Were precious in his sight.*

*By such shall he be feared
While sun and moon endure,
Beloved, adored, revered,
For he shall judge the poor,*

*Through changing generations,
With justice, mercy, truth,
While stars maintain their stations,
And moons renew their youth.*

*He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth,
And joy, and hope, like flowers,
Spring in his path to birth:*

*Before him, on the mountains,
Shall Peace, the herald, go,
And righteousness, in fountains,
From hill to valley flow.*

*Arabia's desert-ranger
To him shall bow the knee;
The Æthiopian stranger
His glory come to see:*

*With offerings of devotion,
Ships from the isles shall meet
To pour the wealth of ocean
In tribute at his feet.*

*Kings shall fall down before him,
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore him,
His praise all people sing:*

*For he shall have dominion
O'er river, sea, and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion,
Or dove's light wing, can soar.*

*For him shall prayer unceasing,
And daily vows, ascend;
His kingdom still increasing,—
A kingdom without end;*

*The mountain-dews shall nourish
A need in weakness sown,
Whose fruit shall spread and flourish
And shake like Lebanon.*

*O'er every foe victorious,
He on his throne shall rest,
From age to age more glorious,—
All-blessing, and all-blest:*

*The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove;
His name shall stand for ever,
His name what is it?—LOVE.*

PSALMS

PSALM 73

The psalmist speaks of God's goodness to his people, 1; shows how much he was stumbled at the prosperity of the wicked, and describes their state, 2-12; details the process of the temptation, and the pain he suffered in consequence, 13-16; shows how he was delivered, and the dismal reverse of the state of the once prosperous ungodly man, by which his own false views were corrected, 17-22; his great confidence in God, and the good consequences of it, 23-28.

NOTES ON PSALM 73

THIS is the commencement of the THIRD BOOK of the *Psalter*; and the Psalm before us has for title, *A Psalm of Asaph*; or, as the margin has it, *A Psalm for Asaph*. The title in the Hebrew is *āsāl rwmzm mizmor leasaph*; “A Psalm of Asaph:” and it is likely that this *Asaph* was the composer of it; that he lived under the Babylonish captivity; and that he published this Psalm to console the Israelites under bondage, who were greatly tried to find themselves in such outward distress and misery, while a people much more wicked and corrupt than they, were in great prosperity, and held them in bondage.

Verse 1. Truly God is good to Israel] Captives as they were, they still had many blessings from God; and they had promises of deliverance, which must be fulfilled in due time.

Such as are of a clean heart.] Those who have a clean heart must have inward happiness: and, because they resemble God, they can never be forsaken by him.

Verse 2. My feet were almost gone] I had nearly given up my confidence. I was ready to find fault with the dispensations of providence; and thought the Judge of all the earth did not do right.

Verse 3. I was envious at the foolish] I saw persons who worshipped not the true God, and others who were *abandoned to all vices*, in possession of every temporal comfort, while the godly were in straits, difficulties, and affliction. I began then to doubt whether there was a wise providence; and my mind became *irritated*. It seems to have been a maxim among the ancient heathens, *Θεου ονειδος τους κακους ευδαιμονειν*, “The

prosperity of the wicked is a reproach to the gods.” But they had no just conception of a state of future rewards and punishments. Besides, man could not bear prosperity. If men had uninterrupted comforts here, perhaps not one soul would ever seek a preparation for heaven. Human trials and afflictions, the *general warfare of human life*, are the highest proof of a providence as benevolent as it is wise. Were the state of human affairs different from what it is, hell would be more thickly peopled; and there would be fewer inhabitants in glory. There is reason to doubt whether there would be *any religion* upon earth had we nothing but temporal prosperity. Indeed, all the following verses are proofs of it.

Verse 4. No bands in their death] Many of the godly have sore conflicts at their death. Their enemy then thrusts sore at them that they may fall; or that their confidence in their God may be shaken. But of this the ungodly know nothing. Satan will not molest *them*; he is sure of his prey; they are entangled, and cannot now break their nets; their consciences are seared, they have no sense of guilt. If they think at all of another world, they presume on that mercy which they never sought, and of which they have no distinct notion. Perhaps, “they die without a sigh or a groan; and thus go off as quiet as a lamb”—to the slaughter.

Verse 6. Pride compasseth them about as a chain] Perhaps there is an allusion here to the office which some of them bore. *Chains of gold*, and *golden rings*, were ensigns of magistracy and civil power. As these chains encompassed their necks, or the rings their wrists and fingers, as the signs of the *offices* in virtue of which they acted; so *smj chamas*, violence, oppressive conduct, encompassed them. They made no other use of their great power, than to oppress the poor and the needy; and to drive things to extremities. The *Chaldee*, instead of *a chain*, represents this as a crown or diadem, which they had formed out of the plunder of the poor and defenceless.

Verse 7. Their eyes stand out with fatness] “Their countenance is changed because of fatness.”—*Chaldee*. By fatness, or corpulency, the natural lines of the face are *changed*, or rather *obliterated*. The characteristic distinctions are gone; and we see little remaining besides the *human hog*.

They have more than heart could wish.] I doubt this translation. *Whose heart ever said, I have enough*, which had not its portion with God? It

would be more literal to say, “They surpass the thoughts of their heart.” They have *more* than they *expected*, though *not more* than they *wish*.

Verse 8. They are corrupt] wqymy *yamiku*, they *mock*, *act dissolutely*.

And speak wickedly concerning oppression] They vindicate excessive acts of government: they push justice to its rigour. They neither show equity, lenity, nor mercy; they are cruel, and they *vindicate* their proceedings.

Verse 9. Set their mouth against the heavens] They blaspheme God, ridicule religion, mock at Providence, and laugh at a future state.

Their tongue walketh through the earth.] They find fault with every thing; they traduce the memory of the just in heaven, and ridicule the saints that are upon earth. They criticize every dispensation of God.

Verse 10. Therefore his people return hither] There are very few verses in the Bible that have been more variously translated than this; and, like the man in the fable, they have blown the *hot* to *cool* it, and the *cold* to *warm* it. It has been translated, “Therefore God’s people fall off to them; and thence they reap no small advantage.” And, “Therefore let his people come before them; and waters in full measure would be wrung out from them.” That is, “Should God’s people come before them, they would squeeze them to the utmost; they would wring out all the juice in their bodies.”

The *Chaldee* has, “Therefore, are they turned against the people of the Lord, that they may bruise and beat them with mallets; that they may pour out to them abundance of tears.” The *Vulgate*, “Therefore shall my people return here, and days of abundance shall be found by them.” The *Septuagint* is the same. The *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Syriac*, nearly the same. The *Hebrew* text is,

wml wxmy al m ymw μl h wm[bwvy ˆkl *lachen yashub ammo (ym[ammi) halom; umey male yimmatsu lamo*; “Therefore shall my people be converted, where they shall find abundance of waters.” That is, The people, seeing the iniquity of the Babylonians, and feeling their oppressive hand, shall be converted to me; and I shall bring them to their own land, where they shall find an abundance of all the necessaries of life. I believe this to be the meaning; and thus we find their afflictions were sanctified to them; for they obliged them to *return to God*, and then God caused them

to return to their own land. The *Vulgate* translates *al m ymw umey male*, “abundance of waters,” by *et dies pleni*, “and days of plenty;” for it has read *ymy yemey, days*, for *ymw umey, and waters*. Almost all the *Versions* support this reading; but it is not acknowledged by any MS. The old *Psalter* is here mutilated.

Verse 11. They say, How doth God know?] My people are so stumbled with the prosperity of the wicked, that they are ready in their temptation to say, “Surely, God cannot know these things, or he would never dispense his favours thus.” Others consider these words as the saying of the *wicked*: “We may oppress these people as we please, and live as we list; God knows nothing about it.”

Verse 12. These are the ungodly] The people still speak. It is the ungodly that prosper, the irreligious and profane.

Verse 13. I have cleansed my heart in vain] It is no advantage to us to worship the true God, to walk according to the law of righteousness, and keep the ordinances of the Most High.

Verse 14. For all the day long have I been plagued] Far from enjoying worldly prosperity, we are not only *poor*, but we are *afflicted* also; and every *succeeding day* brings with it some new trouble.

Verse 15. If I say, I will speak thus] I have at last discovered that I have reasoned incorrectly; and that I have the uniform testimony of all thy children against me. From generation to generation they have testified that the Judge of all the earth does right; they have trusted in thee, and were never confounded. They also met with afflictions and sore trials, but thou didst bring them safely through all, didst sustain them in the worst, and sanctifiedst the whole to their eternal good.

Verse 16. When I thought to know this] When I reviewed the history of our fathers, I saw that, though thou hadst from time to time hidden thy face because of their sins, yet thou hadst never utterly abandoned them to their adversaries; and it was not reasonable to conclude that thou wouldst do now what thou hadst never done before; and yet the continuance of our captivity, the oppressive hardships which we suffer, and the small prospect there is of release, puzzle me again. These things have been very *painful to me*.

Verse 17. Until I went into the sanctuary] Until, in the use of thy ordinances, I entered into a deep consideration of thy secret counsels, and considered the future state of the righteous and the wicked; that the unequal distribution of temporal good and evil argued a future judgment; that the present is a state of trial; and that God exercises his followers according to his godly wisdom and tender mercy. Then light sprang up in my mind, and I was assured that all these exercises were for our benefit, and that the prosperity of the wicked here was a prelude to their destruction. And this I saw to be their *end*.

That this Psalm was written during the *captivity*, there is little room to doubt. How then can the psalmist speak of the *sanctuary*? There was none at Babylon; and at Jerusalem it had been long since destroyed? There is no way to solve this difficulty but by considering that *yvdqm mikdeshey* may be taken in the sense of *holy places*-places set apart for prayer and meditation. And that the captives had such places in their captivity, there can be no doubt; and the place that is set apart to meet God in, for prayer, supplication, confession of sin, and meditation, is holy unto the Lord; and is, therefore, his *sanctuary*, whether a *house* or the open *field*. Calmet thinks by holy meditations a view of the Divine secrets, to which he refers, ^{<19734>}**Psalm 73:24**, is here meant.

Verse 18. Thou didst set them in slippery places] Affluence is a slippery path; few have ever walked in it without *falling*. It is possible to be *faithful* in the *unrighteous mammon*, but it is very *difficult*. No man should *desire riches*; for they bring with them so many cares and temptations as to be almost *unmanageable*. Rich men, even when pious, are seldom happy; they do not enjoy the consolations of religion. A good man, possessed of very extensive estates, unblamable in his whole deportment, once said to me: "There must be some strange malignity in riches thus to keep me in continual bondage, and deprive me of the consolations of the Gospel." Perhaps to a person to whom his estates are a snare, the words of our Lord may be literally applicable: "Sell what thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up thy cross, and follow me." But he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions! May we not then say with the psalmist, *Surely thou digest set them in slippery places, &c.?*

Verse 19. Are they brought into desolation] This is often a literal fact. I have known several cases where persons, very rich, have by sudden losses

been brought into desolation as in a moment; in consequence of which *they were utterly consumed in terrors.*

Verse 20. As a dream when one awaketh] So their goods fled away. Their *possession* was a *dream*—their *privation*, *real.*

Thou shalt despise their image.] While destitute of true religion, whatever appearance they had of greatness, nobility, honour, and happiness; yet in the sight of God they had no more than the *ghost* or *shade* of excellence which God is said here to *despise.* Who would be rich at such risk and dishonour?

Verse 21. Thus may heart was grieved] The different views which I got of this subject quite confounded me; I was equally astonished at their sudden overthrow and my own ignorance. I felt as if I were a *beast* in stupidity. I permitted my mind to be wholly occupied with *sensible things*, like the beasts that perish, and did not look into a future state; nor did I consider, nor submit to, the wise designs of an unerring Providence.

Verse 23. I am continually with thee] I now see that myself and my people are under thy guardian care; that we are continually upheld by thee; and while in thy *right hand*, we shall not be utterly cast down.

Verse 24. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel] After we have suffered awhile, receiving directions and consolations from thy good Spirit, by means of thy prophets, who are in the same captivity with ourselves; thou wilt grant us deliverance, restore us to our own land, and crown us with honour and happiness. Any sincere follower of God may use these words in reference to this and the coming world. *Thy counsel*—thy WORD and SPIRIT, shall *guide me* through life; and when I have done and suffered thy righteous will, thou wilt *receive me into thy eternal glory.*

Verse 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee?] The original is more emphatic: *ϣμνβ yl ym xrab ytxpj al Ēm[w mi li bashshamayim; veimmecha lo chaphatsti baarets.* “Who is there to me in the heavens? And with thee I have desired nothing in the earth.” No man can say this who has not taken God for his portion in reference to both worlds.

Verse 26. My flesh-faileth] I shall soon die: *and my heart*—even my natural courage, will fail; and no support but what is *supernatural* will then be available. Therefore, he adds,—

God is the strength of my heart] Literally, *the rock of my heart*.

And my portion] Allusion is here made to the division of the promised land. I ask no inheritance below; I look for one above. I do not look for this in the possession of any *place*; it is GOD alone that can content the desires and wishes of an immortal spirit. And even this would not satisfy, had I not the prospect of its being *for ever*, מל וּלְעוֹלָם *leolum*, “to eternity!”

Verse 27. They that are far from thee shall perish] The term *perish* is generally used to signify a *coming to nothing*, being *annihilated*; and by some it is thus applied to the *finally impenitent*, they shall all be *annihilated*. But where is this to be found in the Scriptures? In no part, properly understood. In the new heavens and the new earth none of the wicked shall be found; for therein dwells righteousness—nothing but God and righteous spirits; but at the same time the wicked shall be in their own place. And to suppose that they shall be *annihilated*, is as great a heresy, though scarcely so absurd, as to believe that the pains of damnation are *emendatory*, and that *hell-fire* shall burn out. There is presumptive evidence from Scripture to lead us to the conclusion, that if there be not eternal punishment, glory will not be eternal; as the same terms are used to express the duration of both. No human spirit that is not *united* to God can be saved. *Those who are FAR FROM THEE shall perish*—they shall be *lost, undone, ruined*, and that without remedy. Being *separated from God* by sin, they shall never be *rejoined*; the great gulf must be between them and their Maker *eternally*.

All them that go a whoring from thee.] That is, all that worship false gods; all idolaters. This is the only meaning of the word in such a connexion. I have explained this elsewhere.

Verse 28. It is good for me to draw near] We have already seen that those who are *far off* shall perish; therefore, it is *ill for them*. Those who *draw near*—who come in the true *spirit of sacrifice*, and with the only available offering, the Lord Jesus, shall be finally saved; therefore, it is *good for them*.

I have put my trust in the Lord God] I confide in *Jehovah, my Prop and Stay*. I have taken him for my portion.

That I may declare all thy works.] That I may testify to all how good it is to *draw nigh to God*; and what a *sufficient portion* he is to the soul of man.

The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, add, *in the gates of the daughter of Sion*. These words appear to make a better finish; but they are not acknowledged by any Hebrew MS.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD PSALM

The prophet shows the grief that many good men feel at the prosperity of the wicked, and the distresses of the godly; but at last, consulting the will of God, he finds that the felicity of the wicked ends in wretchedness, and the crosses of the godly are the way to happiness; and, with this consideration, he gains quiet to his troubled mind. Let the question be, Who is the *happy man*? The *godly* or *ungodly*? And then the parts of the Psalm will be as follows:—

I. The arguments produced for the happiness of the wicked, ^{<197301>}**Psalm 73:1-9.**

II. The impression these arguments make in carnal minds, ^{<197302>}**Psalm 73:2, 3, 10-14.**

III. The rejection of these doubts and impressions, ^{<197315>}**Psalm 73:15-17.**

IV. The refutation of the former arguments, ^{<197318>}**Psalm 73:18-20.**

V. The psalmist's censure of himself for his precipitate judgment, ^{<197321>}**Psalm 73:21, 22.**

VI. His full resolution of the doubt, after the full examination of the reasons on both sides. That true happiness consists in *union with God*; and therefore the wicked, who are *far from him*, however they flourish, are unhappy, ^{<197323>}**Psalm 73:23-28.**

But, more particularly, the Psalm is divisible into the following parts:—

I. There is, *first*, an assertion: “Certainly, God is good to Israel, to such as are of a clean heart,” ^{<197301>}**Psalm 73:1.** But can this comport with their present afflicted state? With this he was greatly harassed, ^{<197302>}**Psalm 73:2.** He saw the wicked in prosperity, which he states in several particulars.

II. What carnal minds think of them.

1. They have no conflicts in their death, ^{<197304>}**Psalm 73:4.**
2. They are not troubled like other men, ^{<197316>}**Psalm 73:5.**
3. They are proud and haughty, ^{<197305>}**Psalm 73:6**, and yet are not punished.
4. They are oppressive tyrants: “Violence covereth them.”
5. They feed luxuriously, ^{<197307>}**Psalm 73:7.**
6. They speak evil against the poor, ^{<197308>}**Psalm 73:8.**
7. They even speak against God, and all the dispensations of his providence: “Their tongue walketh through the earth,” ^{<197309>}**Psalm 73:9.**
8. They assert that he takes no cognizance of their ways, ^{<197310>}**Psalm 73:10, 11.**

III. The evil conclusion formed from these premises refuted.

1. It is the ungodly that prosper in the earth, ^{<197312>}**Psalm 73:12.**
2. If so, then of what avail are my religious observances and sufferings, &c.? ^{<197313>}**Psalm 73:13, 14.**

He resolves the question,—

1. From *the testimony of ALL the godly*, ^{<197315>}**Psalm 73:15.**
2. He tried to solve it by *reason*, but did not succeed, ^{<197316>}**Psalm 73:16.**
3. He *consults with God*, and the whole is made plain, ^{<197317>}**Psalm 73:17.**

From him he learns,—

1. That the happiness of the wicked is *unstable*, ^{<197318>}**Psalm 73:18.**
2. They stand on a *precipice*, and are *cast down*, ^{<197319>}**Psalm 73:19.**
3. Their desolation comes *suddenly* and *unexpectedly*, ^{<197319>}**Psalm 73:19.**
4. Their ruin is *fearful*: “They are consumed with terrors.”
5. Thus it is demonstrated that their happiness was vain, empty, as unsubstantial as a *dream*, ^{<197320>}**Psalm 73:20.**

IV. He now acknowledges that he had formed an erroneous judgment. 1. That he gave way to *animosity*. 2. That he acted rather like a *beast* than a *man*, in looking only to the present life, ^{<197321>}**Psalm 73:21, 22.** He now receives instruction and encouragement.

1. The godly are not neglected: “They are continually with God,”

<197323> **Psalm 73:23.**

2. They are tenderly *led* as by *the hand* of a loving father,

<197323> **Psalm 73:23.**

3. They are directed by the *word* and *Spirit* of God, <197324> **Psalm**

73:24.

4. They are often *crowned* with signal marks of God’s esteem, even in this life, <197324> **Psalm 73:24.**

V. His resolution to live to God, as he sees that such alone are happy.

1. He expects nothing in *heaven* but God: “Whom have I in heaven,” &c.

2. He will seek no other portion on earth: “There is none on earth,”

<197325> **Psalm 73:25.**

3. I will cleave to him in life and death: “When my flesh and my heart fail.”

4. My confidence in him shall be unshaken, <197326> **Psalm 73:26.**

VI. He draws two conclusions from what he had learned:—

1. They that are far from God *perish*.

2. They that *draw nigh* to him are saved, <197327> **Psalm 73:27.**

Therefore, I will so trust in God that I shall be able to declare his works,

<197328> **Psalm 73:28.**

PSALMS

PSALM 74

The psalmist complains of the desolations of the sanctuary, and pleads with God, 1-3; shows the insolence and wickedness of their enemies, 4-8; prays to God to act for them as he had done for their fathers, whom, by his miraculous power, he had saved, 9-17; begs God to arise, and vindicate his own honour against his enemies, and the enemies of his people, 18-23.

NOTES ON PSALM 74

The title is, *Maschil of Asaph*, or, “A Psalm of Asaph, to give instruction.” That this Psalm was written at a time when the *temple* was ruined, *Jerusalem* burnt, and the prophets scattered or destroyed, is evident. But it is not so clear whether the desolations here refer to the days of *Nebuchadnezzar*, or to the desolation that took place under the *Romans* about the *seventieth* year of the Christian era. *Calmet* inclines to the former opinion; and supposes the Psalm to be a lamentation over the *temple* destroyed by *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Verse 1. O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever?] Hast thou determined that we shall never more be thy people? Are we never to see an end to our calamities?

Verse 2. Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old] We are the descendants of that people whom thou didst take unto thyself; the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Wilt thou never more be reconciled to us?

Verse 3. Lift up thy feet] Arise, and return to us, our desolations still continue. Thy sanctuary is profaned by thine and our enemies.

Verse 4. Thine enemies roar] Thy people, who were formerly a distinct and separate people, and who would not even touch a Gentile, are now obliged to mingle with the most profane. Their boisterous mirth, their cruel mockings, their insulting commands, are heard every where in all our assemblies.

They set up their ensigns for signs.] *twta pttwa wmc samu othotham othoth*, they set up their standards in the place of ours. All the ensigns and trophies were those of our enemies; our own were no longer to be seen.

The *fifth*, *sixth*, and *seventh* verses give a correct historical account of the ravages committed by the Babylonians, as we may see from ^{<12504>}**2 Kings 25:4, 7-9**, and ^{<26307>}**Jeremiah 52:7, 18, 19**: “And the city was broken up, and all the men fled by night by the way of the gate. They took Zedekiah, and slew his sons before his eyes; and put out his eyes, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon. And on the *second* day of the *fifth* month of the *nineteenth* year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, came unto Jerusalem; and he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king’s house, and every great man’s house; and all the houses of Jerusalem burnt he with fire. And they broke down the walls of Jerusalem round about. And the pillars of brass, and the bases, and the brazen sea, they broke in pieces, and carried the brass to Babylon. And the pots, shovels, snuffers and spoons, and the fire pans and bowls, and such things as were of gold and silver, they took away.” Thus they broke down, and carried away, and destroyed this beautiful house; and in the true barbarian spirit, neither sanctity, beauty, symmetry, nor elegance of workmanship, was any thing in their eyes. What *hammers* and *axes* could ruin, was ruined; Jerusalem was totally destroyed, and its walls laid level with the ground. Well might the psalmist sigh over such a desolation.

Verse 8. Let us destroy them] Their object was totally to annihilate the political existence of the Jewish people.

They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.] It is supposed that there were no *synagogues* in the land till after the Babylonish captivity. How then could the Chaldeans burn up any in Judea? The word **yd** [wm *moadey*], which we translate *synagogues*, may be taken in a more general sense, and mean *any places* where *religious assemblies* were held: and that such places and assemblies did exist long *before* the Babylonish captivity, is pretty evident from different parts of Scripture. It appears that Elisha kept such at his house on the *sabbaths* and *new moons*. See ^{<12043>}**2 Kings 4:23**. And perhaps to such St. James may refer, ^{<41523>}**Acts 15:23**, a species of *synagogues*, where *the law was read of old, in every city of the land*. And it appears that such religious meetings were held at the house of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, ^{<23331>}**Ezekiel 33:31**. And perhaps every prophet’s house was such. This is the only place in the *Old Testament* where we have the word *synagogue*. Indeed, wherever there was a *place* in which God met with *patriarch* or *prophet*, and any memorial of it was *preserved*, there was a **d** [wm *moed*], or place of religious meeting; and all

such places the Chaldeans would destroy, pursuant to their design to extinguish the Jewish religion, and blot out all its memorials from the earth. And this was certainly the most likely means to effect their purpose. How soon would Christianity be destroyed in England if all the churches, chapels, and places of worship were destroyed, and only the poor of the people left in the land; who, from their circumstances, could not build a place for the worship of God! After such desolation, what a miracle was the restoration of the Jews!

Verse 9. We see not our signs] “They have taken away all our trophies, and have left us no memorial that God has been among us. Even thou thyself hast left us destitute of all those *supernatural evidences* that have so often convinced us that thou wert among us of a truth.” But we may say that they were not totally destitute even of these. The preservation of Daniel in the lion’s den, and of the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace; the metamorphosis of Nebuchadnezzar; the handwriting that appeared to Belshazzar; were all so many prodigies and evidences that God had not left them without proofs of his *being* and his *regard*.

There is **no more any prophet]** There was not one among them in that place that could tell them *how long* that captivity was yet to endure. But there were prophets in the captivity. *Daniel* was one; but his prophecies were confined to one place. *Ezekiel* was another, but he was among those captives who were by the river *Chebar*. They had not, as usual, prophets who went *to* and *fro* through the land, preaching repentance and remission of sins.

Verse 11. Why withdrawest thou thy hand] It has been remarked, that as the outward habit of the easterns had no sleeves, the hands and arms were frequently covered with the folds of the robe; and in order to do any thing, the hand must be disentangled and drawn out. The literal version of the *Hebrew* is: “To what time wilt thou draw back thy hand; yea, thy right hand, from within thy bosom?” *Consume*; that is, manifest thy power, and *destroy* thy adversaries. I have, in the *introduction* to the book of Psalms, spoken of the old metrical version by *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*, and have stated that it was formed from the original text. A proof of this may be seen by the learned reader in this and the preceding verse; where, though their version is harsh, and some of their expressions quaint almost to ridicule, yet they have hit the true meaning which our prose translators have missed:—

*Ver. 10. When wilt thou once, Lord, end this shame,
And cease thine en'mies strong?
Shall they always blaspheme thy name,
And rail on thee so long?*

*Ver. 11. Why dost thou draw thy hand aback,
And hide it in thy lap?
O pluck it out, and be not slack
To give thy foes a rap!*

Verse 12. For God is my King of old] We have always acknowledged thee as our sovereign; and thou hast reigned as a king in the midst of our land, dispensing salvation and deliverance from the *centre* to every part of the *circumference*.

Verse 13. Thou didst divide the sea] When our fathers came from Egypt. **Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.]** Pharaoh, his captains, and all his hosts were drowned in the Red Sea, when attempting to pursue them.

Verse 14. The heads of leviathan] Leviathan might be intended here as a personification of the *Egyptian government*; and its *heads*, Pharaoh and his chief captains.

To the people inhabiting the wilderness.] Probably meaning the *birds and beasts of prey*. These were the people of the wilderness, which fed on the dead bodies of the Egyptians, which the tides had cast ashore. The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* read, “Thou hast given him for meat to the Ethiopians,” or Abyssinians.

Verse 15. Thou didst cleave the fountain] Thou didst cleave the *rock* in the wilderness, of which all the congregation drank.

Thou driedst up mighty rivers.] Does not this refer to the cutting off the waters of the Jordan, so that the people passed over dryshod?

Verse 16. The day is thine, the night also is thine] Thou art the Author of light, and of the sun, which is the means of dispensing it.

Verse 17. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth] Thou alone art the Author of all its grand *geographical* divisions.

Thou hast made summer and winter.] Thou hast appointed that peculiarity in the poise and rotation of the earth, by which the *seasons* are produced.

Verse 18. Remember this] The heathen not only deny these things, but give the honour of them to their false gods, and thus blaspheme thy name.

Verse 19. Deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove] Thy people Israel are helpless, defenceless, miserable, and afflicted: O deliver them no longer into the power of their brutal adversaries.

Verse 20. Have respect unto the covenant] *tyrbl cbh habbet labberith*. Pay attention to the *covenant sacrifice*; to that offered by Abraham, ^{<0153>}**Genesis 15:9**, &c., when the contracting parties, God and Abram, passed through between the separated parts of the covenant sacrifice. An indisputable type of Jesus Christ; and of God and man meeting in his sacrificed humanity.

The dark places of the earth] The caves, dens, woods, &c., of the *land* are full of robbers, cut-throats, and murderers, who are continually destroying thy people, so that the holy seed seems as if it would be entirely cut off and the *covenant* promise thus be rendered void.

The words may either apply to *Chaldea* or *Judea*. Judea was at this time little else than a den of robbers, its own natural inhabitants being removed. Chaldea was infested with hordes of banditti also.

Verse 21. Let not the oppressed return ashamed] Do not permit thy people to be so diminished, that when, according to thy promise, they are restored to their own land, they may appear to be but a handful of men.

Verse 22. Plead thine own cause] Thy honour is concerned, as well as our safety and salvation. *The fool*-the idolater, *reproacheth thee daily*-he boasts of the superiority of his idols, by whose power, he asserts, we are brought under their domination.

Verse 23. Forget not the voice] While we pray to thee for our own salvation, we call upon thee to vindicate thy injured honour: and let all the nations see that thou lovest thy followers, and hatest those who are thy enemies. Let not man prevail against thee or thine.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-FOURTH PSALM

This Psalm divides itself into *two* parts:—

- I. The Psalmist's complaint, ^{<19740>}**Psalm 74:1-10.**
- II. His prayer, ^{<19740>}**Psalm 74:10-23.**

Both the complaint and petition are summarily comprised in the *three* first verses; and afterwards amplified throughout the Psalm.

I. He expostulates with God about their calamity.

1. From the author of it: "Thou, O God."
2. From the extremity of it: "Cast us not off."
3. From the duration of it: "For ever."
4. From the cause: "Thy anger smokes against us."
5. From the object of it: "The sheep of thy pasture."

To his complaint he subjoins his *petition*; in which every word has the strength of an argument.

1. "Remember thy congregation:" Thy chosen people.
2. "Whom thou hast purchased: " By a mighty hand from Pharaoh.
3. "Of old:" Thy people ever since thy covenant with Abraham.
4. "The rod of thine inheritance;" dwelling in that land which thou didst *measure* out to them.
5. "Whom thou hast redeemed:" From the Canaanites, &c.
6. "This Mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt:" Where we gave thee the worship which belonged to the true God; and thou wert pleased with our sacrifices and services. *Remember* this people, and all these engagements; and "cast us not off for ever."
7. Lift up thy feet:" Consider thy *own dishonour*; they are *thy enemies* as well as *ours*. See what they have done against thee, thy *temple*, thy *ordinances*. Look at their *blasphemies*, and avenge the quarrel of thy *covenant*, ^{<19740>}**Psalm 74:3-11.**

Consider what thou hast done for our fore-fathers.

1. Thou hast been long *our King* and Deliverer. See the proofs, ^{<197412>}**Psalm 74:12-16.**

2. Thy general *providence* respects all men. Thou hast given them *light*; the *sun* and *moon*, the *vicissitude of seasons*, &c., ^{<197416>}**Psalm 74:16, 17.**

II. The psalmist's *prayer*:—

1. That God would *remember the reproaches* of his *enemies*, ^{<197418>}**Psalm 74:18.**

2. That he would *deliver the souls* of his *children*, ^{<197419>}**Psalm 74:19.**

3. That he would not forget “the congregation of the poor,” ^{<197419>}**Psalm 74:19.**

4. That he would *remember his covenant* with Abram, to make them an innumerable people, and a blessing to all mankind, ^{<197420>}**Psalm 74:20.**

5. That, when they did return, they might not be a diminished people; for their enemies were determined to destroy them, ^{<197421>}**Psalm 74:21.**

6. That they might be led from all considerations to *praise his name*, ^{<197421>}**Psalm 74:21.**

At the conclusion he urges his petition:—

1. “Arise,—plead thine own cause.”

2. “Remember the foolish.”

3. “Forget not thine enemies.”

4. They make a *tumult*, and their partisans *daily increase*,

^{<197422>}**Psalm 74:22, 23.**

PSALMS

PSALM 75

The psalmist praises God for present mercies, 1; the Lord answers, and promises to judge the people righteously, 2, 3; rebukes the proud and haughty, 4, 5; shows that all authority comes from himself, 4-7; that he will punish the wicked, 8; the psalmist resolves to praise God, 9; and the Most High promises to cast down the wicked, and raise up the righteous, 9, 10.

NOTES ON PSALM 75

The title is, “*To the chief Musician, or conqueror, Al-taschith, destroy not, A Psalm or Song of Asaph.*” See this title Al-taschith explained ^{<19570>} **Psalm 57:1**. The *Chaldee* supposes that this Psalm was composed at the time of the pestilence, when David prayed the Lord *not to destroy the people*. Some of the Jews suppose that *Al-taschith* is the beginning of a Psalm, to the air of which this Psalm was to be set and sung. The Psalm seems to have been composed during the captivity; and appears to be a continuation of the subject in the preceding.

Verse 1. Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks] Thou canst not forget thy people. The numerous manifestations of thy providence and mercy show that thou art not far off, but near: this

Thy wondrous works declare.] These words would make a proper conclusion to the preceding Psalm, which seems to end very abruptly. The *second* verse is the commencement of the Divine answer to the prayer of *Asaph*.

Verse 2. When I shall receive the congregation] When the proper time is come that the congregation, my people of Israel, should be brought out of captivity, and received back into favour, I shall not only enlarge them, but punish their enemies. They shall be cut off and cast out, and become a more miserable people than those whom they now insult. I will destroy them as a nation, so that they shall never more be numbered among the empires of the earth.

Verse 3. The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved] They all depend on me; and whenever I withdraw the power by which they exist and live, they are immediately dissolved.

I bear up the pillars of it.] By the word of my power all things are upheld, and without me nothing can subsist. Those who consider this Psalm to have been written by David before he was anointed king over ALL *Israel*, understand the words thus: “All is at present in a state of confusion; violence and injustice reign: but when ‘I shall receive the *whole* congregation,’ when all the tribes shall acknowledge me as *king*, I will reorganize the whole constitution. It is true that the *land* and *all its inhabitants are dissolved*-unsettled and unconnected by the bands of civil interest. The whole system is disorganized: ‘I bear up the pillars of it;’ the expectation of the *chief people* is placed upon *me*; and it is the hope they have of my coming speedily to the throne of all Israel that prevents them from breaking out into actual rebellion.”

Verse 4. I said unto the fools] I have given the idolatrous Chaldeans sufficient warning to abandon their idols, and worship the true God; but they would not. I have also charged the wicked, to whom for a season I have delivered you because of your transgressions, not to *lift up their horn*-not to use their *power* to oppress and destroy. They have, notwithstanding, abused their power in the persecutions with which they have afflicted you. For all these things they shall shortly be brought to an awful account. On the term *horn*, see Clarke’s note on “~~4016~~ Luke 1:69”.

Verse 5. Speak not with a stiff neck.] Mr. Bruce has observed that the Abyssinian kings have a *horn* on their *diadem*; and that the keeping it erect, or in a projecting form, makes them appear as if they had a *stiff neck*; and refers to this passage for the antiquity of the usage, and the *appearance* also.

Verse 6. For promotion cometh neither from the east, &c.] As if the Lord had said, speaking to the Babylonians, None of all the surrounding powers shall be able to help you; none shall pluck you out of my hand. I am the *Judge*: I will pull you down, and set my afflicted people up,
~~4970~~ **Psalm 75:7.**

Calmet has observed that the Babylonians had Media, Armenia, and Mesopotamia on the EAST; and thence came Darius the Mede: that it had Arabia, Phœnicia, and Egypt on the WEST; thence came Cyrus, who overthrew the empire of the Chaldeans. And by the *mountains of the desert*, *μϋρh rbdm* *midbar harim*, which we translate SOUTH, Persia, may be meant; which government was established on the ruins of the

Babylonish empire. No help came from any of those powers to the sinful Babylonians; they were obliged to drink the *cup of the red wine* of God's judgment, even to the very *dregs*. They were to receive no *other* punishment; this one was to *annihilate* them as a people for ever.

Verse 8. It is full of mixture] Alluding to that mingled potion of stupefying drugs given to criminals to drink previously to their execution. See a parallel passage to this, ^{<42515>}**Jeremiah 25:15-26.**

Verse 9. I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.] These are the words of the psalmist, who magnifies the Lord for the promise of deliverance from their enemies.

Verse 10. All the horns of the wicked] All their *power* and *influence*, will I cut off; and will exalt and extend the *power* of the righteous. The psalmist is said to *do these things*, because he is as the *mouth* of God to *denounce* them. All was punctually fulfilled: the *wicked*-the Babylonians, were all cut off; the *righteous*-the Jews, called so from the holy covenant, *which required righteousness*, were delivered and *exalted*.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-FIFTH PSALM

Bishop *Nicholson* supposes that *David* was the author of this Psalm; and that he composed it on his inauguration or entrance upon the kingdom; and by it he gives us an example of a good king.

There are *three* chief parts in this Psalm:—

- I. A doxology, ^{<19750>}**Psalm 75:1**; repeated, ^{<19750>}**Psalm 75:9.**
 - II. His profession how to perform the regal office, ^{<19750>}**Psalm 75:2, 3, 10.**
 - III. His rebuke of foolish men for mistakes occasioned,—
1. Partly by their *pride* when they rise to great places, ^{<19750>}**Psalm 75:4, 5.**
 2. That they do not consider whence their preferment comes, ^{<19750>}**Psalm 75:6, 7.**
 3. That they judge not rightly of afflictions, ^{<19750>}**Psalm 75:8.**

I. The doxology or thanksgiving.

1. He *doubles* it to show that it should be *frequently* done: “Unto thee do we give thanks; unto thee,” &c.

2. His reason for it: “For that thy name is near,”—thy help is always at hand. “The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him.”

3. Of which he had experience in his exaltation to the kingdom, which he calls God’s “wondrous works.”

II. How the office of a good king is to be discharged.

1. I will judge uprightly.

2. To rectify disorders. They had need of a just and upright king. 1. The land and its inhabitants were disorganized. 2. He was the only stay and support of the state: “I bear up the pillars.”

III. His rebuke of bad men.

1. They were *fools*, and dealt unjustly.

2. *Wicked*, and vaunted their wealth and power.

3. They used their *power* to oppress.

4. They were *obstinate* in their oppression of the poor. He refers to their false judgments.

1. They supposed that their authority and influence came by their own *merit*; and for them they were accountable to none.

2. They did not consider that *God* was the author of power, &c.

3. Their third mistake was, they imputed afflictions to a wrong cause, and did not consider that they came from God.

To show this, the Psalmist uses an elegant comparison, comparing God to the master of a feast, who invites and entertains all kinds of men at his table; who has a cup of mixed wine in his hand, by which he represents the *miseries* of this life. To all God reaches this cup; and *every one drinks* of it, some more, some less.

1. “In the hand of the Lord there is a cup.” He apportions the afflictions of men.

2. “The wine is red.” The high-coloured feculent wine, i.e., *afflictions*.

3. “It is full of mixture,” not all *sour*, nor *sweet*, nor *bitter*. The strength of it is tempered by God to the circumstances of his creatures.

4. “He poureth out of the same.” He gives to all, some even to his own children. *ALL must drink of this cup.*

5. But the *lees* or *dregs* of it “all the wicked of the earth shall wring out.” Those who are incorrigible have afflictions without benefit; they wring the dregs out. On them God’s judgments fall without mitigation.

He concludes the Psalm with—

1. A repetition of his thanks: “I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.”

2. A protestation of his duty: 1. “I will cut off the horns of the wicked.” 2. “I will exalt the horns of the righteous.” Those who exalt themselves shall be abased: those who humble themselves shall be exalted.

*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,
(Hae tibi erunt artes) pacisque imponere morem;
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.
VIRG. Æn. lib. vi., ver. 851.*

*“But, Rome, ‘tis thine alone, with awful sway
To rule mankind, and make the world obey,
Disposing peace and war thy own majestic way:
To tame the proud, the fettered slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.”
DRYDEN.*

These lines of the Roman poet contain precisely the same sentiment that is expressed in the *tenth* verse of the Psalm. And thus God acts in the government of the world, dealing with nations as they have dealt with others: so the conquerors are conquered; the oppressed, raised to honour and dominion.

PSALMS

PSALM 76

The true God known in Judah, Israel, Salem, and Zion, 1, 2. A description of his defeat of the enemies of his people, 3-6. How God us to be worshipped, 7-9. He should be considered as the chief Ruler: all the potentates of the earth are subject to him, 10-12.

NOTES ON PSALM 76

The *title*, “To the chief Musician on Neginoth, a Psalm or Song of Asaph.” See the titles to ^{<1900>}**Psalm 4:1; 6:1**. The *Vulgate, Septuagint*, and others have, “A Psalm for the Assyrians;” and it is supposed to be a thanksgiving for the defeat of the Assyrians. The Syriac says it is a thanksgiving for the taking of Rabbah, belonging to the children of Ammon. It is considered by some of the best commentators to have been composed after the defeat of Sennacherib. That it was composed after the death of David, and after the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah were separated, is evident from the first verse. If Asaph was its author, it could not be the *Asaph* that flourished in the days of David but some other gifted and Divinely inspired man of the same name, by whom several others of the Psalms appear to have been composed during the captivity.

Verse 1. In Judah is God known] The true God revealed himself to the *Jews*. The *Israelites*, after the separation of the tribes, had the same knowledge, but they greatly corrupted the Divine worship; though still God was *great*, even in Israel.

Verse 2. In Salem also is his tabernacle] *Salem* was the ancient name of *Jebus*, afterward called *Jerusalem*. Here was the *tabernacle* set up; but afterwards, when the *temple* was built on *Mount Zion*, there was his *habitation*. The Psalm was evidently composed after the building of Solomon’s temple.

Verse 3. There brake he the arrows of the bow] *ypvr rishphey*, the *fiery arrows*. Arrows, round the heads of which inflammable matter was rolled, and then ignited, were used by the ancients, and shot into towns to set them on fire; and were discharged among the towers and wooden

works of besiegers. The Romans called them *phalaricæ*; and we find them mentioned by Virgil, *Æn.* lib. ix., ver. 705:—

*Sed magnum stridens contorta phalarica venit,
Fulminis acta modo*

On this passage *Servius* describes the *phalarica* as a dart or spear with a spherical leaden head to which fire was attached. Thrown by a strong hand, it killed those whom it hit, and set fire to buildings, &c. It was called *phalarica* from the towers called *phalæ* from which it was generally projected. In allusion to these St. Paul speaks of the *fiery darts of the devil*, ^{<40616>}**Ephesians 6:16**, to the note on which the reader is requested to refer.

The shield and the sword] If this refers to the destruction of Sennacherib's army, it may be truly said that God rendered useless all their warlike instruments, his angel having destroyed 185,000 of them in one night.

Verse 4. Than the mountains of prey.] This is an address to Mount *Zion*. Thou art more illustrious and excellent than all the mountains of prey, i.e., where wild beasts wander, and prey on those that are more helpless than themselves. *Zion* was the place where GOD *dwelt*; the other mountains were the *abode of wild beasts*.

Verse 5. The stout-hearted are spoiled] The boasting blasphemers, such as Rab-shakeh, and his master Sennacherib, the king of Assyria.

They have slept their sleep] They were asleep in their tent when the destroying angel, the suffocating wind, destroyed the whole; they over whom it passed never more awoke.

None of the men of might] Is not this a strong irony? Where are your mighty men? their boasted armour, &c.?

Verse 6. At thy rebuke] It was not by any human means that this immense army was overthrown; it was by the power of God alone. Not only *infantry* was destroyed, but the *cavalry* also.

The chariot and horse] That is, the chariot horses, as well as the men, were

Cast into a dead sleep.] Were all suffocated in the same night. On the destruction of this mighty host, the reader is requested to refer to **Clarke's notes on "^{22 Kings 19:35" 2 Kings 19:35}**.

Verse 7. Thou, even thou, art to be feared] The Hebrew is simple, but very emphatic: *hta arwn hta attah nora attah*, "Thou art terrible; thou art." The repetition of the *pronoun* deepens the sense.

When once thou art angry?] Literally, *From the time thou art angry*. In the moment thy wrath is kindled, in that moment judgment is executed. How awful is this consideration! If *one hundred and eighty-five thousand* men were in one moment destroyed by the wrath of God, canst *thou*, thou poor, miserable, feeble sinner, resist his will, and turn aside his thunder!

Verse 8. Thou didst cause judgment to be heard] When God declared by his prophet that the enemy should not prevail, but on the contrary be destroyed, *the earth-the land*, and by *metonymy* the *inhabitants* of the land, were struck with astonishment and terror, so as not to be able to move. The great boaster Sennacherib, who carried terror, dismay and desolation every where, was now struck with dumb amazement; and the angel of the Almighty, in a moment, stopped the breath of those hosts in which he confided.

Verse 9. The meek of the earth.] The *humbled or oppressed people of the land*. The poor Jews, now utterly helpless, and calling upon the Lord for succour.

Verse 10. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee] The rage of Sennacherib shall only serve to manifest thy glory. The stronger he is, and the more he threatens, and the weaker thy people, the more shall thy majesty and mercy appear in his destruction and their support.

The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.] The Hebrew gives rather a different sense: "Thou shalt gird thyself with the remainder of wrath." Even after thou hast sent this signal destruction upon Sennacherib and his army, thou wilt continue to pursue the *remnant* of the persecutors of thy people; their wrath shall be the cause of the excitement of thy justice to destroy them. As a man *girds* himself with his girdle, that he may the better perform his work, so thou wilt gird thyself *with wrath*, that thou mayest destroy thy enemies. A good maxim has been taken from this verse: "God often so *counterworks* the evil designs of men against his cause and

followers, that it turns out to their advantage and his glory; nor does he permit them to go to the extent of what they have *purposed*, and of what they are *able* to perform. He *suffers* them to do *some mischief*, but not *all they would or can do*." But how different is the reading of the *Vulgate*! *Quoniam cogitatio hominis confitebitur tibi: et reliquæ cogitationis diem festum agent tibi*: "The thought of man shall praise thee; and the remains of thought shall celebrate a feast day to thee." The *Septuagint* and the *Æthiopic* have understood the text in the same way. Some translate thus: "Certainly, the ferocity of the man (Sennacherib) shall praise thee: and thou shalt gird thyself with the spoils of the furious." The spoils of this great army shall be a booty for thy people. Probably this is the true notion of the place. The old *Psalter* renders it thus: **For thought of man sal schrite (confess) to the, and leuyngs (remains) of thought a feste day till the sal wikk.** The paraphrase is curious, of which this is the substance: "When man forsakes perfittly his synne, and sithen (afterwards) rightwisness werks; it is a feste day; whenne the conscience is clered, and makes feste with the swetnes of goddes lufe, restand fra besynes of any creatur in erth: Than is God at hame with his spouse dwelland."

Verse 11. Vow, and pay unto the Lord] *Bind* yourselves to him, and forget not your *obligations*.

Let all that be round about him] All the neighbouring nations, who shall see God's judgments against his enemies, should

Bring presents unto him] Give him that homage which is due unto him.

That ought to be feared.] *arwml lammora*, "to the terrible One;" lest they be consumed as the Assyrians have been.

Verse 12. He shall cut off the spirit of princes] Even in the midst of their conquests, he can fill them with terror and dismay, or cut them off in their career of victory.

He is **terrible to the kings of the earth.]** "He is the only Ruler of princes;" to him they must account. And a terrible account most of them will have to give to the great God; especially those who, instigated by the desire of dominion, have, in the lust of conquest which it generates, laid countries waste by fire and sword, making widows and orphans without number, and extending the empire of desolation and death.

Thus *all* are under his dominion, and are accountable to him. Even those whom *man* cannot bring to justice, God will; and to judge *them* is one grand use of a *final judgment day*.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH PSALM

In this Psalm there are *three* parts:—

- I. The Prerogative of Judah and Israel, ^{<19760>}**Psalm 76:1, 2.**
- II. A narration of God's majesty in the Church, ^{<19763>}**Psalm 76:3-11.**
- III. An exhortation to worship and serve God.

I. The prerogatives of the Jews above all other nations.

1. God was *known* among them: "In Judah is God known."
2. His *name* was *great* in *Israel*. Illustrious for his manifold deliverances.
3. At *Salem* was his tabernacle,—his *seat of worship*, his peculiar presence.
4. His dwelling in *Zion*,—his constant habitation.

II. A narration of God's power and majesty.

He was *glorious* among good men; *more glorious than the mountains of prey-kingdoms* acquired by violence, murder, and robbery.

And this *glory* was manifest in the following particulars:—

1. They who came to *spoil* were *spoiled*, ^{<19765>}**Psalm 76:5.**
2. They were *slain*: "They have slept their sleep," ^{<19765>}**Psalm 76:5.**
3. They could make no head against their destroyer, though they were both *numerous* and *strong*: "None of the men of might have found their hands," ^{<19765>}**Psalm 76:5.**

The cause of their consternation:—

1. The *rebuke* of God, ^{<19766>}**Psalm 76:6.**
2. He was *terrible*: "None could stand in his sight," ^{<19767>}**Psalm 76:7.**
3. He was *determinate*: "Judgment was heard from heaven," ^{<19768>}**Psalm 76:8.** Sennacherib and his host were destroyed.

The *effects* produced by this were,

1. Praise from the wicked: “They shall acknowledge this as the hand of God.” ^{<197610>} **Psalm 76:10.**

2. Victory; though they rally, and return again to the battle, they shall be routed: “The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain,” ^{<197610>} **Psalm 76:10.** See the notes.

III. He exhorts all to praise him:—1. “Vow, and pay.” 2. “Fear and submit to him,” ^{<197611>} **Psalm 76:11.**

This exhortation he founds on the following REASONS:—

1. “He shall cut off the spirit of princes;” take away from tyrants their prudence and courage.

2. “He is terrible to the kings of the earth.” They also shall know that he is God.

PSALMS

PSALM 77

The psalmist's ardent prayer to God in the time of distress, 1-4. The means he used to excite his confidence, 5-12. God's wonderful works in behalf of his people, 13-20.

NOTES ON PSALM 77

The *title*, "To the chief Musician, (or conqueror,) to Jeduthun, A Psalm of Asaph." On this title we may observe that both *Asaph* and *Jeduthun* were celebrated singers in the time of David, and no doubt were masters or leaders of bands which long after their times were called by their names. Hence Psalms composed during and after the captivity have these names prefixed to them. But there is reason to believe also, that there was a person of the name of *Asaph* in the captivity at Babylon. The author must be considered as speaking in the persons of the captive Israelites, It may however be adapted to the case of any individual in spiritual distress through strong temptation, or from a sense of the Divine displeasure in consequence of backsliding.

Verse 1. I cried unto God] The *repetition* here marks the earnestness of the psalmist's soul; and the word *voice* shows that the Psalm was not the issue of private *meditation*, but of deep mental trouble, which forced him to *speak* his griefs *aloud*.

Verse 2. My sore ran in the night, and ceased not] This is a most unaccountable translation; the literal meaning of *hrgn ydy yadi niggerah*, which we translate *my sore ran*, is, *my hand was stretched out*, i.e., in prayer. He continued during the whole night with his voice and hands lifted up to God, *and ceased not*, even in the midst of great discouragements.

Verse 3. My spirit was overwhelmed.] As the verb is in the *hithpael* conjugation, the word must mean *my spirit was overpowered in itself*. It purposed to involve itself in this calamity. I felt exquisitely for my poor suffering countrymen.

*"The generous mind is not confined at home;
It spreads itself abroad through all the public,
And feels for every member of the land."*

Verse 4. Thou holdest mine eyes waking] Literally, *thou keepst the watches of mine eyes*-my grief is so great that I cannot sleep.

I am so troubled that I cannot speak.] This shows an *increase* of sorrow and anguish. At *first* he felt his misery, and *called aloud*. He receives more light, sees and feels his deep wretchedness, and then his words are swallowed by excessive distress. His woes are too big for utterance. “Small troubles are loquacious; the great are dumb.” *Curæ leves loquuntur; ingentes stupent.*

Verse 5. I have considered the days of old] *ytbvj chishshabti*, *I have counted up*; I have reckoned up the various dispensations of thy mercy in behalf of the distressed, marked down in the history of our fathers.

Verse 6. I call to remembrance my song in the night] I do not think that *ytnygn neginathi* means *my song*. We know that *tnygn neginath* signifies some *stringed* musical instrument that was struck with a *plectrum*; but here it possibly might be applied to the *Psalm* that was played on it. But it appears to me rather that the psalmist here speaks of the circumstances of composing the short ode contained in the *seventh, eighth, and ninth* verses; which it is probable he sung to his harp as a kind of dirge, if indeed he had a harp in that distressful captivity.

My spirit made diligent search.] The verb *cpj chapas* signifies such an investigation as a man makes who is obliged to strip himself in order to do it; or, *to lift up coverings*, to search fold by fold, or in our phrase, *to leave no stone unturned*. The Vulgate translates: “Et scopebam spiritum meum.” As *scopebam* is no pure Latin word, it may probably be taken from the Greek *σκοπεω scopeo*, “to look about, to consider attentively.” It is however used by no author but St. Jerome; and by him only here and in ²³¹⁴²³**Isaiah 14:23**: *And I will sweep it with the besom of destruction*; *scopabo eam in scopa terens*. Hence we see that he has formed a verb from a noun *scopæ*, a *sweeping brush* or *besom*; and this sense my old Psalter follows in this place, translating the passage thus: **And I sweped my gaste**: which is thus paraphrased: “And swa I sweped my gaste, (I swept my soul,) that is, I purged it of all fylth.”

Verse 7. Will the Lord cast off for ever?] Will there be no end to this captivity? Has he not said, “Turn, ye backsliders; for I am married unto

you: I will heal your backsliding, and love you freely.” *Will he then be favourable no more?* Thus the psalmist pleads and reasons with his Maker.

Verse 8. For evermore?] *rdw rdl ledor vador*, “to generation and generation.” From race to race. Shall no mercy be shown even to the remotest generation of the children of the offenders?

Verse 9. Hath God-in anger shut up his tender mercies?] The *tender mercies* of God are the *source* whence all his kindness to the children of men flows. The metaphor here is taken from a *spring*, the mouth of which is closed, so that its waters can no longer run in the same channel; but, being confined, break out, and take some other course. Wilt thou take thy mercy from the Israelites, and give it to some other people? This he most certainly did. He took it from the *Jews*, and gave it to the *Gentiles*.

Verse 10. And I said, This is my infirmity] The Hebrew is very obscure, and has been differently translated: *^wyl [μymy twnv ayh ytwl j rmaw vaomar challothi hi shenoth yemin elyon*; “And I said, Is this my weakness? Years the right hand of the Most High.” If *ytwl j challothi* comes from *hl j chalah*, and signifies to *pray*, as *Deuteronomy Dieu* has thought, then his translation may be proper: *Precari hoc meum est; mutare dextram Altissimi*. “To pray, this my business; to change the right hand of the Most High.” I can do nothing else than pray; God is the Ruler of events. Mr. *N. M. Berlin* translates, “*Dolere meum hoc est; mutare est dextra Altissimi*.” *To grieve is my portion; to change (my condition) belongs to the right hand of the Most High*. Here *twnv shenoth*, which we translate *years*, is derived from *hnv shanah*, to *change*. This latter appears to me the better translation; the sum of the meaning is, “I am in deep distress; the Most High alone can change my condition.” The old Psalter, following the *Vulgate*,—*Et dixi, Nunc coepi: haec mutatio dexteræ Excelsi*,—translates: *And I said, Now I began this chaunchyng of ryght hand of hihgh* (highest) *Alswa say, God sal noght kast al man kynde fra his sigt with outen ende: for nowe I began to understand the syker; (the truth;) that man sal be brogt to endles; and thar fore, now I said, that this chaunchyng fra wreth to mercy, is through Ihu Criste that chaunges me fra ill to gude, fra noy to gladnes*.

Once more, *Coverdale*, who is followed by Matthews and Becke, takes the passage by storm: “At last I came to this poynte, that I thought; O why art thou so foolish? The right hande of the Most Hyest can chaunge all.”

Verse 11. I will remember the works of the Lord] I endeavour to recollect what thou hast done in behalf of our fathers in past times; in no case hast thou cast them off, when, with humbled hearts, they sought thy mercy.

Verse 13. Thy way-is in the sanctuary] See ^{<197317>} **Psalm 73:17.** I must go to the sanctuary now to get *comfort*, as I went before to get *instruction*. What a mercy to have the privilege of drawing near to God in his ordinances! How many doubts have been solved, fears dissipated, hearts comforted, darknesses dispelled, and snares broken, while waiting on God in the means of grace!

Some understand the words, *Thy way is in holiness*-all thy dispensations, words, and works are holy, just and true. And as is thy majesty, so is thy mercy! O, who is so great a God as our God?

Verse 14. Thou-doeest wonders] Every act of God, whether in nature or grace, in creation or providence, is wondrous; surpasses all *power* but his own; and can be comprehended only by his own *wisdom*. To the *general observer*, his *strength* is most apparent; to the *investigator of nature*, his *wisdom*; and to the genuine *Christian*, his *mercy* and *love*.

Verse 15. The sons of Jacob and Joseph.] “The sons which Jacob begat and Joseph nourished.” says the *Chaldee*. The Israelites are properly called the sons of Joseph as well as of Jacob, seeing *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, his sons, were taken into the number of the tribes. All the latter part of this Psalm refers to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt; and the psalmist uses this as an argument to excite the expectation of the captives. As God delivered *our fathers* from *Egypt*, so we may expect him to deliver *us* from *Chaldea*. It required his *arm* to do the former, and that arm is not shortened that it cannot save.

Verse 16. The waters saw thee] What a fine image! He represents God approaching the Red Sea; and the waters, seeing him, took fright, and ran off before him, dividing to the right and left to let him pass. I have not found any thing more majestic than this.

The depths also were troubled.] Every thing appears here to have *life* and *perception*. The *waters* see the Almighty, do not wait his coming, but in terror flee away! The deeps, uncovered, are astonished at the circumstance; and as they cannot fly, they are filled with trouble and

dismay. Under the hand of such a poet, *inanimate nature* springs into *life*; all *thinks, speaks, acts*; all is in motion, and the dismay is general.

Verse 17. The clouds poured out water] It appears from this that there was a violent *tempest* at the time of the passage of the Red Sea. There was a violent storm of *thunder, lightning, and rain*. These *three* things are distinctly marked here. 1. “The skies sent out a sound:” the THUNDER. 2. “Thine arrows went abroad:” the LIGHTNING. 3. “The clouds poured out water:” the RAIN. In the next verse we have, 4. An EARTHQUAKE: “The earth trembled and shook,” ^{<19718>}**Psalm 77:18.**

Verse 19. Thy way is in the sea] Thou didst walk through the sea, thy path was through a multitude of waters.

Thy footsteps are not known.] It was evident from the *effects* that God was there: but his *track* could not be discovered; still he is the Infinite Spirit, without parts, limits, or passions. No object of sense.

Verse 20. Thou leddest thy people like a flock] This may refer to the *pillar of cloud and fire*. It went before them, and they followed it. So, in the eastern countries, the shepherd does not *drive*, but *leads*, his flock. He goes *before* them to find them pasture, and they regularly *follow* him.

By the hand of Moses and Aaron.] They were God’s agents; and acted, in *civil* and *sacred* things, just as directed by the Most High.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH PSALM

In this Psalm the prophet shows the bitter agony which a troubled spirit undergoes from a sense of God’s displeasure; and the comfort which it afterwards receives through faith in his promises.

There are *two* parts in this Psalm:—

I. The psalmist sets forth the strife between the flesh and the spirit; and how the flesh tempts the spirit to despair, and calls in question the goodness of God, ^{<19701>}**Psalm 77:1-10.**

II. Next, he shows the victory of the spirit over the flesh; being raised, encouraged, and confirmed by the nature, promises, and works of God, ^{<19711>}**Psalm 77:11-20.**

This is an excellent Psalm, and of great use in spiritual desertion.

I. The *strife*. The prophet betakes himself to God. 1. He prays. 2. Prays often. 3. Prays earnestly. 4. And with a troubled soul. The Psalm is, therefore, not the expression of a *despairing* soul, but of one that has a great conflict with temptation.

Though he complains, yet he despairs not.

I. His complaint is bitter, and he sets down how he was exercised.

1. He found no intermission; day and night he was in distress. His voice was continually lifted up, and his hands constantly stretched out to God in prayer. When no man saw him, he prayed. His complaint was in *secret*, and far from *hypocrisy*, which always loves to have *witnesses*.

2. He refused to be comforted, ^{<1971D>}**Psalm 77:2**.

3. Even the “remembrance of God troubled him,” ^{<1971B>}**Psalm 77:3**.

4. His *soul* was *overwhelmed*, ^{<1971B>}**Psalm 77:3**.

5. He became at last *speechless* through grief, ^{<1971C>}**Psalm 77:4**.

6. All *sleep* departed from him, ^{<1971C>}**Psalm 77:4**.

II. He shows that his grief was aggravated by a consideration of the happiness he once enjoyed, but had lost.

1. He had considered the days of old, ^{<1971B>}**Psalm 77:5**.

2. He could rejoice in and praise God, ^{<1971C>}**Psalm 77:6**.

3. But now, on diligent search, all good is gone, ^{<1971C>}**Psalm 77:6**.

4. His debate between hope and despair, which leads him to break out in the following interrogations: 1. Will the Lord cast off for ever? 2. Will he be favourable no more? 3. Is his mercy clean gone? 4. Doth his promise fail? 5. Hath God forgotten to be gracious? 6. Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? ^{<1971D>}**Psalm 77:7-9**.

II. How he is restored.

1. He begins with a correction of himself: “I said, This is my infirmity,” ^{<1971D>}**Psalm 77:10**.

2. Takes encouragement from a remembrance,—

(1) Of God's *ways*: "I will remember-the right hand of the Most High,"
^{<19710>}**Psalm 77:10.**

(2) Of his **WORKS**: "I will remember thy wonders of old," ^{<19711>}**Psalm 77:11.**

3. On these he will *meditate* and *discourse*, ^{<19712>}**Psalm 77:12.**

(1) He then addresses his speech to God; who he understands is to be sought in his *sanctuary*, ^{<19713>}**Psalm 77:13.**

(2) And who is "infinitely great and good," ^{<19713>}**Psalm 77:13.**

(3) Who has declared his strength among the people, ^{<19714>}**Psalm 77:14.**

(4) And particularly to the descendants of Jacob, ^{<19715>}**Psalm 77:15.**

III. He amplifies the story of their deliverance from Egypt by several instances of God's power.

1. In the **RED SEA**: "The waters saw thee," ^{<19716>}**Psalm 77:16.**

2. In the **HEAVENS**: "The clouds poured out water," ^{<19717>}**Psalm 77:17.**

3. In the **EARTH**: "The earth trembled and shook," ^{<19718>}**Psalm 77:18.**

IV. The final cause of all was that he might lead his people out of their bondage, and destroy their enemies, ^{<19719>}**Psalm 77:19, 20.**

PSALMS

PSALM 78

An enumeration of the principal effects of the goodness of God to his people, 1-16; of their rebellions and punishment, 17-33; their feigned repentance, 34-37; God's compassion towards them, 38, 39; their backsliding, and forgetfulness of his mercy, 40-42; the plagues which he brought upon the Egyptians, 43-51; the deliverance of his own people, and their repeated ingratitude and disobedience, 52-58; their punishment, 59-64; God's wrath against their adversaries, 65, 66; his rejection of the tribes of Israel and his choice of the tribe of Judah, and of David to be king over his people, 67-72.

NOTES ON PSALM 78

The title, *Maschil of Asaph*; or, according to the *margin*, A Psalm for Asaph to give instruction; contains nothing particular. The *Arabic* has, "A sermon from Asaph to the people." The Psalm was probably not written by David, but *after* the separation of the *ten* tribes of Israel, and *after* the days of Rehoboam, and *before* the Babylonish captivity, for the *temple* was still standing, ^{<1978B>} **Psalm 78:69**. Calmet supposes that it was written in the days of *Asa*, who had gained, by the aid of the Syrians, a great victory over the Israelites; and brought back to the pure worship of God many out of the tribes of *Ephraim*, *Manasseh*, and *Simeon*. See ^{<141516>} **2 Chronicles 15:16-16:14**.

Verse 1. Give ear, O my people] This is the *exordium* of this very pathetic and instructive discourse.

Verse 2. In a parable] Or, I will give you *instruction* by numerous *examples*; see ^{<19400>} **Psalm 49:1-4**, which bears a great similarity to this; and see the notes there. The term *parable*, in its various acceptations, has already been sufficiently explained; but **l vm mashal** may here mean *example*, as opposed to **hrwt torah**, *law* or *precept*, ^{<19780>} **Psalm 78:1**.

Verse 3. Which we have heard and known] We have heard the *law*, and known the *facts*.

Verse 4. We will not hide them] In those ancient times there was very *little reading*, because *books* were exceedingly scarce; *tradition* was therefore the only, or nearly the only, means of preserving the memory of

past events. They were handed down from father to son by *parables* or *pithy sayings*, and by *chronological poems*. This very Psalm is of this kind, and must have been very useful to the Israelites, as giving instructions concerning their ancient history, and recounting the wonderful deeds of the Almighty in their behalf.

Verse 5. A testimony in Jacob] This may signify the various *ordinances*, *rites*, and *ceremonies* prescribed by the law; and the word *law* may mean the *moral* law, or system of religious *instruction*, teaching them their duty to God, to their neighbour, and to themselves. These were commanded to the *fathers*-the *patriarchs* and *primitive Hebrews*, that they should make them known to their children, who should make them known to the generation that was to come, whose children should also be instructed that they might declare them to their children; to the end that their hope might be in God, that they might not forget his works, and might keep his commandments: that they might not be as their fathers, but have their heart right and their spirit steadfast with God, ^{<1978>}**Psalm 78:6-8.** Five generations appear to be mentioned above: 1. Fathers; 2. Their children; 3. The generation to come; 4. And their children; 5. And their children. They were never to lose sight of their history throughout all their generations. Some think the *testimony* here may mean the *tabernacle*.

Verse 9. The children of Ephraim-turned back] This refers to some defeat of the Ephraimites; and some think to that by the *men of Gath*, mentioned ^{<1372>}**1 Chronicles 7:21.** R. D. *Kimchi* says this defeat of the Ephraimites was in the desert; and although the story be not mentioned in the law, yet it is written in the Books of the Chronicles, where we read, on the occasion of “Zabad the Ephraimite, and Shuthelah, &c., whom the men of Gath, who were born in the land, slew; and Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him,” ^{<1372>}**1 Chronicles 7:20-22:** but to what defeat of the Ephraimites this refers is not certainly known; probably the *Israelites* after the division of the two kingdoms are intended.

Verse 10. They kept not the covenant of God] They abandoned his worship, both *moral* and *ritual*. They acted like the Ephraimites in the above case, who threw down their bows and arrows, and ran away.

Verse 12. The field of Zoan.] “In campo Taneos,” *Vulgate*. *Tanis* was the capital of Pharaoh, where Moses wrought so many miracles. It was situated in the *Delta*, on one of the most easterly branches of the *Nile*. It

was afterwards called *Thanis*; and from it the district was called the *Thanitic Canton*. See *Calmet*. Dr. *Shaw* thinks *Zoan* was intended to signify *Egypt* in general.

Verse 13. He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through] The reader is requested to consult the notes on the parallel passages marked in the margin on this verse and ^{<197814>}**Psalm 78:14-17**, &c., where all these miracles are largely explained.

Verse 18. By asking meat for their lust.] מִן־לֶחֶם *lenaphsham*, “for their souls,” i.e., *for their lives*; for they said in their hearts that the *light bread*, the *manna*, was not sufficient to sustain their natural force, and preserve their lives. It seems, however, from the expression, that they were wholly *carnal*; that they had no *spirituality* of mind; they were *earthly, animal, and devilish*.

Verse 22. They believed not in God] After all the miracles they had seen, they were not convinced that there was a Supreme Being! and, consequently, they did *not trust in his salvation*—did not expect the *glorious rest* which he had promised them. Their descendants in the present day are precisely in this state. Multitudes of them disbelieve the Divine origin of their *law*, and have given up all hopes of a *Messiah*.

Verse 24. The corn of heaven.] The *manna*. It fell about their camp in the form of seeds; and as it appeared to come down from the clouds, it was not improperly termed *heavenly corn*, or *heavenly grain*, מִן־לֶחֶם *ngd degan shamayim*. The word *shamayim* is frequently taken to express the *atmosphere*.

Verse 25. Man did eat angels' food] וַיֹּאכְלוּ מִן־לֶחֶם הַמַּיִם הַגְּדֹלִים *lechem abbirim achal ish*, “Man did eat the bread of the mighty ones;” or, *each person ate*, &c. They ate such bread as could only be expected at the tables of the *rich and great*; the best, the most delicate food. How little did this gross people know of the sublime excellence of that which they called *light bread*, and which they said their *soul loathed*; ^{<042105>}**Numbers 21:5!** It was a type of Jesus Christ, for so says St. Paul: “They all ate the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink,” &c., ^{<46103>}**1 Corinthians 10:3, 4.** And our Lord calls himself “the bread that came down from heaven, that giveth life unto the world,” ^{<8031>}**John 6:31-35:** but a Jew sees nothing but with the eyes of *flesh*. It is true their doctors or rabbins are full of

allegories, mysteries, and conceits; but they are, in general, such as would disgrace the *Cabinet des Fees*, and would not be tolerated in the *nursery*. O, how thick a veil hangs over their *gross and hardened hearts*.

Verse 26. He caused an east wind to blow] See Clarke's note on "^{<0113>}Numbers 11:31".

Verse 32. For all this they sinned still] How astonishing is this! They were neither *drawn* by *mercies*, nor *awed* by *judgments*! But we shall cease to wonder at this, if we have a thorough acquaintance with our own hearts.

Verse 33. Their days did he consume in vanity] By causing them to wander forty years in the wilderness, *vainly expecting* an end to their labour, and the enjoyment of the promised rest, which, by their rebellions, they had forfeited.

Verse 34. When he slew them] While his judgments were upon them, then they began to humble themselves, and deprecate his wrath. When they saw some fall, the rest began to tremble.

Verse 35. That God was their rock] They recollected in their affliction that Jehovah was their *Creator*, and their *Father*; the *Rock*, the *Source*, not only of their *being*, but of all their *blessings*; or, that he was their sole *Protector*.

And the high God their Redeemer.] מִלְּאֵלֵי אֱלֹהִים [*I aw veel elyon goalam*, "And the strong God the Most High, their kinsman." That one who possessed the *right of redemption*; the *nearest akin* to him who had *forfeited* his *inheritance*; so the word originally means, and hence it is often used for a *redeemer*. The Hebrew word *l ag goel* answers to the Greek σωτηρ, a *saviour*; and is given to the *Lord Jesus Christ*, the *strong God*, the *Most High*, the *Redeemer of a lost world*. After this verse there is the following Masoretic note: רִפְשֵׁי יַחַד *chatsi hassepher*, "The middle of the book." And thus the reader has arrived at the *middle of the Psalter*, a book for excellence unparalleled.

Verse 36. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth] What idea could such people have of God, whom they supposed they could thus deceive? They promised well, they called him their God, and their fathers' God; and told him how good, and kind, and merciful he had been to them.

Thus, *their mouth flattered him*. And they said that, whatever the Lord their God commanded them to *do*, they would perform.

And they lied unto him.] I think the *Vulgate* gives the true sense of the Hebrew: *Dilexerunt eum in ore suo; et lingua sua mentiti sunt ei,—*“They loved him with their mouth; and they lied unto him with their tongue.” “That is,” says the old *Psalter*, “thai sayde thai lufed God, bot thai lighed, als thair dedes schewes; for thai do nocht als thai hight; for when God ceses to make men rad; than cese thai to do wele.”

Verse 37. Their heart was not right] When the *heart* is *wrong*, the *life* is *wrong*; and because their heart was not right with God, therefore they were not faithful in his covenant.

Verse 38. But he, being full of compassion] Feeling for them as a *father* for his children.

Forgave their iniquity] *rpj y* *yechapper*, made an *atonement* for their iniquity.

And did not stir up all his wrath.] Though they often grieved his Spirit, and rebelled against him, yet he seldom punished them; and when he did chastise them, it was as a tender and merciful Father. *He did not stir up all his wrath*—the punishment was much less than the iniquity deserved.

Verse 39. He remembered that they were but flesh] Weak mortals. He took their feeble perishing state always into *consideration*, and knew how much they needed the whole of their state of *probation*; and therefore he bore with them to the uttermost. How merciful is God!

A wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.] I believe this to be a bad translation, and may be productive of error; as if when a man dies his being were ended, and death were an eternal sleep. The original is, *bwvy al w Ēl wh j wr ruach holech velo yashub*: and the translation *should* be, “The spirit goeth away, and it doth not return.” The present life is the state of probation; when therefore the *flesh*—the *body*, fails, the *spirit* goeth away into the eternal world, and returneth not hither again. Now God, being full of compassion, spared them, that their salvation might be accomplished before they went into that state where there is no *change*; where the pure are pure still, and the defiled are defiled still. All the *Versions* are right; but the polyglot translator of the *Syriac*, [*Syriac*] *rocho*, has falsely put *ventus*,

wind, instead of *spiritus*, soul or spirit. The *Arabic* takes away all ambiguity: [—Arabic—] “He remembered that they were flesh; and a spirit which, when it departs, does not again return.” The human being is composed of flesh and spirit, or body and soul; these are easily separated, and, when separated, the body turns to dust, and the spirit returns no more to animate it in a state of probation. *Homer* has a saying very like that of the psalmist:—

Ἄνδρος δε ψυχη παλιν ελθειν ουτε ληιστη,
Ουθ̄ ελετη, επει αρ κεν αμειψεται ερκος οδοντων.

IL. ix., ver., 408.

“But the soul of man returns no more; nor can it be acquired nor caught after it has passed over the barrier of the teeth.”

Pope has scarcely given the passage its genuine meaning:—

*“But from our lips the vital spirit fled
Returns no more to wake the silent dead.”*

And the *Ossian-like* version of *Macpherson* is but little better: “But the life of man returns no more; nor acquired nor regained is the soul which once takes its flight on the wind.” What has the *wind* to do with the ερκος οδοντων of the Greek poet?

Several similar sayings may be found among the Greek poets; but they all suppose the *materiality* of the soul.

Verse 41. Limited the Holy One of Israel.] The *Chaldee* translates, “And the Holy One of Israel they signed with a sign.” The Hebrew word **wth** *hithvu* is supposed to come from the root **hwt** *tavah*, which signifies to *mark*; and hence the letter **t** *tau*, which in the ancient Hebrew character had the form of a cross X, had its name probably because it was used as a *mark*. Mr. *Bate* observes that in *hithpael* it signifies to *challenge* or *accuse*; as one who gives his *mark* or *pledge* upon a trial, and causes his adversary to do the same. Here it most obviously means an insult offered to God.

Verse 44. Turned their rivers into blood] See on ^{<1072>}Exodus 7:20.

Verse 45. He sent-flies-and frogs] See on ^{<1086>}Exodus 8:6, 24.

Verse 46. The caterpillar and-the locust.] See on ^{<12013>}Exodus 10:13.

Verse 47. He destroyed their vines with hail] Though the *vine* was never plentiful in Egypt, yet they have some; and the wine made in that country is among the most delicious. The *leaf* of the vine is often used by the Egyptians of the present day for wrapping up their mince-meat, which they lay leaf upon leaf, season it after their fashion, and so cook it, making it a most exquisite sort of food, according to Mr. *Maillet*.

And their sycamore-trees] This tree was very useful to the ancient Egyptians, as all their *coffins* are made of this wood; and to the modern, as their barques are made of it. Besides, it produces a kind of *fig*, on which the common people in general live; and Mr. *Norden* observes that “they think themselves well regaled when they have a piece of bread, a couple of sycamore figs, and a pitcher of water from the Nile.” The loss therefore of their *vines* and *sycamore-trees* must have been very distressing to the Egyptians.

Verse 48. He gave up their cattle] See on ^{<1023>} **Exodus 9:23**.

Verse 49. By sending evil angels] This is the first mention we have of *evil angels*. There is no mention of them in the account we have of the plagues of Egypt in the Book of Exodus, and what they were we cannot tell: but by what the psalmist says here of their operations, they were the sorest plague that God had sent; they were marks of the *fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble*. Some think the *destroying angel* that slew all the first-born is what is here intended; but this is distinctly mentioned in ^{<1785>} **Psalm 78:51**. An *angel* or *messenger* may be either *animate* or *inanimate*; a *disembodied spirit* or *human being*; any *thing* or *being* that is an instrument *sent of God* for the punishment or support of mankind.

Verse 54. The border of his sanctuary] *wvdq kodsho*, “of his holy place,” that is, the *land of Canaan*, called afterwards *the mountain* which *his right hand had purchased*; because it was a *mountainous country*, widely differing from Egypt, which was a long, continued, and almost perfect *level*.

Verse 57. They were turned aside like a deceitful bow.] The eastern bow, which when at rest is in the form of a [curved figure ‘C’], must be *recurved*, or *turned the contrary way*, in order to be what is called *bent* and *strung*. If a person who is unskilful or weak attempt to *recurve* and string one of these bows, if he take not great heed it will spring back and regain its quiescent position, and perhaps break his arm. And sometimes I have

known it, when bent, to *start aside*, and regain its quiescent position, to no small danger, and in one or two cases to my injury. This image is frequently used in the sacred writings; but no person has understood it, not being acquainted with the eastern *bow* [curved figure ‘C’], which must be *recurved*, or bent the contrary way, [figure ‘}’] in order to be proper for use. If not well made, they will fly back in discharging the arrow. It is said of the *bow* of Jonathan, *it turned not back*, ^{<4012>}**2 Samuel 1:22**, **rwj a gwcn al** *lo nasog achor*, “did not twist itself backward.” It was a good bow, one on which he could depend. Hosea, ^{<28716>}**Hosea 7:16**, compares the unfaithful Israelites to a *deceitful bow*; one that, when bent, would suddenly start aside and recover its former position. We may find the same passage in ^{<2403>}**Jeremiah 9:3**. And this is precisely the kind of bow mentioned by *Homer*, *Odyss.* xxi., which none of Penelope’s suitors could bend, called **καμπυλα τοξα** and **αγκυλα τοξα**, the *crooked bow* in the state of rest; but **τοξον παλιντονον**, the *recurved bow* when prepared for use. And of this trial of *strength* and *skill* in the bending of the bow of Ulysses, none of the critics and commentators have been able to make any thing, because they knew not the instrument in question. On the **τοξου θησις** of *Homer*, I have written a dissertation elsewhere. The image is very correct; these Israelites, when brought out of their natural bent, soon recoiled, and relapsed into their former state.

Verse 60. He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh] The Lord, offended with the people, and principally with the *priests*, who had profaned his holy worship, gave up his ark into the hands of the Philistines. And so true it is that he *forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh*, that he never returned to it again. See ^{<19001>}**1 Samuel 6:1**; ^{<40812>}**2 Samuel 6:2-17**; ^{<10801>}**1 Kings 8:1**; where the several removals of the ark are spoken of, and which explain the remaining part of this Psalm. Because God suffered the Philistines to take the ark, it is said, ^{<19785>}**Psalm 78:61**: “He delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand;” and ^{<19785>}**Psalm 78:67**, that “he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim;” for *Shiloh* was in the tribe of *Ephraim* the son of Joseph; and God did not suffer his ark to return thither, but to go to *Kirjath-jearim*, which was in the tribe of *Benjamin*; from thence to the house of *Obed-edom*: and so to *Zion* in the tribe of *Judah*, as it follows, ^{<19788>}**Psalm 78:68**.

The *tabernacle* which Moses had constructed in the wilderness remained at Shiloh even after the *ark* was taken by the Philistines and afterwards sent

to Kirjath-jearim. From Shiloh it was transported to *Nob*; afterwards to Gibeon, apparently under the reign of Saul; and it was there at the commencement of Solomon's reign, for this prince went thither to offer sacrifices, ^{<1100b>} **1 Kings 3:4**. From the time in which the temple was built, we know not what became of the tabernacle of Moses: it was probably laid up in some of the chambers of the temple. See *Calmet*.

Verse 63. Their maidens were not given to marriage.] **wl l wh** *hullalu*, were not celebrated with marriage songs. It is considered a calamity in the east if a maiden arrives at the age of *twelve years* without being *sought* or *given in marriage*.

Verse 64. Their priests fell by the sword] Hophni and Phinehas, who were slain in that unfortunate battle against the Philistines in which the ark of the Lord was taken, ^{<0041b>} **1 Samuel 4:11**.

A Chaldee *Targum* on this passage says, "In the time in which the ark of the Lord was taken by the Philistines, Hophni and Phinehas, the two priests, fell by the sword at Shiloh; and when the news was brought, their wives made no lamentation, for they both died the same day."

Verse 65. Then the Lord awaked] He seemed as if he had totally disregarded what was done to his people, and the reproach that seemed to fall on himself and his worship by the capture of the ark.

Like a mighty man] **rwbqk** *kegibbor*, like a hero that shouteth by reason of wine. One who, going forth to meet his enemy, having taken a sufficiency of wine to refresh himself, and become a proper stimulus to his animal spirits, *shouts*—gives the *war-signal* for the *onset*; impatient to meet the foe, and sure of victory. The idea is not taken from the case of a *drunken man*. A person in such a state would be very unfit to meet his enemy, and could have little prospect of conquest.

Verse 66. He smote his enemies in the hinder part] This refers to the *hemorrhoids* with which he afflicted the Philistines. See the note on ^{<0106b>} **1 Samuel 5:6-10**.

Verse 67. He refused the tabernacle of Joseph] See Clarke's note on ^{<1978b>} **Psalms 78:60**.

Verse 69. He built his sanctuary like high palaces] **μymr wmk** *kemo ramim*, which several of the *Versions* understand of the *monoceros* or

rhinoceros. The temple of God at Jerusalem was the *only one* in the land, and stood as *prominent* on Mount Zion as the horn of the unicorn or rhinoceros does upon his snout. And there *he established* his ark, to go no more out as long as the temple should last. Before this time it was frequently in a migratory state, not only in the wilderness, but afterwards in the promised land. See Clarke's notes on "^{<1978B>}Psalm 78:60".

Verse 70. He chose David] See the account, Clarke, "^{<0916I>}1 Samuel 16:11", &c.

Verse 71. From following the ewes] Instances of this kind are not unfrequent in the ancient Greek and Roman history. *Cræsus* said that *Gyges*, who was the first of his race, was a *slave*, and rose to *sovereignty*, succeeding his predecessor, *of whose sheep he had been the pastor*.

Verse 72. So he fed them] Here David is mentioned as *having terminated his reign*. He *had fed* the people, *according to the integrity of his heart*, for that was ever disposed to do the will of God in the administration of the kingdom: and his *hand* being *skilful* in war, he always led them out to victory against their enemies.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-EIGHTH PSALM

The psalmist, considering that it is God's command that his works be not forgotten, but that the father should deliver his former doings to posterity, that they might be to them both *comfort* and *instruction*, *deter them from sin*, and *persuade them to fear God*, gives in this Psalm a long catalogue of God's dealings with his people, even from their coming out of Egypt to the conclusion of the reign of David.

There are *three* principal parts in this Psalm:—

I. A *preface*, in which the psalmist exhorts men to learn and declare the way of God, ^{<1978B>}Psalm 78:1-9.

II. A *continued narrative* of God's administration among the people, and their *stubbornness*, *disobedience*, and *contumacy*; together with the *punishments* which God inflicted upon them, ^{<1978B>}Psalm 78:9-67.

III. His *mercy*, manifested in the midst of judgment; that he did not cut them off, but, after the rejection of Ephraim, (Israel,) made choice of Judah, Zion, and David.

I. In the PREFACE or *exordium* he labours to gain attention: “Give ear, O my people,” ^{<19780>}**Psalm 78:1**.

1. Shows that he is about to deliver doctrines and precepts from heaven. It is God’s law, and it should be heard: 1. For its excellence, ^{<197812>}**Psalm 78:2**.

2. For its certainty, ^{<197813>}**Psalm 78:3**.

2. He shows the *end*, which is another argument for attention. 1. It must not be hidden from their children, that God might be praised, ^{<197804>}**Psalm 78:4**. 2. And his power magnified; and 3. His people edified, ^{<197815>}**Psalm 78:5**.

Then follow the *duties* of their *children*, which are *three*: 1. That they might *know* God, his law, his works, ^{<197806>}**Psalm 78:6**. 2. That they might *trust* in him, ^{<197807>}**Psalm 78:7**. 3. That they might be *obedient*, ^{<197808>}**Psalm 78:8**.

II. The NARRATION. Their fathers were stubborn and rebellious, of which he gives several examples:—

1. In *Ephraim*: “They turned back in the day of battle,” ^{<197809>}**Psalm 78:9**.

2. They kept not the *covenant* of God, ^{<197810>}**Psalm 78:10**.

3. They *forgot his works* in Egypt, ^{<197811>}**Psalm 78:11**.

The psalmist extends this narrative, and shows, 1. God’s goodness; 2. Israel’s obstinacy; 3. Their punishment.

I. His *goodness* in bringing them out of Egypt in such a marvellous way, ^{<197812>}**Psalm 78:12**. 1. He divided the Red Sea, ^{<197813>}**Psalm 78:13**. 2. He made the waters to stand on a heap, ^{<197813>}**Psalm 78:13**.

1. His *care* in guiding them: 1. In the daytime by a *cloud*, ^{<197814>}**Psalm 78:14**.

2. In the night by *fire*, ^{<197813>}**Psalm 78:14**.

2. His *love* in providing for them. 1. He clave the rock that they might have water, ^{<197815>}**Psalm 78:15**. 2. He caused these waters to follow them as rivers, ^{<197816>}**Psalm 78:16**. 3. And thus they had an abundant supply, ^{<197816>}**Psalm 78:16**.

II. *Israel’s* obstinacy. 1. They sinned. 2. More and more. 3. Provoked the Holy One of Israel, ^{<197817>}**Psalm 78:17, 18**.

They were *incredulous*.

1. They *tempted* God by desiring other *supplies* than his providence had designed. He gave them *manna*; they would have *flesh*.

2. They questioned his *power*, ^{<197819>}**Psalm 78:19**.

3. They were foolishly *impatient*, and must have immediately whatever they thought proper, else they murmured. They said, 1. He smote the rock, and the *water* gushed out. 2. But can he give *bread* also? ^{<197820>}**Psalm 78:20**.

III. Their *punishment*. 1. The Lord was wroth, ^{<197821>}**Psalm 78:21**. 2. A *fire* was kindled. 3. Because they *believed him not*, nor trusted in his salvation, ^{<197822>}**Psalm 78:22**.

He provided *manna* for them; an especial blessing, on various considerations.

1. It came from heaven, ^{<197823>}**Psalm 78:23**.

2. It came abundantly. He “rained it down,” ^{<197824>}**Psalm 78:24**.

3. It was *most excellent*: “Man did eat angels’ food,” ^{<197825>}**Psalm 78:25**.

Weary of this, they desired *flesh*. In this also God heard them. 1. He brought *quails*. 2. In abundance. 3. Brought them to and about the *camp*, so that they had no labour to find them, ^{<197826>}**Psalm 78:25, 26, 28**. 4. They were all *gratified* with them, ^{<197829>}**Psalm 78:29**.

See God’s *justice* in their punishment, and the cause of it. 1. They were “not estranged from their lust,” ^{<197830>}**Psalm 78:30**. 2. His *wrath* came upon them. 3. It came *suddenly*. 4. It *slew* them. 5. Even the *chief* of them, ^{<197831>}**Psalm 78:31**.

See their *sin* notwithstanding. 1. For all this, they sinned yet more. 2. They were *incredulous*, ^{<197832>}**Psalm 78:32**. 3. He caused them to consume their days in vanity. 4. And their years (forty long years) in trouble, ^{<197833>}**Psalm 78:33**.

They began apparently to relent. 1. They sought him. 2. They returned. 3. They sought after God. 4. They remembered that he was their Rock. 5. And the Most High their Redeemer, ^{<197834>}**Psalm 78:34, 35**.

But in this, their *apparent* amendment, they were guilty-1. Of *hypocrisy*, ^{<197836>}**Psalm 78:36**. 2. Of *insincerity*, ^{<197837>}**Psalm 78:37**. 3. Of *instability*: “They were not steadfast in his covenant,” ^{<197837>}**Psalm 78:37**.

On a review of this, the prophet extols the *goodness* of God that bore with such a people.

1. He opened to them the *fountain of mercy*: “He being full of compassion.”
2. He displayed an *act* of this mercy: “He forgave their iniquity.”
3. Though he punished *in a measure*, yet he restrained his vindictive justice, and destroyed them not, ^{<197838>}**Psalm 78:38**.

His motives for this tenderness: 1. He remembered that they were but *flesh*. 2. That, their *probation* once ended, their state was fixed for ever, ^{<197839>}**Psalm 78:39**. See the note. See Clarke “^{<197839>}**Psalm 78:39**”.

He proceeds with the story of their *rebellions*. 1. They provoked him often in the wilderness. 2. They grieved him in the desert, ^{<197840>}**Psalm 78:40**. 3. They *returned to sin*, tempted him. 4. Insulted him. 5. And forgot all his past mercies, ^{<197841>}**Psalm 78:41-43**. More particularly, 1. They remembered not his hand, ^{<197842>}**Psalm 78:42**. 2. Nor his signs in Egypt, ^{<197844>}**Psalm 78:44**.

The wonders which he wrought in Egypt. *Five* of the plagues mentioned:—

First plague. He turned their *rivers into blood*, ^{<197844>}**Psalm 78:44**.

Fourth plague. He sent *divers flies*, ^{<197845>}**Psalm 78:45**.

Second plague. The *frogs* destroyed them, ^{<197845>}**Psalm 78:45**.

Eighth plague. The *locusts*, ^{<197846>}**Psalm 78:46**.

Seventh plague. Their *vines*, &c. were destroyed, ^{<197847>}**Psalm 78:47**.

1. He cast upon them the fierceness of his wrath. 2. Sent evil angels among them. 3. And made a *path for his anger*, ^{<197849>}**Psalm 78:49**.

The *first plague*. He gave their life to the pestilence, ^{<197850>}**Psalm 78:50**.

The *last plague*. He slew their first-born, ^{<197851>}**Psalm 78:51**.

He now gives a recital of God’s mercy in the following particulars:

1. He brought his people through the Red Sea, ^{<197852>}**Psalm 78:52**.

2. He guided them as a flock.

3. He kept them in safety, ^{<19783>}**Psalm 78:53.**

4. He did not suffer them still to wander, but brought them,—1. To the border of his sanctuary. 2. Even to Mount Zion. 3. Cast out the heathen before them. 4. And divided them an inheritance by lot, ^{<19784>}**Psalm 78:54, 55.**

Yet still, 1. “They tempted and provoked him.” 2. “Kept not his testimonies.” 3. “Turned aside” from his worship. 4. Were *unfaithful*. 5. And *idolatrous*, ^{<19785>}**Psalm 78:55-58.**

For this,—1. God’s wrath grows more hot against the people. 2. He greatly abhorred Israel. 3. Forsook the tabernacle. 4. Delivered up the ark. 5. Gave the people to the sword. 6. Gave up the priests to death. 7. And brought upon them general desolation, ^{<19789>}**Psalm 78:59-64.**

Once more, God—1. Remembers them in mercy. 2. Fixes his *tabernacle* among them. 3. Chooses *David* to be their king. 4. During the whole of whose days they had prosperity in all things, ^{<19786>}**Psalm 78:65-72.**

Behold here the goodness and severity of God. Reader, learn wisdom by what those have suffered.

PSALMS

PSALM 79

The psalmist complains of the cruelty of his enemies and the desolations of Jerusalem, and prays against them, 1-7. He prays for the pardon and restoration of his people, and promises gratitude and obedience, 8-13.

NOTES ON PSALM 79

The *title*, *A Psalm of Asaph*, must be understood as either applying to a person of the name of *Asaph* who lived under the captivity; or else to the *family of Asaph*; or to a *band of singers* still bearing the name of that *Asaph* who flourished in the days of *David*; for most undoubtedly the Psalm was composed during the Babylonish captivity, when the city of Jerusalem lay in heaps, the temple was defiled, and the people were in a state of captivity. *David* could not be its author. Some think it was composed by *Jeremiah*; and it is certain that the *sixth* and *seventh* verses are exactly the same with ^{<4105>}**Jeremiah 10:25**: “Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him; and have made his habitation desolate.”

Verse 1. The heathen are come into thine inheritance] Thou didst cast them *out*, and take thy people *in*; they have cast *us* out, and now taken possession of the land that belongs to *thee*. They have defiled the temple, and reduced Jerusalem to a heap of ruins; and made a general slaughter of thy people.

Verse 2. The dead bodies of thy servants] It appears that in the destruction of Jerusalem the Chaldeans did not bury the bodies of the slain, but left them to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey. This was the grossest inhumanity.

Verse 3. There was none to bury them.] The Chaldeans would not; and the Jews who were not slain were carried into captivity.

Verse 4. We are become a reproach to our neighbours] The Idumeans, Philistines, Phœnicians, Ammonites, and Moabites, all gloried in the subjugation of this people; and their insults to them were mixed with blasphemies against God.

Verse 5. How long, Lord?] Wilt thou continue thine anger against us, and suffer us to be insulted, and thyself blasphemed?

Verse 6. Pour out thy wrath] Bad as we are, we are yet less wicked than they. We, it is true, have been unfaithful; but they never knew thy name, and are totally abandoned to idolatry.

Verse 7. Laid waste his dwelling-place.] The *Chaldee* understands this of the *temple*. This, by way of eminence, was Jacob's *place*. I have already remarked that these two verses are almost similar to ^{<41025>}**Jeremiah 10:25**, which has led many to believe that *Jeremiah* was the author of this Psalm.

Verse 8. Remember not against us former iniquities] Visit us not for the sins of our forefathers.

Speedily prevent us] Let them *go before us*, and turn us out of the path of destruction; for there is no help for us but in *thee*.

We are brought very low.] Literally, "We are greatly thinned." Few of us remain.

Verse 9. Purge away our sins] *rpk* *capper*, be *propitiated*, or *receive an atonement* (*wnytacj* | [*al chattotheynu*] *on account of our sins*).

Verse 10. Where is their God?] Show *where* thou art by rising up for our redemption, and the infliction of deserved punishment upon our enemies.

Verse 11. The sighing of the prisoner] The poor captive Israelites in Babylon, who sigh and cry because of their bondage.

Those that are appointed to die] *htwmt ynb* *beney themuthah*, "sons of death." Either those who were condemned to death because of their crimes, or condemned to be destroyed by their oppressors. Both these senses apply to the Israelites: they were sons of death, i.e., worthy of death because of their sins against God; they were condemned to death or utter destruction, by their Babylonish enemies.

Verse 12. Sevenfold into their bosom] That is, Let them get in this world what they deserve for the cruelties they have inflicted on us. Let them suffer in captivity, who now have us in bondage. Probably this is a *prediction*.

Verse 13. We thy people] Whom thou hast chosen from among all the people of the earth.

And sheep of thy pasture] Of whom thou thyself art the *Shepherd*. Let us not be destroyed by those who are thy enemies; and we, in all our generations, will give thanks unto thee for ever.

ANALYSIS OF THE SEVENTY-NINTH PSALM

This Psalm contains the *four* following parts:—

- I. A complaint for the desolation of Jerusalem, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:1-5.**
- II. A deprecation of God's anger, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:5.**
- III. A twofold petition:—
 1. Against the enemies of God's people, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:6, 7, 10-12.**
 2. For the people, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:8, 9.**
- IV. A doxology, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:13.**

I. The complaint is bitter, and is amplified by a *climax*,—

1. "The heathen are come into thine inheritance," ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:1.**
2. "The holy temple they have defiled," ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:1.**
3. "They have laid Jerusalem in heaps," ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:2.**
4. They have exercised cruelty towards the dead.
5. "They have shed blood like water," ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:3.**
6. They have not even buried those whom they slaughtered.
7. "We are become a reproach, a scorn, and a derision," ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:4.**

II. Next comes the cause of their calamity.

1. God's anger was kindled because of their sins, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:5.**
2. This anger he deprecates, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:5.**

III. The twofold prayer,—

1. Against the enemy: 1. Pour out thy wrath on *them*, not on *us*, ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:6**; 2. He adds the reason: "They have devoured Jacob." ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:7.**
2. The second part of the prayer is in behalf of the people: 1. "Remember not against us former offences," ^{<19730>}**Psalm 79:8.** 2. "Let thy mercy prevent us." The reasons: "We are brought very low." 3. His prayer is directed for

help to the God of salvation. 4. For deliverance and pardon of sin,
^{<19790>}**Psalm 79:9.**

His arguments to prevail with God:—

1. The blasphemy of the heathen, ^{<197910>}**Psalm 79:10.**
2. The misery of the people, ^{<197911>}**Psalm 79:11.** And another prayer against the enemy, ^{<197912>}**Psalm 79:12.**

IV. The doxology.

1. We, who are thy people, will be thankful.
2. We will leave a record of thy mercy to all generations, ^{<197913>}**Psalm 79:13.**

PSALMS

PSALM 80

A prayer for the captives, 1-3. A description of their miseries, 4-7. Israel compared to a vineyard, 8-14. Its desolate state, and a prayer for its restoration, 15-19.

NOTES ON PSALM 80

The *title*: see ^{<19450>} **Psalm 45:1; 60:1; 69:1**, where every thing material is explained. This Psalm seems to have been written on the same occasion with the former. One ancient MS. in the public library in Cambridge writes the *eightieth* and the *seventy-ninth* all as one Psalm; the subject-matter is precisely the same—was made on the same occasion, and probably by the same author.

Verse 1. O Shepherd of Israel] The subject continued from the last verse of the preceding Psalm.

Leadest Joseph] *Israel* and *Joseph* mean here the whole of the Jewish tribes; all were at this time in captivity; all had been the people of the Lord; all, no doubt, made supplication unto him now that his chastening hand was upon them; and for all the psalmist makes supplication.

That dwellest between the cherubims] It was between the cherubim, over the *cover* of the ark, called the *propitiatory* or *mercy-seat*, that the glory of the Lord, or symbol of the Divine Presence, appeared. It is on this account that the Lord is so often said *to dwell between the cherubim*. Of these symbolical beings there is a long and painful account, or system of conjectures, in *Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon*, of about twenty quarto pages, under the word **brk** *carab*.

Shine forth.] Restore thy worship; and give us such evidences of thy presence *now*, as our fathers had under the first tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple built by Solomon.

Verse 2. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh] It is supposed that these three tribes represent the whole, Benjamin being incorporated with Judah, Manasseh comprehending the country beyond Jordan, and Ephraim all the rest.—*Dodd*.

Verse 3. Turn us again] *wbbyvh* *hashibenu*, *convert* or *restore* us. There are *four* parts in this Psalm, *three* of which end with the above words; see the *third*, *seventh*, and *nineteenth* verses; and *one* with words similar, ^{<18014>}**Psalm 80:14**.

Verse 5. Thou feedest them with the bread of tears] They have no peace, no comfort, nothing but continual sorrow.

In great measure.] *vyl v* *shalish*, *threefold*. Some think it was a certain *measure* used by the Chaldeans, the real capacity of which is not known. others think it signifies *abundance* or *abundantly*.

Verse 6. Thou makest us a strife] The neighbouring districts have a controversy about us; we are a subject of contention to them. A people so wonderfully preserved, and so wonderfully punished, is a mystery to them. They see in us both the *goodness* and *severity* of God. Or, all the neighbouring nations join together to malign and execrate us. We are hated by all; derided and cursed by all.

Verse 8. Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt] This is a most elegant metaphor, and every where well supported. The same similitude is used by Isaiah, ^{<21801>}**Isaiah 5:1**, &c.; by Jeremiah, ^{<24122>}**Jeremiah 2:21**; by Ezekiel, ^{<26176>}**Ezekiel 17:5, 6**; by Hosea, ^{<28101>}**Hosea 10:1**; by Joel, ^{<29107>}**Joel 1:7**; by Moses, ^{<15322>}**Deuteronomy 32:32, 33**; and often by our Lord himself, ^{<41001>}**Matthew 20:1**, &c.; ^{<42133>}**Matthew 21:33**, &c.; ^{<411201>}**Mark 12:1**, &c. And this was the ordinary figure to represent the Jewish Church. We may remark several analogies here:—

1. This vine was brought out of Egypt that it might be planted in a better and more favourable soil. The Israelites were brought out of their Egyptian bondage that they might be established in the land of Canaan, where they might grow and flourish, and worship the true God.

2. When the husbandman has marked out a proper place for his vineyard, he hews down and roots up all other trees; gathers out the stones, brambles, &c., that might choke the young vines, and prevent them from being fruitful. So God cast out the *heathen nations* from the land of Canaan, that his pure worship might be established, and that there might not remain there any incitements to idolatry.

Verse 9. Thou preparedst-before it] 3. When the ground is properly cleared, then it is well digged and manured, and the vines are placed in the ground at proper distances, &c. So when God had cast out the heathen, he caused the land to be divided by lot to the different tribes, and then to the several families of which these tribes were composed.

And didst cause it to take deep root] 4. By sheltering, propping up, and loosening the ground about the tender plants, they are caused to take a deep and firm rooting in the ground. Thus did God, by especial manifestations of his kind providence, support and protect the Israelites in Canaan; and by various religious ordinances, and civil institutions, he established them in the land; and, by the ministry of priests and prophets, did every thing necessary to make them *morally fruitful*.

It filled the land.] 5. To multiply vines, the gardener cuts off a shoot from the old tree, leaving a joint or knob both at top and bottom; then plants it in proper soil; the lower knob furnishes the *roots*, and the upper the *shoot*, which should be carefully trained as it grows, in order to form another vine. By these means one tree will soon form a complete vineyard, and multiply itself to any given quantity. Thus God so carefully, tenderly, and abundantly blessed the Israelites, that they increased and multiplied; and, in process of time, filled the whole land of Canaan. Vines are propagated, not only by *cuttings*, but by *layers*, *seed*, *grafting*, and *inoculation*.

Verse 10. The hills were covered] 6. The vine, carefully cultivated in a suitable soil, may be spread to any extent. In the land of Judea it formed shades under which the people not only sheltered and refreshed themselves in times of sultry heats; but it is said they even ate, drank, and dwelt under the shelter of their vines. See ^{<11025>}1 Kings 4:25; ^{<3304>}Micah 4:4; 1Mac 14:12. God so blessed the Jews, particularly in the days of David and Solomon, that all the neighbouring nations were subdued—the Syrians, Idumeans, Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites.

Verse 11. She sent out her boughs unto the sea and her branches unto the river.] The Israelitish empire extended from the River *Euphrates* on the east to the *Mediterranean Sea* on the west, and from the same Euphrates on the north of the promised land to its farthest extent on the south; Syria bounding the north, and Arabia and Egypt the south. And this was according to the promises which God had made to the fathers, ^{<02231>}Exodus 23:31; ^{<051124>}Deuteronomy 11:24.

Verse 12. Why hast thou broken down] 7. When a vineyard is planted, it is properly *fenced* to preserve it from being trodden down, or otherwise injured by beasts, and to protect the fruit from being taken by the unprincipled passenger. So God protected Jerusalem and his temple by his own almighty arm; and none of their enemies could molest them as long as they had that protection. As it was *now spoiled*, it was a proof that that protection had been withdrawn; therefore the psalmist addresses the Lord with, “Why hast thou broken down her hedges?” Had God continued his protection, Jerusalem would not have been destroyed.

Verse 13. The boar out of the wood] Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who was a fierce and cruel sovereign. The allusion is plain. The wild *hogs* and *buffaloes* make sad havoc in the *fields* of the *Hindoos*, and in their *orchards*: to keep them out, men are placed at night on covered stages in the fields.

Verse 14. Return-O God of hosts] Thou hast *abandoned* us, and therefore our enemies have us in captivity. *Come back* to us, and we shall again be restored.

Behold, and visit this vine] Consider the state of thy own people, thy own worship, thy own temple. Look down! Let thine eye affect thy heart.

Verse 15. The vineyard which thy right hand hath planted] Thy holy and pure worship, which thy Almighty power had established in this city.

And the branch-thou madest strong for thy self.] The original $\hat{b} \text{ I } [w$ *veal ben*, “and upon the SON whom thou hast strengthened for thyself.” Many have thought that the *Lord Jesus* is meant. And so the *Chaldee* understood it, as it translates the passage thus: $aj \text{ yvm} \text{ akI} \text{ m I } [w$ *veal MALCA MESHICHA*, And upon the King Messiah, whom thou hast strengthened for thyself.” The Syriac, Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic, have, “the Son of man,” as in the *seventeenth* verse. *Eighteen* of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS. have $\mu da \hat{b} \text{ ben}$ *Adam*, “Son of man,” and as the *Versions* have all the same reading, it was probably that of the original copies. As *Christ* seems here to be intended, this is the *first place* in the Old Testament where the title *Son of man* is applied to him. The old Psalter understands this of *setting Christ at the right hand of God*.

Verse 17. The man of thy right hand] The only person who can be said to be at the right hand of God as intercessor, is JESUS the MESSIAH. Let him become our Deliverer: appoint him for this purpose, and let his strength be manifested In our weakness! By whom are the Jews to be restored, if indeed they ever be restored to their own land, but by JESUS CHRIST? By HIM alone can they find mercy; through HIM *alone* can they ever be reconciled to God.

Verse 18. So will not we go back from thee] We shall no more become *idolaters*: and it is allowed on all hands that the Jews were never guilty of idolatry after their return from the Babylonish captivity.

Quicken us] Make us *alive*, for we are nearly as good as *dead*.

We will call upon thy name.] We will invoke thee. Thou shalt be for ever the object of our adoration, and the centre of all our hopes.

Verse 19. Turn as again] Redeem us from this captivity.

O Lord God of hosts] Thou who hast all power in heaven and earth, the innumerable *hosts* of both worlds being at thy command.

Cause thy face to shine] Let us know that thou art *reconciled* to us. Let us once more enjoy thy *approbation*. Smile upon thy poor rebels, weary of their sins, and prostrate at thy feet, imploring mercy.

And we shall be saved.] From the power and oppression of the Chaldeans, from the guilt and condemnation of our sins, and from thy wrath and everlasting displeasure. Thus, O God, *save US!*

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTIETH PSALM

The parts of this Psalm are the following:—

I. A prayer, ^{<19801>}**Psalm 80:1-3.**

II. A complaint by way of expostulation, ^{<19804>}**Psalm 80:4-7.**

III. In the *twelve* last verses, to move God's mercy, he, 1. Shows God's love to Israel under the allegory of a vine, ^{<19808>}**Psalm 80:8-12.** 2. Deplores the waste made upon it, ^{<19802>}**Psalm 80:12, 13.** 3. Prays for its restoration, ^{<19803>}**Psalm 80:13-18.**

IV. He makes a vow of perpetual service, ^{<19809>}**Psalm 80:19.**

I. The *first* part, his *petition*, ^{<1801>}**Psalm 80:1**. 1. For audience, ^{<1802>}**Psalm 80:2**. 2. For assistance, ^{<1803>}**Psalm 80:3**. 3. For grace to amend, ^{<1803>}**Psalm 80:3**.

The arguments he uses to induce the Lord to hear. 1. He was formerly their Shepherd. 2. He sat between the cherubim, on the *mercy-seat*. 3. He has only to *shine forth*, and show himself; and they shall be saved.

II. The *second* part, his complaint. He complains, 1. That God was angry with them. 2. That the people were in the most distressed circumstances, ^{<1805>}**Psalm 80:5**. 3. Of what they suffered from their neighbours, ^{<1806>}**Psalm 80:6**.

On which he redoubles his prayer. 1. Turn us. 2. Cause thy face to shine. And, 3. Then we shall be saved, ^{<1807>}**Psalm 80:7**.

III. The *third* part: what God *had done* for his people. 1. He brought the vine out of Egypt, ^{<1808>}**Psalm 80:8**. 2. He cast out the heathen, ^{<1808>}**Psalm 80:8**. 3. He planted it. 4. He prepared the soil for it. 5. He caused it to take deep root. 6. And it filled the land, from the *river* Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea, ^{<1809>}**Psalm 80:9-11**.

He deplores the *waste* made upon it. 1. The fence was broken down. 2. It was spoiled by those who passed by, and by the wild beasts.

Then he prays, 1. Look down from heaven. 2. Visit this vine. 3. It is cut down. 4. It is burnt with fire. 5. Let thy power in its behalf be shown by the Man of thy right hand. See the notes.

Some think *Zerubbabel* is meant; others think the *Jewish nation* is thus called *the son of man*, and the *man of God's right hand*.

IV. The *last* part of the Psalm: gratitude and obedience are promised. 1. We will backslide no more, ^{<18018>}**Psalm 80:18**. 2. We are nearly dead; quicken us, and we will live to thee. 3. We will invoke thy name. We will serve thee alone, and never more bow down to any strange god, ^{<18018>}**Psalm 80:18**.

All these things considered, he thinks he has good ground for his prayer; and therefore confidently repeats what he had twice before said: "Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine," &c.

PSALMS

PSALM 81

An exhortation to the people to praise God for his benefits, 1-7; and to attend to what he had prescribed, 8-10; their disobedience lamented, 11; the miseries brought on themselves by their transgressions, 12-16.

NOTES ON PSALM 81

The *title* is the same as to ^{<19081>}**Psalm 8:1**, which see. There are various opinions concerning the *occasion* and *time* of this Psalm: but it is pretty generally agreed that it was either written *for* or used at the celebration of the Feast of Trumpets, (see on ^{<19234>}**Leviticus 23:24**), which was held on the first day of the month *Tisri*, which was the beginning of the Jewish year; and on that day it is still used in the Jewish worship. According to Jewish tradition, credited by many learned Christians, the world was created in *Tisri*, which answers to our *September*. The Psalm may have been used in celebrating the Feast of Trumpets on the first day of *Tisri*, the Feast of Tabernacles on the *fifteenth* of the same month, the *creation* of the world, the Feasts of the New Moons, and the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt; to all which circumstances it appears to refer.

Verse 1. Sing aloud unto God our strength] There is much *meaning* here: as God is our *strength*, let that strength be devoted to his service; therefore, sing *aloud*! This is principally addressed to the *priests* and *Levites*.

Verse 2. Take a psalm] **hrmz** *zimrah*. I rather think that this was the name of a *musical instrument*.

Bring hither the timbrel] **pt** *toph*; some kind of *drum* or *tom tom*.

The pleasant harp] **rwnk** *kinnor*. Probably a *sistrum*, or something like it. A STRINGED instrument.

With the psaltery.] **l bn** *nebel*, the *nabla*. The *cithara*, *Septuagint*.

Verse 3. Blow up the trumpet] **rpwv** *shophar*, a species of *horn*. Certainly a *wind* instrument, as the two last were *stringed* instruments. Perhaps some chanted a *psalm* in *recitativo*, while all these *instruments*

were used as *accompaniments*. In a *representative* system of religion, such as the Jewish, there must have been much *outside* work, all emblematical of better things: no proof that such things should be continued under the Gospel dispensation, where outsides have disappeared, shadows flown away, and the *substance* alone is presented to the *hearts* of mankind. He must be ill off for proofs in favour of instrumental music in the Church of Christ, who has recourse to practices under the Jewish ritual.

The feast of the *new moon* was always proclaimed by sound of trumpet. Of the ceremonies on this occasion I have given a full account in my *Discourse on the Eucharist*. For want of astronomical knowledge, the poor Jews were put to sad shifts to know the real time of the new moon. They generally sent persons to the top of some hill or mountain about the time which, according to their supputations, the new moon should appear. The first who saw it was to give immediate notice to the Sanhedrin; they closely examined the reporter as to his credibility, and whether his information agreed with their calculations. If all was found satisfactory, the president proclaimed the new moon by shouting out *vdqm mikkodesh!* "It is consecrated." This word was repeated *twice* aloud by the people; and was then proclaimed every where by *blowing of horns*, or what is called the sound of *trumpets*. Among the Hindoos some feasts are announced by the sound of the *conch* or *sacred shell*.

Verse 4. This was a statute for Israel] See the statute, ^{<04100>}Numbers 10:10, and ^{<02234>}Leviticus 23:24.

Verse 5. I heard a language I understood not.] This passage is difficult. Who heard? And *what* was heard? All the *Versions*, except the *Chaldee*, read the pronoun in the *third* person, instead of the *first*. "He heard a language that *he* understood not." And to the *Versions* *Kennicott* reforms the text, [*mcy h[dy al tpc sephath lo yadah yisma*; "a language which *he* did not understand *he* heard." But what was that *language*? Some say the *Egyptian*; others, who take *Joseph* to signify the *children of Israel* in general, say it was the declaration of God by Moses, that Jehovah was the true God, that he would deliver their *shoulder from their burdens*, and their *hands from the pots*-the moulds and furnaces in which they formed and baked their brick.

Verse 7. Thou calledst in trouble] They had *cried* by reason of their burdens, and the cruelty of their task-masters; and God heard that cry, and delivered them. See ^{<0170>}**Exodus 3:7**, &c.

In the secret place of thunder] On Mount Sinai; where God was *heard*, but not *seen*. They heard a *voice*, but they saw no *shape*.

At the waters of Meribah.] See this transaction, ^{<0170>}**Exodus 17:1**, &c.

Verse 8. Hear, O my people] These are nearly the same words with those spoken at the giving of the law, ^{<0210>}**Exodus 20:2**.

Verse 10. Open thy mouth wide] Let thy desires be ever so extensive, I will gratify them if thou wilt be faithful to me. Thou shalt lack no manner of thing that is good.

Verse 11. Israel would none of me.] *yl hba al lo abah li*, They willed me not, they would not have me for their God.

Verse 12. Unto their own hearts' lust] To the *obstinate wickedness* of their heart.

In their own counsels.] God withdrew his restraining grace, which they had abused; and then they fulfilled the inventions of their wicked hearts.

Verse 13. O that my people had hearkened unto me,—Israel had walked in my ways] Nothing can be more plaintive than the original; *sense* and *sound* are surprisingly united. I scruple not to say to him who understands the Hebrew, however learned, he has never found in any poet, Greek or Latin, a finer example of deep-seated grief, unable to express itself in appropriate words without frequent interruptions of sighs and sobs, terminated with a mournful cry.

*yl [mv ym[wl
wkl hy ykrdb yarvy*

Lo ammi shomea li
Yishrael bidrachi yehallechu!

He who can give the proper guttural pronunciation to the letter [*ain*; and gives the *w vau*, and the *y yod*, their full Asiatic sound, not pinching them to death by a compressed and worthless European enunciation; will at once be convinced of the propriety of this remark.

Verse 14. I should soon have subdued] If God’s promise appeared to fail in behalf of his people, it was because they rejected his counsel, and walked in their own. While they were faithful, they prospered; and not one jot or tittle of God’s word failed to them.

Verse 15. Their time should have endured for ever.] That is, Their *prosperity* should have known no end.

Verse 16. With the finest of the wheat] *hcj bl j m mecheleb chittah;* literally, *with the fat of wheat*, as in the *margin*.

Honey out of the rock] *And he fed thaim of the grese of whete: And of the hony stane he thaim filled.* Old *Psalter*. Thus paraphrased: “He fed thaim with the body of Criste and gastely understandyng; and of hony that ran of the stane, that is, of the wisdom that is swete to the hert.” Several of the fathers understand this place of Christ.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-FIRST PSALM

The contents of this Psalm are the following:—

I. The psalmist exhorts them to celebrate God’s name in their festivals, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:1-4.**

II. The reasons why they should do this: God’s benefits conferred on Israel, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:5-10.**

III. Israel’s ingratitude, and its consequences, ^{<19811>}**Psalm 81:11, 12.**

IV. God’s love and call to amendment, with the reasons for obedience, ^{<19813>}**Psalm 81:13-16.**

I. He exhorts them to rejoice: but this must be, 1. *In God*, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:1.**
2. At his *festivals*, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:2, 3.**

II. The reasons. 1. It was God’s command, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:4.** 2. It was an ancient ordinance, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:5.** 3. Their deliverance from base servitude, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:6.** 4. When in deep affliction, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:7.** 5. In a miraculous manner, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:7.** 6. His mercy shown at the waters of Meribah, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:7.** 7. His giving them his law, ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:8, 9.**

He then inculcates obedience, for which he gives *three* reasons: 1. “I am the Lord thy God,” ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:10.** 2. Who *redeemed* thee from

bondage, ^{<198110>}**Psalm 81:10**. 3. He will make thee *truly happy*: “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it,” ^{<198110>}**Psalm 81:10**.

III. Israel’s ingratitude, and its consequences. 1. God gave them up; left them to themselves, ^{<198112>}**Psalm 81:12**. 2. They walked in their own counsels, ^{<198112>}**Psalm 81:12**. And came to ruin.

IV. God’s love and call, &c.

He calls them to repentance, ^{<198113>}**Psalm 81:13**. The fruits of which would be *three* great benefits. 1. The subjugation of their enemies, ^{<198114>}**Psalm 81:14**. 2. A long uninterrupted prosperity. 3. An abundance of all temporal and spiritual blessings, ^{<198115>}**Psalm 81:15, 16**.

Under the emblems of the *finest wheat*, and the *purest honey* from the hives of bees in the rocks, where they abounded in Judea, he shows them that his followers should have so much of earthly and spiritual blessings, that they should be *satisfied* and say, It is enough. But, alas! Israel would not be obedient; and, therefore, Israel is under the curse.

PSALMS

PSALM 82

A warning to corrupt judges, 1, 2; an exhortation to them to dispense justice without respect of person, 3-5; they are threatened with the judgments of the Lord, 6-8.

NOTES ON PSALM 82

This Psalm, which, in the *title*, is attributed to *Asaph*, was probably composed in the time when *Jehoshaphat* reformed the courts of justice throughout his states; see ^{<4896>}**2 Chronicles 19:6, 7**, where he uses nearly the same words as in the beginning of this Psalm.

Verse 1. God standeth in the congregation of the mighty] The Hebrew should be translated, “God standeth in the assembly of God.” God is among his people; and he presides especially in those courts of justice which himself has established. The *Court of King’s Bench* is properly the place where the *king presides*, and where he is supposed to be always present. But the kings of England seldom make their appearance there. King James I. sometimes attended: at such times it might be said, “The *king* is in the *king’s* court.” I believe the case above to be similar. Judges! beware what you do! God is in his court, and in the midst (of the assembly) God will judge. See *Parkhurst* under **hl a**.

Verse 2. Accept the persons of the wicked?] “Lift up their faces,” encourage them in their oppressions.

Selah.] “Mark this:” ye *do* it, and sorely shall ye *suffer* for it.

Verse 3. Defend the poor] You are their natural *protectors* under God. They are *oppressed*: *punish* their *oppressors*, however rich or powerful: and *deliver* them.

Verse 5. They know not] The judges are not acquainted with the law of God, on which all their decisions should be founded.

Neither will they understand] They are ignorant and do not wish to be instructed. They will not learn; they cannot teach. Happy England! How different from Judea, even in the days of *Jehoshaphat*! All thy judges are

learned, righteous, and impartial. Never did greater men in their profession dignify any land or country.—(1822.)

All the foundations of the earth] “All the civil institutions of the land totter.” Justice is at the *head* of all the institutions in a well regulated state: when that gets poisoned or perverted, every evil, political and domestic, must prevail; even *religion* itself ceases to have any influence.

Verse 6. Ye are gods] Or, with the prefix of **k** *ke*, the particule of *similitude*, **μyhl ak keelohim**, “like God.” Ye are my *representatives*, and are clothed with my power and authority to dispense judgment and justice, therefore *all of them* are said to be *children of the Most High*.

Verse 7. But ye shall die like men] **μdak keadam**, “ye shall die like *Adam*,” who fell from his high perfection and dignity as ye have done. Your high office cannot secure you an immortality.

And fall like one of the princes.] *Justice* shall pursue you, and *judgment* shall overtake you; and you shall be executed like public *state criminals*. You shall not, in the course of nature, fall into the grave; but your life shall be brought to an end by a *legal sentence*, or a *particular judgment* of God.

Verse 8. Arise, O God, judge the earth] Justice is perverted in the land: take the sceptre, and rule thyself.

For thou shalt inherit all nations.] Does not this last verse contain a prophecy of our Lord, the calling of the Gentiles, and the prevalence of Christianity over the earth? Thus several of the *fathers* have understood the passage. It is only by the universal spread of Christianity over the world, that the reign of righteousness and justice is to be established: and of whom can it be said that *he shall inherit all nations*, but of *Jesus Christ*?

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND PSALM

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

- I. The prophet’s proclamation, ^{<19801>}**Psalm 82:1.**
- II. God’s controversy with the judges of the land, ^{<19812>}**Psalm 82:2-7.**
- III. The prophet’s prayer that God would rise and judge, ^{<19818>}**Psalm 82:8.**

I. God's presence proclaimed in court. At an assize the judge sits in the midst of the justices: "God standeth in the congregation," &c., ^{<19831>}**Psalm 82:1**.

II. 1. He *reproves* them, ^{<19832>}**Psalm 82:2**. 1. For their unjust judgment: "Ye judge unjustly." 2. For their obstinate continuance in it: "How long will ye," &c. Ye have not done it once, but often. 3. For their partiality: "they accepted persons," ^{<19832>}**Psalm 82:2**.

2. He *exhorts* them to do their duty. 1. "Defend the poor and fatherless." Do right to every man. 2. "Deliver the poor and needy," ^{<19833>}**Psalm 82:3**.

3. He acquaints them with the events that shall follow where justice is not done: all is out of order; and the judges are the cause of it.

1. Through ignorance: "They know not the law," ^{<19835>}**Psalm 82:5**.

2. Through obstinacy: "They will not learn it," ^{<19835>}**Psalm 82:5**.

3. Through their determination to walk in their own way, ^{<19835>}**Psalm 82:5**: "They walk on in darkness."

4. They shall in consequence be brought, 1. To an untimely death: "Ye shall die like men." 2. To a shameful death: "Ye shall fall like one of the princes," ye shall have a mighty fall, ^{<19837>}**Psalm 82:7**.

III. The prophet's prayer. Since judgment and justice have failed in the land, he says, 1. "Arise, O Lord! " He does not say, Arise, O people, and put down those unjust judges. No; their function is from God, and God alone is to *reform*, or *strip*, or *punish* them. 2. "Judge the earth." Take the state of all people into thy consideration: there is much injustice in the earth. 3. For this petition he gives a reason: "For thou shalt inherit all nations," ^{<19838>}**Psalm 82:8**. Publish thy own laws, appoint thy own officers and let them in thy name dispense righteousness and true holiness throughout the world.

PSALMS

PSALM 83

The psalmist calls upon God for immediate help against a multitude of confederate enemies who had risen up against Judah, 1-5. He mentions them by name, 6-8; shows how they were to be punished, 9-17; and that this was to be done for the glory of God, 18.

NOTES ON PSALM 83

The title, *A Song* or *Psalm of Asaph*, contains nothing particular. Among a multitude of conjectures relative to the *time* and *occasion* of this Psalm, that which refers it to the confederacy against *Jehoshaphat*, king of Judah, mentioned ^{<1431>}**2 Chronicles 20:1-30**, is the most likely. The following reasons make it probable: 1. The children of *Ammon*, that is, the *Ammonites* and *Moabites*, were the principal movers in the war. 2. The *Idumeans* came to their assistance, ^{<1432>}**2 Chronicles 20:22**; with certain *Ammonites* or *Meonians*, referred to here in ^{<1933>}**Psalm 83:8**, and in ^{<1431>}**2 Chronicles 20:1**. 3. There were also in this confederacy many *strangers* of *Syria*, and from beyond the sea, most likely the Dead Sea, which seems to indicate the *Assyrians*, *Hagaranes*, and *Ishmaelites*, designed expressly here, ^{<1937>}**Psalm 83:7, 8**. 4. In that transaction there was a prophet of the race of *Asaph*, named *Jahaziel*, who foretold to *Jehoshaphat* their total overthrow, ^{<1434>}**2 Chronicles 20:14**, &c., and probably this *Jahaziel* is the same with *Asaph*, the author of this Psalm. In the course of the notes we shall see other circumstances relative to the war of the *Moabites* and *Ammonites* against *Jehoshaphat*, which illustrates several particulars in this Psalm. See *Calmet*.

Verse 1. Keep not thou silence] A strong appeal to God just as the confederacy was discovered. Do not be inactive, do not be neuter. Thy honour and our existence are both at stake.

Verse 2. Thine enemies make a tumult] They are not merely the enemies of *thy people*, but they are the enemies of *thyself*, thy worship, ordinances, and laws: "They make a tumult," they *throng* together.

They-have lifted up the head.] They have made an irruption into the land of Judea, and encamped at *En-gedi*, by the Dead Sea, ^{<1431>}**2 Chronicles 20:1, 2**.

Verse 3. Consulted against thy hidden ones.] *Ēynwpx tsephuneycha*, *Thy hidden things; places; persons*. “The hidden things in thy treasures.”—CHALDEE. “Thy holy ones.”—SYRIAC. “Thy saints.”—VULGATE and SEPTUAGINT; and so the *Æthiopic* and *Arabic*. The *people of Israel* are probably meant. Or perhaps the *temple*, the *ark*, and the *treasures of the temple*, are intended.

Verse 4. Let us cut them off] Let us exterminate the whole race, that there may not be a record of them on the face of the earth. And their scheme was well laid: *eight* or *ten* different nations united themselves in a firm bond to do this; and they had kept their purpose so secret that the king of Judah does not appear to have heard of it till his territories were actually invaded, and the different bodies of this coalition had assembled at En-gedi. Never was Judah before in greater danger.

Verse 5. They have consulted together with one consent] With a united heart, *wdj y bl leb yachdav*, Their heart and soul are in the work.

They are confederate against thee] “They have made a covenant,” *wtyrky tyrb berith yachrithu*, “they have cut the covenant sacrifice.” They have slain an animal, divided him in twain, and passed between the pieces of the victim; and have thus bound themselves to accomplish their purpose.

Verse 6. The tabernacles of Edom] The *tents* of these different people are seen in the grand encampment. *Tents* are probably mentioned because it was the custom of some of these people, particularly the *Ishmaelites*, to live a migratory or wandering life; having no fixed habitation, but always abiding in tents. Their posterity remain to the present day, and act and live in the same manner.

Hagarenes] These people dwelt on the east of *Gilead*; and were nearly destroyed in the days of Saul, being totally expelled from their country, ^{<13510>} **1 Chronicles 5:10**, but afterwards recovered some strength and consequence; but where they dwelt after their expulsion by the Israelites is not known.

Verse 7. Gebal] The *Giblites*, who were probably the persons here designed, were a tribe of the ancient inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and are mentioned as unconquered at the death of Joshua, ^{<13135>} **Joshua 13:5**. They are called *stone-squarers* or *Giblites*, ^{<110518>} **1 Kings 5:18**, and were of

considerable assistance to Hiram king of Tyre, in preparing timber and stones for the building of the temple. They appear to have been eminent in the days of Ezekiel, who terms them the “ancients of Gebal, and the wise men-thereof,” who were ship-builders, ^{<327B>}**Ezekiel 27:3**. What is now called *Gibyle*, a place on the Mediterranean Sea, between Tripoli and Sidon, is supposed to be the remains of the city of the *Giblites*.

Ammon and *Moab* were then descendants of the children of *Lot*. Their bad origin is sufficiently known. See ^{<0193>}**Genesis 19:30**, &c. Calmet supposes that *Ammon* is put here for *Men* or *Maon*, the *Meonians*, a people who lived in the neighbourhood of the Amalekites and Idumeans. See the notes on ^{<420I>}**2 Chronicles 20:1; 26:7**.

Amalek] The Amalekites are well known as the ancient and inveterate enemies of the Israelites. They were neighbours to the Idumeans.

The Philistines] These were tributaries to Jehoshaphat, ^{<4471I>}**2 Chronicles 17:11**; but it seems they took advantage of the present times, to join in the great confederacy against him.

The inhabitants of Tyre] These probably joined the confederacy in hopes of making conquests, and extending their territory on the *main land*.

Verse 8. Assur also is joined] The *Ammonites* might have got those auxiliaries from beyond the Euphrates, against Jehoshaphat, as formerly they were brought against David. See ^{<01016>}**2 Samuel 10:16**.

They have holpen the children of Lot.] The Ammonites, who appear to have been the chief instigators in this war.

Verse 9. Do unto them as unto the Midianites] Who were utterly defeated by *Gideon*, ^{<07072I>}**Judges 7:21, 22**.

As to Sisera] Captain of the army of *Jabin*, king of Canaan, who was totally defeated by *Deborah* and *Barak*, near Mount *Tabor*, by the river *Kishon*; and himself, after having fled from the battle, slain by *Jael*, the wife of *Heber*, the Kenite. See ^{<07045>}**Judges 4:15**, &c.

Verse 10. Perished at En-dor] This refers to the defeat of the *Midianites* by *Gideon*, who were encamped in the valley of *Jezebel*, at the foot of Mount *Gilboa*, and near to *Tabor*, ^{<07063>}**Judges 6:33; 7:1**, and consequently in the environs of *En-dor*. There *Gideon* attacked and defeated them; and,

in various places during their flight, they were destroyed, and left to rot upon the earth. <0722>**Judges 7:22-25.**

Verse 11. Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb] They were two of the chiefs, or generals, of the Midianites; and were slain in the pursuit of the Midianites, by the men of Ephraim; and their heads brought to *Gideon* on the other side of Jordan. <0724>**Judges 7:24, 25.**

Yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna] These were kings of *Midian*, who were encamped at *Karkor* with *fifteen thousand* men, whom *Gideon* attacked there, and defeated, and took the kings prisoners; and finding that they had killed his own brothers slew them both. See <07810>**Judges 8:10-21.** Of the Midianites there fell at this time *one hundred and twenty thousand* men.

Verse 12. Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.] Nearly the words spoken by the confederates when they came to attack *Jehoshaphat*. *They come* (says the king in address to God) *to cast us out of thy possession which thou hast given us to inherit.* See <4011>**2 Chronicles 20:11.**

Verse 13. O my God, make them like a wheel] Alluding to the manner of threshing corn in the east. *A large broad wheel* was rolled over the grain on a threshing-floor, which was generally in the open air; and the grain being thrown up by a shovel against the wind the chaff was thus separated from it, in the place where it was threshed.

Verse 14. The flame setteth the mountains on fire] This may refer to the burning of the straw and chaff, after the grain was threshed and winnowed. And as their threshing-floors were situated often on the *hills* or *mountains*, to take the advantage of the wind, the *setting the mountains on fire* may refer to the burning of the *chaff*, &c., in those places. Let them be like *stubble* driven away by the *wind*, and burnt by the *fire*.

Verse 15. So persecute them] In this and the two following verses we find several awful execrations; and all this seems to be done in reference to that ancient custom, “pouring execrations on an enemy previously to battle.” Of this I have already given specimens in this work; and the reader is particularly requested to refer to the case of *Balaam* being hired by the king of *Moab* to curse *Israel* previously to his intended attack: see the note on <4216>**Numbers 22:6**, where the subject is treated at large.

This custom prevailed much among the *Romans*, and the ancient *Druids* of *Britain*. In all cases the *priests* were employed to utter the execrations, as they were supposed to have the greatest influence with the gods, in whose name the curses were uttered.

Verse 16. That they may seek thy name] Let them be confounded in all their attempts on Israel; and see, so manifestly, that thou hast done it, that they may invoke thy name, and be converted to thee.

Verse 17. Let them-perish] That is, in their present attempts. Some have objected to the execrations in this Psalm, without due consideration. None of these execrations refer either to their *souls* or to their *eternal state*; but merely to their *discomfiture on their present attempts*. Suppose the continental powers should join together to subjugate Britain, and destroy the Protestant religion; is there a Christian in the land that would not be justified in meeting them with the same or similar execrations? On the knees of my soul would I offer every one of them to God against such invaders. Selah.—A. C.

Verse 18. That men may know] That they may acknowledge, and be converted to thee. Here is *no malice*; all is *self-defence*.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-THIRD PSALM

This Psalm divides itself into *four* parts:—

- I. A short ejaculation, ^{<198301>}**Psalm 83:1**.
- II. A complaint against God's enemies, which is the reason of this prayer, ^{<198312>}**Psalm 83:2-10**.
- III. A fearful imprecation against them, ^{<198312>}**Psalm 83:12-17**.
- IV. The charitable ends proposed, ^{<198318>}**Psalm 83:18**.

I. The *ejaculation* or prayer: "Keep not thou silence—be not still." Thy enemies are *loud* in their threatenings, and active in their endeavours, to destroy thy *people* and *thy worship*: "Hold not thy peace!"

II. He complains—These are enemies, 1. To thy people, ^{<198312>}**Psalm 83:2**. 2. To God himself, ^{<198315>}**Psalm 83:5**. Then he describes them, ^{<198316>}**Psalm 83:6-8**.

1. They were banditti—spoilers: They "make a tumult," ^{<198312>}**Psalm 83:2**.
2. Proud and arrogant: "They have lifted up the head," ^{<198312>}**Psalm 83:2**.

3. They were subtle and crafty: “They have taken crafty counsel,”

<1983B> **Psalm 83:3.**

4. They carried their cunning counsel into acts of aggression: “Come, and let us cut them off,” &c., <1983B> **Psalm 83:4.**

5. They were conspirators,—1. Against God. 2. Against his people. All the world against God and his Church! Not an uncommon case.

6. He gives us a *catalogue* of these conspirators, <1983B> **Psalm 83:6-8: Edom, &c.**

III. *He prays to God against them.* In which there are *four* particulars: 1. Their fall and ruin. 2. Their persecution. 3. Their terror. 4. Their disgrace.

These he illustrates by *five* similitudes: 1. Of a *wheel* that, running on, crushes all under it successively. 2. Of *stubble* or *chaff*, easily driven away by the *wind*, <1983B> **Psalm 83:13.** 3. Of a *wood* or *forest* in a state of general *conflagration*, <1983B> **Psalm 83:14.** 4. Of a *flame* that even consumes the *mountains*, <1983B> **Psalm 83:14.**

Their fall and ruin he wished to be—

1. *Speedy* and *perpetual*: “Do unto them as unto the Midianites,” &c., <1983B> **Psalm 83:9-13.**

2. *Sudden* and *violent*: “As fire,” <1983B> **Psalm 83:13.**

3. *Terrible* and *shameful*: “Fill their faces with shame,” <1983B> **Psalm 83:15, 16.**

There are here *three* particulars of their punishment: 1. *Flight*. 2. *Terror*. 3. *Shame* and *ignominy*.

IV. The charitable ends proposed. These were *two*:—

1. That they might *seek after God*, be converted to him, <1983B> **Psalm 83:16.**

2. That they might *know him to be Jehovah*, the only true God, that they might be saved from all idolatry, <1983B> **Psalm 83:18.**

The spirit of this prayer is, 1. If they will not *seek* thee, and be converted, let them be *confounded* in their attempts against thy people. 2. If they will not *acknowledge* thee, let them be utterly *routed and overthrown*: “Let them be put to shame, and perish!”

PSALMS

PSALM 84

The psalmist longs for communion with God in the sanctuary, 1-3. The blessedness of those who enjoy God's ordinances, 4-7. With confidence in God, he prays for restoration to his house and worship, 8-12.

NOTES ON PSALM 84

The *title* here is the same as that of ^{<19810>}**Psalm 81:1**, only that was for *Asaph*, this *for the sons of Korah*. This person was one of the chief rebels against Moses and Aaron; there were *three*, *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, who made an insurrection; and the earth opened, and swallowed them and their partisans up, ^{<04161>}**Numbers 16:31, 32**. The children of Dathan and Abiram perished with their fathers; but by a particular dispensation of Providence, the children of *Korah* were *spared*. See ^{<04251>}**Numbers 26:11**, and the *note* there. The family of *Korah* was continued in Israel; and it appears from ^{<13301>}**1 Chronicles 26:1-19** that they were still employed about the temple, and were *porters* or *keepers of the doors*. They were also *singers* in the temple; see ^{<142019>}**2 Chronicles 20:19**. This Psalm might have been sent to them to be sung, or one of themselves might have been its author.

Verse 1. How amiable are thy tabernacles] In this *plural* noun he appears to include all the *places* in or near the temple where acts of Divine worship were performed. The holy of holies, the holy place, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt-offering, &c., &c.; all called here God's *tabernacles* or *dwelling-places*; for wherever God was worshipped, there he was supposed to dwell.

Verse 2. My soul longeth] It is a Levite that speaks, who ardently longs to regain his place in the temple, and his part in the sacred services.

My heart and my flesh] All the desires of my *soul* and *body*; every *appetite* and *wish*, both *animal* and *spiritual*, long for thy service.

Verse 3. Yea, the sparrow hath found a house] It is very unlikely that sparrows and swallows, or birds of any kind, should be permitted to build their nests, and hatch their young, in or about altars which were kept in a state of the *greatest purity*; and where *perpetual fires* were kept up for the

purpose of sacrifice, burning incense, &c. Without altering the text, if the clause be read in a parenthesis, the absurdity will be avoided, and the sense be good. “My heart crieth out for the living God, (even the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow **rwrđ** *deror*, the *ring-dove*, a nest for herself, where she may lay; her young,) for thine altars. O Lord of hosts! “ Or, read the parenthesis last: “My heart crieth out for the living God; for thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Even the sparrow hath found out a house, and the swallow (ring-dove) a nest for herself, where she may lay her young;” but I have no place, either of rest or worship, understood. The *Chaldee* translates thus: “Even the pigeon hath found a house, and the turtle-dove hath a nest because their young may be offered lawfully upon thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.” Or, as a *comparison* seems to be here intended, the following may best express the meaning; “Even as the sparrow finds out (seeks) a house, and the swallow her nest in which she may hatch her young; so I, thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.”

Verse 4. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house] They who have such a constant habitation in thy temple as the sparrow or the swallow has in the house wherein it has built its nest.

They will be still praising thee.] They will find it good to draw nigh unto God, as he always pours out his Spirit on his sincere worshippers.

Verse 5. The man whose strength is in thee]

*“Who life and strength from thee derives;
And by thee moves and in thee lives.”*

In whose heart are the ways of them] This is no sense. The original, however, is obscure: **ubbl b twl sm** *mesilloth bilebabam*, “the high ways are in their hearts;” that is, the roads winding to thy temple. Perhaps there is a reference here to the *high roads* leading to the *cities of refuge*. We wish to escape from the hands and dominion of these murderers, and the roads that lead to Jerusalem and the temple we think on with delight; our hearts are with them, we long to be travelling on them.

Verse 6. Passing through the valley of Baca make it a well] Instead of **akb** *bacha*, a *mulberry-tree*, seven MSS. have **hkb** *bechēh*, *mourning*. I believe *Baca* to be the same here as *Bochim*, **Ⲁⲓⲃⲓⲙ** **Judges 2:1-6**, called *The Valley of Weeping*. Though they pass through this barren and desert place,

they would not fear evil, knowing that thou wouldst supply all their wants; and even in the sandy desert cause them to find pools of water, in consequence of which they shall advance with renewed strength, and shall meet with the God of Israel in Zion.

The rain also filleth the pools.] The *Hebrew* may be translated differently, and has been differently understood by all the *Versions*. **hrwm hc[y twkrb µg** *gam berachoth yaateh moreh*; “Yea, the instructor is covered or clothed with blessings.” While the followers of God are passing through the *wilderness* of this world, God *opens* for them *fountains* in the *wilderness*, and *springs* in the *dry places*. They *drink* of the *well-spring of salvation*; they are not destitute of their *pastors*. God takes care to give his followers *teachers* after his own heart, that shall feed them with knowledge; and while they are watering the people they are watered themselves; for God *loads them with his benefits*, and the people *cover* them with their *blessings*.

Verse 7. They go from strength to strength] They proceed from one degree of grace to another, gaining Divine virtue through all the steps of their probation.

Every one of them **in Zion appeareth before God.]** This is a paraphrase, and a bad one, but no translation. They shall proceed from strength to strength, **wyxb µyh l a l a hary** *yaeh el Elohim betsiyon*, “The God of gods shall be seen in Zion.” God shall appear in their behalf, as often as they shall seek him; in consequence of which they shall increase in spiritual strength.

Some think there is a reference here to *companies* of people going up to Jerusalem from different parts of the land, blending together as they go on, so that the crowd is continually increasing. This meaning our translators have put in the *margin*.

Verse 8. Hear my prayer] Let us be restored to thy sanctuary, and to thy worship.

Verse 9. Behold, O God, our shield] We have no Protector but thee. Thou seest the deadly blows that are aimed at us; cover our souls; protect our lives!

Look upon the face of thine anointed.] Consider the supplications sent up by him whom thou hast appointed to be Mediator between thee and man—thy *Christ*. But some apply this to *David*, to *Zerubbabel*, to the *people of Israel*; and each has his reasons.

Verse 10. A day in thy courts is better than a thousand.] Not only better than *one thousand* in captivity, as the *Chaldee* states, but any where else. For in God's courts we meet with God the King, and are sure to have what petitions we offer unto him through his Christ.

I had rather be a doorkeeper] O what a strong desire does this express for the ordinances of God! Who *now* prefers the worship of God to genteel, gay, honourable, and noble company, to mirthful feasts, public entertainments, the stage, the oratorio, or the ball! Reader, wouldst thou rather be in thy *closet*, wrestling in prayer, or reading the Scriptures on thy knees, than be at any of the above places? How often hast thou sacrificed thy *amusement*, and *carnal delight*, and *pleasures*, for the benefit of a pious heart-searching sermon? Let conscience speak, and it will tell thee.

Verse 11. For the Lord God is a sun and shield] To *illuminate*, *invigorate*, and *warm*; to *protect* and *defend* all such as prefer him and his worship to every thing the earth can produce.

It is remarkable that not one of the *Versions* understand the **vmv shemesh**, as signifying *sun*, as we do. They generally concur in the following translation: "For the Lord loveth mercy and truth, and he will give grace and glory." The *Chaldee* says, "The Lord is as a high wall and a strong shield; grace and glory will the Lord give, and will not deprive those of blessedness who walk in perfection." Critics in general take the word as signifying a defence or a *guard*. Instead of **vmv shemesh**, *sun*, Houbigant reads **rmv shemer**, a *keeper* or *guardian*, and says that to represent God as the *sun* is without example in the sacred writings. But is not ^{<3012>}**Malachi 4:2**, a parallel passage to this place? "Unto you that fear my name, shall the *Sun of righteousness* arise with healing in his wings." No MS. countenances the alteration of Houbigant.

The Lord will give grace] To pardon, purify, and save the soul from sin: and then he will *give glory* to the *sanctified* in his eternal kingdom; and even *here* he withholds no good thing from them that walk uprightly. Well,

therefore, might the psalmist say, ^{<198412>}**Psalm 84:12**, “O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.”

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-FOURTH PSALM

This Psalm may be divided into the following parts:—

I. The psalmist, absent from the public worship of God, shows his love to the house of God, and his desire to be present in it, ^{<198401>}**Psalm 84:1-3**.

II. The happiness of those who continue in that assembly, ^{<198404>}**Psalm 84:4-7**.

III. He prays for restoration to it, and sets down the causes, ^{<198408>}**Psalm 84:8-11**.

IV. The blessedness of the man who trusts in God, ^{<198412>}**Psalm 84:12**.

I. 1. He begins with the pathetic exclamation, “How amiable are thy tabernacles!” A mode of expression which intimates *there is none equal to them*.

2. He expresses his ardent affection to the house of God:—1. “My soul longeth,” &c. 2. “My heart and flesh cry out,” &c.

3. He laments his absence from God’s house. The *sparrows* and *swallows* have their respective houses, where they may be present, build, hatch their young, &c., but he could have no access to God’s house. And this he expresses in an affecting appeal to God to move his pity:—1. “O Lord of hosts!” I acknowledge thee as my *Leader*. 2. “My King.” I acknowledge myself as thy *subject*. 3. “My God.” Whom I serve, and have taken for my portion.

II. The happiness of those who have liberty to worship God in his temple.

1. “Blessed are they.” They enjoy thy ordinances, and have blessings in all.

2. “Who dwell:” Who continue in union with God, ever prizing his ordinances.

3. “They will be still praising thee:” As being continually happy in thy presence.

“Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee:” Who knows his own weakness, and depends upon thee for his continual support.

This is the happiness of those who are near God's house: but there is a happiness for those also whose hearts are there, though their bodies are detained at a distance from it.

1. Blessed are they in whose hearts are the ways of them, ^{<1845>}**Psalm 84:5**.

2. Even when they are passing through desert and inhospitable countries, ^{<1846>}**Psalm 84:6**.

3. "They go from strength to strength:" 1. They get from one place of protection to another. 2. They increase in the Divine light and life. 3. They get many companions on the way.

III. His prayer. 1. He begs to be heard. 2. He remembers God, who succoured *Jacob* in weakness and distress. 3. He considers himself as the *anointed* of God, and under his especial care, ^{<1848>}**Psalm 84:8**. He wishes to be employed, even in the meanest offices, in the house of God, which he illustrates by an opposition of *time*, *place*, and *persons*.

1. *Time*. *One day* in thy courts is better than a *thousand out of it*.

2. *Place*. *God's house*, to the *tents* of wickedness.

3. *Persons*. A doorkeeper, a Korahite at the temple, rather than an emperor in his palace.

For this he gives *five* reasons:—

1. "The Lord is a sun:" He dispels darkness, comforts warms, gives life.

2. He is a *shield*: The Defender and Protector of his followers.

3. He *gives grace*, to prepare for heaven.

4. *Glory*, to crown that grace.

5. He is all-sufficient. "He will withhold no good thing."

But sinners and hypocrites need not expect these blessings; they are for them that walk uprightly.

1. They must *walk-go on*, be constant, abide in the way.

2. They must be *upright-truly* sincere and obedient.

IV. The blessedness of the man who trusts in God. "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusts in thee!" This acclamation may be intended to answer an objection: "If those be blessed who dwell in thy temple, then those must be wretched who are exiled from it." No, says the psalmist;

though there be many advantages enjoyed by those who can attend the ordinances of God, and some may attend them without profit; yet he who trusts in God can never be confounded. Faith in God will always be crowned; and, when absent through necessity, every place is a temple.

*“Though fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth—————
Yet God is ever present, ever felt,
In the wide waste as in the city full;
And where he vital breathes, there must be joy.*

PSALMS

PSALM 85

Thanksgiving to God for restoration to the Divine favour, 1-3; prayer for farther mercies, 4-7; the psalmist waits for a gracious answer in full confidence of receiving it, 8. He receives the assurance of the greatest blessings, and exults in the prospect, 9-13.

NOTES ON PSALM 85

The *title* of this Psalm we have seen before, ^{<1901>} **Psalm 42:1**. As to the *time*, it seems to have been written during, or even after, the return from the Babylonish captivity. In the *three* first verses the psalmist acknowledges the goodness of God in bringing the people back to their own land; he next prays to God to restore them to their ancient prosperity. In the spirit of prophecy, he waits on God, and hears him promise to do it; and then exults in the prospect of so great a good. The whole Psalm seems also to have a reference to the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ.

Verse 1. Lord, thou hast been favourable] Literally, *Thou hast been well pleased with thy land.*

Thou hast brought back the captivity] This seems to fix the *time* of the Psalm to be after the return of the Jews from Babylon.

Verse 2. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity] ^{^w[} ^{tacn} *nasatha avon*, *Thou hast borne, or carried away, the iniquity.* An allusion to the ceremony of the *scapegoat*.

Thou hast covered all their sin.] As thou hast freely *forgiven* it, its offensiveness and abominable nature no longer *appear*. The whole is put *out of sight*; and, as we are restored from our captivity, the *consequences* no longer *appear*.

Selah.] This is true. Our return to our own land is the full proof.

Verse 3. Thou hast taken away] ^{tpsa} *asaphtha*, “Thou hast gathered up all thy wrath.” This carries on the *metaphor* in the *second* verse: “Thou hast *collected* all thy wrath, and *carried it away* with all our iniquities.”

Verse 4. Turn us, O God of our salvation] Thou hast turned our captivity; now convert our souls. And they find a *reason* for their prayer in an attribute of their God; *the God of their salvation*. And as his work was to *save*, they beg that *his anger towards them might cease*. The Israelites were not restored from their captivity *all at once*. A few returned with *Zerubbabel*; some more with *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; but a great number still remained in *Babylonia, Media, Assyria, Egypt*, and other *parts*. The request of the psalmist is, to have a complete restoration of all the Israelites from all places of their dispersion.

Verse 5. Wilt thou draw out thine anger] We have already suffered much and long; our fathers have suffered, and we have succeeded to their distresses. Draw not out thy anger against us from generation to generation.

Verse 6. Wilt thou not revive us] We have long had the sentence of death in ourselves; and have feared an utter extinction. Shall not our nation yet live before thee? Shall we not become once more numerous, pious, and powerful, that

Thy people may rejoice in thee?] As the Source of all our mercies; and give thee the glory due to thy name?

Verse 7. Show us thy mercy] Blot out all our sins.

And grant us thy salvation.] Give us such a complete deliverance as is worthy of thy *majesty* and *mercy* to bestow!

Verse 8. I will hear what God the Lord will speak] The psalmist goes as a prophet to consult the Lord; and, having made his request, waits an answer from the spirit of prophecy. He is satisfied that the answer will be gracious; and having received it he relates it to the people.

He will speak peace] He will give *prosperity* to *the people* in general; and to *his saints*-his followers, in particular.

But let them not turn again to folly.] Let them not abuse the mercy of their God, by sinning any more against him.

Verse 9. Surely his salvation is nigh] To him who *fears* God, and trembles at his word, his salvation is nigh at hand.

That glory may dwell in our land.] That thy worship may be restored, the temple rebuilt, and the Divine shechinah, or symbol of the presence of God, resume its place. The pure and undefiled religion of God preached, professed, and experienced in a nation, is the *glory* of that land. The Prophet *Haggai* had said that *the glory of the latter house*-the temple built after their return from Babylon, *should be greater than the glory of the former*, viz., of that built by Solomon: but, as a building, it was far inferior to the former; yet it had a superior glory in being visited by Jesus Christ. This was the glory that excelled.

Verse 10. Mercy and truth are met together] It would be more simple to translate the original,—

wvgpn tmaw dsj

wqvn µwl vw qdx

Chesed veemeth niphgashu;
Tsedek veshalom nashaku,—

*“Mercy and truth have met on the way
Righteousness and peace have embraced.”*

This is a remarkable text, and much has been said on it: but there is a beauty in it which, I think, has not been noticed.

Mercy and *peace* are on one side; *truth* and *righteousness* on the other. *Truth* requires *righteousness*; *mercy* calls for *peace*.

They meet together on the way; one going to make inquisition for sin, the other to plead for reconciliation. Having met, their differences on certain considerations, not here particularly mentioned, are adjusted; and their mutual claims are blended together in one common interest; on which *peace* and *righteousness* immediately embrace. Thus, *righteousness* is given to *truth*, and *peace* is given to *mercy*.

Now, *Where* did these meet? In Christ Jesus.

When were they reconciled? When he poured out his life on Calvary.

Verse 11. Truth shall spring out of the earth] In consequence of this wonderful *reconciliation*, the truth of God shall prevail among men. The *seeds* of it shall be so plentifully sown by the preaching of Christ and his apostles that true religion shall be diffused over the world.

And righteousness shall look down from heaven.] And be delighted with the reformation of the sons of Adam; and shall be so satisfied with the glorious work which is carried forward, that,

Verse 12. The Lord shall give-good] *bwch hattob*, THE GOOD *thing*—what is the supreme good, the *summum bonum*, for which man has searched in vain through all his generations. Those who are reconciled to him through the Son of his love shall enjoy the *favour* of their God; to have which is the supreme happiness of man.

Our land shall yield her increase.] There shall be neither *dearth* nor *barrenness*; for *truth*, that *springs out of the earth*, shall yield an abundant harvest, in the conversion of all nations to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 13. Righteousness shall go before him] Perhaps this verse may receive its best solution from ^{<1872>}**Romans 3:25**: “Whom God hath set for a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his RIGHTEOUSNESS for the remission of sins that are past.” This term the apostle uses to point out God’s *method of justifying* or *saving mankind*. And this, in the preaching of the pure Gospel, is *ever going before* to point out the Lord Jesus, and the redemption that is in his blood. And thus going before him, the sinner, who feels his need of salvation, is *Set—in the way of his steps*; as Bartimeus sat by the way-side begging, by which way Jesus walked; and when he came where he was, heard his prayer, and restored him his sight. Or, *righteousness*—the pure and holy law of God, must be proclaimed as broken by sinners, and calling aloud for vengeance, before they can see and feel their need of Christ crucified. By the preaching of the law they are prepared to receive the grace of the Gospel.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-FIFTH PSALM

Mystically, this Psalm may be considered as treating of the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ. It has the *three* following parts:—

- I. An acknowledgment of God’s former mercies, ^{<1850>}**Psalm 85:1-3**.
- II. A petition on that ground that he would repeat them, ^{<1850>}**Psalm 85:4-7**.
- III. A profession of obedience, and an advice to continue in it, ^{<1850>}**Psalm 85:8**. That men may be partakers of the promises, both *spiritual*,

<1985D> **Psalm 85:9-11**; and *temporal*, <1985I2> **Psalm 85:12**, which shall be fulfilled to those who keep in the ways of God, <1985I3> **Psalm 85:13**.

I. In the *three* first verses, the psalmist commemorates God's mercies to his people; of which his *good will* or *favour* is the Fountain. These mercies are, 1. *Temporal*: "Thou hast been favourable unto thy land," &c., <1985O> **Psalm 85:1**. 2. *Spiritual*: 1. "Thou hast forgiven the iniquities of thy people;" Justification. 2. "Thou hast taken away all thy wrath;" Reconciliation.

II. Upon this he finds a prayer: "Turn us, O God."

1. Thou hast turned away the captivity. Restore and convert us.
2. Thou hast brought us back. Revive our hearts, that they may rejoice in thee.
3. Thou hast been reconciled to our *fathers*. Be reconciled to *us*.
4. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people. Save us.

III. He promises obedience: "I will hear what God will speak;" and I shall hear nothing from him but what is for his own glory, and his people's good.

1. "He will speak peace;" He will turn all their sufferings to their advantage.
2. But they must hear, and be steady. They must "not turn again to folly;" let them remember this.
3. To such his promise is sure: "His salvation is nigh them."
4. And it comes, that "glory may dwell in our land;" that it may be crowned with peace and plenty.

In this prosperity of theirs, there shall be a combination of *mercy*, *truth*, *justice*, and *peace*.

1. "Justice and peace shall embrace;" for there is such a league between these two, that where peace is made without *justice*, it cannot long continue: and *mercy* and *truth* must; for it is inconsistent with mercy to be in concord with falsehood.

2. "Truth shall spring out of the earth." Men shall observe it in all their transactions, contracts, and promises.

3. "Righteousness shall look down from heaven." God will smile on this state of things, and pour out upon them the continual dew of his blessing.

4. In a word, 1. They shall enjoy all *spiritual* blessings; for the "Lord shall give that which is good." 2. And all *temporal*; "for the land shall yield her increase."

For these mercies he sets down our duty:—

1. "Righteousness shall go before him." All his saints shall walk before him in righteousness and true holiness.

"And this righteousness shall set them in the way of his steps." It shall teach them to walk constantly and steadily in the way of his commandments all the days of their life.

By manor of the ancients and moderns the whole of this Psalm has been applied to Christ and his salvation. See the preceding notes.

PSALMS

PSALM 86

The psalmist prays to God for support, from a conviction that he is merciful, good, ready to forgive, and that there is none like him, 1-8; all nations shall bow before him because of his wondrous works, 9, 10; he prays to be instructed, and promises to praise God for his great mercy, 11-13; describes his enemies, and appeals to God, 14-16; begs a token for God, that his enemies may be confounded, 17.

NOTES ON PSALM 86

The *title* attributes this Psalm to *David*; and in this all the *Versions* agree: but in its structure it is the same with those attributed to the *sons of Korah*; and was probably made during the captivity. It is a very suitable prayer for a person labouring under affliction from persecution or calumny.

Verse 1. Bow down thine ear] Spoken after the manner of men: I am so *low*, and so *weak*, that, unless thou *stoop to me*, my voice cannot reach thee.

Poor and needy.] I am afflicted, and destitute of the necessaries of life.

Verse 2. Preserve my soul] Keep it as in a strong place.

For I am holy] *yna dycj yk ki chasid ani*, for I am merciful. The spirit of this prayer is,

*“The mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me!”*

Save thy servant] I have long taken thee as my *Master* and *Lord*; I receive the word from thy mouth, and *obey* thee.

Verse 3. Be merciful unto me] I have no *merit*; I plead none, but trust in thee alone.

I cry unto thee daily.] My state deeply affects me; and I incessantly cry for thy salvation.

Verse 4. Rejoice the soul of thy servant] I want spiritual blessings; I want such consolations as thou dost impart to them that love thee; I present that soul to thee which I wish thee to console.

Verse 5. For thou, Lord, art good] I found my expectations of help on thy own goodness through which thou art always ready to forgive. And I found it also on thy well-known character, to which all thy followers bear testimony, viz., that “thou art plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.”

Verse 6. Give ear, O Lord] Attend to *me*. Millions call upon thee for help and mercy; but who has more need than myself? That the psalmist was deeply in earnest, his conduct shows. 1. He *prayed*. 2. His prayer was vehement; he lifted up his *voice*. 3. He continued in prayer; he abounded in *supplications*.

Verse 7. Thou wilt answer me.] Because thou art good, merciful, and ready to forgive; and I call upon thee fervently, and seek thee in thy own way.

Verse 8. Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord] None that trusted in an idol ever had help in time of need; none that prayed to any of them ever had an answer to his petitions. *Thou* savest; *they* cannot; thou *upholdest*; they must be *upheld* by their foolish worshippers. *Thou art my Director, ynda Adonai*; but they cannot *direct* nor *teach*; they have mouths, but they speak not.

Verse 9. All nations] Thy word shall be proclaimed among all the Gentiles: they shall receive thy testimony, and worship thee as the only true and living God.

Verse 10. For thou art great] Almighty, infinite, eternal.

And doest wondrous things] *twal pn hc[w veoseh niphlaoth*; thou art the *Worker of miracles*. This thou hast done in numerous instances, and thereby showed thy infinite power and wisdom.

This appears to be a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ, and the evidence to be given to his Divine mission by the *miracles* which he should work.

Thou art God alone.] *Συ ει ο Θεος μονος ο μεγας*.—*Sept. Thou art the only, THE GREAT God*. In this the *Æthiopic* and *Arabic* agree.

Verse 11. Teach me thy way] Instruct me in the steps I should take; for without thy teaching I must go astray.

Unite my heart] *ybbi dj y yached lebabi*, join all the purposes, resolutions, and affections of my heart *together*, to fear and to glorify thy name. This is a most important prayer. A *divided* heart is a great curse; *scattered* affections are a miserable plague. When the *heart* is not at *unity* with itself, the work of religion cannot go on. *Indecision of mind* and *division of affections* mar any work. The *heart* must be *one*, that the *work* may be *one*. If this be wanting, all is wrong. This is a prayer which becomes the mouth of every Christian.

Verse 12. I will praise thee-with all my heart] When my *heart* is *united* to fear thy name, then shall I praise thee with my *whole heart*.

Verse 13. Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.] This must mean more than the *grave*; a *hell below hell*—a place of perdition for the soul, as the *grave* is a place of corruption for the *body*.

Verse 14. The assemblies of violent men] *μyxyr [td [adath aritsim*, the *congregation of the terrible ones*. Men of violent passions, violent counsels, and violent acts; and, because they have power, *terrible* to all.

Have not set thee before them.] Who sins that sets God before his eyes? Who does not sin that has no consciousness of the Divine presence?

Verse 15. But thou, O Lord] What a wonderful character of God is given in this verse! *ynda Adonai*, the Director, Judge, and Support;—but instead of *ynda Adonai*, *thirty-four* of *Kennicott's MSS.* have *hwby Jehovah*, the self-existent and eternal Being;—*l a El*, the strong God; *μwj r rachum*, tenderly compassionate; *wnj channun*, the Dispenser of grace or favour; *μyπα Era erech appayim*, suffering long, not easily provoked; *dsj br rab chesed*, abundant in blessings; and *tma emeth*, faithful and true. Such is the God who has made himself more particularly known to us in Christ. The scanty language of our ancestors was not adequate to a full rendering of the original words: [—Anglo-Saxon—]. “And thu driht God gemildsiend , and mildheort, gethyldig and mucel mildheortnysse and sothfaest.—And thou, Lord God, art mild, and mildhearted, patient, and of much mildheartedness, and soothfast,”—steady in truth.

In the old *Psalter* the language is but little improved: *And thou Lorde God mercier, and mercyful, sufferand, and of mykel mercy, and sothefast.*

The word *mercier* is interpreted, *doand dede of mercy*.

Verse 16. O turn unto me] He represents himself as following after God; but he cannot overtake him; and then he plays that he would *turn* and meet him through pity; or give him *strength* that he might be able to hold on his race.

Give thy strength unto thy servant] The *Vulgate* renders, Daniel imperium tuum puero tuo, "Give thy empire to thy child." The old *Psalter*: *Ȝyf empyre to thi barne, and make safe the son of thi hand mayden. Thi barne*-thy tender child. [A. S.] or [A. S.], Anglo-Saxon; *thy knave*; signifying either a *servant* or a *male child*. As many *servants* were found to be purloiners of their masters' property, hence the word [A. S.], and [A. S.], and *knave*, became the title of an unprincipled servant. The term *fur*, which signifies a *thief* in Latin, for the same reason became the appellative of a *dishonest servant*.

Quid domini facient, audent cum talia FURES?

*When servants (thieves) do such things,
what may not be expected from the masters?*

VIRG. Ecl. iii. 16.

So PLAUTUS, speaking of a *servant*, Aulul. ii. 46, says: Homo es trium literarum, "Thou art a man of *three* letters," i.e., FUR, a *thief*. The word *knave* is still in use, but is always taken in a bad sense. The *paraphrase* in the old *Psalter* states the *handmaid* to be the *kirk*, and the *son* of this *handmaid* to be a *true believer*.

Verse 17. Show me a token for good] *ywa ym[hc[aseh immi oth*, "Make with me a sign." Fix the honourable mark of thy name upon me, that I may be known to be thy servant. There seems to be an allusion here to the *marking of a slave*, to ascertain whose property he was. The *Anglo-Saxon*, [A. S.] on [A. S.], "do with me a token in good." Old *Psalter*: *Do with me signe in gude*. From [A. S.] *tacn* we have our word *token*, which signifies a *sign*, *mark*, or *remembrancer* of something beyond itself; a *pledge* that something, then specified, shall be *done* or *given*. Give me, from the influence of thy Spirit in my heart, a *pledge* that the blessings which I now ask shall be given in due time. But he wished for such a sign as his enemies might see; that they might know God to be his helper, and be confounded when they sought his destruction.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH PSALM

This Psalm is a continued prayer, and may be divided into *four* parts:—

I. The *first* part is a petition for safety, drawn from *his own person*,
^{<19801>}**Psalm 86:1-4.**

II. The *second*, a quickening of the same petition, drawn from the *person and nature of God*,
^{<19805>}**Psalm 86:5-13.**

III. The *third*, taken from the *quality of his adversaries*,
^{<19814>}**Psalm 86:14.**

IV. The *fourth*, a conjunction of all these *three*; the *first*,
^{<19815>}**Psalm 86:15**; the *second*,
^{<19816>}**Psalm 86:16**; the *third*,
^{<19817>}**Psalm 86:17.**

I. The reasons of his petition, drawn from *himself*.

1. “Bow down thine ear.” Reason: “I am poor and needy,”
^{<19801>}**Psalm 86:1.**

2. “Preserve my soul.” Reason: “I am holy,” or merciful,
^{<19810>}**Psalm 86:2.**

3. “Save thy servant.” Reason: “He puts his trust in thee,”
^{<19813>}**Psalm 86:3.**

4. “Be merciful unto me.” Reason: “I cry unto thee daily,”
^{<19804>}**Psalm 86:4.**

5. “Rejoice the soul of thy servant.” Reason: “For unto thee do I lift up my soul,”
^{<19804>}**Psalm 86:4.**

II. A quickening of the petition, drawn from the *nature of God*.

1. “For thou, Lord, art good,” &c.,
^{<19805>}**Psalm 86:5, 6.**

2. “I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me,”
^{<19807>}**Psalm 86:7.**

3. “There is none like unto thee,”
^{<19808>}**Psalm 86:8.**

4. “Nor any works like unto thy works,”
^{<19808>}**Psalm 86:8.** This shall be amply proved: for

5. “All nations,” now worshipping idols, “shall be converted to thee,”
^{<19809>}**Psalm 86:9.**

6. “Because thou art great, and doest wondrous things,”
^{<19810>}**Psalm 86:10.**

On this reason, that there is none like God,—

1. He begs to be governed by his word and Spirit,
^{<19811>}**Psalm 86:11.**

2. Promises to praise him for his great mercy,
^{<19812>}**Psalm 86:12, 13.**

III. He presses another argument taken from his *enemies*.

1. They were *proud*: “The proud are risen against me.”
2. They were *powerful*: “The assemblies of violent men.”
3. They were *ungodly*: “They did not set thee before them,”
<19814> **Psalm 86:14.**

IV. He amplifies his former argument.

1. From the *nature of God*: “Thou art full of compassion,” &c.,
<19815> **Psalm 86:15.**
2. From his *own condition*: “Turn unto me and have mercy upon me,”
<19816> **Psalm 86:16.**
3. From the *quality of his adversaries*: “Show me a token-that they which hate me may be ashamed,”
<19817> **Psalm 86:17.**

PSALMS

PSALM 87

The nature and glorious privileges of Zion and Jerusalem, 1-3. No other city to be compared to this, 4. The privilege of being born in it, 5, 6. Its praises celebrated, 7.

NOTES ON PSALM 87

The *title*, *A Psalm or Song for the sons of Korah*, gives us no light into the *author* or *meaning* of this Psalm. It begins and ends so abruptly that many have thought it to be only a *fragment* of a larger Psalm. This opinion is very likely. Those who suppose it to have been made when Jerusalem was rebuilt and fortified, imagine it to have been an exclamation of the author on beholding its beauty, and contemplating its privileges. If this opinion be allowed, it will account for the apparent abruptness in the beginning and end. As to its general design it seems to have been written in praise of Jerusalem; and those who are for *mystic* meanings think that it refers to the Christian Church; and, on this supposition it is interpreted by several writers, both ancient and modern. To pretend to have found out the true meaning would be very absurd. I have done the best I could to give its *literal* sense.

Verse 1. His foundation is in the holy mountains.] Jerusalem was founded on the mountains or hills of *Zion* and *Moriah*. The after increase of the population obliged the inhabitants to inclose all the contiguous hills; but *Zion* and *Moriah* were the principal. We know that ancient Rome was built on *seven hills*.

Verse 2. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.] That is, he preferred Zion for his habitation, to be the place of his temple and sanctuary, before any other place in the promised land. Mystically, the Lord prefers the Christian Church to the Jewish: the latter was only a type of the former; and had no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth. To this position no exception can be made.

Verse 3. Glorious things are spoken of thee] Or, there are glorious words or doctrines in thee. Does this refer to the glorious doctrines of the Christian Church? These are glorious sayings indeed.

Verse 4. I will make mention of Rahab] The meaning seems to be, *Rahab*, i.e., *Egypt*, *Babylon*, *Tyre*, *Philistia*, and *Ethiopia* are not so honourable as *Jerusalem*. To be born in any of them is no privilege when compared with being a native of *Jerusalem*: their cities are but heads of villages; *Jerusalem* alone is a CITY. I have met with a very similar sentiment in a Persian work, of which I know not the author:

[—Persic—]

[—Persic—]

Tche Mesr, o tche Sham, o tche Birr o Buhr.
Heme rustæ and, we Sheerazee Shuhr.

What celebrity can *Egypt* or *Syria*, or any thing on *earth* or on the *sea*, pretend to?

*“When compared to Sheeraz, those are but villages,
but this alone is a CITY.”*

The meaning seems to be the same in both the *Hebrew* and *Persian* poet.

Verse 5. This and that man was born in her] It will be an honour to any person to have been born in *Zion*. But how great is the honour to be *born from above*, and be a citizen of the *Jerusalem* that is from above! To be children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus! The *Targum* has, “David the king, and Solomon his son, were brought up here.”

The Highest himself shall establish her.] The Christian Church is built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles; Jesus Christ himself being the Cornerstone.

Verse 6. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people] מִיִּם [bwtkb] *bichthob ammin*, in the register of the people. When he takes account of those who dwell in *Jerusalem*, he will particularly note those who were born in *Zion*.

This has an easy spiritual meaning. When God takes an account of all *professing Christians*, he will set apart those for inhabitants of the New *Jerusalem* who were born in *Zion*, who were born again, received a new nature, and were fitted for heaven.

Verse 7. As well the singers, &c.] Perhaps, this may mean no more than, The burden of the songs of all the singers and choristers shall be, “All my

fountains (ancestors and posterity) are in thee;” and consequently, entitled to all thy privileges and immunities. Instead of **μῦρῶν** *sharim*, “singers,” many MSS. and early printed editions have, *sarim*, “princes.” Some for **γῦν[μ]** *mayenai*, “my fountains,” would read with several of the *Versions*, **γῦν[μ]** *meoney*, “habitations;” but no MS. yet discovered supports this reading.

It would be a very natural cause of exultation, when considering the great privileges of this royal city, to know that all his friends, family, and children, were citizens of this city, were entered in God’s register, and were entitled to his protection and favour. Applied to the Christian Church, the privileges are still higher: born of God, enrolled among the living in Jerusalem, having their hearts purified by faith, and being washed and made clean through the blood of the covenant, and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, such have a right to the inheritance among the saints in light. I need not add that *springs, wells, fountains, and cisterns, and waters* are used metaphorically in the sacred writings for children, posterity, fruitful women, people, &c.; see among others ^{<31615>} **Proverbs 5:15, 16;** ^{<49636>} **Psalm 68:26;** ^{<23801>} **Isaiah 48:1;** and ^{<661715>} **Revelation 17:15.** The old *Psalter* understands the whole as relating to Gospel times; and interprets it accordingly. Bishop Horne takes it in the same sense. The whole Psalm is obscure and difficult. I will venture a literal version of the whole, with a few explanatory interpolations, instead of notes, in order to cast a little more light upon it.

1. A Psalm *to be sung* by the posterity of Korah. A *prophetic song*.
2. “Jehovah loves his foundation, the city built by him on holy mountains. He loves the gates of Zion more than all the habitations of Jacob.”
3. “Honourable things are declared of thee, O city of God. Selah.”
4. “I will number Egypt and Babylon among my worshippers; behold Philistia and Tyre! They shall be born in the same place.” They shall be considered as born in the city of God.
5. “But of Zion it shall be said, This one, and that one,” persons of different nations, “was born in it, and the Most High shall establish it.”
6. “Jehovah shall reckon in the registers of the people, This one was born there.”

7. “The people shall sing, as in leading up a choir, All my fountains,” the springs of my happiness, “are in thee.”

I have nearly followed here the version of Mr. *N. M. Berlin*, who wonders that there should be any doubt concerning this translation of the last verse, when *Symmachus* and *Aquila*, who must have well known the sense of the Masoretic text, have translated: **Και αδοντης ως χοροι πασαι πηγαι εν σοι**, “And they shall sing, as in leading up a dance, *All my fountains are in thee.*” The translation cannot be far from the meaning.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH PSALM

This Psalm contains marks of the beauty and perfection of the Church.

1. Its *foundation*. The author is GOD, it is *his foundation*; not laid in the *sand*, but upon the *mountains*, not common, but *holy mountains*,

<19870> **Psalm 87:1.**

2. The *Lord loveth his Church*-this assembly, beyond all others: “The Lord loveth,” &c., <19872> **Psalm 87:2.**

3. All the prophets have spoken *glorious things* concerning it, and have considered it as the “city of God,” <19873> **Psalm 87:3.**

4. One of the *glorious things* spoken of it was the *conversion* of the *Gentiles* to it. So here *Egyptians, Babylonians, Tyrians, Ethiopians, &c.*, are to be gathered into it by regeneration. They shall all be brought to *know* the true God; and shall be classed in the multitude of those *who know him*, i.e., who offer him a pure and holy worship, <19874> **Psalm 87:4.**

5. By having the word of God in this true Church, they shall be converted to God; so that it may be said, “This and that man were born to God in it,” <19875> **Psalm 87:5.**

6. All other cities shall decay and perish; but the Church of God, the city of the Great King, shall be *established for ever*, the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, <19876> **Psalm 87:5.**

7. The converted Gentiles shall have equal privileges with the converted Jews; and in the Christian Church they shall all *be enrolled* without difference or precedence, <19876> **Psalm 87:6.**

8. They shall *enjoy a perpetual solemnity*. They shall ever have cause to *sing and rejoice*, <19877> **Psalm 87:7.**

9. The highest privilege is that in God's Church he opens the *fountains of living water*; in his ordinances God dispenses every blessing; every sincere and upright soul rejoices in opportunities to wait on God in his ordinances. Such a one can sing, "All my springs are in thee." All other *fountains* are *muddy*; this alone is as *clear as crystal*. Worldly springs yield no pure delight; all there are mixed and turbulent: all here are refreshing, satisfying, delightful.

PSALMS

PSALM 88

The earnest prayer of a person in deep distress, abandoned by his friends and neighbours, and apparently forsaken of God, 1-18.

NOTES ON PSALM 88

Perhaps the *title* of this Psalm, which is difficult enough, might be thus translated: “A Poem to be sung to the conqueror, by the sons of Korah, responsively, in behalf of a distressed person; to give instruction to Heman the Ezrahite.” *Kennicott* says this Psalm has *three* titles, but the last only belongs to it; and supposes it to be the prayer of a person shut up in a separate house, because of the leprosy, who seems to have been in the last stages of that distemper; this disease, under the Mosaic dispensation, being supposed to come from the immediate stroke of God. *Calmet* supposes it to refer to the captivity; the Israelitish nation being represented here under the figure of a person greatly afflicted through the whole course of his life. By some *Heman* is supposed to have been the author; but who he was is not easy to be determined. *Heman* and *Ethan* whose names are separately prefixed to this and the following Psalm, are mentioned as the grandsons of Judah by his daughter-in-law Tamar, ^{<13016>} **1 Chronicles 2:6**, for they were the sons of Zerah, his immediate son by the above. “And Tamar, his daughter-in-law, bare him Pharez and Zerah,” ^{<13014>} **1 Chronicles 2:4**. “And the sons of Zerah Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara, (or Darda,)” ^{<13016>} **1 Chronicles 2:6**. If these were the same persons mentioned ^{<10431>} **1 Kings 4:31**, they were *eminent in wisdom*; for it is there said that Solomon’s wisdom “excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol,” ^{<10430>} **1 Kings 4:30, 31**. Probably *Zerah* was also called *Mahol*. If the Psalms in question were written by these men, they are the *oldest* poetical compositions extant; and the *most ancient part of Divine revelation*, as these persons lived at least *one hundred and seventy years* before Moses. This may be true of the *seventy-eighth* Psalm; but certainly not of the following, as it speaks of transactions that took place long afterwards, at least as late as the days of *David*, who is particularly mentioned in it. Were we sure of Heman as the author, there would be no

difficulty in applying the whole of the Psalm to the state of the Hebrews in Egypt, persecuted and oppressed by Pharaoh. But to seek or labour to reconcile matters contained in the *titles* to the Psalms, is treating them with too much respect, as many of them are wrongly placed, and none of them Divinely inspired.

Verse 1. O Lord God of my salvation] This is only the *continuation of prayers and supplications* already often sent up to the throne of grace.

Verse 2. Let my prayer come before thee] It is weak and helpless, though fervent and sincere: take all hinderances out of its way, and let it have a free passage to thy throne. One of the finest thoughts in the *Iliad* of *Homer* concerns prayer; I shall transcribe a principal part of this incomparable passage—incomparable when we consider its origin:—

Και γαρ τε Λιται εισι Διος κουραι μεγαλοιο,
 Χωλαι τε, ρυσσαι τε, παραβλωπες ἔ οφθαλμω,
 Αι ρα τε και μετοπισθ Ατης αλεγουσι κιουσαι,
 Ἐ δ Ατη σθεναρη τε και αρτιπος, ουνεκα πασας
 Πολλον υπεκπροθει, φθανει δε τε πασαν ἐπ αιαν,
 Βλαπτουδ ανθρωπους, αι δ εξακεονται ποισσω,
 Ὅσ μεν ἔ αιδεσεται κουρας Διος, ασσον ιουσας,
 Τονδε μεγ ωνησαν, και ἔ εκλυον ευξαμενοιο.
 Ὅς δε κ ανηνηται, και τε στερεως αποειπη,
 Λισσονται δ αρα ταιγε Δια Κρονιωνα κιουσαι,
 Τω ατην αμ επεσθαι, ινα βλαφθεις αποτιση.
 Αλλ, Αχιλευ, πορε και συ Διος κουρησιν επεσθαι
 Τιμην, ητ αλλων περ επιγμαμπτει φρενας εσθλων.

Iliad., ix. 498-510.

*Prayers are Jove's daughters; wrinkled, lame, slant-eyed,
 Which, though far distant, yet with constant pace
 Follow offence. Offence, robust of limb,
 And treading firm the ground, outstrips them all,
 And over all the earth, before them runs
 Hurtful to man: they, following, heal the hurt.
 Received respectfully when they approach,
 They yield us aid, and listen when we pray.
 But if we slight, and with obdurate heart
 Resist them, to Saturnian Jove they cry.
 Against, us supplicating, that offence*

*May cleave to us for vengeance of the wrong.
Thou, therefore, O Achilles! honour yield
To Jove's own daughters, vanquished as the brave
Have oftimes been, by honour paid to thee.
COWPER.*

On this allegory the translator makes the following remarks: “*Wrinkled*, because the countenance of a man, driven to prayer by a consciousness of guilt, is sorrowful and dejected. *Lame*, because it is a remedy to which men recur late, and with reluctance. *Slant-eyed*, either because in that state of humiliation they fear to lift up their eyes to heaven, or are employed in taking a retrospect of their past misconduct. The whole allegory, considering *when* and *where* it was composed, forms a very striking passage.”

Prayer to God for mercy must have the qualifications marked above. *Prayer comes from God*. He *desires* to save us: this desire is impressed on our hearts by his Spirit, and *reflected* back to himself. Thus says the allegory, “Prayers are the daughters of Jupiter.” But they are *lame*, as *reflected light* is much *less intense* and *vivid* than *light direct*. The desire of the heart is afraid to go into the presence of God, because the man knows, *feels*, that he has sinned against goodness and mercy. They are *wrinkled-dried* up and withered, with incessant longing: even the *tears* that refresh the soul are dried up and exhausted. They are *slant-eyed*; look aside through shame and confusion; dare not look God in the face. But *transgression* is strong, bold, impudent, and destructive: it treads with a *firm step* over the earth, bringing down curses on mankind. *Prayer and repentance follow*, but generally at a *distance*. The heart, being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin does not *speedily* relent. They, however, *follow*: and when, with humility and contrition, they approach the throne of grace, they are *respectfully received*. God acknowledges them *as his offspring*, and *heals the wounds* made by *transgression*. If the heart remain *obdurate*, and the man *will not humble himself* before his God, then his *transgression cleaves to him*, and the heartless, lifeless prayers which he may offer in that state, presuming on God's mercy, will turn against him; and to such a one the sacrificial death and mediation of Christ are in vain. And this will be the case especially with the person who, having received an offence from another, *refuses to forgive*. This latter circumstance is that to which the poet particularly refers. See the whole passage, with its context.

Verse 4. I am counted with them, &c.] I am as good as dead; nearly destitute of life and hope.

Verse 5. Free among the dead] *yvpj* *μytm* *bammethim chopshsi*, I rather think, means *stripped among the dead*. Both the *fourth* and *fifth* verses seem to allude to a *field of battle*: the *slain* and the *wounded*, are found scattered over the plain; the *spoilers* come among them, and strip, not only the *dead*, but those also who appear to be *mortally wounded*, and cannot recover, and are so feeble as not to be able to resist. Hence the psalmist says, “I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am as a man that hath no strength,” ~~<1980>~~ **Psalm 88:4**. And I am stripped among the dead, like the mortally wounded (*μyl l j* *chalalim*) that lie in the grave. “Free among the dead,” *inter mortuos liber*, has been applied by the fathers to our Lord’s voluntary death: all others were *obliged* to die, he alone *gave up his life*, and could take it again, ~~<31018>~~ **John 10:18**. He went into the grave, and came out when he *chose*. The dead are *bound* in the grave; *he was free*, and not obliged to continue in that state as *they* were.

They are cut off from thy hand.] An allusion to the roll in which the general has the names of all that compose his army under their respective officers. And when one is killed, he is erased from this register, and *remembered no more*, as belonging to the army; but his name is entered among those who are dead, in a separate book. This latter is termed the *black book*, or the *book of death*; the other is called the *book of life*, or the *book* where the *living are enrolled*. From this circumstance, expressed in different parts of the sacred writings, the doctrine of unconditional reprobation and election has been derived. How wonderful!

Verse 7. Thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.] The figures in this verse seem to be taken from a tempest at sea. The storm is fierce, and the waves cover the ship.

Verse 8. Thou hast made me an abomination] This verse has been supposed to express the *state of a leper*, who, because of the infectious nature of his disease, is *separated* from his *family*-is *abominable* to all, and at last *shut up* in a *separate house*, whence he does not *come out* to mingle with society.

Verse 10. Wilt thou show wonders to the dead!] *μytm* *methim*, *dead men*.

Shall the dead] *μυαπρ* *rephaim*, “the manes or departed spirits.”

Arise and praise thee?] Any more in this life? The *interrogations* in this and the two following verses imply the strongest *negations*.

Verse 11. Or thy faithfulness in destruction?] *Faithfulness* in God refers as well to his *fulfilling his threatenings* as to his *keeping his promises*. The wicked are threatened with such *punishments* as their crimes have deserved; but *annihilation* is no *punishment*. God therefore does not intend to *annihilate* the wicked; their *destruction* cannot declare the *faithfulness of God*.

Verse 12. The land of forgetfulness?] The place of *separate spirits*, or the *invisible world*. The heathens had some notion of this state. They feigned a river in the invisible world, called *Lethe*, *ληθη*, which signifies *oblivion*, and that those who drank of it remembered no more any thing relative to their former state.

—————*Animæ, quibus altera fato
Corpora debentur, lethæi ad fluminis undam
Securos latices et longa oblivia potant.
VIRG. Æn. vi. 713.*

*To all those souls who round the river wait
New mortal bodies are decreed by fate;
To yon dark stream the gliding ghosts repair,
And quaff deep draughts of long oblivion there.*

Verse 13. Shall my prayer prevent thee.] It shall get *before* thee; I will not wait till the accustomed time to offer my morning sacrifice, I shall call on thee long before others come to offer their devotions.

Verse 14. Why castest thou off my soul?] Instead of *my soul*, several of the ancient *Versions* have *my prayer*. Why dost thou refuse to *hear* me, and thus abandon me to *death*?

Verse 15. From my youth up.] I have always been a child of sorrow, afflicted in my body, and distressed in my mind. There are still found in the Church of God persons in similar circumstances; persons who are continually mourning for themselves and for the desolations of Zion. A disposition of this kind is sure to produce an unhealthy body; and indeed a weak constitution may often produce an enfeebled mind; but where the

terrors of the Lord prevail, there is neither health of *body* nor peace of *mind*.

Verse 16. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me.] It is a mighty flood by which I am overwhelmed.

Verse 17. They came round about me daily like water] Besides his spiritual conflicts, he had many enemies to grapple with. The waves of God's displeasure broke over him, and his enemies came around him like water, increasing more and more, rising higher and higher, till he was at last on the point of being submerged in the flood.

Verse 18. Lover and friend] I have no comfort, and neither *friend* nor *neighbour* to sympathize with me.

Mine acquaintance into darkness.] All have forsaken me; or Ēcj m y[dym meyuddai machsach, “Darkness is my companion.” Perhaps he may refer to the *death* of his acquaintances; all were gone; there was none left to console him! That man has a dismal lot who has outlived all his old friends and acquaintances; well may such complain. In the removal of their friends they see little else than the triumphs of death. *Khosroo*, an eminent Persian poet, handles this painful subject with great delicacy and beauty in the following lines:—

[—Persic—]

[—Persic—]

[—Persic—]

[—Persic—]

*Ruftem sauee khuteereh bekerestem bezar
Az Hijereh Doostan ke aseer fana shudend:
Guftem Eeshah Kuja shudend? ve Khatyr
Dad az sada jouab Eeshan Kuja!*

*“Weeping, I passed the place where lay my friends
Captured by death; in accents wild I cried,
Where are they? And stern Fate, by Echoes voice,
Returned in solemn sound the sad Where are they?”*

J. B. C.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH PSALM

There are *four* parts in this Psalm:—

I. A petition, ^{<198801>}**Psalm 88:1, 2.**

II. The cause of this petition, his misery, which he describes, ^{<198813>}**Psalm 88:3-9.**

III. The effects produced by this miserable condition: 1. A special prayer, ^{<198810>}**Psalm 88:10-12**; 2. An expostulation with God for deliverance, ^{<198810>}**Psalm 88:10-12.**

IV. A grievous complaint, ^{<198814>}**Psalm 88:14-18.**

The psalmist offers his petition; but before he begins, he lays down four arguments why it should be admitted,—

1. His confidence and reliance on God: “O Lord God of my salvation.”
2. His earnestness to prevail: “I have cried.”
3. His assiduity: “Day and night.”
4. His sincerity: “I have cried before thee.”

And then he tenders his request for audience: “Let my prayer come before thee, incline thine ear unto my cry.”

II. And then next he sets forth the pitiful condition he was in, that hereby he might move God to take compassion, which he amplifies several ways:—

1. From the weight and variety of his troubles; many they were, and pressed him to death. “For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh to the grave.”
2. From the danger of death in which he was.

Which is illustrated by three degrees:—

1. That he was *moribundus*, *dying*, no hope of life in him even by the estimate of all men: “I am counted with them that go down to the pit; I am as a man that hath no strength.”
2. That he was *plane mortuus*, *nearly dead*; but as a dead man, “free among the dead;” freed from all the business of this life; as far separate from them as a dead man.

3. Yea, dead and buried: “Like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberedst no more;” i.e., to care for in this life; and “they are cut off from thy hand,” i.e., thy providence, thy custody, as touching matter of this life.

And yet he farther amplifies his sad condition by two similitudes:—

1. Of a man in some deep dark dungeon: “Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps;” as was Jeremiah, ^{<193715>}**Psalm 37:15, 16; 38:6.**

2. Of a man in a wreck at sea, that is compassed with the waves, to which he compares God’s anger: “Thy wrath lieth hard upon me. and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.” One wave impels another. The recurrence of his troubles was perpetual; one no sooner gone but another succeeded.

And, to add to this his sorrow, his friends, whose visits in extremity used to alleviate the grief of a troubled soul, even these proved perfidious, and came not to him; he had no comfort with them; which was also God’s doing, and thus augmented his grief.

The *auxesis* or *augmentation* is here very elegant:

1. “Thou hast put away mine acquaintance from me.” THOU.
2. “Thou hast made me an abomination to them.” No less; *an abomination*.
3. “I am shut up, I cannot come forth.” As a man in prison, I cannot come at them, and they will not come to me.

III. The effect of which grievous affliction was threefold: 1. An internal grief and wasting of the body; 2. An ardent affection in God; and 3. An expostulation with God.

1. “My eye mourns by reason of affliction.” An evidence that I am troubled and grieved to the heart, that my eye droops and fails; for when the animal and vital spirits suffer a decay, the eye will quickly, by her dimness, deadness, and dulness, discover it.

2. It produced an ardent affection, a continuance and assiduity in prayer, which is here made evident by the adjuncts.

1. His *voice*: “I have called daily upon thee.” It was, 1. A cry; 2. It was continual.

2. By the extension of his hands: “I have stretched out my hands to thee.” Men used to do so when they expected help; when they looked to receive; whence we sometimes say Lend me thy hand.

3. The third effect was, an expostulation with God, in which he presseth to spare his life from the inconvenience that might thereby happen, viz., that he should be disabled to praise God and celebrate his name, as he was bound and desired to do, among the living: an argument used before, ~~908B~~ **Psalm 6:3**. This argument, though it savours too much of human frailty, yet he thought by it to move God, who above all things is jealous of his own glory, which by his death he imagines will suffer loss; and therefore he asks,—

1. “Wilt thou show wonders among the dead?” That is, thy desire is to set forth thy honour, which cannot be done if I go to the grave, except by some miracle I should be raised from thence.

2. “Shall the dead arise again and praise thee?” It is the living that shall show forth thy praise, thy power, and goodness; thy fidelity in keeping thy promises to the sons of men. The dead, as dead, cannot do this; and they return not from the grave, except by miracle.

3. “Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction? shall thy wonders be known in the dark, or thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?” Such is the grave, a place of oblivion; for Abraham is ignorant of us. The goodness and faithfulness of God, which he makes known to us in this life, are not known nor can be declared by the dead: the living see them; they have experience of them; and therefore he desires that his life may be spared to that end, lest if he die now that faculty should be taken from him; he should no longer be able to resound the praise of God, which is the end for which men ought to desire life.

IV. He returns to his complaint; and again repeats what he had said before, and almost in the same words, and gives *three* instances:—

1. In his prayer: “But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.” He prayed earnestly, early, not drowsily; for he did prevent God: he prayed, and would continue in prayer; and yet all in vain.

2. For God seems to be inexorable, of which he complains: “Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?” Even the best

of God's servants have sometimes been brought to that strait, that they have not had a clear sense of God's favour, but conceived themselves neglected and deserted by him, and discountenanced.

His *second* instance is, his present affliction, mentioned before, ^{<19804>}**Psalm 88:4-7**: "I am afflicted and ready to die," which he here exaggerates:—

1. From the time and continuance of it; for he had borne it "even from his youth up."
2. From the cause. It did not proceed from any outward or human cause; that might have been borne and helped: but it was an affliction sent from God: "Thy terrors have I suffered;" it came from a sense of God's wrath.
3. From an uncomfortable effect. It wrought in this soul amazement, unrest, a perpetual trouble and astonishment: "Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind: "I am distracted with them."

He amplifies this wrath by the former similes, ^{<19807>}**Psalm 88:7**; waves and water.

1. "Thy fierce wrath goes over me;" as waves over a man's head at sea. "Thy terrors have cut me off," as a weaver's thrum.
2. "They came round about me like water; daily like water."
3. "They compassed me about together," as if they conspired my ruin: "all thy waves," ^{<19807>}**Psalm 88:7**.

His *third* instance, which is the same, ^{<19808>}**Psalm 88:8**. The perfidiousness and desertion of friends: a loving friend is some comfort in distress; but this he found not: "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness." They appear no more to me to give me any counsel, help, or comfort, than if they were hidden in perpetual darkness. His case, therefore, was most deplorable.

PSALMS

PSALM 89

The psalmist shows God's great mercy to the house of David, and the promises which he had given to it of support and perpetuity, 1-37; complains that, notwithstanding these promises, the kingdom of Judah is overthrown, and the royal family nearly ruined, 38-45; and earnestly prays for their restoration, 46-52.

NOTES ON PSALM 89

It is most probable that this Psalm was composed during the captivity. Of *Ethan* and *Heman* we have already seen something in the introduction to the preceding Psalm; {<1880> **Psalm 88:1**} see also the parallel places in the margin. The *title* should probably be translated,—*To give instruction to Ethan the Ezrahite*. The *Chaldee* has, “A good instruction, delivered by Abraham, who came from the east country.” The *Septuagint* and *Æthiopic* have *Nathan the Israelite*; the *Arabic* has *Nathan the Israelite*.

The Psalm divides itself into *two* grand parts; the first extends, <1880> **Psalm 89:1-37**, in which the psalmist shows God's mercy to the house of David, and the promises which he has given to it of support and perpetuity. The *second* part begins with verse 38, and ends with the Psalm; {<1883> **Psalm 89:38-52**} and in it the author complains that notwithstanding these promises, the kingdom of Judah is overthrown and the royal family ruined; and he entreats the Lord to remember his covenant made with that family, and restore them from their captivity.

Verse 1. I will sing of the mercies of the Lord] I will celebrate the mercy of God to the house of Jacob; the mercy that has been shown to our fathers from time *immemorial*.

To all generations] What I say concerning thy mercy and goodness, being inspired by thy Spirit, is not only *true*, but shall be *preserved* by the Divine providence for ever.

Verse 2. Mercy shall be built up for ever] God's *goodness* is the *foundation* on which his *mercy rests*; and from that source, and on that foundation, acts of mercy shall flow and be built up for ever and ever.

Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish] What thou hast promised to do to the children of men on earth, thou dost register in heaven, and thy promise shall never fail.

Verse 3. I have made a covenant with my chosen] I have made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and renewed it with Moses and Joshua in reference to the Israelites in general: but I have made one with David in especial relation to himself and posterity, of whom, according to the flesh, the Christ is to come. And this is the covenant with David:—

Verse 4. Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.] And this covenant had most incontestably Jesus Christ in view. This is the *seed*, or posterity, that should sit on the throne, and reign for ever and ever. David and his family are long since become extinct; none of his race has sat on the Jewish throne for more than *two thousand* years: but the Christ has reigned invariably since that time, and will reign till all his enemies are put under his feet; and to this the psalmist says Selah. It will be so, it is so; and it cannot be otherwise; for the Lord hath *sworn* that he shall have an *everlasting kingdom*, as he has an *everlasting priesthood*.

Verse 5. The heavens shall praise thy wonders] The works that shall be wrought by this descendant of David shall be so plainly miraculous as shall prove their origin to be Divine: and both saints and angels shall join to celebrate his praises.

Thy faithfulness also] All thy promises shall be fulfilled; and particularly and supereminently those which respect the *congregation of the saints*—the assemblies of Christian believers.

Verse 6. For who in the heaven] *qj v shachak* signifies the ethereal regions, all visible or unbounded space; the universe. Who is like Jesus? given in his *human nature* none of *the sons of the mighty* can be compared with him. He atones for the sin of the world, and saves to the uttermost all who come unto God through him.

This may also be considered a reproof to idolaters. Is there any among the heavenly hosts like to God? Even the most glorious of them were made by his hands. Can the stars, or the more distant planets, or the moon, or the sun, be likened unto God most high?

Who **among the sons of the mighty**] Instead of **יָלֵךְ אֱלֹהִים**, *mighty ones*, four of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. have **יָלֵךְ אֵל**, *strength*:—sons of strength, strong persons. Several of the *Versions* seem to have read **יָלֵךְ אֱלֹהִים**, *GOD*, instead of **יָלֵךְ אֱלֹהִים**, *strong ones*. So my old Psalter, following the Vulgate.—**For wha in the cloudes sal be eveded to Lorde; like sal be to God in sons of God!** which it paraphrases thus: “Emang al haly men nane may be eveded to Ihu Crist: and nane may be like to hym in God's sons: for he is God's son be kynde, and thai through grace.”

Verse 7. God is greatly to be feared] In all religious assemblies the deepest reverence for God should rest upon the people. Where this does not prevail, there is no true worship. While some come with a proper Scriptural boldness to the throne of grace, there are others who come into the presence of God with a reprehensible, if not sinful, boldness.

Verse 8. O Lord God of hosts] Thou who hast all armies at thy command, and canst serve thyself by every part of thy creation, whether animate or inanimate.

Who is a strong Lord] See ^{<1806>} **Psalm 89:6**.

Thy faithfulness round about thee?] Or, more properly, *thy faithfulness is round about thee*. Thou still keepest thy promises *in view*. God's *truth* leads him to fulfil his promises: they stand round his throne as the faithful servants of an eastern monarch stand round their master, waiting for the moment of their dismissal to perform his will.

Verse 9. Thou rulest the raging of the sea] Whoever has seen the sea in a storm, when its waves run what is called *mountain high*, must acknowledge that nothing but omnipotent power could rule its raging.

When the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.] Thou governest both its *flux* and *reflux*. Thou art the Author of *storms* and *calms*. There may be a reference here to the passage of the Red Sea, and the strong wind that agitated its waves at that time; as the next verse seems to indicate.

Verse 10. Thou hast broken Rahab] Thou hast destroyed the power of *Egypt*, having overthrown the king and its people when they endeavoured to prevent thy people from regaining their liberty.

As one that is slain] The whole clause in the original is, **bhr l l j k takd hta** *attah dikkitha kechalal Rahab*, “Thou, like a hero, hast broken down Egypt.” Dr. *Kennicott* has largely proved that **l l j chahal**, which we render *wounded, slain, &c.*, means a *soldier, warrior, hero*; and it is certain that this sense agrees better with it than the other in a great number of places. Mr. *Berlin* translates, Tu contrivisti ut cadaver Ægyptum; “Thou hast bruised down Egypt like a dead carcass.” The whole strength of Egypt could avail nothing against thee. Thou didst trample them down as easily as if they had all been dead carcasses.

Verse 11. The heavens are thine] Thou art the Governor of all things, and the Disposer of all events.

The world] The terraqueous globe.

And the fullness] All the generations of men. *Thou hast founded them*-thou hast *made* them, and dost *sustain* them.

After this verse, the *Editio Princeps* of the Hebrew Bible, printed at Soncini, 1488, adds:—

hl yl Ēl pa μwy Ēl

lailah lecha aph yom lecha

vmvw rwam twnykh hta

vashamesh maor hachinotha attah

To thee is the day; also to thee is the night:

Thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

But these same words are found in ^{<197416>}Psalm 74:16.

Verse 12. The north and the south] It is generally supposed that by these *four* terms all the four quarters of the globe are intended. *Tabor*, a mountain of Galilee, was on the *west* of Mount *Hermon*, which was beyond Jordan, to the *east* of the source of that river.

Verse 14. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne] The throne-the government, of God, is founded in *righteousness* and *judgment*. He knows what is right; he sees what is right; he does what is right; and his *judgments* are ever according to righteousness. His decisions are all *oracles*, no one of them is ever reversed.

Mercy and truth shall go before thy face.] These shall be the *heralds* that shall announce the coming of the Judge. His *truth* binds him to fulfil all his declarations; and his *mercy* shall be shown to all those who have fled for refuge to the hope that is set before them in the Gospel. **See Clarke's notes on** “^{<18510>}Psalm 85:10”; “^{<18511>}Psalm 85:11”.

Verse 15. Blessed is the people] “O the blessednesses of that people ($\mu[h\ yrv\ a$ *ashrey haam*) that know the joyful sound;” that are spared to hear the sound of the trumpet on the morning of the *jubilee*, which proclaims deliverance to the captives, and the restoration of all their forfeited estates. “They shall walk vigorously ($\wkl\ hy\ yehallechun$) in the light of thy countenance” ($\ddot{E}ynp\ rwab\ beor\ paneycha$)-the full persuasion of the approbation of God their *Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier*.

Verse 16. In thy name shall they rejoice] Or, “greatly exult,” $\wml\ ygy\ yegilun$; “all that day,” $\muwyh\ haiyom$, the jubilee, referred to above.

And in thy righteousness] In the declaration of thy righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, ^{<1825>}**Romans 3:25, 26.**

Shall they be exalted.] They shall be justified freely from all things, be purified from all unrighteousness, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ here below, and at last be exalted to his right hand to reign with him for ever. The jubilee was a type of the Gospel, and under that type the psalmist here speaks of the glorious advent of the Lord Jesus, and the great happiness of believers in him. Let it be observed that the letters in the above Hebrew words called *paragoric*, as \hat{nun} in $\wkl\ hy\ yehallechuN$, and $\wml\ ygy\ yegiluN$, always increase and deepen the meaning of the words to which they are attached.

Verse 17. For thou art the glory of their strength] They are strong in faith, and give glory to thee, because they know that their strength cometh from the Lord of hosts.

And in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.] Instead of $\muwr\ t\ tarum$, “shall be exalted,” $\muyr\ t\ tarim$, “thou shalt exalt,” is the reading of several MSS.: but $\muwr\ t\ tarum$, “shall be exalted,” is supported by *forty-four* of *Kennicott's MSS.*, and *sixty* of *Deuteronomy Rossi's*, as well as by several ancient editions, with the *Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic*

Versions. In the enjoyment of the Divine favour they shall grow more *wise*, more *holy*, more *powerful*, and, consequently, more *happy*.

Verse 19. Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one] Instead of **Ēdysj chasidecha**, “thy holy one,” **Ēydysj chasideycha**, “thy holy ones,” is the reading of *sixty-three* of *Kennicott’s* and *seventy-one* of *Deuteronomy Rossi’s MSS.*, and a great number of *editions* besides.

If we take it in the *singular*, it most probably means *Samuel*, and refers to the *revelation* God gave to him relative to his appointment of *David* to be king in the stead of *Saul*. If we take it in the *plural*, it may mean not only *Samuel*, but also *Nathan* and *Gad*.

For what God revealed to *Samuel* relative to *David*, see ^{<1076>}**2 Samuel 7:5**, &c.; ^{<1310>}**1 Chronicles 11:2, 3**; and for what he said to *Nathan* on the same subject, see ^{<1370>}**1 Chronicles 17:3, 7-15**. All the *Versions* have the word in the *plural*.

Verse 20. I have found David my servant] This is the sum of what God had said in prophetic *visions* to his *saints* or holy persons, *Samuel*, *Nathan*, and *Gad*; see the parallel places in the *margin*. Here the psalmist begins to reason with God relative to *David*, his posterity, and the perpetuity of his kingdom; which promises appear now to have utterly failed, as the throne had been overturned, and all the people carried into captivity. But all these things may have reference to *Christ* and his kingdom; for we are assured that *David* was a type of the *Messiah*.

Verse 22. The enemy shall not exact upon him] None of his enemies shall be able to prevail against him. It is worthy of remark that *David* was never overthrown; he finally conquered every foe that rose up against him. *Saul’s* persecution, *Absalom’s* revolt, *Sheba’s* conspiracy, and the struggle made by the partisans of the house of *Saul* after his death, only tended to call forth *David’s* skill, courage, and prowess, and to seat him more firmly on his throne. The *Philistines*, the *Ammonites*, the *Syrians*, &c., united all their forces to crush him, but in vain: “God beat down all his foes before his face,” and variously *plagued* those who opposed him, ^{<1823>}**Psalm 89:23**.

Verse 25. I will set his hand also in the sea] This was literally fulfilled in *David*. *Hand* signifies power or authority; he set his hand on the sea in *conquering* the *Philistines*, and extending his empire along the coast of the *Mediterranean Sea*, from *Tyre* to *Pelusium*. All the coasts of the *Red Sea*,

the Persian Gulf, and the Arabic Ocean, might be said to have been under his *government*, for they all paid tribute to *him* or his son Solomon.

His right hand in the rivers] First, the Euphrates: he subjected all Syria, and even a part of Mesopotamia; ^{<1088>}**2 Samuel 8:3**; ^{<1388>}**1 Chronicles 18:3**. He also took Damascus, and consequently had his *hand* or authority over the river Chrysorrhoes, or Baraddi; and in his conquest of all Syria his hand must have been on the *Orontes* and other rivers in that region. But if this be considered as referring to the typical David, we see that *He* was never conquered; he never lost a battle; the hosts of hell pursued him in vain. Satan was discomfited, and all his enemies bruised under his feet. Even over *death* he triumphed; and as to his dominion, it has spread and is spreading over all the isles of the sea, and the continents of the world.

Verse 27. I will make him my first-born] I will deal with him as a father by his *first-born son*, to whom a double portion of possessions and honours belong. *First-born* is not always to be understood *literally* in Scripture. It often signifies simply a *well-beloved*, or *best-beloved son*; one preferred to all the rest, and distinguished by some eminent prerogative. Thus God calls Israel *his son*, his *first-born*, ^{<1892>}**Exodus 4:22**. See also **Ecclus 36:12**. And even Ephraim is called God's *first-born*, ^{<2310>}**Jeremiah 31:9**. In the same sense it is sometimes applied even to *Jesus Christ himself*, to signify his supereminent dignity; not the *eternal Sonship* of his *Divine nature*, as inveterate prejudice and superficial thinking have supposed.

Verse 29. His seed also will I make to endure for ever] This can apply only to the spiritual David. The posterity of David are long since extinct, or so blended with the remaining Jews as to be utterly indiscernible; but Jesus ever liveth, and his seed (*Christians*) are spread, and are spreading over all nations; and *his throne* is eternal. As to his *manhood*, he is of the house and lineage of David; the government is upon his shoulders, and of its increase there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and on his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth even for ever. ^{<2307>}**Isaiah 9:7**.

Verse 30. If his children forsake my law] See Clarke's notes on "^{<10713>}**2 Samuel 7:13**", where this and some of the following verses are explained.

Verse 34. My covenant will I not break] My determination to establish a spiritual kingdom, the head of which shall be Jesus, the son of David, shall

never fail. My prophets have declared this, and I will not alter the thing that is gone out of my mouth.

Verse 35. Once have I sworn] I have made one determination on this head, and have bound myself by my holiness; it is impossible that I should change, and there needs no second oath, the one already made is of endless obligation.

Verse 36. His throne as the sun] Splendid and glorious! dispensing light, heat, life, and salvation to all mankind.

Verse 37. As the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.] That is, as long as the sun and moon shall endure, as long as *time* shall last, his kingdom shall last among men. The moon appears to be termed a *faithful witness* here, because by her particularly *time* is measured. Her *decrease* and *increase* are especially observed by every nation, and by these time is generally estimated, especially among the eastern nations. *So many moons is a man old; so many moons since such an event happened;* and even their years are reckoned by *lunations*. This is the case with the Mohammedans to the present day. Or the *rainbow* may be intended; that sign which God has established in the cloud; that faithful witness of his that the earth shall no more be destroyed by water. As long therefore as the *sun*, the *moon*, and the *rainbow* appear in the heavens, so long shall the spiritual David reign, and his seed prosper and increase.

Selah.] It is confirmed; it shall not fail.

Verse 38. But thou hast cast off] Hitherto the psalmist has spoken of the *covenant of God with David* and his family, which led them to expect all manner of prosperity, and a perpetuity of the Jewish throne; now he shews what appears to him a failure of the promise, and what he calls in the next verse the *making void the covenant of his servant*. God cannot lie to David; how is it then that his *crown is profaned*, that it is cast *down to the ground*; the land being possessed by strangers, and the twelve tribes in the most disgraceful and oppressive captivity?

Verse 40. Thou hast broken down all his hedges] Thou hast permitted the land to be stripped of all defence; there is not even one strong place in the hands of thy people.

Verse 41. All that pass by the way spoil him.] The land is in the condition of a vineyard, the hedge of which is broken down, so that they

who pass by may pull the grapes, and dismantle or tear down the vines. The *Chaldeans* and the *Assyrians* began the ravage; the *Samaritans* on the one hand, and the *Idumeans* on the other, have completed it.

Verse 42. Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries] Thou hast given them that strength which thou didst formerly give to thy own people; therefore *these* are depressed, *those* exalted.

Verse 43. Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword.] The arms and military prowess of thy people are no longer of any use to them; THOU art *against* them, and therefore they are fallen. In what a perilous and hopeless situation must that soldier be who, while defending his life against his mortal foe, has his sword *broken*, or its *edge turned*; or, in modern warfare, whose *gun misses fire*! The *Gauls*, when invaded by the Romans, had no method of *hardening iron*; at every blow their swords *bended*, so that they were obliged, before they could strike again, to put them under their foot or over their knee, to straighten them; and in most cases, before this could be done, their better armed foe had taken away their life! The edge of their sword was turned, so that they could not stand in battle; and hence the *Gauls* were conquered by the Romans.

Verse 44. Thou hast made his glory to cease] The kingly dignity is destroyed, and there is neither *king* nor *throne* remaining.

Verse 45. The days of his youth hast thou shortened] Our kings have not reigned half their days, nor lived out half their lives. The *four* last kings of Judea reigned but a short time, and either died by the sword or in captivity.

Jehoahaz reigned only *three months*, and was led captive to Egypt, where he *died*. *Jehoiakim* reigned only *eleven years*, and was tributary to the Chaldeans, who *put him to death*, and cast his body into the common sewer. *Jehoiachin* reigned *three months and ten days*, and was led *captive* to Babylon, where he continued in prison to the time of Evilmerodach, who, though he loosed him from prison, never invested him with any power. *Zedekiah*, the last of all, had reigned only *eleven years* when he was taken, *his eyes put out*, was *loaded with chains*, and thus carried to Babylon. Most of these kings died a violent and *premature* death. Thus the *days of their youth*-of their power, dignity, and life, were *shortened*, and they themselves *covered with shame*. *Selah*; so it most incontestably is.

Verse 46. How long, Lord?] The promise cannot utterly fail. When then, O Lord, wilt thou restore the kingdom to Israel?

Verse 47. How short my time is] If thou deliver not speedily, none of the present generations shall see thy salvation. Are all the remnants of our tribes created in vain? shall they never see happiness?

Verse 48. What man is he that liveth] All men are mortal, and death is uncertain and no man, by wisdom, might, or riches, can deliver his life from the *hand*-the power, of death and the grave.

Verse 49. Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses] Wilt thou not deal with *us* as thou didst with our *fathers*? Didst thou not swear unto David that thou wouldst distinguish *him* as thou didst *them*?

Verse 50. I do bear in my bosom] Our enemies, knowing our confidence, having often heard our boast in thee, and now seeing our low and hopeless estate, mock us for our confidence, and blaspheme *thee*. This wounds my soul; I cannot bear to hear thy name blasphemed among the heathen. *All these mighty people* blaspheme the God of Jacob.

Verse 51. They have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.] They search into the whole history of thy people; they trace it up to the earliest times; and they find we have been disobedient and rebellious; and on this account we suffer much, alas, *deserved* reproach. The *Chaldee* gives this clause a singular turn: “Thy enemies have reproached the slowness of the footsteps of the feet of thy Messiah, O Lord. We have trusted in him as our great Deliverer, and have been daily in expectation of his coming; but there is no deliverer, and our enemies mock our confidence.” This expectation seems now wholly abandoned by the Jews: they have rejected the *true Messiah*, and the ground of their expectation of *another* is now cut off. When will they turn unto the Lord? When shall the veil be taken away from their hearts?

*“Bend by thy grace, O bend or break
The iron sinew in their neck!”*

Verse 52. Blessed be the Lord for evermore.] Let him treat us as he will, his name deserves eternal praises: our affliction, though great, is less than we have deserved.

This verse concludes the THIRD BOOK of the PSALTER; and, I think, has been added by a later hand, in order to make this *distinction*, as every *Masoretic* Bible has something of this kind at the end of each book. The verse is wanting in one of *Kennicott's* and one of *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS.; in *another* it is written without points, to show that it does not belong to the text, and in *three* others it is written *separately* from the text. It is found, however, in all the ancient *Versions*. The *Chaldee* finishes thus: "Blessed be the name of the Lord in this world. Amen and Amen. Blessed be the name of the Lord in the world to come. Amen and Amen." And the reader will find no difficulty to subscribe his Amen, so be it.

ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH PSALM

In this Psalm the stability and perpetuity of Christ's kingdom, of which the kingdom of David was but a type, are excellently described and foretold.

The *parts* of this Psalm are these:—

I. The *argument* and *sum* of the whole; the loving-kindness and the truth of God, ^{<1980B>}**Psalm 89:1, 2.**

II. The *particular instance* of God's goodness and truth in making a covenant with David, ^{<1980B>}**Psalm 89:3, 4.**

III. A *doxology* in which God is praised for his wonders, faithfulness, power, providence, justice, judgment, mercy, and truth, ^{<1980B>}**Psalm 89:3-15.**

IV. The *happy state* of God's people, ^{<1981S>}**Psalm 89:15-19.**

V. A *special example* of God's goodness towards his Church, *exemplified* in David, but *verified* in Christ, ^{<1982B>}**Psalm 89:20-28.**

VI. How David's *posterity should be dealt with*, on their disobedience, ^{<1982B>}**Psalm 89:29-38.**

VII. An *expostulation* on the contrary events, where the psalmist deploras the ruined state of the Jewish kingdom, ^{<1983B>}**Psalm 89:38-47.**

VIII. A *petition* for mercy and restoration, ^{<1984B>}**Psalm 89:48-51.**

IX. The *conclusion*, in which the psalmist blesseth God for the hope he has in his favour, in all states, ^{<1985B>}**Psalm 89:52.**

I. The *argument* or *sum* of the Psalm set down in the *first verse*, and amplified by the reason in the *second*.

1. "I will sing." I will set this forth in a song; because, 1. It is the fittest way to express joy for any thing. 2. It will be best inculcated in this way. 3. It will be more easily remembered; and, 4. More easily delivered to others, in order to be remembered. Many ancient histories had not been preserved at all, had they not been delivered in *poetry*.

2. "Of thy mercies." Plurally, for they are many; and a song of this kind should be of *all*.

3. "For ever." Intentionally, not in himself, not actually; for as a wicked man, could he live always, would sin always; so a good man, could he live here for ever, would sing for ever of the mercies of the Lord.

4. "With my mouth will I make known," &c. While I live I will make them known, and when I am dead they shall be known by the record which I leave behind. His reason for it is, because God's mercy is everlasting; it is therefore proper to be the subject of everlasting song.

1. "For I have said." This is an indubitable truth.

2. "Mercy shall be built up for ever." It is not exhausted in one age, but, as a house built on a strong foundation, it shall be firm, and last from age to age.

3. "Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish." As is thy *mercy*, so is thy faithfulness, perpetual as the heavens.

II. For the proof of God's goodness and truth he produces the instance of the covenant made with David, where he brings in God speaking:—

1. "I have made a covenant with my chosen." I have made this covenant through my mere mercy, not on account of their merits. I have chosen David, not because he *deserved* it, but because he is fit for it.

2. "I have sworn." In compassion to the weakness of men, I have condescended to bind myself by an oath; and the covenant and the oath are extant. ^{<0071>} **2 Samuel 7:11.**

3. The tenor of the covenant is, "Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." *Thy seed*-this is true of Christ only, who was of the seed of David, and of whose kingdom there shall be no

end. The words are not to be understood of David's earthly kingdom, but of Christ's spiritual kingdom, for that alone will be established for ever.

III. A Doxology. What the psalmist undertook in the *first* part he now performs, and thus he begins: "The heavens shall praise." By these some understand the Church, and the preachers in the Church; others, the *angels*: both are true. GOD'S *followers* and his *angels* praise him; and the subject of their praise is:—

1. God's *wondrous works*, and his *truth*. 2. the manner in which he showed his works and his truth, in promising the Messiah, and in so faithfully keeping that promise.

And now he sings praise to his majesty, setting forth his power in *three* respects:—

1. By way of comparison; there is nothing in heaven or earth equal to it, ~~1986~~ **Psalm 89:6-8.**

2. By his agency in governing the world: as, for example, the *sea*, Thou stillest the raging of it, &c.

3. The creation of all things; the world and its fulness.

The other part of the praise, sung both by the prophets and the angels, is taken from his attributes, summed up in ~~1994~~ **Psalm 89:14**: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face."

He represents God as a great King sitting in his throne; the *basis* of which is, 1. *Justice* and *Judgment*. 2. The *attendants* are *mercy* and *truth*.

1. Justice, which defends his subjects, and does every one right.

2. Judgment, which restrains rebels, and keeps off injuries.

3. Mercy, which shows compassion, pardons, supports the weak.

4. Truth, that performs whatsoever he promiseth.

IV. And in regard that God is powerful, just, merciful, faithful, he takes an occasion to set out the happy condition of God's people, who live under this King.

“Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound:” that is, do know that God is present with them, and his kingly Majesty is at hand to protect them. The phrase is taken from *Moses*. For the law was given by sound of trumpet. The calling of the feasts was by sound of trumpet: at that sound they removed; at that sound they assembled. *Balaam* said, “The sound of a king is among them.” Happy, then, are the people that know the joyful sound. God presents their King speaking, ruling, defending, pardoning them. Or it may refer to the year of jubilee, (see the notes.) That they are happy, the effects do evince; which are:—

1. “They shall walk in the light of thy countenance,” i.e., though beset with troubles, yet they shall walk confidently, being assured of God’s favour.
2. “In thy name shall they rejoice all the day long.” Their joy is firm.
3. “In thy righteousness shall they be exalted.” They shall get a name, strength. In their union and communion with God they shall be happy.

Confident, yea, joyful and strong they are in all temptations; which yet they have not from themselves. All is from God. For “thou art the glory of their strength, and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our defence, the Holy One of Israel is our King.”

V. The doxology being now ended, and the happiness of God’s people expressed and proved, the prophet now enlarges himself upon the covenant formerly mentioned. ^{<19804>}**Psalm 89:4, 5**, exemplified in *David*, but truly verified in *Christ*. Which he continues to verse 30. { ^{<19805>}**Psalm 89:6-30** }

1. “Then,” i.e., when *David* was chosen to be king, and invested with the regal robe.
2. “Thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One.” To *Samuel* for his anointing; and saidst,
3. “I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.” That is, *David* in type, but *Christ* in the antitype. So explained, “I have found *David* my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.”

To which there follow the promises made to him:—

1. For his establishment and confirmation in the throne: “With whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him.”

2. For protection against his enemies: “The enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him.”

3. A conquest over his enemies: “And will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.”

4. And that there be no doubt of the performance of these ample promises, nor yet those that follow, the prophet interposes the cause, viz., the faithfulness and mercy of God. In mercy he said it, and it should so come to pass: “But my faithfulness and mercy shall be with him.” And now he goes on:—

5. “His horn shall be exalted.” His power shall be greatly increased.

And this his exaltation appears:—

1. In the dilatation of his empire: “I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers,” i.e., from the sea to *Euphrates*, ~~<108B>~~ **2 Samuel 8:3**.

2. In the honour done him, to call GOD Father, his God, his Rock: “He shall call to me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.”

3. Then that God asserts and fixes this prerogative upon him, acknowledging him to be his Son; his first-born Son: “Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.”

4. In the perpetuity of his kingdom, which is rightly attributed to God’s mercy; as ~~<1825>~~ **Psalm 89:25**: “My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.”

5. In the promise made to his seed: “His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.”

VI. And next the prophet puts a case, and answers it: But what, if *David’s* seed transgress God’s covenant, break his laws, violate his statutes, become rebels and disobedient; will God then *keep covenant with them!* *shall his seed endure for ever? and his throne as the days of heaven?* To this doubt God answers, ~~<1881>~~ **Psalm 89:30-38**; showing us how David’s seed, if they transgress, shall be dealt with.

1. “If his children forsake my law;” that is, my whole doctrine of worship, religion, faith, &c.

2. “And walk not in my judgments;” i.e., in those laws which set out rewards and punishments.

3. “If they break my statutes.” Those statutes I have set down for my service, the rites, ceremonies, new moons, Sabbaths, sacrifices, circumcision, passover, &c.

4. “And keep not my commandments;” that is, the decalogue and moral law. In a word, if they become vicious in their morals, and profane, and rebels in my worship and religion.

This then shall happen unto them,—escape they shall not, but shall soundly smart for it. They shall feel,—1. *The rod*; and, 2. *The scourge*. Then,

1. “I will visit (that is, punish) their transgression with the rod.”

2. “And their iniquity with stripes.” Which was often done by the *Babylonians, Antiochus, &c.* And yet in judgment I will remember mercy. I will remember my covenant, my promise, my word, my oath, and will make that good. I will not totally cast off David’s seed; which I mean not after the flesh, for that is long since cast off, but after the Spirit. *Christ*, which was of the seed of *David*, and those which are his seed, viz., the Church, shall enjoy the benefit of my covenant and oath for ever: “Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing gone out of my lips.”

And that there be no doubt of this, he brings in God repeating his oath and covenant.

1. His oath: “Once have I sworn by my holiness;” that is, by myself, who am holy.

2. His covenant: “That I will not lie unto David; for his seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.” As the sun and moon are not liable to any ruinous mutations no more is this covenant: they must endure to the end of the world; and so must this covenant. They are faithful witnesses in heaven; and so we are to seek for the performance of this covenant in heaven; not in the earth the covenant being about a heavenly kingdom, not an earthly; it being evident that the kingdom of

David on earth has failed many ages since: but that of *Christ* shall never fail.

VII. Now that *David's* kingdom did fail, or at least was brought to a low ebb, is the complaint in the following words, which flesh and blood considering, gave a wrong judgment upon it, as if God did nothing less than perform his oath and covenant. This is what the prophet lays to God's charge: "But thou hast cut off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed." Both king and people are cast aside, than which nothing seems more contrary to thy covenant.

Thou hast made void the covenant of the servant, of which there are many lamentable consequences:—

1. "His crown is cast to the ground." The glory of his kingdom trampled upon.
2. "His hedges broken down." His strongholds brought to ruin.
3. "All that pass by the way spoil him." He is exposed to all rapine and plunder.
4. "He is a reproach to his neighbour." Exposed to all contumely and disgrace.
5. "Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies, and made all his adversaries to rejoice." Thou seemest to take part with the enemy against him, and makest him to exult and rejoice in oppressing him.
6. "Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, (blunted his sword that was wont to slay,) and hast not made him to stand in the battle," but to fly and turn his back.
7. "Thou hast made his glory (the glory dignity, authority of his kingdom) to cease, and cast his crown to the ground."
8. "The days of his youth hast thou shortened;" cut him off in the prime and strength of his years. "Thou hast covered him with shame;" made his opulent, glorious kingdom ignominious; which was true in divers of *David's* posterity, especially *Jehoiakim*.

These were the sad complaints which the prophet pours out; but he quickly recovers and recalls his thoughts; and that he may move God to help, he falls to prayer, which is very pathetic.

VIII. He considers the nature of God as kind, loving, merciful, slow to anger; and asks:—

1. “How long, Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever?” Hide thy favour?
2. “Shall thy wrath burn like fire?” An element that hath no mercy.

He then uses other arguments, pathetically expressed, to move God to pity:—

1. Drawn from the brevity of man’s life: “Remember how short my time is.”
2. From the end for which man was created; not in vain, but to be an object of God’s goodness and favour.
3. From the weakness and disability of man. His life is short; and can he lengthen it? “What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?” Yea, though he live long, yet he is a mortal creature: “Shall he deliver his soul from the grave?”
4. From the covenant, of which he puts God in mind: “Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest to David in thy truth?”
5. From the ignominy, scorns, sarcasms, by enemies cast upon them, which he desires God to look upon. 1. “Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servant.” 2. “And how I do bear in my bosom.” Not spoken afar off, but in my hearing, and to my face, as if poured and emptied into my bosom; the *rebukes* not of this or that man, but of *many people*.
6. And lastly, that these reproaches, in effect, fall upon God. For they who reproach God’s servants are his enemies: “Remember the reproaches”—1. “Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord.” 2. “Wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed,” i.e., either whatsoever he says or does; or else by *footsteps* is to be understood the latter end of *David’s* kingdom, which was indeed subject to reproach. 3. But the *Chaldee* paraphrast by *footsteps* understands the coming of the Messiah in the flesh; which, because it was long promised and men saw not performed, many derided, mocked, and reproached, as vain.

IX. The close of this long Psalm is a *benediction*, by which the prophet, after his combat with flesh and blood about the performance of the

covenant, composes his troubled soul, and acquiesces in God; blessing him for whatever falls out, breaking forth into:—

1. “Blessed be the Lord for evermore:” Blessed be his name, who does and orders all things for the best of his people, although in the midst of calamities and troubles he seems to desert them.
2. And that we may know that he did this from his heart, he seals it with a double Amen. “Amen, Amen.” So I wish it; so be it.

PSALMS

PSALM 90

The eternity of God, 1, 2; the frailty of the state of man, 3-9; the general limits of human life, 10; the danger of displeasing God, 11; the necessity of considering the shortness of life, and of regaining the favour of the Almighty, 12; earnest prayer for the restoration of Israel, 13-17.

NOTES ON PSALM 90

The *title* of this Psalm is, *A Prayer of Moses the man of God*. The *Chaldee* has, “A prayer which Moses the prophet of the Lord prayed when the people of Israel had sinned in the wilderness.” All the *Versions* ascribe it to Moses; but that it could not be of Moses the *lawgiver* is evident from this consideration, that the age of man was not then *seventy* or *eighty years*, which is here stated to be its almost universal limit, for Joshua lived *one hundred and ten* years, and Moses himself *one hundred and twenty*; Miriam his sister, *one hundred and thirty*; Aaron his brother, *one hundred and twenty-three*; Caleb, *four-score and five* years; and their contemporaries lived in the same proportion. **See Clarke’s note on “~~Psalm 90:4~~”**. Therefore the Psalm cannot at all refer to such *ancient* times. If the *title* be at all authentic, it must refer to some *other person* of that name; and indeed **מַיְהִי אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים**, a man of God, a divinely inspired man, agrees to the times of the prophets, who were thus denominated. The Psalm was doubtless composed during or after the captivity; and most probably on their return, when they were engaged in rebuilding the temple; and this, as Dr. *Kennicott* conjectures, may be *the work of their hands*, which they pray God to *bless* and *prosper*.

Verse 1. Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place] **וְיָמֵינוּ** *maon*; but instead of this several MSS. have **זִמְנוּ** *maoz*, “place of defence,” or “refuge,” which is the reading of the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*. Ever since thy covenant with Abraham thou hast been the Resting-place, Refuge, and Defence of thy people Israel. Thy mercy has been lengthened out from generation to generation.

Verse 2. Before the mountains were brought forth] The mountains and hills *appear* to have been everlasting; but as they were *brought forth* out of the womb of eternity, there was a *time* when *they were not*: but THOU hast

been *ab æternitate a parte ante, ad æternitatem a parte post*; from the eternity that is past, before time began; to the eternity that is after, when time shall have an end. This is the highest description of the *eternity* of God to which human language can reach.

Verse 3. Thou turnest man to destruction] Literally, Thou shalt turn dying man, *vwna enosh*, to the small dust, *akd dacca* but thou wilt say, Return, ye children of Adam. This appears to be a clear and strong promise of the *resurrection* of the human body, after it has long slept, mingled with the *dust of the earth*.

Verse 4. For a thousand years in thy sight] As if he had said, Though the resurrection of the body may be a *thousand* (or any indefinite number of) years distant; yet, when these are past, they are *but as yesterday*, or a single *watch of the night*. They pass through the mind in a moment, and appear no longer in their duration than the time required by the mind to reflect them by thought. But, short as they appear to the eye of the mind, they are *nothing* when compared with the *eternity* of God! The author probably has in view also that economy of Divine justice and providence by which the life of man has been shortened from *one thousand years* to *threescore years and ten*, or *fourscore*.

Verse 5. Thou carriest them away as with a flood] Life is compared to a *stream*, ever *gliding away*; but sometimes it is as a *mighty torrent*, when by reason of *plague, famine, or war*, thousands are swept away daily. In particular cases it is a *rapid stream*, when the *young* are suddenly carried off by consumptions, fevers, &c.; this is the *flower that flourisheth in the morning*, and in the *evening* is *cut down* and *withered*. The whole of life is like a *sleep* or as a *dream*. The eternal world is *real*; all *here* is either *shadowy* or *representative*. On the whole, *life* is represented as a *stream*; *youth*, as *morning*; *decline of life*, or *old age*, as *evening*; *death*, as *sleep*; and the *resurrection* as the *return of the flowers in spring*. All these images appear in these curious and striking verses, ^{490B}**Psalm 90:3-6**.

Verse 7. We are consumed by thine anger] *Death* had not entered into the world, if men had not fallen from God.

By thy wrath are we troubled] Pain, disease, and sickness are so many proofs of our defection from original rectitude. The *anger* and *wrath* of God are moved against all *sinner*s. Even in protracted life we *consume away*, and only seem to live in order to die.

*“Our wasting lives grow shorter still,
As days and months increase;
And every beating pulse we tell
Leaves but the number less.”*

Verse 8. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee] Every one of our transgressions is *set before thee*; noted and minuted down in thy awful register!

Our secret sins] Those committed in darkness and privacy are easily discovered by thee, being shown by the splendours of thy face shining upon them. Thus we light a candle, and bring it into a dark place to discover its contents. O, what can be hidden from the all-seeing eye of God? Darkness is no darkness to him; wherever he comes there is a profusion of light-for God is light!

Verse 9. We spend our years as a tale] The *Vulgate* has: *Anni nostri sicut aranea meditabuntur*; “Our years pass away like those of the spider.” Our *plans* and *operations* are like the *spider’s web*; life is as *frail*, and the *thread* of it as *brittle*, as one of those that constitute the well-wrought and curious, but *fragile*, habitation of that insect. All the *Versions* have the word *spider*; but it neither appears in the *Hebrew*, nor in any of its MSS. which have been collated.

My old *Psalter* has a curious paraphrase here: “Als the iran (spider) makes vayne webe for to take flese (flies) with gile, swa our yeres ere ockupide in ydel and swikel castes about erthly thynges; and passes with outen frute of gude werks, and waste in ydel thynkyns.” This is *too true* a picture of most lives.

But the *Hebrew* is different from all the *Versions*. “We consume our years (*hgh wmk kemo hegeh*) like a groan.” We live a dying, whining, complaining life, and at last a *groan* is its termination! How amazingly expressive!

Verse 10. Threescore years and ten] See the note on the *title* of this Psalm. See Clarke “⁶⁻³⁹⁰¹⁰ Psalm 90:1”. This Psalm could not have been written by *Moses*, because the *term* of human life was much more *extended* when he flourished than *eighty* years at the most. Even in *David’s* time many lived *one hundred* years, and the author of *Ecclesiasticus*, who lived after the captivity, fixed this term at *one hundred* years at the most (**Eccles**

18:9;) but this was merely a general average, for even in our country we have many who exceed *a hundred years*.

Yet is their strength labour and sorrow] This refers to the infirmities of old age, which, to those well advanced in life, produce *labour* and *sorrow*.

It is soon cut of] *It*—the *body*, is soon cut off.

And we fly away.] The *immortal spirit* wings its way into the eternal world.

Verse 11. Who knoweth the power of thine anger?] The afflictions of *this life* are not to be compared to the *miseries* which await them who live and die without being reconciled to God, and saved from their sins.

Verse 12. So teach us to number our days] Let us deeply consider our own frailty, and the shortness and uncertainty of life, that we may live for eternity, acquaint ourselves with thee, and be at peace; that we may die in thy favour and live and reign with thee eternally.

Verse 13. Return, O Lord, how long?] Wilt thou continue angry with us for ever?

Let it repent thee] **uj nh** *hinnachem*, *be comforted*, rejoice over them to do them good. Be glorified rather in our salvation than in our destruction.

Verse 14. O satisfy us early] Let us have thy mercy soon, (literally, *in the morning*.) Let it now shine upon us, and it shall seem as the morning of our days, and we shall exult in thee all the days of our life.

Verse 15. Make us glad according to the days] Let thy people have as many years of *prosperity* as they have had of *adversity*. We have now suffered *seventy* years of a most distressful captivity.

Verse 16. Let thy work appear unto thy servants] That thou art working for us we know; but O, let thy work *appear*! Let us *now see*, in our deliverance, that thy thoughts towards us were mercy and love.

And thy glory] Thy pure worship be established among our *children* for ever.

Verse 17. And let the beauty of the Lord] Let us have thy *presence*, *blessing*, and *approbation*, as our fathers had.

Establish thou the work of our hands] This is supposed, we have already seen, to relate to their *rebuilding the temple*, which the surrounding heathens and Samaritans wished to hinder. We have begun, do not let them demolish our work; let the top-stone be brought on with shouting, *Grace, grace* unto it.

Yea, the work of our hands] This repetition is wanting in *three of Kennicott's MSS.*, in the *Targum*, in the *Septuagint*, and in the *Æthiopic*. If the repetition be genuine, it may be considered as marking great earnestness; and this earnestness was to get the temple of God rebuilt, and his pure worship restored. The pious Jews had this more at heart than their own restoration; it was their highest grief that the temple was destroyed and God's ordinances suspended; that his enemies insulted them, and blasphemed the worthy name by which they were called. Every truly pious man feels more for God's glory than his own temporal felicity, and rejoices more in the prosperity of God's work than in the increase of his own worldly goods.

A FEW INSTANCES OF MODERN LONGEVITY

In the year 1790 I knew a woman in the city of Bristol, Mrs. *Somerhill*, then in the 106th year of her age. She read the smallest print without spectacles, and never had used any helps to decayed sight. When she could not go any longer to a place of worship, through the weakness of her limbs, she was accustomed to read over the whole service of the Church for each day of the year as it occurred, with all the *Lessons, Psalms, &c.* She had been from its commencement a member of the Methodist Society; heard Mr. *John Wesley* the first sermon he preached when he visited Bristol in 1739; and was so struck with his clear manner of preaching the doctrine of *justification through faith*, that, for the benefit of hearing *one more sermon* from this apostolic man, she followed him *on foot* to Portsmouth, a journey of *one hundred and twenty-five miles!* On my last visit to her in the above year, I was admitted by a *very old decrepit woman*, then a widow of *seventy-five* years of age, and the *youngest daughter* of Mrs. *Somerhill*. I found the aged woman's faculties strong and vigorous, and her eyesight unimpaired, though she was then confined to her bed, and was hard of hearing. She died rejoicing in God, the following year.

Agnes Shuner is another instance. She lived at Camberwell in Surrey; her husband, *Richard Shuner*, died in 1407, whom she survived *ninety-two* years. She died in 1499, aged *one hundred and nineteen* years.

The *Countess of Desmond* in Ireland. On the ruin of the house of Desmond, she was obliged at the age of *one hundred and forty* to travel from Bristol to London, to solicit relief from the court, being then reduced to *poverty*. She renewed her teeth *two* or *three* times, and died in 1612, aged *one hundred and forty-five* years.

Thomas Parr, of Winnington, in Shropshire, far outlived the term as set down in the Psalm. At the age of *eighty-eight* he married his first wife, by whom he had *two* children. At the age of *one hundred and two* he fell in love with *Catharine Milton*, by whom he had an illegitimate child, and for which he did penance in the Church! At the age of *one hundred and twenty*, he married a widow woman; and when he was *one hundred and thirty* could perform any operation of husbandry. He died at the age of *one hundred and fifty-two*, A.D. 1635. He had seen *ten* kings and queens of England.

Thomas Damme, of Leighton, near Minshul in Cheshire, lived *one hundred and fifty-four* years, and died A.D. 1648.

Henry Jenkins, of Ellerton upon Swale, in Yorkshire, was sent, when a boy of about *twelve* years of age, with a *cart load of arrows* to Northallerton, to be employed in the battle of *Flodden Field*, which was fought September 9, 1513. He was a *fisherman*; and often *swam* in the rivers when he was more than *one hundred* years of age! He died A.D. 1670, being then *one hundred and sixty-nine* years of age!

I shall add one foreigner, *Peter Toston*, a peasant of Temiswar, in Hungary. The remarkable longevity of this man exceeds the age of *Isaac five* years; of *Abraham, ten*; falls short of *Terah's*, Abraham's father, *twenty*; and exceeds that of *Nahor*, Abraham's grandfather, *thirty-seven* years. He died A.D. 1724, at the extraordinary age of *one hundred and eighty-five*!

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETIETH PSALM

There are four parts in this Psalm:—

I. An ingenuous acknowledgment of God's protection of the people, ^{<1900>}**Psalm 90:1, 2.**

II. A lively narration of the mortality of man, the fragility and brevity of his life, together with the misery of it, ^{<1900>}**Psalm 90:2-7.**

III. The causes: man's rebellion and God's anger for it, ^{<1900>}**Psalm 90:7-12.**

IV. A petition, which is double: 1. That God would instruct man to know his fragility. 2. That he would return, and restore him to his favour,

<19012> **Psalm 90:12-17.**

I. In the beginning the psalmist freely acknowledges what God had always been unto his people. What he is in himself, and his own nature.

1. To his people he had always been a refuge, as it were, a dwelling-place: though they had been pilgrims and sojourners in a strange land for many years, yet he had been, nay dwelt, among them; and no doubt he alludes to the tabernacle of God that was pitched among them as an evidence of his presence and protection: “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place (a secure place to rest in) in all generations,” <16301> **Deuteronomy 33:1-6.**

2. But in himself he was from everlasting: other creatures had a beginning, and their creation and ornaments from him. He, the Eternal Being, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth, and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.” Not like man, then, whose mutability, fragility, mortality, brevity, he next describes.

II. “Thou turnest man to destruction.” Though framed according to thy own image, yet he is but an earthen vessel; to that pass thou bringest him, till he be broken to pieces, broken as a potter’s vessel. To him thou sayest, “Return, ye children of men, (of Adam,) return; for dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return.” The mortality of man may not be then attributed to diseases, chance, fortune, &c., but to God’s decree, pronounced on man upon his disobedience. First, then, let the sons of *Adam* remember that they are mortal; next, that their life is but very short. Suppose a man should live the longest life, and somewhat longer than the oldest patriarch, a thousand years; yet, let it be compared with eternity, it is as nothing: “A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past;” but as a day which is short, as a day which is past and forgotten; which the *prophet* farther illustrates by elegant similitudes.

1. “And as a watch in the night.” A time of three hours’ continuance, which is but the eighth part of a natural day, and so far less than he said before. The flower of our youth, our constant age, and our old age, may well be the three hours of this watch; and wise they are that observe their stations in either of them.

2. “Thou carriest them away as with a flood.” As a sudden inundation of waters our life passeth; we swell and fall. Or, As all waters come from the

sea, and return thither; so from the earth we came, and thither return. Or, We are as water spilt on the earth, which cannot be gathered up again.

3. "They are as a sleep," or rather a dream; all our happiness a dream of felicity. In our dreams many pleasant, many fearful things are presented; we pass half our time in sleep; drowsily, it is certain, for our life is *σκιας ουρα*, *the shadow of a dream*.—Pindar.

4. Or we are like grass: "In the morning they are like grass that groweth up: in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth." The herb hath its morning and evening, and its mid-day, and so hath our life; *naturally* it fades, or *violently* it is cut off.

III. After he had spoken of and explained our mortality, the brevity, the misery of our life, he next descends to examine the causes of it which are two. 1. God's anger; and that which brought it upon us, our own iniquities.

1. God's anger: "We consume away by thine anger; and by thy wrath are we troubled." The cause, then, of death and disease is not the decay of the radical moisture, or defect of natural heat; but that which brought these defects upon us, *God's wrath* because of sin.

2. Our own sin: For this anger of God was not raised without a just cause; he is a just Judge, and proceeds not to punishment, but upon due examination and trial; and to that end he takes an account, not only of our open sins, but even of our secret faults, such as are not known to ourselves, or such as we labour to conceal from others.

1. "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee."

2. "And our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." No hypocrisy, no contempt, can escape thine eye: all to thee is revealed, and clear as the light.

3. And then he repeats the effect, together with the cause: "Therefore all our days (*viz.*, the *forty* years in the wilderness and the *seventy* in captivity) are passed away in thy wrath." 2. "We spend our days as a tale that is told;" *et fabula fies*, the tale ended, it vanisheth, and is thought of no more.

4. And as for our age, it is of no great length: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten." To that time some men may be said to live, because the faculties of their souls are tolerably vigorous, and their bodies proportionately able to execute the offices of life.

But allow that it so happen, which happens not to many, “that by reason of strength,” some excellent natural constitution, “a man arrive to fourscore years,” yet our life is encumbered with these *three* inconveniences, labour, sorrow, and brevity.

1. It is laborious, even labour itself. One is desirous to be rich, another wise; this man potent, another prudent, or at least to seem so; and this will not be without labour: “All is affliction of spirit.”

2. Sorrow; for our life is only the shadow of real life.

3. Short; for it is soon cut off, and we flee away: *Avolat umbra*. 1. God’s anger for sin is not laid to heart; and of this the *prophet* in the next verse sadly complains: “Who knows the power of thy anger?” Thine anger is great for sin; the power of it fearful and terrible. Thou canst and wilt cast sinners into hell-fire; but who regards it? Thy threats to men seem to be old wives’ fables. 2. “Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath;” but be it that this stupidity possess men, yet this is certain, that thy wrath is great; and it shall be executed according to thy fear, in such proportion as men have stood in fear of thee. They that have in a reverential fear stood in awe of thee shall escape it; they that have contemned and slighted thy wrath shall feel it to the uttermost.

IV. Upon all the former considerations the psalmist converts his words to a prayer, in which he implores God’s mercy, that he would turn, 1. The stupidity of men into wisdom. 2. Our calamity into felicity. 3. His wrath into compassion. And, 4. Our sorrow into joy. For the first he begins thus:—

1. “So teach us to number our days,” to cast up the labour, the sorrow, the brevity, the fugacity; thy anger, our sin, that caused it.

2. “That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom;” be no more stupid and secure, but wise; wise, to avoid thy anger, wise to set a true estimate on this life, and wise in time to provide for another.

3. “So teach us;” for God must teach it, or it will not be learned: this wisdom comes from above.

Secondly, he deprecates God’s anger: “Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.”

Thirdly, he begs restoration to God's favour; and what will follow upon it, peace of conscience.

1. "O satisfy us with thy mercy." We hunger for it as men do for meat.
2. Early let it be done, quickly, before our sorrows grow too high, and overwhelm us.
3. With thy mercy; not with wealth, delights, &c.
4. And with a perpetual joy of heart: "That we may be glad and rejoice all our days."
5. And let our joy bear proportion to our sorrows: "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil."
6. This is the work he calls God's work; for as to punish is his strange work, ~~23221~~ **Isaiah 28:21**, so to have pity and mercy is his own proper work; and this he desires that it should be made manifest: "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children."

Fourthly, he begs for success in all their work and labours.

1. "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us," for no action of ours is beautiful, except the beauty of God be stamped upon it; done by his direction, his rule, his word, and to his glory.
2. And therefore he prays, and repeats this prayer: "Establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." There must be *opus*, our work; for God blesseth not the idle. 2. And *opus manuum*, a laborious work. 3. God's direction, his word the rule. 4. A good end in it, for that is his beauty upon it. 5. So it will be established, confirmed, ratified. 6. And, lastly, know that there is no blessing to be expected without prayer; and therefore he prays, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." See the notes on this Psalm.

PSALMS

PSALM 91

The safety of the godly man, and his confidence, 1, 2. How he is defended and preserved, 3-10. The angels of God are his servants, 11, 12; and he shall tread on the necks of his adversaries, 13. What God says of, and promises to, such a person, 14-16.

NOTES ON PSALM 91

This Psalm has no *title* in the Hebrew; nor can it be determined on what occasion or by whom it was composed. It is most likely by the author of the preceding; and is written as a *part* of it, by *fifteen* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., commencing before the *repetition* of the four last words of the *ninetieth*. It is allowed to be one of the finest Psalms in the whole collection. Of it *Simon de Muis* has said: "It is one of the most excellent works of this kind which has ever appeared. It is impossible to imagine any thing more solid, more beautiful, more profound, or more ornamented. Could the Latin or any modern languages express thoroughly all the beauties and elegancies as well of the *words* as of the *sentences*, it would not be difficult to persuade the reader that we have no poem, either in *Greek* or *Latin*, comparable to this Hebrew ode."

Verse 1. He that dwelleth in the secret place] The *Targum* intimates that this is a *dialogue* between *David*, *Solomon*, and *Jehovah*. Suppose we admit this,—then

DAVID asserts: "He who dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," ^{<199101>} **Psalm 91:1.**

SOLOMON answers: "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in him will I trust," ^{<199102>} **Psalm 91:2.**

DAVID replies, and tells him what blessings he shall receive from God if he abide faithful, ^{<199103>} **Psalm 91:3-13.**

Then the SUPREME BEING is introduced, and confirms all that *David* had spoken concerning *Solomon*, ^{<199114>} **Psalm 91:14-16:** and thus this sacred and instructive dialogue ends.

In the secret place of the Most High] Spoken probably in reference to the *Holy of holies*. He who enters legitimately there shall be covered with the cloud of God's glory—the protection of the all-sufficient God. This was the privilege of the *high priest* only, under the law: but under the new covenant all believers in Christ *have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*; and those who thus enter are safe from every evil.

Verse 2. I will say of the Lord] This is my experience: “He is my fortress, and in him will I continually trust.”

Verse 3. Surely he shall deliver thee] If thou wilt act thus, then the God in whom thou trustest will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, from all the devices of Satan, and from all dangerous maladies. As the original word, **רַבָּד** *dabar*, signifies a *word spoken*, and *deber*, the same letters, signifies *pestilence*; so some translate one way, and some another: he shall deliver thee from the evil and *slandorous word*; he shall deliver thee from the *noisome pestilence*—all blasting and injurious *winds, effluvia, &c.*

Verse 4. He shall cover thee with his feathers] He shall act towards thee as the hen does to her brood,—take thee under his wings when birds of prey appear, and also shelter thee from chilling blasts. This is a frequent metaphor in the sacred writings; see the parallel texts in the *margin*, and the notes on them. The *Septuagint* has **Ἐν τοῖς μετὰ φρενοῖς αὐτοῦ ἐπισκιάσει σοί**, *He will overshadow thee between his shoulders*; alluding to the custom of parents carrying their weak or sick children on their backs, and having them covered even there with a mantle. Thus the Lord is represented carrying the Israelites in the wilderness. See **Deuteronomy 32:11, 12**, where the metaphor is taken from the *eagle*.

His truth shall be thy shield and buckler] His revelation; his Bible. That truth contains promises for all times and circumstances; and these will be invariably fulfilled to him that trusts in the Lord. The fulfillment of a promise relative to defence and support is to the soul what the best shield is to the body.

Verse 5. The terror by night] Night is a time of terrors, because it is a time of treasons, plunder, robbery, and murder. The godly man lies down in peace, and sleeps quietly, for he trusts his body, soul, and substance, in the hand of God; and he knows that he who keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. It may also mean all *spiritual foes*,—*the rulers of the darkness of this world*. I have heard the following petition in an evening family

prayer: “Blessed Lord, take us into thy protection this night; and preserve us from disease, from sudden death, from the violence of fire, from the edge of the sword, from the designs of wicked men, and from the influence of malicious spirits!”

Nor **for the arrow**] The *Chaldee* translates this verse, “Thou shalt not fear the demons that walk by night; nor the arrow of the angel of death which is shot in the day time.” Thou needest not to fear a sudden and unprovided-for death.

Verse 6. Nor **for the pestilence** that **walketh in darkness**; nor **for the destruction** that **wasteth at noonday**.] The rabbins supposed that the empire of death was under two demons, one of which ruled by *day*, the other by *night*. The *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* have the *noonday devil*. The ancients thought that there were some demons who had the power to injure particularly at *noonday*. To this *Theocritus* refers, Id. i. ver. 15:—

Ου θεμις, ω ποιμαν, το μεσαμβρινον, ου θεμις αμμιν
 Συρισδεν, τον Πανα δεδοικαμες, η γαρ απ αγρας
 Τανικα κεκμακως αμπαυεται, εντι γε πικρος,
 Και οι αιι δριμεια χολα ποτι ρινη καθηται.

“It is not lawful, it is not lawful, O shepherd, to play on the flute at *noonday*: we fear Pan, who at that hour goes to sleep in order to rest himself after the fatigues of the chase; *then he is dangerous*, and his wrath easily kindled.”

Lucan, in the horrible account he gives us of a grove sacred to some barbarous power, worshipped with the most horrid rites, refers to the same superstition:—

*Lucus erat longo nunquam violatus ab ævo,
 Non illum cultu populi propiore frequentant,
 Sed cessere deis: medio cum Phæbus in axe est,
 Aut cælum nox atra tenet, pavet ipse sacerdos
 Accessus, dominumque timet deprendere luci.*
LUCAN, lib. iii., ver. 399.

*“Not far away, for ages past, had stood
 An old inviolated sacred wood:—
 The pious worshippers approach not near,
 But shun their gods, and kneel with distant fear:
 The priest himself, when, or the day or night
 Rolling have reached their full meridian height,

 Refrains the gloomy paths with wary feet,
 Dreading the demon of the grove to meet;
 Who, terrible to sight, at that fixed hour
 Still treads the round about this dreary bower.”*
 ROWE.

It has been stated among the heathens that the gods should be worshipped *at all times*, but the *demons* should be worshipped at *midday*: probably because these demons, having been employed during the *night*, required *rest at noonday* and that was the most proper time to appease them. See *Calmet* on this place. Both the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* seem to have reference to this superstition.

The *Syriac* understands the passage of a *pestilential wind*, that *blows at noonday*. *Aquila* translates, *of the bite of the noonday demon*.

Verse 7. A thousand shall fall at thy side] *Calmet* thinks this place should be translated thus: “A thousand enemies may fall upon thee on one side, and ten thousand may fall upon thee on thy right hand: but they shall not come nigh thee to take away thy life.” It is a promise of perfect protection, and the utmost safety.

Verse 8. The reward of the wicked.] Thou shalt not only be safe thyself, but thou shalt see all thy enemies discomfited and cast down.

Verse 9. Because thou hast made the Lord] Seeing thou hast taken Jehovah, the Most High, for thy portion and thy refuge, *no evil shall come nigh thy dwelling*; thou shalt be safe in thy soul, body, household, and property, ^{<19110>}**Psalm 91:10.** Every pious man may expect such protection from his *God* and *Father*.

Verse 11. He shall give his angels charge over thee] Evil spirits may attempt to injure thee; but they shall not be able. The *angels of God* shall have an especial charge to accompany, defend, and preserve thee; and against their power, the influence of evil spirits cannot prevail. These will, when necessary, turn thy steps out of the way of danger; ward it off when

it comes in thy ordinary path; suggest to thy mind prudent counsels, profitable designs, and pious purposes; and thus minister to thee as a child of God, and an heir of salvation.

To keep thee in all thy ways.] The path of duty is the way of safety. Thou canst not reasonably expect protection if thou walk not in the way of obedience. *Thy ways* are the paths of duty, which God's word and providence have marked out for thee. The *way of sin* is not *thy way*—thy *duty*, thy *interest*. Keep in *thy own ways*, not in those of *sin*, *Satan*, the *world*, and the *flesh*; and God will take care of thee.

Verse 12. They shall bear thee up in their hands] Take the same care of thee as a *nurse* does of a weak and tender child; lead thee,—teach thee to walk,—lift thee up out of the way of danger, “lest thou shouldst dash thy foot against a stone,” receive any kind of injury, or be prevented from pursuing thy path with safety and comfort.

Let us remember that it is GOD, whose these angels are; HE gives them charge—from HIM they receive their commission,—to HIM they are responsible for their charge. From God thou art to expect them; and for their help he alone is to receive the praise. It is expressly said, *He shall give his angels charge*; to show that they are not to be *prayed to* nor *praised*; but GOD *alone*, whose *servants* they are. **See Clarke's note on “^{<4006>}Matthew 4:6”**.

Verse 13. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder] Even the king of the forest shall not be able to injure thee; should one of these attack thee, the angels whom God sends will give thee an easy victory over him. And even the asp, (^{tp} *pethen*,) one of the most venomous of serpents, shall not be able to injure thee.

The asp is a very small serpent, and peculiar to Egypt and Libya. Its poison kills without the possibility of a remedy. Those who are bitten by it die in about from three to eight hours; and it is said they die by sleep, without any kind of *pain*. Lord *Bacon* says the asp is less painful than all the other instruments of death. He supposes it to have an affinity to *opium*, but to be less disagreeable in its operation. It was probably on this account that *Cleopatra*, queen of Egypt, chose to die by the asp, as she was determined to prevent the designs of *Augustus*, who intended to have carried her captive to Rome to grace his *triumph*.

The dragon shalt thou trample] The *ynt tannin*, which we translate *dragon*, means often any large aquatic animal; and perhaps here the *crocodile* or *alligator*.

Verse 14. Because he hath set his love upon me] Here the *Most High* is introduced as confirming the word of his servant. He has fixed his *love*—his heart and soul, on me.

Therefore will I deliver him] I will save him in all troubles, temptations, and evils of every kind.

I will set him on high] I will place him *out of the reach* of all his enemies. I will *honour* and *ennoble* him, *because he hath known my name*—because he has loved, honoured, and served me, and rendered me that worship which is my due. He has *known* me to be the God of infinite mercy and love.

Verse 15. He shall call upon me] He must *continue to pray*; all his blessings *must come in this way*; when he *calls*, I will *answer* him—I will give him whatever is best for him.

I will be **with him in trouble]** Literally, *I am with him*. *ykna wm* [*immo anochi*; as soon as the trouble comes, *I are there*.

I will deliver him] For his good I may permit him to be exercised for a time, but *delivered* he shall be.

And honour him] *whdbka acabbedehu*, “I will glorify him.” I will *load* him with *honour*; that honour that comes from God. I will even show to men how highly I prize such.

Verse 16. With long life] Literally, *With length of days will I fill him up*. He shall neither live a useless life, nor die before his time. He shall live happy and die happy.

And show him my salvation.] *yt* [*wvb wharaw vearehu bishuathi*, “I will make him see (or contemplate) in my salvation.” He shall discover infinite lengths, breadths, depths, and heights, in my salvation. He shall feel boundless desires, and shall discover that I have provided boundless gratifications for them. He shall dwell in my glory, and throughout eternity increase in his resemblance to and enjoyment of me. Thus shall it be done to the man whom the Lord delighteth to honour; and he delights to honour

that man who *places his love on him*. In a word, he shall have a *long life* in this world, and an *eternity of blessedness* in the world to come.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-FIRST PSALM

The full intent and purpose of this Psalm is to encourage and exhort the godly in all extremities, pressures, troubles, temptations, afflictions, assaults, inward or outward; in a word, in all dangers to put their trust and confidence in God, and to rely upon his protection.

There are *two* parts in this Psalm:—

I. A general proposition, in which is given an assurance of help and protection to every godly man, ^{<199101>}**Psalm 91:1**: “He that dwelleth,” &c.

II. The proof of this by three witnesses:—

1. Of the just man, in whose person the *psalmist* speaks, ^{<199102>}**Psalm 91:2**: “I will say of the Lord,” &c.

2. Of the prophet, ^{<199103>}**Psalm 91:3**: “Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare,” &c.; which he amplifies by an enumeration of the dangers, God’s assistance, and the angels’ protection, ^{<199103>}**Psalm 91:3-14**.

3. Of God himself, whom he brings in speaking to the same purpose, ^{<199114>}**Psalm 91:14-16**.

I. The first part or verse is a universal proposition, in which is contained a comfortable and excellent promise made by the Holy Ghost of security, viz., that God’s help shall never be wanting to those who truly put their hope and trust in him: “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide (or lodge) under the shadow of the Almighty.”

1. *He*,—be he who he will, rich or poor; king or people, God is no respecter of persons.

2. “That dwells.” For that he must be sure to do, constantly, daily, firmly, rest and acquiesce in God, to persevere in the faith of his promise, and carry that about him, else he cannot be assured by this promise.

3. “In the secret place.” For his aid and defence is not as some strong-hold or castle which is visible; it is a secret and invisible fortress, known only to a faithful soul. In that he may repose his hope, as a means and secondary

defence; but he dwells, relies, rests in that help of God which is secret, and is not seen except by the eye of faith.

4. “Of the Most High.” And upon this he relies, because he is the *Most High*. Above he is, and sees all; nothing is hid from him. And again, *above* he is, sits in the highest throne, and rules all. All things are under his feet; he can therefore deliver his people from all troubles and dangers. Yea, he will do it for this faithful man; he that relies and trusts in him shall never be frustrated of his hope; protected he shall be; he shall be safe. 1. “He dwells, therefore he shall abide.” He shall lodge quietly-securely. 2. “He dwells in the secret place, therefore he shall abide under the shadow.” In the cool, the favour, the cover from the heat. 3. “He dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, therefore he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;” i.e., of the all-powerful God, of the God of heaven; of that God whose name is Shaddai, All-sufficient; by which name he made his promise to Abraham, ^{<0170>}**Genesis 17:1.**

II. This proposition being most certainly true, in the next place the psalmist explains it. And that no man may doubt of it, descends to prove it by three witnesses: first, of a just man; secondly, of the prophet; thirdly, of God himself.

He brings in the just man thus speaking in his own person: “I will say unto the Lord, He is my refuge, my fortress my God; in him will I trust.” Is it so? “Shall he that dwells in the secret of the Most High, abide under the shadow of the Almighty?” Therefore I will say, in the person of all just men, to the Lord, that hath no superior, that hath no peer; to that Lord to whose command all things are subject, and who can be commanded by none; I will say to him,—

1. “Thou art my refuge.” If pursued, I will flee to thee as a sanctuary.
2. “Thou art my fortress.” If set upon, I will betake myself to thee as a strong tower.
3. “Thou art my God.” If assaulted by men or devils, thou, the Most High; thou, Almighty, art a God able to defend me, and therefore “I will hope in thee;” I will dwell, trust, rely upon thee and this thy promise, in every temptation and danger.

Next, to assert the truth of this, he brings in the attestation of the prophet; for, being moved by the Holy Ghost, he saith as much, “Surely he shall

deliver thee;” and then falls upon the particulars, from which the godly man shall be delivered, set down in many metaphors.

1. “He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler;” the deceits of evil men or devils.

2. “From the noisome pestilence,” all danger to which we are incident, by plague, war, or famine.

Again, when thou art little in thine own eyes,—

1. “He shall cover thee,” as the hen does her young, “with his feathers; and under his wings shalt thou trust,” secured from the rain, the storm, the heat of the sun, and the birds of prey.

2. When thou art grown up, and able to encounter an enemy in the field, he shall help thee to a shield and buckler, and that shall be his truth, his veracity, thy faith in it; and which is yet more,—

Thou shalt not be afraid,—

1. “For the terror by night;” any hidden secret temptation, danger, treachery, detraction, conspiracy.

2. “Nor for the arrow that flies by day;” any open persecution, calamity, fraud, assault, invasion.

3. “Nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness;” the machinations of wicked men hatched in the dark.

4. “Nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day;” the bold threats and decrees of tyrants and persecutors.

Moller observes rightly that the promises of deliverance here made do not belong to one or other kind of evil, but to all kinds of calamities, open or secret, and so may be applicable to any; some of which steal upon us, as in the night secretly; others overwhelm as in the day, openly. But the promise is general, as Bellarmine well observes; whether the danger come by day or night, those who trust in God are armed with his shield of truth against it. “For if God be for us, who can be against us?” ^{483B} **Romans 8:31**

The prophet goes on, and confirms the godly in their security by the dissimilarity or unlike condition of wicked men. When thou shalt be safe, they shall fall.

1. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, on thy left hand," overcome by adversity.
2. "Ten thousand on thy right hand," flattered into sin by prosperity. "But neither the fear by night, nor the arrow by day, shall come nigh thee."
3. And, which is another cause of comfort and pleasure: "Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked;" which sometimes falls out in this life, as the *Israelites* saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore; *Moses* and *Aaron* saw *Dathan* and *Abiram* swallowed up quick, &c. But it shall be amply fulfilled at the last judgment, ^{<4231>}**Matthew 25:31-46**. Of which security, comfort, content, the prophet in the next verse gives the reason; the danger shall not come nigh thee; when they fall thou shalt see it, and consider it with content. "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation;" thou trustest in him as I do; and therefore shalt have the like protection, deliverance, comfort, that I by his promise have. Farther, "there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." But the just man may say, I am secure that no evil shall befall me; I desire to know how I may be kept so, that I fall not among thieves. This *objection* the *prophet prevents*, saying, in effect, Fear not, "for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

In which verses consider,—

1. That the good man is protected by angels; many angels have a care of one poor man.
2. That they are commanded by God to do it; for are not they ministering spirits sent by God to that end? ^{<5014>}**Hebrews 1:14**.
3. That it is a particular administration, a charge given to the poorest, the meanest saint.
4. That they are to keep, to look to, defend thee, and what is thine; thou hast an invisible guard.
5. But then mark the limitation and restriction; it is in "all thy ways," in the walk of thy vocation to which God hath called thee; either walk in them, or the angels have no charge to keep thee.

6. Lastly, “In all thy ways;” not in *one* but *all*; for the ways of men are many, and in *all* he needs the custody of angels: 1. The law is a way, and the way of the law is manifold. 2. Our works and operations are manifold; which are our way too. 3. Our life is a way, and there be many parts and conditions of our life, various ages, manifold states; and in all these ways we need a guardian, for we may slip in every law, in every operation, in every age, in every state of life.

Which that it be not done, God hath given his angels charge over us: to keep us only; nay, which is more,—

1. “They shall bear thee,” as kind mothers and nurses do their children.
2. “They shall bear thee in their hands;” the will, understanding, wisdom, and power are, as it were, the angels’ hand; with all these they will bear us.
3. “That thou dash not thy foot;” that is, thy affections, which carry the soul to good or bad.
4. “Against a stone;” which are all difficulties and obstacles.

And, which is yet more, under their custody we shall tread under foot Satan, and all his accomplices; him, a roaring lion, an old serpent, a fierce dragon, and all his associates, tyrants, persecutors, and hypocrites; for such is the promise; “Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and dragon shalt thou trample under feet.”

5. “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word stand, saith God;” and here we find the law strictly observed: it was to be proved, that all who truly trust in God were to be protected by God; of which; one witness was the *just man*, ^{<1910E>}**Psalm 91:2**; another, the testimony of the Spirit by the *prophet*, from verse 3 to this verse; { ^{<1910B>}**Psalm 91:3-16** } to which a third, we have here even GOD himself; for in these three last verses the *prophet* brings Him, God himself, testifying this great and comfortable truth with his own mouth:—

1. “Because he hath set his love upon me,” pleased me, loved me, adhered to me, hoped in me, trusted to me with a filial love and adherence.
2. “Because he hath known my name,” acknowledged my power, wisdom, goodness; these are the causes and conditions presupposed in the protected.

3. "He shall call upon me." Invocation is necessary also. "Therefore I will deliver him, I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will honour him. I will glorify him, or set him on high;" and the second, "I will deliver him; with long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."

1. "I will deliver him," by the shield, by my angels, by other ways, directly or indirectly, yet so that it be remembered that I do it; for these shall not deliver without me.

2. "I will answer him;" answer his desires, answer his prayers, so they be *cries*.

3. "I will be with him in trouble;" join myself close to him, go into prison with him as it were, suffer with him, and think myself pursued when he is persecuted, give him comfort even then; they sung in prison; he neither delivers the martyrs from death, nor does he forsake them.

4. "I will honour him:" for the names of those who suffered for his sake are honourable; "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

These promises may belong to this life; those that follow to the other.

1. "I will deliver him." For the just by death are freed from the present and all future miseries: "Blessed are the dead, for they rest from their labours."

2. "I will glorify him." As if it were not enough to deliver him; such a thing in this life may fall out, as it happened to Joseph, Job, David, Daniel; but the true glory no question must be, "when the righteous shall shine like the sun, be set upon their thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel."

3. "With long life will I satisfy him," i.e., with eternal felicity, with a continuance in bliss, which shall be eternal; for without eternity, even length of days cannot satisfy; as appears by old men, who yet have complained of a short life.

4. And that the *prophet* speaks of this eternal felicity is more than probable, because he adds, "I will show him my salvation;" I will show him Jesus, my salvation; that is, I will bring to pass, that when through his whole life I have given him sufficient evidences of my fatherly affection, I will at last translate him to a place where he shall no longer live by faith, but shall see, and experimentally feel, what he hath believed.

PSALMS

PSALM 92

The psalmist shows the duty and advantage of praising God, 1-3; speaks of the grandeur of God's works, 4-6; the fall of the wicked, 7-9; the happiness of the righteous, 10-14; and all this founded on the perfections of God.

NOTES ON PSALM 92

The *title*, *A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath*, gives no information concerning the *time*, *occasion*, or *author*. The *Chaldee*, has "Praise, and a song which the first man spoke concerning the Sabbath:" but this is an idle conceit; and, though entertained by some *rabbins*, has been followed by none of the *Versions*. *Calmet* supposes the Psalm to have been composed by some of the Levites during or near the close of the Babylonish captivity, acknowledging the mercy of God, and foreseeing the desolation of their enemies, and their own return to Jerusalem, and their temple service.

Verse 1. It is a **good thing to give thanks**] This Psalm begins very *abruptly*. *Good to confess unto the Lord*. He *had been* acknowledging God's goodness, and praising him for his mercy; and now he breaks out and tells how good he felt this employment to be.

Verse 2. To show forth thy loving-kindness] *Ēdsj chasdecha*, thy abundant mercy, *in the morning*-that has preserved me throughout the night, and brought me to the beginning of a new day: *and thy faithfulness in the night*, that has so amply fulfilled the promise of preservation during the course of the day. This verse contains a general plan for morning and evening prayer.

Verse 3. Upon an instrument of ten strings] Eusebius, in his comment on this Psalm, says: *Ψαλτηριον δε δεκαχορδον, η του αγιου πνευματος δια των αισθητηριων Πεντε μεν του σωματος, ισαριθμων δε της ψυχης δυναμεων, επιτελουμενη λατρευια*, "The *Psaltery of ten strings* is the worship of the Holy Spirit, performed by means of the *five* senses of the body, and by the *five* powers of the soul." And, to confirm this interpretation, he quotes the apostle, ^{<6415>}**1 Corinthians 14:15**: "I will pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also." "As the

mind has its influence by which it moves the body, so the spirit has its own influence by which it moves the soul.” Whatever may be thought of this gloss, one thing is pretty evident from it, that *instrumental music* was not in use in the Church of Christ in the time of Eusebius, which was near the middle of the *fourth* century. Had any such thing then existed in the Christian Church, he would have doubtless alluded to or spiritualized it; or, as he quoted the words of the apostle above, would have shown that *carnal usages* were substituted for *spiritual exercises*. I believe the whole verse should be translated thus: *Upon the asur, upon the nebel, upon the higgayon, with the kinnor*. Thus it stands in the Hebrew.

Verse 4. For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work] I am delighted with thy conduct towards me; with the work of thy *providence*, the works of thy *grace*, and thy works of *creation*.

Verse 5. How great are thy works!] They are multitudinous, stupendous, and splendid: *and thy thoughts*-thy designs and counsels, *from which, by which, and in reference to which*, they have been formed; *are very deep*-so profound as not to be fathomed by the comprehension of man.

Verse 6. A brutish man knoweth not] *r [b vya ish baar*, the human hog-the stupid bear-the *boor*; the man who is all flesh; in whom *spirit* or *intellect* neither seems to work nor exist. The *brutish man*, who never attempts to see God in his works.

Neither doth a fool understand this.] *l ysk kesil*, the fool, is different from *r [b baar*, the brutish man; the latter *has mind*, but it is buried in flesh; the former has *no mind*, and his stupidity is unavoidable.

Verse 7. When the wicked spring as the grass] This is a lesson which is frequently inculcated in the sacred writings. The favour of God towards man is not to be known by outward prosperity; nor is his disapprobation to be known by the adverse circumstances in which any person may be found. When, however, we see the wicked flourish, we may take for granted that their *abuse* of God’s mercies will cause him to cut them off as cumberers of the ground; and, dying in their sins, *they are destroyed for ever*.

Verse 8. High for evermore.] *They* are brought down and destroyed; but the Lord is exalted eternally, both for his judgments and his mercies.

Verse 10. Like the horn of a unicorn.] *μῦα* *reeym*, perhaps here, the *oryx* or *buffalo*. But the *rhinoceros* seems to be the real *monoceros* of the Scriptures.

I shall be anointed with fresh oil.] Perhaps the allusion is here not to any *sacramental* anointing, but to such anointings as were frequent among the Asiatics, especially after bathing, for the purpose of health and activity.

Verse 11. Mine eye also shall see,—and mine ears shall hear] Even in my own times my enemies shall be destroyed; and of this destruction I shall either be an *eye-witness* or have authentic *information*.

Verse 12. The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree] Very different from the wicked, ^{<1927>}**Psalm 92:7**, who are likened to grass. These shall have a *short duration*; but those shall have a long and useful life. They are compared also to the *cedar of Lebanon*, an incorruptible wood, and extremely long-lived. Mr. *Maundrell*, who visited those trees in 1697, describes them thus: “These noble trees grow among the snow, near the highest part of Lebanon. Some are very old, and of prodigious bulk. I measured one of the largest, and found it *twelve yards six inches* in girth, and yet sound; and *thirty-seven yards* in the spread of its boughs. At about *five or six yards* from the ground, it was divided into *five limbs*, each of which was equal to a large tree.” Some of these trees are supposed to have lived upwards of *one thousand years*! The figure of the *palm-tree* gives us the idea of *grandeur* and *usefulness*. The *fruit* of the palm-tree makes a great part of the *diet* of the people of *Arabia*, part of *Persia*, and *Upper Egypt*. The *stones* are ground down for the camels; the *leaves* are made into *baskets*; the *hard boughs*, or rather *strong leaves*, some being *six or eight feet* in length, make *fences*; the *juice* makes *arrack*; the *threads* of the web-like integument between the leaves make *ropes*, and the rigging of small vessels; and the *wood* serves for slighter buildings and fire-wood. In short, the *palm* or *date tree*, and the *olive*, are two of the most excellent and useful productions of the forest or the field.

The *cedar* gives us the idea of *majesty*, *stability*, *durableness*, and *incorruptibility*. To these *two trees*, for the most obvious reasons, are the righteous compared. *William Lithgow*, who travelled through the *holy land* about A.D. 1600, describes the cedars of Mount *Lebanon* as “being in number twenty-four, growing after the manner of oaks, but a great deal taller straighter, and thicker, and the branches growing so straight, and

interlocking, as though they were kept by art: and yet from the root to the top they bear no boughs, but grow straight and upwards like to a palm-tree. Their circle-spread tops do kiss or embrace the lower clouds, making their grandeur overlook the highest bodies of all other aspiring trees. The nature of this tree is, that it is always green, yielding an odoriferous smell, and an excellent kind of fruit, like unto apples, but of a sweeter taste, and more wholesome. The roots of some of these cedars are almost destroyed by the shepherds, who have made fires thereat, and holes where they sleep; yet nevertheless they flourish green above, in the tops and branches.”—Lithgow’s 17 years’ Travels, 4to., London, 1640.

Verse 13. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord] I believe the *Chaldee* has the true meaning here: “His children shall be planted in the house of the sanctuary of the Lord, and shall flourish in the courts of our God.” As these trees flourish in their respective soils and climates, so shall the *righteous* in the ordinances of God. I do not think there is any allusion to either *palm-trees* or *cedars*, planted near the tabernacle or temple.

Verse 14. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age] They shall continue to grow in grace, and be fruitful to the end of their lives. It is a rare case to find a man in old age full of faith, love, and spiritual activity.

Verse 15. To show that the Lord is upright] Such persons show how faithful God is to his promises, how true to his word, how kind to them who trust in him. He is the *Rock*, the *Fountain*, whence all good comes.

There is **no unrighteousness in him.**] He does nothing *evil*, nothing *unwise*, nothing *unkind*. He is both *just* and *merciful*.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-SECOND PSALM

I. A general proposition, ^{<1921>}**Psalm 92:1**: “It is good to give thanks to the Lord,” &c.; which is explained ^{<1922>}**Psalm 92:2, 3**, and applied ^{<1924>}**Psalm 92:4**.

II. A particular narration of such works, in which the goodness and faithfulness of God do especially consist, viz., the creation and government of the world, ^{<1924>}**Psalm 92:4, 5**. And of the last he gives two instances:—

1. One in wicked men; of their stupidity, ^{<1925>}**Psalm 92:6**. Then of their sudden extirpation, ^{<1927>}**Psalm 92:7-9**.

2. Another in the godly, whose prosperity is great, ^{<19210>}**Psalm 92:10-14**, and security certain, ^{<19215>}**Psalm 92:15**.

I. He begins with a maxim: 1. "It is good," i.e., just, profitable, pleasant, and commendable, "to give thanks to the Lord." 2. "And to sing praises (with heart and tongue) to thy glorious name, O thou Most High."

And both parts he explains. 1. That we give thanks at all times, morning and evening, in prosperity and in adversity; and in our praises especially to remember his loving-kindness and faithfulness. These must be the matter of our thanksgiving: "It is good to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night," ^{<19212>}**Psalm 92:2**; and by all manner of means, ^{<19213>}**Psalm 92:3**.

And thus the maxim being proposed and explained, he applies it to himself, and shows his own practice, and the reason of it: "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands," ^{<19214>}**Psalm 92:4**.

1. "Thou hast made me glad." He was first delighted and affected with God's work.

2. And then he exults and triumphs in it. The heart must be first truly affected with the work of God before a man shall take any true content or delight in it.

II. He had made mention of the works of God; and now he farther opens what they are: First, The creation of the universe; Secondly, His especial providence in ordering the things of this world, particularly about man.

1. First, he begins with the work of creation, upon which he enters, not with less than an admiration: "O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep." As if he said, I cannot be satisfied in the contemplation of them. There is such a depth in them, that I cannot attain to it, nor comprehend it.

2. And he ends it, not without an indignation, that the wise men of the world, who yet in his judgment, for their disregard of it, are but fools, should not consider it. In the creature they look after nothing but profit and pleasure, in which regard they are but fools. *For this brutish man knows not how great are his works; this fool understands not how deep are his cogitations.*

And that he may illustrate their folly the more, from the work of creation he comes to God's work of governance of the world; and shows, that as they who would be and are reputed wise, are mistaken in the one, so also they are mistaken in the other; for they think the ungodly, and such as flourish in power and wealth, happy, and that the righteous men, sometimes oppressed, are unhappy: and upon these two instances, he insists to the end of the Psalm. First, he instances the ungodly: *When the wicked spring up-rise on a sudden, (for such a time there is,) as the grass, that grows insensibly and in a night; and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish*-become very conspicuous, exalted in power and pride, and abound in wealth; who would not now take them for happy men? No, saith our prophet, it is not so.

1. This their felicity is the greatest infelicity: It is, "that they may perish," be destroyed.
2. "That they may perish for ever." Remember the rich man in the Gospel.
3. And this their destruction is from God, that sits on the throne, and is immutable in his decrees and ways. They flourish and are exalted: but it is but for a moment: "But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore." And thou wilt execute thy decree upon them.
4. Which the prophet fully opens in the next verse, which the *epizeuxis* makes more emphatical: "For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; and all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered."
- 1, Behold, they were green, they *flourished*: but the change shall be sudden.
2. They were *enemies, thy enemies, workers of iniquity*; therefore cursed with a curse.
3. "They shall perish, they shall be scattered;" they rose, they flourished as grass, and they shall be scattered as dry grass, which the wind blows from the face of the earth.

His second instance is the godly, whose happy condition he demonstrates,

1. In *hypothesi*, or in himself, ^{<19210>}**Psalm 92:10, 11**; and, 2. In *thesi*; in all others that be true members of the mystical Church of Christ, ^{<19212>}**Psalm 92:12-15**.

He instanceth in himself, that his condition is not like the ungodly. He shot not up as the fading grass, but his strength and power should be as a unicorn.

1. “But my horn shalt thou exalt as the horn of a unicorn;” that is, my power, and glory, and felicity shall still mount higher.

2. “And I shall be anointed with fresh oil.” Anointed to be king over *Israel*, by *Samuel*, with a horn of oil;—by God, with the gracious oil of his Spirit.

3. And that which adds to my flourishing estate: “My eye shall see my desire upon my enemies, and my ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me;” which David lived to see and hear in the ruin of *Saul* and his house.

And that which the prophet said of himself he now transfers to all just and righteous men, whom he compares to the *palm* and *cedar*.

1. “The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree.” So a good Christian; the greater weight he carries, the more he flourishes.

2. “He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon Cedar-wood is not consumed by worms or time; nor the Church by antiquity nor persecution. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it, nor any true member of it.

Of which the reason is, because these *palms* and *cedars*—these righteous men, are planted, set by faith, watered by the word and sacraments, rooted by charity in the Church, which is the house of the Lord; and therefore they *shall flourish*—be green and vigorous, *in the courts of our God*.

Nay, which is yet more, they shall be full of sap and laden with fruit.

1. “They shall bring forth fruit in their old age.” It shall be contrary to them, as with other trees. Those grow fruitless, and bear not when they grow old; these are then most laden with the fruits of grace.

2. “They shall be fat and flourishing.” Other trees, when old, are hard and dry; these then are fat in juice, and flourish in good works.

3. And the reason of this vigour, of the continuance of this radical and vital moisture to old age, is, that they bring forth fruit, which is specified in the last verse: “That they might show forth God’s faithfulness, praise him for that,” as it is in the second verse. 1. “That they might show that the Lord is upright,”—just and righteous in himself. 2. “That he is a Rock,”—a sure,

stable foundation to trust to. 3. “And that there is no unrighteousness in him,”—no injustice; though for a time he suffer the wicked to flourish, and the just to be under the cross. For in his good time he will show his justice in rewarding the just, and punishing the unjust.

PSALMS

PSALM 93

The universal government of God, 1, 2; the opposition to that government, 3, 4; the truth of God's testimonies, 5.

NOTES ON PSALM 93

This Psalm has no *title* either in the Hebrew or Chaldee. The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, state it to be “A song of praise of David for the day preceding the Sabbath, when the earth was founded;” but in such a title there is no information on which any man can rely. This Psalm is written as a part of the preceding in *twelve* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. It was probably written at the close of the captivity by the *Levites*, descendants of Moses.

Verse 1. The Lord reigneth] He continues to govern every thing he has created; and he is every way qualified to govern all things, for *he is clothed with majesty and with strength*-dominion is his, and he has supreme power to exercise it; and *he has so established the world* that nothing can be driven out of order; all is ruled by him. *Nature* is his agent: or rather, nature is the sum of the laws of his government; the operations carried on by the Divine energy, and the effects resulting from those operations.

He hath girded himself] The *girding with strength* refers to the *girding* in order to *strengthen the loins, arms, knees, &c.* When a Hindoo is about to set off on a journey, to lift a burden, or to do something that requires exertion, he *binds firmly* his loose upper garment round his loins.—
WARD.

Verse 2. Thy throne is established of old] There never was a time in which God did not reign, in which he was not a supreme and absolute Monarch; for he is from *everlasting*. There never was a time in which he was not; there never can be a period in which he shall cease to exist.

Verse 3. The floods have lifted up] Multitudes of people have confederated against thy people; and troop succeeds troop as the waves of the sea succeed each other.

Verse 4. The Lord—is mightier than the noise of many waters] Greater in strength than all the *peoples* and *nations* that can rise up against him.

Mighty waves of the sea.] Even the most powerful empires can prevail nothing against him; therefore those who trust in him have nothing to fear.

Verse 5. Thy testimonies are very sure] Thou wilt as surely fulfil thy word as thou wilt keep possession of thy throne.

Holiness becometh thine house] Thy *nature* is holy, all thy *works* are holy, and thy *word* is holy; therefore, thy *house*—thy *Church*, should be holy. The *building* itself should be *sanctified*—should be so *consecrated* to thy worship alone, that it shall never be employed in any other service. The *ministers* of this Church should be holy, the *members* holy, the *ordinances* holy; its *faith*, its *discipline*, and its *practice* holy. And this at all times, and in all circumstances; for holiness becometh thine house—for ever,” **μymy Ēral** *le-orech yamin*, for length of days. During the whole lapse of time; till the sun and moon shall be no more. The old *Psalter* says the house of God is *man’s saule*; and of this house holiness is **hwan naavah**, “the *ornament*,” it produces that meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. No decoration of person nor simplicity of dress can supply the place of this heavenly clothing.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-THIRD PSALM

In this Psalm it is the purpose of the prophet to comfort the Church, oppressed by tyrants and persecutors; and yet she shall not utterly fail. The gates of hell shall not prevail against her; because Christ sits in his Church as *King*. The sum of it is,—

I. The magnificence and power of Christ our eternal King,

Psalm 93:1, 2.

II. That he defends his Church in the day of a storm, **Psalm**

93:3, 4.

III. That his laws are holy, and his Church also, **Psalm 93:5.**

I. The prophet in the first verse describes our King:

First. From his office:—

1. “He reigns.” He is the great and chief Monarch; he is no idle spectator of things below; but wisely, and justly, and powerfully administers all things.

2. He is a glorious King: “He is clothed with majesty.”

3. He is a potent King: “The Lord is clothed with strength.”

4. He is a warlike King: “He hath girded himself,” buckled his sword upon his armour; for offence towards his enemies, for defence of his kingdom.

Secondly. From his kingdom:—

1. It is universal: “The world.”

2. It is fixed, firm, and stable: “The world is also established, and cannot be moved.”

3. It is an everlasting kingdom: “From everlasting to everlasting; thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.”

II. But in this his kingdom there are those who raise tumults, commotions, and rebellions. These he compares to swelling waters and foaming waves.

1. “The floods,” that is, tyrants, persecutors, &c., “have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.” The Church dwells in the sea; and the waves of tyranny, ambition, and malice, beat furiously upon it.

2. Well, be it so; yet “the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters; yea than the mighty waves of the sea.” He wonderfully and strangely hath showed his might in getting himself the victory over all persecutors, and propagating and enlarging his kingdom over all the earth in despite of his enemies.

III. 1. And as his kingdom is immovable, so are the laws by which it is governed fixed and unalterable also: “Thy testimonies are very sure.” The Gospel is an eternal Gospel; the doctrine thereof is holy and inviolable; by which God hath declared his good will to man, and what he requires of all his loving subjects; which is, that they be a holy people. For,

2. “Holiness becomes thy house for ever.” The temple, the priests, the people, must be a holy nation; for ever correspondent to the holiness of his law and testimonies: “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” “Holiness becomes thy house, O Lord, for ever.”

PSALMS

PSALM 94

An appeal to God against oppressors, 1-7. Expostulations with the workers of iniquity, 8-11. God's merciful dealings with his followers, 12-15; and their confidence in him, 16-19. The punishment of the wicked foretold, 20-23.

NOTES ON PSALM 94

This Psalm has no *title* either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*. The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, have “A Psalm of David, for the fourth day of the week;” but this gives us no information on which we can rely. In *three* of *Kennicott's* MSS. it is written as a *part* of the preceding. It is probably a prayer of the captives in Babylon for deliverance; and was written by the descendants of Moses, to whom some of the preceding Psalms have been attributed. It contains a description of an iniquitous and oppressive government, such as that under which the Israelites lived in Babylon.

Verse 1. O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth] God is the author of *retributive justice*, as well as of *mercy*. This retributive justice is what we often term *vengeance*, but perhaps improperly; for vengeance with us signifies an excitement of *angry passions*, in order to *gratify* a *vindictive spirit*, which supposes itself to have received some real injury; whereas what is here referred to is that simple act of justice which gives to all their due.

Verse 2. Lift up thyself] Exert thy power.

Render a reward to the proud.] To the Babylonians, who oppress and insult us.

Verse 3. How long shall the wicked triumph?] The wicked are often in prosperity; and this only shows us of how little worth riches are in the sight of God, when he bestows them on the most contemptible of mortals. But their time and prosperity have their *bounds*.

Verse 4. They utter and speak] *wayby yabbiu*, their hearts *get full* of pride and insolence; and then, from the abundance of such vile hearts, the

mouth *speaks*; and the speech is of *hard things, threatenings* which they are determined to execute, *boastings* of their power, authority, &c.

Verse 5. They break in pieces thy people] This was true of the Babylonians. Nehuchadnezzar slew many; carried the rest into captivity; ruined Jerusalem; overturned the temple; sacked, pillaged, and destroyed all the country.

Verse 6. They slay the widow] Nebuchadnezzar carried on his wars with great cruelty. He carried fire and sword every where; spared neither *age, sex, nor condition*. The *widow, the orphan, and the stranger*, persons in the most desolate condition of life, were not distinguished from others by his ruthless sword.

Verse 7. The Lord shall not see] This was either the language of *infidelity* or *insult*. Indeed, what could the Babylonians know of the true God? They might consider him as the God of a *district* or *province*, who knew nothing and did nothing out of his own territories.

Verse 8. Understand, ye brutish] These are the same expressions as in ^{<19216>}**Psalm 92:6**, on which see the note. See Clarke “^{<19216>}**Psalm 92:6**”.

Verse 9. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?] This is allowed to be an unanswerable mode of argumentation. Whatever is found of excellence in the *creature*, must be derived from the *Creator*, and exist in him in the plenitude of infinite excellence. God, says St. *Jerome*, is all *eye*, because he sees all; he is all *hand*, because he does all things; he is all *foot*, for he is every where present. The psalmist does not say, He that planted the ear, *hath he not an ear?* He that formed the eye, *hath he not eyes?* No; but, Shall he not *hear?* Shall he not *see!* And why does he say so? To prevent the error of humanizing God, of attributing members or corporeal parts to the infinite Spirit. See *Calmet*.

Verse 10. He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct?] YOU, who are heathens, and heathens of the most abandoned kind.

He that teacheth man knowledge] We here supply *shall not he know?* But this is not acknowledged by the *original*, nor by any of the *Versions*. Indeed it is not necessary; for either the words contain a simple proposition, “It is he who teacheth man knowledge,” or this clause should be read in connexion with ^{<19411>}**Psalm 94:11**: “Jehovah, who teacheth man knowledge, knoweth the devices of man, that they are vanity.” As he

teaches *knowledge* to man, must he not *know* all the reasonings and devices of the human heart?

Verse 12. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest] **wnr**syt

teyasserennu, whom thou *instructest*; and *teachest him out of thy law*. Two points here are worthy of our most serious regard: 1. God gives *knowledge* to man: gives him *understanding* and *reason*. 2. He gives him a *revelation* of himself; he places before that *reason* and *understanding* his *Divine law*. This is God's system of teaching; and the human intellect is his gift, which enables man to understand this teaching. We perhaps may add a *third* thing here; that as by sin the understanding is darkened, he gives the Holy Spirit to dispel this darkness from the intellect, in order that his word may be properly apprehended and understood. But he gives no *new faculty*; he removes the impediments from the old, and invigorates it by his Divine energy.

Verse 13. That thou mayest give him rest] He whom God instructs is made wise unto salvation; and he who is thus taught has rest in his soul, and peace and confidence in adversity.

Verse 14. The Lord will not cast off his people] Though they are now suffering under a grievous and oppressive captivity, yet the Lord hath not utterly cast them off. They are his inheritance, and he will again restore them to their own land.

Verse 15. But judgment shall return unto righteousness] If we read **bvwy** *yosheb*, *shall sit*, for **bwvy** *yashub*, *shall return*, which is only placing the **w** *vau* before the **v** *shin* instead of after it, we have the following sense: *Until the just one shall sit in judgment, and after him all the upright in heart*. Cyrus has the epithet **qdx** *tsedek*, the *just one*, in different places in the Prophet Isaiah. See ^{<234102>} **Isaiah 41:2, 10; 45:8; 51:5**. It was Cyrus who gave liberty to the Jews, who appeared as their deliverer and conductor to their own land, and they are all represented as *following* in his *train*.

Verse 16. Who will rise up for me] Who is he that shall be the deliverer of thy people? Who will come to our assistance against these wicked Babylonians?

Verse 17. Unless the Lord had been my help] Had not God in a strange manner supported us while under his chastising hand, we had been utterly cut off.

My soul had almost dwelt in silence.] The *Vulgate* has *in inferno*, in *hell* or the *infernal world*; the *Septuagint*, **τω αδη**, in the *invisible world*.

Verse 18. When I said, My foot slippeth] When I found myself so weak and my enemy so strong, that I got *first* off my guard, and then off my *centre of gravity*, and my fall appeared inevitable,—

Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.] **ynd** [**sy** *yisadeni*, *propped me*. It is a metaphor taken from any thing *falling*, that is *propped*, *shored up*, or *buttressed*. How often does the *mercy* of God thus prevent the ruin of weak believers, and of those who have been unfaithful!

Verse 19. In the multitude of my thoughts] Of my griefs, (*dolorum*, *Vulgate*;) my sorrows, (**οδυνον**, *Septuagint*.) According to the multitude of my trials and distresses, have been the consolations which thou hast afforded me. Or, While I have been deeply *meditating* on thy wondrous grace and mercy, Divine light has broken in upon my soul, and I have been filled with delight.

Verse 20. Shall the throne of iniquity] No wicked king, judge, or magistrate shall ever stand in thy presence. No countenance shall such have from thy grace or providence.

Which frameth mischief] Devise, plan, and execute, as if they acted by a positive law, and were strictly enjoined to do what they so much delighted in.

Verse 21. They gather themselves together] In every thing that is *evil*, they are in *unity*. The devil, his angels, and his children, all join and draw together when they have for their object the destruction of the works of the Lord. But this was particularly the case with respect to the poor Jews among the Babylonians: they were objects of their continual hatred, and they laboured for their destruction.

This and the following verses have been applied to our Lord, and the treatment he met with both from his own countrymen and from the Romans. They pretended to “judge him according to the law, and framed mischief against him;” they “assembled together against the life of the

righteous one,” and “condemned innocent blood;” but God evidently interposed, and “brought upon them their own iniquity,” according to their horrible imprecation: “His blood be upon us and upon our children!” God “cut them off in their own iniquity.” All this had, in reference to him, a most literal fulfilment.

Verse 22. The rock of my refuge.] Alluding to those natural fortifications among rocks, which are frequent in the land of Judea.

Verse 23. Shall cut them off] This is repeated, to show that the destruction of the Babylonians was fixed and indubitable: and in reference to the Jews, the persecutors and murderers of our Lord and his apostles, it was not less so. *Babylon* is totally destroyed; not even a *vestige* of it remains. The *Jews* are no longer a nation; they are scattered throughout the world, and have no certain place of abode. They do not possess even one *village* on the face of the earth.

The last verse is thus translated and paraphrased in the old Psalter:—

Trans. And he sal yelde to thaim thair wickednes, and in thair malice he sall skater thaim: skater thaim sal Lorde our God.

Par. Alswa say efter thair il entent, that thai wil do gude men harme; he sall yelde thaim pyne, and in thair malice thai sal be sundred fra the hali courte of hevене, and skatred emang the wiked fendes of hell.

For different views of several parts of this Psalm, see the *Analysis*.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-FOURTH PSALM

In this Psalm the parts are,—

- I. A petition for vengeance upon the wicked, ^{<9901>}**Psalm 94:1, 2.**
- II. A pitiful complaint, with the causes of it, which were two:—
 1. The delay of God’s judgments on them, ^{<9903>}**Psalm 94:3, 4.**
 2. Their insolence, oppression of the poor, and blasphemy against God, ^{<9904>}**Psalm 94:4-7.**
- III. A sharp reprehension of their blasphemy and atheism, and the refutation of it.
- IV. A consolation to all good men, that God will punish the wicked and defend the righteous, ^{<9912>}**Psalm 94:12-23.** Which is confirmed,—

1. From God's faithfulness, who hath promised, and will perform it,

^{<19914>}**Psalm 94:14.**

2. From David's own experience, ^{<19916>}**Psalm 94:16-20.**

3. From God's hatred of injustice, tyranny, and oppression, ^{<19921>}**Psalm**

94:20, 21. 1. Which will cause him to be a rock and defence to his people,

^{<19922>}**Psalm 94:22.** 2. A severe revenger to the oppressors, ^{<19923>}**Psalm 94:23.**

1. He begins with a petition that God would take vengeance of the oppressors of his people: "O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongs, to whom vengeance belongs;" as if he had said, Thou art the most powerful Lord, a God of justice and power, and hast vengeance in thine own hand. Therefore now—

1. "Show thyself." Appear, shine forth evidently, and apparently show thy justice, ^{<19940>}**Psalm 94:1.**

2. "Lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth." Do thy office of judicature; ascend thy throne and tribunal, as judges use to do when they give judgment.

3. "Render a reward unto the proud." For the proud humble themselves not unto thee; they repent not.

II. And now the prophet begins to complain that, by the delay of God's judgment, wicked men were hardened in their impiety, and gloried in their villany.

1. "How long? how long?" This thy forbearance seems tedious; especially since the wicked grow worse and worse by it, and insult over us the more.

2. "For they triumph in their strength." They glory in their prosperity, and in their wickedness.

3. "They utter and speak hard things." Boldly, rashly, proudly, they threaten ruin to thy Church.

4. "They are workers of iniquity, and they boast themselves." It is not sufficient for them to do ill, but they boast of it.

Now to what end do they make use of all these? The consequence is lamentable—the event sad. The effects are lamentable, for in their fury and injustice—

1. "They break in pieces thy people, O Lord." The people dedicated to thee.
2. "They afflict thine heritage." The people that thou hast chosen for thy possession.
3. "They slay the widow," destitute of the comfort of a husband-1. "And the stranger." A man far from his friends and country. 2. "And murder the fatherless." All which thou hast taken into thy protection, and commanded that they be not wronged. ^{<12221>}**Exodus 22:21, 22;** ^{<16344>}**Deuteronomy 24:14, 17-22.** Yet such is their fury, that they spare neither sex, nor age, nor any condition of men.

"Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it." This is their impiety; this is their blasphemy; this is the true cause of all their injustice, tyranny, cruelty, and oppression.

III. Now our prophet sets himself seriously to reprehend and confute this. By an *apostrophe* he turns to them, and calls them fools; and proves by a manifest argument that they are fools; demonstrating, from the cause to the effect, that God is neither deaf nor blind, as they presumed and conceived: and urgeth them emphatically,—

1. "Understand, ye brutish among the people. O ye fools, when will ye be wise?" What! will ye be brutish always? will ye never have common sense in your heads?
2. "He planted the ear," caused you to hear; "and shall he not then hear?"
3. He *formed the eye* with all the tunicles, and put into it the faculty of vision by which you see; "and shall he not see?" To say the contrary, is as if you should affirm that the fountain that sends forth the stream had no water in it; or the sun that enlightens the world had no light; or the fire that warms, no heat. Are these affirmations fit for wise men? Neither is it, that the God of Jacob doth not hear nor see.
4. "He chastiseth the heathen," as *Sodom, Gomorrah, &c.*, or he chastises them by the checks of their own conscience; "and shall not he then correct you," who go under the name of his people, and yet so impiously blaspheme?
5. "He that teacheth man knowledge"—hath endued him with a reasonable soul, and made him capable of all arts and sciences; is he stupid? is he

without understanding? “Shall not he know?” He looks into your hearts, and knows your thoughts and counsels, and findeth them all vain: “The Lord knows the thoughts of man, that they are but vanity.” With which he concludes his reprehension.

IV. And so from them he comes to the good man, and shows his happiness, whom he labours to comfort in his extremities, pronouncing him blessed: “Blessed is the man.” And his blessedness lies in three things:—

1. In his sufferings; because when he is punished, he is but chastised, and his chastisements are from the Lord: “Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest.”

2. In his teaching, for when he is chastised, he is but taught obedience to the law of God, taught *out of thy law*.

3. In consideration of the end; that he feel not, but bear more moderately, the injuries of the wicked; for the end why God chastiseth and teacheth thee out of his law is: *That he may give thee rest*-a quiet and even soul, *from the days of adversity*; and that thou shouldst expect with patience, *till the pit be digged up for the ungodly*. Such a day there is, and the day will come. Hell is as ready to receive the sinner, as a grave digged up for a dead body. Expect therefore, their punishment and thy deliverance with a quiet mind. For which he gives *three* reasons:—

The *first* reason is, that though God for a time seem to be angry, and suffer his people to be afflicted, yet he will not utterly neglect and forsake them:—

1. “For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.”

2. A day of judgment and execution of justice shall come, “when judgment shall return unto righteousness.”

A *second* confirmation of the comfort he gave to the Church in affliction is drawn from his own experience, ^{<19416>}**Psalm 94:16-20**.

1. Object. Yea, but this time of judgment may be long; in the meanwhile it is necessary to have some helper and help against the persecutions and injuries of cruel men. Who will arise for me, and labour to protect me in so great a concourse of devils or mischievous men? “Who will stand up for me, and defend me against the workers of iniquity?”

Resp. Even he that then stood up for me. No man, but God alone. He did it; and “unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence;” I had been laid in the grave among the dead, saith David,

<99417> **Psalm 94:17.**

2. *If I said*, and complained to him, that I was in any danger, *my foot slips*—I was tempted and ready to fall, *thy mercy, O Lord. held me up*; in mercy he lent me his hand, and sustained me.

3. “In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul:”—

(1) The *thoughts within me* were sorrows of heart, and many they were, occasioned from within, from without; *a multitude of them*.

(2) “Thy comforts delight my soul.” As were the troubles in the flesh, so were comforts in my soul.

His *third* reason, to comfort the Church in affliction, is drawn from the nature of God, to whom all iniquity is hateful.

1. “Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee?” Thou art a just God, and wilt thou have any thing to do, any society, with those that sit upon thrones and seats of justice, and execute injustice?

2. “Which frame mischief by a law,” i.e. frame wicked laws; or, under the colour of law and justice, oppress the innocent. With those who do injustice by the sword of justice, God will have no fellowship.

3. And yet there is a third pretense of wicked men to colour their proceedings against innocent men. The first was their *throne*, the second was the *law*, and the third is their *council*, and consultations in them. These they call to that end. They meet by troops as thieves; they assemble, they convene in synods; “they gather themselves together,” and that to a most wicked end:—

1. “Against the soul of the righteous.” **Θηρευσαι**, To hunt.—*Septuagint*.

2. “To condemn the innocent blood.” Their laws are *Draco’s* laws. Now what shall the poor innocent do in such a case? How shall he be comforted? Help he must not expect from man; from man it cannot come; it must come from heaven; and therefore let him say with *David*, Though

my enemies rage as they list, and exercise all cruelties towards me, under a pretence of zeal, piety, and legal justice; yet

1. “The Lord is my defence,” so that their treachery and plots shall not hurt me.

2. “My God is the rock of my refuge,” on whom my hope shall safely rely.

3. “I am fully assured, for I have his word and his promise engaged for it.”

1. “That he shall bring upon them their own iniquity;” that is, that the iniquity of the wicked man shall return upon his own head.

2. “And shall cut them off in their own wickedness;” not so much for their sin as for the malice of it.

3. Which for assurance of it he repeats, and explains who it is that shall do it: “Yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off;” the Lord, whose providence they derided; “our God,” the God of Jacob, whom they contemned, ^{<199407>}**Psalm 94:7**, he “shall cut them off;” they shall have no part with his people.

PSALMS

PSALM 95

An invitation to praise God, 1, 2. The reason on which this is founded, the majesty and dominion of God, 3-5. An invitation to pray to God, 6. And the reasons on which that is founded, 7. Exhortation not to act as their fathers had done, who rebelled against God, and were cast out of his favour, 8-11.

NOTES ON PSALM 95

This Psalm is also without a *title*, both in the *Hebrew* and *Chaldee*: but is attributed to *David* by the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Syriac*; and by the *author* of the Epistle to the Hebrews, ^{<5804B>} **Hebrews 4:3-7**. *Calmet* and other eminent critics believe that it was composed during the time of the *captivity*, and that the apostle only followed the *common opinion* in quoting it as the production of *David*, because in general the Psalter was attributed to him.

The Psalm is a solemn invitation to the people, when assembled for public worship, to praise God from a sense of his great goodness; and to be attentive to the instructions they were about to receive from the reading and expounding of the law; and on these accounts it has been long used in the Christian Church, at the commencement of public service, to prepare the people's minds to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Houbigant, and other learned divines, consider this Psalm as composed of *three* parts. 1. The part of the *people*, ^{<4950B>} **Psalm 95:1** to the middle of ^{<4950C>} **Psalm 95:7**. 2. The part of the *priest* or *prophet*, from the middle of ^{<4950D>} **Psalm 95:7** to the end of ^{<4950E>} **Psalm 95:8**. 3. The part of *Jehovah*, ^{<4950F>} **Psalm 95:9-11**. It is written as a part of the preceding Psalm by *nine* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS.; but certainly it must have been originally an ode by itself, as the subject is widely different from that in the foregoing.

Verse 1. O come, let us sing] Let us *praise* God, not only with the most joyful accents which can be uttered by the *voice*; but let us also praise him with *hearts* tuned to gratitude, from a full sense of the manifold benefits we have already received.

The rock of our salvation.] The strong *Fortress* in which we have always found *safety*, and the *Source* whence we have always derived *help* for our souls. In both these senses the word *rock*, as applied to God, is used in the Scriptures.

Verse 2. Let us come before his presence] *wynp panaiv*, his faces, with thanksgiving, *hdwtb bethodah*, with *confession*, or with the *confession-offering*. Praise him for what he has already done, and confess your unworthiness of any of his blessings. The *confession-offering*, the great *atonement sacrifice*, can alone render your *acknowledgment of sin* and *thanksgiving* acceptable to a *holy* and *just* God.

Verse 3. For the Lord is a great God] Or, “A great God is Jehovah, and a great King above all gods;” or, “God is a great King over all.” The Supreme Being has *three* names here: *l a EL*, *hwby JEHOVAH*, *pyhl a ELOHIM*, and we should apply none of them to *false gods*. The *first* implies his *strength*; the *second* his *being* and *essence*; the *third*, his *covenant relation* to mankind. In public worship these are the views we should entertain of the Divine Being.

Verse 4. In his hand are the deep places of the earth] The greatest deeps are *fathomed by him*.

The strength of the hills is his also.] And to him the *greatest heights* are *accessible*.

Verse 5. The sea is his] The sea and the dry land are equally his, for he has formed them both, and they are his property. He governs and disposes of them as he sees good. He is the absolute Master of universal nature. Therefore there is no other object of worship nor of confidence.

Verse 6. O come, let us worship] *Three* distinct words are used here to express *three different acts of adoration*: 1. *Let us worship*, *hwj tvn nishtachaveh*, let us *prostrate* ourselves; the highest act of adoration by which the *supremacy* of God is acknowledged. 2. *Let us bow down*, *h[rkn nichraah*, let us *crouch* or *cower down*, *bending the legs under*, as a dog in the presence of his master, which solicitously waits to receive his commands. 3. *Let us kneel*, *hkrbn nibrachah*, let us *put our knees to the ground*, and thus put ourselves in the *posture* of those who *supplicate*.

And let us consider that all this should be done in the *presence* of HIM who is *Jehovah our Creator*.

Verse 7. For he is our God] Here is the reason for this service. He has condescended to enter into a *covenant* with us, and he has taken us for his own; therefore—

We are the people of his pasture] Or, rather, as the *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, and *Æthiopic* read, “We are his people, and the sheep of the pasture of his hand.” We are his own; he feeds and governs us, and his powerful *hand* protects us.

To-day if ye will hear his voice] *To-day*—you have no time to lose; *to-morrow* may be too late. God calls to-day; to-morrow he may be silent. This should commence the eighth verse, as it begins what is supposed to be the part of the *priest* or *prophet* who now exhorts the people; as if he had said: Seeing you are in so good a spirit, do not forget your own resolutions, and harden not your hearts, “as your fathers did in Meribah and Massah, in the wilderness;” the *same fact* and the *same names* as are mentioned ^{<1217>}**Exodus 17:7**; when the people murmured at *Rephidim*, because they had no water; hence it was called *Meribah*, contention or provocation, and *Massah*, temptation.

Verse 9. When your fathers tempted me] *Tried* me, by their insolence, unbelief, and blasphemy. They *proved* me—they had full proof of my power to save and to destroy. There *they saw my works*—they saw that nothing was too hard for God.

Verse 10. Forty years long] They did nothing but murmur, disbelieve, and rebel, from the time they began their journey at the *Red Sea* till they passed over Jordan, a period of *forty* years. During all this time God was *grieved* by *that generation*; yet he seldom showed forth that *judgment* which they most righteously had deserved.

It is a people that do err in their heart] Or, according to the *Chaldee*, These are a *people whose idols are in their hearts*. At any rate they had not GOD there.

They have not known my ways] The verb [*dy yada*, to know, is used here, as in many other parts of Scripture, to express *approbation*. They knew God’s ways well enough; but they did not *like* them; and would not walk in them. “These wretched men,” says the old Psalter, “were gifnen to

the lufe of this lyfe: knewe nocht my ways of mekenes, and charite: for thi in my wreth I sware to thaim; that es, I sett stably that if that sall entre in till my rest;” that is, they shall not enter into my rest.

This ungrateful people did not approve of God’s ways—they did not enter into his designs—they did not conform to his commands—they paid no attention to his miracles—and did not acknowledge the benefits which they received from his hands; therefore God determined that they should not enter into the *rest* which he had promised to them on condition that, if they were obedient, they should inherit the promised land. So none of those who came out of Egypt, except *Joshua* and *Caleb*, entered into Canaan; all the rest died in the wilderness, wherein, because of their disobedience, God caused them to wander *forty* years.

It is well known that the land of Canaan was a type of heaven, where, after all his toils, the good and faithful servant is to enter into the joy of his Lord. And as those Israelites in the wilderness were not permitted to enter into the land of Canaan because of their unbelief, their distrust of God’s providence, and consequent disobedience, St. Paul hence takes occasion to exhort the Jews, ^{<304E>}**Hebrews 4:2-11**, to accept readily the terms offered to them by the Gospel. He shows that the words of the present Psalm are applicable to the state of Christianity; and intimates to them that, if they persisted in obstinate refusal of those gracious offers, *they* likewise would fall according to the same example of unbelief.—*Dodd*.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-FIFTH PSALM

This Psalm contains *two* parts:—

I. An exhortation to praise God, to adore, worship, kneel,
^{<1950E>}**Psalm 95:1, 2, 6.**

II. Reasons to persuade to it.

1. God’s mercies, ^{<1957B>}**Psalm 95:3-5, 7.**

2. His judgments in punishing his own people *Israel* for neglect of this duty.

I. The psalmist begins this *Psalm* with an earnest invitation, including himself; saying,—

1. “O come, let us;” come along with me. Though a king, he thought not himself exempted.

2. And the assembly being come together, he acquaints them what they came for:—

1. “To sing to the Lord.” 1. Heartily, joyfully: “Let us make a joyful noise;” make a *jubilee* of it. 2. Openly, and with a loud voice: “Let us make a joyful noise with Psalms.” 3. Reverently, as being in his eye, “his presence.” 4. Gratefully: “Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving.”

2. “To worship, to bow down, to kneel,” ~~1956~~ **Psalm 95:6**. Adoration, humble adoration; outward worship—that of the body, as well as inward—that of the soul, is his due; and that for these reasons:—

II. 1. Because he is “the Rock of our salvation;” whether temporal or spiritual. So long as we rely on him as a Rock, we are safe from the tyranny of men, from the wrath of God, from the power of the devil, death, and hell.

2. Because he is “a great God, and a great King above all gods,” JEHOVAH, a God whose name is *I am*, an incommunicable name to any other; for his essence is from himself, and immutable; all others derivative and mutable; and the *great* JEHOVAH, great in power, majesty, and glory; for he “is above all gods.”

3. The whole orb of the earth is under his power and dominion: “In his hands are all the corners of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also.” The globe in all its extensions is subject to him.

4. And no wonder, for he is the Creator of both, which is another argument: “The sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.”

5. “He is our Maker,” the Creator and Lord of men also.

6. *Our Lord God* in particular, for he hath called us to be his inheritance: “For we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.”

In which duty, if we fail, he proposeth what is to be expected by the example of the *Israelites*.

I. God gave them a day, and he gives it to you; it is the *hodie*, to-day, of your life.

2. In this day he speaks, he utters his voice: outwardly he speaks by his word; inwardly, by his Spirit.
3. This you are bound to hear, to obey.
4. And it is your own fault if you hear it not, for you may hear it if you will; to that purpose he hath given you a day: “To-day if you will hear his voice.”
5. Suppose you hear it not; the cause is, the hardness of your hearts: and take heed of it; “harden not your hearts.”

For then it will be with you as it was with the Israelites.

- I. “As in the day of temptation in the wilderness,” at *Meribah* and *Massah*.
2. “When your fathers,” the Israelites that then lived, “tempted me and proved me.” They asked whether God was among them or not? They questioned my power, whether I was able to give them bread and water, and flesh?
3. And they found that I was able to do it: “They saw my works;” for I brought them water out of the rock, and gave them bread from heaven, and flesh also.

Their stubbornness was of long continuance, and often repeated, for it lasted *forty* years: “Forty years was I grieved with this generation;” which drew God to pass this censure and verdict upon them:—

1. His censure was, that they were an obstinate perverse people, “a people that do always err in their hearts;” that were led by their own desires, which caused them to err; the way of God they would not go in; they knew it not, that is, they liked it not.
2. This verdict upon them: “Unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest;” i.e., literally, into the land of *Canaan* that I promised them. The oath is extant, ^{<04428>}**Numbers 14:28, 29**. “As I live, saith the Lord, your carcasses shall fall in the wilderness;” and in the wilderness they did fall, every one except *Caleb* and *Joshua*, a fearful example against stubbornness and disobedience. Let him that readeth understand.

PSALMS

PSALM 96

All the inhabitants of the earth are invited to praise the Lord, 1-3. His supreme majesty, 3-6. The tribes of Israel are invited to glorify him, 7-9; and to proclaim him among the heathen, 10. The heavens and the earth are commanded to rejoice in him, 11-13.

NOTES ON PSALM 96

This Psalm has no *title*, either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*. The *Syriac*: “Of David. A prophecy of the advent of Christ and the calling of the Gentiles to believe in him.” The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* have, “A Song of David, when the House was built after the Captivity.” We have seen in ^{<B1623>}**1 Chronicles 16:23-33** a Psalm nearly like this, composed by David, on bringing the ark to Sion, from the house of Obed-edom. See the notes on the above place. But the Psalm, as it stands in the *Chronicles*, has *thirty* verses; and this is only a section of it, from the *twenty-third* to the *thirty-third*. It is very likely that this part was taken from the Psalm above mentioned, to be used at the dedication of the *second temple*. The *one hundred and fifth* Psalm is almost the same as that in *Chronicles*, but much more extensive. Where they are in the *main* the same, there are differences for which it is not easy to account.

Verse 1. Sing unto the Lord a new song] A song of peculiar excellence, for in this sense the term *new* is repeatedly taken in the Scriptures. He has done extraordinary things for us, and we should *excel* in praise and thanksgiving.

Verse 2. Show forth his salvation from day to day.] The original is very emphatic, **wt [wvy myyl myym wrcb** *basseru miyom leyom yeshuatho* “Preach the Gospel of his salvation from day to day.” To the same effect the *Septuagint*, **Ευαγγελιζεσθε ημεραν εξ ημερας το σωτηριον αυτου**, “Evangelize his salvation from day to day.”

Verse 3. Declare his glory among the heathen.] The heathen do not know the true God: as his being and attributes are at the foundation of all religion, these are the first subjects of instruction for the Gentile world.

Declare, **wrps** *sapperu*, detail, number out his glory, **wdwbk** *kebodo*, his splendour and excellence.

His wonders among all people.] Declare also to the Jews his wonders, **wytwal pn** *niphleothaiv*, his miracles. Dwell on the works which he shall perform in Judea. The miracles which Christ wrought among the Jews were full proof that he was not only the *Messiah*, but the *mighty power of God*.

Verse 4. He is to be feared above all gods.] I think the two clauses of this verse should be read thus:—

*Jehovah is great, and greatly to be praised.
Elohim is to be feared above all.*

I doubt whether the word **pyhl a** *Elohim* is ever, by fair construction, applied to false gods or idols. The *contracted* form in the following verse appears to have this meaning.

Verse 5. All the gods of the nations are idols] **yhl a** *elohey*. All those reputed or worshipped as gods among the heathens are **pyl yl a** *elilim*, *vanities, emptinesses, things of nought*. Instead of being *Elohim*, they are *elilim*; they are not only not GOD, but they are *nothing*.” “Jehovah made the heavens.” He who is the creator is alone worthy of adoration.

Verse 6. Honour and majesty are before him] Does this refer to the cloud of his glory that preceded the ark in their journeying through the wilderness? The words *strength* and *beauty*, and *glory and strength*, ^{<19807>}**Psalm 96:7**, are those by which the ark is described, ^{<197851>}**Psalm 78:61**.

Verse 7. Ye kindreds of the people] Ye families, all the *tribes* of Israel in your respective *divisions*.

Verse 8. Come into his courts.] Probably referring to the *second temple*. The reference must be either to the *tabernacle* or *temple*.

Verse 9. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness] I think **vdq trdhb** *behadrath kodesh*, signifies *holy ornaments*, such as the high priest wore in his ministrations. These were given him for *glory* and *beauty*; and the psalmist calls on him to put on his sacerdotal garments, to

bring his offering, **h̄j nm minchah**, and come into the courts of the Lord, and perform his functions, and make intercession for the people.

Verse 10. Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth] *Justin Martyr*, in his dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew, quotes this passage thus: **Ειπατε εν τοις εθνεσι, ο κυριος εβασιλευσε απο του ξυλου**, “Say among the nations, the Lord ruleth *by the wood*,” meaning the *cross*; and accuses the Jews of having blotted this word out of their Bibles, because of the evidence it gave of the truth of Christianity. It appears that this reading did exist anciently in the *Septuagint*, or at least in some ancient copies of that work, for the reading has been quoted by *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*, *Arnobius*, *Augustine*, *Cassiodorus*, *Pope Leo*, *Gregory of Tours*, and others. The reading is still extant in the ancient *Roman Psalter*, *Dominus regnavit a ligno*, and in some others. In an ancient MS. copy of the Psalter before me, while the text exhibits the commonly received reading, the margin has the following gloss: *Regnavit a ligno crucis*, “The Lord reigns by the wood of the cross.” My old *Scotico-Latin Psalter* has not a *ligno* in the text, but seems to refer to it in the paraphrase: **For Criste regned efter the dede on the crosse**. It is necessary, however, to add, that no such words exist in any copy of the Hebrew text now extant, nor in any MS. yet collated, nor in any of the ancient Versions. Neither *Eusebius* nor *Jerome* even refer to it, who wrote comments on the Psalms; nor is it mentioned by any *Greek* writer except *Justin Martyr*.

The world also shall be established] The word **l bt tebel** signifies the *habitable globe*, and may be a metonymy here, the container put for the contained. And many think that by it the *Church* is intended; as the *Lord*, who is announced to the heathen as reigning, is understood to be *Jesus Christ*; and *his judging among the people*, his establishing the holy Gospel among them, and governing the nations by its laws.

Verse 11. Let the heavens rejoice] The publication of the Gospel is here represented as a universal blessing; the *heavens*, the *earth*, the *sea*, and its *inhabitants*, the *field*, the *grass*, and the *trees* of the *wood*, are all called to rejoice at this glorious event. This verse is well and harmoniously translated in the old Psalter:—

**Fayne be hevenes. and the erth glad;
Styrde be the see, and the fulnes of it;
Joy sal feldeſ,—and al that ere in thaim.**

And the paraphrase is at least curious:—

Hebens, haly men. **E**rthe, meke men that receyves lare (learning.) **F**eldes, that is even men, mylde and softe: they shall joy in Criste. **A**nd all that is in thaim, that es, strengh, wyttes & skill.”

I shall give the remaining part of this ancient paraphrase, which is an echo of the opinion of most of the Latin fathers.

Verse 12. **T**hou sal glad al the tresp of woddess.—**T**hou, that is in another Iyfe. **T**resp of woddess.—Synful men that were fyrst withouten frut, and sithen taken into God’s temple.

Verse 13. **F**or he coms, he coms. **H**e coms, fyrste to be man.—Sythen he comes to deme the erth.

He sal deme in evenes the erth: and folk in his sothfastnes. Nothing is evener, or sothfaster, than that he geder with hym perfyte men; to deme and to deperte to the rig hande (thaim) that did mercy:—pase to the lefte hande (thaim) that did it nogt.

The psalmist here in the true spirit of poetry, gives life and intelligence to universal nature, producing them all as exulting in the reign of the Messiah, and the happiness which should take place in the earth when the Gospel should be universally preached. These predictions seem to be on the eve of complete fulfilment. Lord, hasten the time! For a fuller explanation see the following analysis.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-SIXTH PSALM

Although this Psalm was composed by David at the bringing back of the ark, yet most ancient and modern Christian expositors acknowledge it a prophecy of Christ’s kingdom, to be enlarged by the accession of all the Gentiles, and finally, his coming to judgment.

There are *two* parts in this Psalm:—

I. A general exhortation to both Jews and Gentiles to praise God,

^{<19901>}**Psalm 96:1-3.**

II. A prophecy of Christ’s kingdom, described by its greatness, ^{<19904>}**Psalm 96:4, 5**; the honours and glory, ^{<19906>}**Psalm 96:6**; of the majesty of the King, ^{<19907>}**Psalm 96:7, 8.**

1. The amplitude of this kingdom, ^{<199610>} **Psalm 96:10.**

2. His judicature in it, ^{<199611>} **Psalm 96:11-13.**

I. 1. The invitation to praise God for the benefits conferred on the whole earth by Christ. ^{<199601>} **Psalm 96:1-3.** 1. That the praise be full, he thrice repeats, “O sing, sing, sing;” to the honour of the Trinity, says *Bellarmino*, obscurely intimated in the Old, but plainly to be preached in the New, Testament. 2. “Show forth.” Give praise by thanks and singing. 3. “Declare.” Carry good news-the Gospel of glad tidings.

2. The song to be sung must be new: “Sing unto the Lord a new song.” New, for a new benefit; new, to be sung by new people; new, as being on a most excellent subject.

3. It was to be sung “by the whole earth.” By new men, and all the world over; for God was not now to be known in *Judea* only, but by all nations.

4. It must be continually sung, from day to day, without cessation; for as one day succeeds another, so should there be a continual succession in his praise.

Afterwards he expresses the benefits for which the whole earth is to praise him, which is for the redemption of the world by his Son.

1. He shows forth his salvation, which he has conferred on mankind by Christ.

2. “Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.” Salvation was a glorious work, full of wonders. And this was to be evangelized, as before to the *Jews* by the *prophets*, so now to *all people* by the *apostles*.

II. And that this exhortation might appear more reasonable, he presents God as a king, and sets down the greatness, amplitude, and equity of his kingdom.

1. “Sing to the Lord all the earth, for he is Lord of the whole earth.” 1. “The Lord is great.” Great in power, wisdom, goodness, mercy, dominion, riches; great in every way of greatness. 2. “He is greatly to be praised,” or worthy of all praise, for his innumerable benefits. He bestows them, spiritually and temporally, in his creation, redemption, and preservation of

the world. What is praiseworthy in any king may be found superlatively in him.

2. “He is to be feared above all gods;” for he can cast body and soul into hell. They though called gods, can do neither good nor hurt; the devils, who set them up, believe that he is above them, and they tremble. Sing to him then, for the supremacy is his; he is above all gods. If there be other gods, show their works; produce the heavens they have made, or the earth they have framed. It is our God alone who “made the heavens, and all things that are in them;” fear him, and not them.

The prophet elegantly derides the heathenish gods, and the heathen for fearing them.

1. For the multitude of them, for they were many; which is contrary to the nature of God, who must be but one, for there can be but one Supreme.
2. For their division: one of the *Ammonites*; another of the *Moabites*; one of the *Philistines*; many of the *Assyrians*, *Egyptians*, *Greeks*, *Romans*: their gods were according to the number of their cities; three hundred Jupiters, thirty thousand deities.
3. They were *elilim*, *Dii minores*. *Moloch* had the rule of the *sun*; *Astarte*, of the *moon*; *Ceres*, of *corn*; *Pluto*, of *hell*; *Neptune*, of the *sea*, &c. Their power was not universal, as the power of God ought to be.
4. Lastly, in the opposition, which plainly shows the difference between God and idols. They are but the work of men’s hands. Our God is a creator; he made the heavens, and all that is contained in and under them. He then is terrible, and to be feared; not those diminutive, vain, unprofitable gods of the nations.

And so, having removed out of his way all the gods of the nations, he returns to our God and King. Having said “he was great, greatly to be feared, and praised above all gods,” he now sets forth his majesty to the eye of the subject and stranger: *Honour*, *majesty*, *strength*, *beauty*; so says our prophet: “Honour and majesty are before him, strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.” God is invisible; but his honour and majesty, strength and beauty, may be easily observed in his ordering, governing, and preserving the whole world and his Church; both which may be justly called his sanctuary, and the last *his holy place*.

He has proved God to be a universal King, and now he endeavours to persuade his subjects, all kindreds of people, to return to their king his tribute, his honour and worship, which he comprehends in these words: *Give—bring an offering—worship—fear—proclaim him to be King.*

1. “Give unto the Lord;” and again, “Give unto the Lord glory and strength.” Give freely to him, and alone attribute to him the glory of your being and well-being, that he made and redeemed you, and that by the strength of his right hand he has plucked you out of the hands of your enemies. This was the glorious work of his mercy and power.
2. “Give unto the Lord the honour due to his name.” It is a debt; and a debt, in equity, must be paid. The honour due to his name is to acknowledge him to be holy, just, true, powerful: “The Lord, the faithful God,”—“good, merciful, long-suffering,” &c. Defraud not his name of the least honour.
3. “Bring an offering, and come into his courts.” *Appear not before the Lord empty*, as the *Jews* were commanded; to which the prophet alludes. “They had their sacrifices, and we also have our spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ,” to bring; ~~AIMS~~ **1 Peter 2:5**. These are the sacrifices of a contrite heart. Bring these when you enter into his courts, and into his house of prayer.
4. “O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.” They who enter into the presence of a king presently fall on their knees in token of submission and homage; in the presence of your King do the same. *Adore*, and remember to do it in the beauty of holiness; referred to the material temple, it is by relation a *holy place*, and should not be profaned; a beautiful place, and should not be defaced, but kept beautiful. If referred to the spiritual temple, the temple of the Holy Ghost is to be beautiful with holiness; a holy life, holy virtues, beautiful garments, righteousness and true holiness.
5. “Fear before him, all the earth.” Join fear to your worship, for a man may be bold in the presence of his king. “Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with reverence.” There is a fear which arises out, of an apprehension of greatness and excellency in the person, together with our dependence on and our submission to him, which in body and mind makes us step back, and keep at a distance. This kind of fear produces reverence and adoration, and this the prophet here means.

6. “Say among the heathen, the Lord reigns;” or, as some say: “The Lord reigns among the heathen.” Be heralds; and proclaim, with the sound of the trumpet, *God reigns, God is King.*

The prophet begins to set forth the amplitude of Christ’s kingdom:—

1. Before, it was confined to Judea, but is now enlarged: “All nations are become his subjects; he reigns among the heathen.”

2. Its stability: “The world shall be established, that it shall not be moved.” The laws of this kingdom are not to be altered, as were the laws of Moses, but fixed and established for ever. The Gospel is an eternal Gospel, a standing law.

3. The equity to be observed in it: “He shall judge the people righteously,” for he shall give to those who observe his laws, rewards; to those who despise them, break them, and say, “We will not have this man to reign over us,” condign punishment.

4. The prophet, having described the King, and the state of his kingdom, exults in spirit, as if he had seen him coming to sit upon the throne. He calls, not the *Gentiles* only, whom it did very nearly concern, but all creatures, to rejoice in him; *heaven, earth, sea, trees, fields, &c.* Although there are who by *heaven* understand *angels*; by *the earth, men*; by the *sea, troublesome spirits*; by *trees and fields*, the *Gentiles* who were to believe; yet this need not be thought strange, because such *prosopopæias* are frequent in Scripture. The meaning is, that as the salvation was universal, so he would have the joy to be universal: “Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord.”

He incites all creatures to rejoice for Christ’s coming, both for the first and for the second: for the first, in which he consecrated all things; for the second, in which he will free all things from corruption, ✠ **Romans 8:19-22.**

1. “For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth.”—Which first part of the verse the fathers refer to his first coming, when he was incarnate, and came to redeem the world by his death: and was to the end to judge, that is to rule and govern, the world by his word, ordinances, and Spirit.

2. And again: “He shall come to judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth:” which coming, though terrible to the wicked, will be joyful and comfortable to the righteous. For, says our Lord, “Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth near;’ and to comfort them, and terrify the wicked, he tells them he will judge with equity, that is, in justice and in truth, according to his word and promise. He will accept no man’s person, but render to every man according to his works.

PSALMS

PSALM 97

The reign of Jehovah, its nature and blessedness, 1, 2. He is fearful to the wicked, 3-4. Idolaters shall be destroyed, 7. The blessedness of the righteous, 8-12.

NOTES ON PSALM 97

This Psalm has no *title* either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*; and in *fourteen* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. it is written as a part of the preceding. In the *Vulgate* it is thus entitled, *Psalmus David, quando terra ejus restituta est*. "A Psalm of David when his land was restored;" the meaning of which I suppose to be, after he had obtained possession of the kingdom of Israel and Judah, and became king over all the tribes; or perhaps, after he had gained possession of all those countries which were originally granted to the Israelites in the Divine promise. See ^{<13180>}**1 Chronicles 18:1, 2**. The *Septuagint* is nearly to the same purpose, **οτι η γη αυτου καθισταται**, "when his land was established:" so the *Æthiopic* and *Arabic*. The *Syriac* has, "A Psalm of David, in which he predicts the advent of Christ, (i.e., in the flesh,) and through it his last appearing, (i.e., to judgment.*)" The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, ^{<8010>}**Hebrews 1:6**, quotes a part of the *seventh* verse of this Psalm, and applies it to Christ. Who the author was is uncertain: it is much in the spirit of David's finest compositions; and yet many learned men suppose it was written to celebrate the Lord's power and goodness in the restoration of the Jews from the *Babylonish captivity*.

Verse 1. The Lord reigneth] Here is a simple proposition, which is a self-evident axiom, and requires no proof: JEHOVAH is *infinite* and *eternal*; is possessed of *unlimited power* and *unerring wisdom*; as he is the *Maker*, so he must be the *Governor*, of all things. His authority is absolute, and his government therefore universal. In all places, on all occasions, and in all times, Jehovah reigns.

But this supreme King is not only called **hwhy** YEHOVAH, which signifies his infinite and eternal being, unlimited power, and unerring wisdom; and, as Creator, his *universal government*; but he is also **ynda** ADONAI, the *Director* and *Judge*. He *directs* human actions by his *word*, *Spirit*, and

Providence. Hence are his *laws* and *revelation* in general; for the governed should know their governor, and should be acquainted with his laws, and the reasons on which *obedience* is founded. As *Adonai* or *Director*, he shows them the difference between good and evil; and their duty to their God, their neighbours, and themselves: and he finally becomes the *Judge* of their actions. But as his law is holy, and his commandment holy, just, and good, and man is in a fallen, sinful state; hence he *reveals* himself as; **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים**, *ELOHIM, God*, entering into a *gracious covenant* with mankind, to enlighten his darkness, and help his infirmities; that he may see what is *just*, and be *able* to do it. But as this will not cancel the sins *already committed*, hence the necessity of a Saviour, an atonement; and hence the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. This is the *provision* made by the great God for the more effectual administration of his kingdom upon earth. *Jehovah, Adonai, Elohim* reigneth; *et his animadversis*, and these points considered, it is no wonder that the psalmist should add,

Let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad] The *earth*, the *terraqueous globe*; especially, here, the *vast continents*, over every part of which God's dominion extends. But it is not confined to *them*; it takes in the *islands* of the sea; all the *multitude* of those islands, even to the smallest inhabited rock; which are as much the objects of his care, the number of their inhabitants considered, as the vastest continents on which are founded the mightiest empires. All this government springs from his *holiness, righteousness, and benignity*; and is exercised in what we call *providence*, from *pro*, for, before, and *video*, to see, which word is well defined and applied by CICERO: *Providentia est, per quam futurism aliquid videtur, antequam factum sit.* "Providence is that by which any thing future is seen before it takes place." *Deuteronomy Invent. c. 53.* And, in reference to a *Divine providence*, he took up the general opinion, viz., *Esse deos, et eorum providentia mundum administrari. Deuteronomy Divinat. c. 51, ad finem.* "There are gods; and by their providence the affairs of the world are administered."

This providence is not only *general*, taking in the *earth* and its *inhabitants, en masse*; giving and establishing *laws* by which all things shall be governed; but it is also *particular*; it takes in the multitudes of the *isles*, as well as the *vast continents*; the different *species* as well as the *genera*; the *individual*, as well as the *family*. As every *whole* is composed of its *parts*, without the smallest of which it could not be a whole; so all *generals* are

composed of *particulars*. And by the *particular* providence of God, the *general* providence is formed; he takes care of each *individual*; and, consequently, he takes care of the *whole*. Therefore, on the *particular* providence of God, the *general* providence is built; and the *general* providence could not exist without the *particular*, any more than a *whole* could subsist independently of its *parts*. It is by this particular providence that God governs *the multitude of the isles*, notices the *fall of a sparrow*, *bottles the tears* of the mourner, and *numbers the hairs* of his followers. Now, as God is an infinitely *wise* and *good* Being, and governs the world in *wisdom* and *goodness*, the *earth* may well *rejoice*, and *the multitude of the isles* be glad.

Verse 2. Clouds and darkness are round about him] It is granted that this is a subject which cannot be comprehended. And why? Because God is *infinite*; he acts from his own *counsels*, which are *infinite*; in reference to *ends* which are also *infinite*: therefore, the *reasons* of his government cannot be comprehended by the feeble, limited powers of man. There must be *clouds and darkness*—an impenetrable obscurity, round about him; and we can no more comprehend him in what is called *æternitas a parte ante*—the eternity that passed before *time* commenced, than we can in the *æternitas a parte post*—the eternity that is to come, when time shall be no more. Yet such a Being cannot but *see* all things *clearly*, and *do* all things *well*; therefore the psalmist properly asserts,—

Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.]

Righteousness, **qdx** *tsedek*, the principle that acts according to *justice* and *equity*; that gives to all their *due*, and ever holds in all things an *even balance*. And *judgment*, **cpvm** *mishpat*, the principle that *discerns*, *orders*, *directs*, and *determines* every thing according to truth and justice: these form *the habitation of his throne*; that is, his government and management of the world are according to these; and though we cannot see the *springs*, the *secret counsels*, and the *times*, which this *omniscient* and *almighty* FATHER must ever have in his own power, yet we may rest assured that all his administration is wise, just, holy, good, and kind. For, although his counsels be inscrutable, and the dispensations of his providence be sometimes apparently unequal, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

In this most sublime description, the psalmist, by the figure termed *prosopopœia*, or personification, gives *vitality* and *thought* to all the

subjects he employs; here, the very *throne* of God is *animated*; *righteousness* and *judgment* are two *intellectual beings* who support it. The *fire*, the *lightnings*, the *earth*, the *heavens* themselves, are all intellectual beings, which either accompany, go before him, or proclaim his majesty.

Verse 3. A fire goeth before him] Literally, this and the following verse may refer to the electric fluid, or to manifestations of the Divine displeasure, in which, by means of *ethereal fire*, God consumed his enemies. But *fire* is generally represented as an accompaniment of the appearances of the Supreme Being. He appeared on *Mount Sinai* in the midst of *fire*, *thunder*, and *lightnings*, ⁽¹²¹⁹¹⁶⁾ **Exodus 19:16-18**. Daniel, ⁽²⁰⁷⁰⁾ **Daniel 7:9, 10**, represents the Sovereign Judge as being on a throne which was a *fiery flame*, and the *wheels* of his chariot like *burning fire*; and a *fiery stream* issuing from it, and coming forth from before him. St. *Paul* tells us (⁽⁵³⁰¹⁸⁾ **2 Thessalonians 1:8**) that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in *flaming fire*; and St. *Peter*, (⁽⁶¹⁰⁰⁷⁾ **2 Peter 3:7, 10, 11**), that when the Lord shall come to judgment the heavens and the earth shall be destroyed by *fire*, the heavens shall pass away with a *great noise*, the *elements melt with fervent heat*, and the *earth* and its works be *burnt up*. Here then, will appear,—

“Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire.”

Burneth up his enemies round about.] The fire is his pioneer which destroys all the hinderances in his way, and makes him a plain passage.

Verse 4. His lightnings enlightened the world] Though this be no more than a majestic description of the coming of the Lord, to confound his enemies and succour his followers, yet *some spiritualize* the passage, and say, the *lightnings* signify the *apostles*, who *enlightened* the world by their heavenly doctrine.

The earth saw, and trembled.] The earth is represented as a sentient being. It saw the terrible majesty of God; and trembled through terror, fearing it should be destroyed on account of the wickedness of its inhabitants.

Verse 5. The hills melted like wax] The fire of God seized on and liquefied them, so that they no longer opposed his march; and the mountains before him became a plain.

The Lord of the whole earth.] *xrah l k wda adon col haarets*, the Director, Stay, and Support of the whole earth. The universal Governor, whose jurisdiction is not confined to any one place; but who, having created all, governs all that he has made.

Verse 6. The heavens declare his righteousness] They also, in this poetic description, become *intelligent* beings, and proclaim the majesty and the mercy of the Most High. Metaphorically, they may be said to declare his glory. Their magnitude, number, revolutions, order, influence, and harmony, proclaim the wondrous skill, matchless wisdom, and unlimited power of the Sovereign of the universe. **See Clarke's notes on "^{<-19100>}Psalm 19:1", &c.**

And all the people see his glory.] Whatsoever God has made proclaims his eternal power and Godhead; and who, from a contemplation of the work of his hands, can be ignorant of his being and providence?

Verse 7. Confounded be all they] Rather, *They shall be confounded that boast themselves in idols*. There is a remarkable play on the *letters* here, *μυλ l htmh hammithhalelim*, who move like madmen; referring to the violent gestures practised in idolatrous rites.

Of idols] *μυλ yl ab baelilim*, in vanities, emptinesses; who "make much ado about nothing," and take a *mad* and *painful* pleasure in *ridiculous* and *unprofitable* ceremonies of religion.

Worship him] WHO? JESUS: so says the apostle, ^{<80106>}**Hebrews 1:6**. Who will dare to dispute his authority?

All ye gods.] *Οι αγγελοι αυτου*, *his angels*: so the *Septuagint* and the *apostle*: "Let all the angels of God worship him:" and the words are most certainly applied to the Saviour of the world by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews; see the note there. The *Chaldee* says: "All nations who worship idols shall adore him."

Verse 8. Zion heard, and was glad] All the land of *Israel*, long desolated, heard of the judgments which God had shown among the enemies of his people.

And the daughters of Judah] All the villages of the land-Zion as the mother, and all the *villages* in the country as her *daughters*, rejoice in the deliverance of God's people.

Verse 9. For thou, Lord, art high] Thou art infinitely exalted above *men* and *angels*.

Verse 10. Ye that love the Lord hate evil] Because it is inconsistent with his love to you, as well as your love to him.

He preserveth the souls of his saints] The *saints*, *wydyjsj chasidaiv*, his *merciful people*: their *souls*-lives, are precious in his sight. He *preserves* them; keeps them from every evil, and every enemy.

Out of the hand of the wicked.] From his *power* and influence.

Verse 11. Light is sown for the righteous] The Divine light in the soul of man is a seed which takes root, and springs up and increases *thirty*, *sixty*, and a *hundred* fold. *Gladness* is also a seed: it is *sown*, and, if carefully improved and cultivated, will also multiply itself into *thousands*. Every grace of God is a *seed*, which he intends should produce a *thousand* fold in the hearts of genuine believers. We do not so much require *more* grace from God, as the *cultivation* of what we have received. God will not give more, unless we improve what we have got. Remember *the parable of the talents*. Let the *light* and *gladness* be faithfully cultivated, and they will multiply themselves till the whole body shall be full of light, and the whole soul full of happiness. But it is the *righteous* only for whom the *light* is sown; and the *upright in heart* alone for whom the *gladness* is sown.

The words may also signify that, however *distressed* or *persecuted* the *righteous* and the *upright* may be, it shall not be always so. As surely as the *grain* that is sown in the earth shall vegetate, and bring forth its proper fruit in its season, so surely shall *light*-prosperity, and *gladness*-comfort and peace, be communicated to them. They also will *spring up* in due time.

Verse 12. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous] It is your privilege to be *happy*. Exult in him through whom ye have received the atonement. *Rejoice*; but let it be *in the Lord*. All other joy is the *mirth of fools*, which is as the *crackling of thorns under a pot*-it is a luminous blaze for a moment, and leaves nothing but smoke and ashes behind.

At the remembrance of his holiness.] But why should you give thanks at the remembrance that God is holy? Because he has said, *Be ye holy; for I am holy*: and in *holiness* alone true *happiness* is to be found. *As he, therefore, who hath called you is holy; so be ye holy in all manner of conversation*. False Christians hate the doctrine of Christian holiness; they

are willing to be holy in another, but not holy in themselves. There is too much cross-bearing and self-denial in the doctrine of holiness for them. A perfect heart they neither expect nor wish.

The analysis considers the whole Psalm as relating to Jesus Christ and the last judgment: so it was understood by several of the ancient fathers. The reader may take it in either sense.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH PSALM

There are *three* parts in this Psalm, if we interpret it as referring to our blessed Lord:—

I. A *prophetical* description of his power and glory, especially at the *day of judgment*, ^{<19970>}**Psalm 97:1-6.**

II. A manifest difference between the states of idolaters and the people of God, ^{<19970>}**Psalm 97:7-9.**

III. An exhortation to love God and hate evil; and the reason on which it is founded: a two-fold gracious reward, ^{<199710>}**Psalm 97:10-12.**

I. The psalmist begins with a solemn acclamation: “The Lord reigneth.” He is the supreme King; and he will use his kingly power both now and in the day of judgment. 1. For the good of his subjects. 2. For the confusion of his enemies.

1. For “clouds and darkness are round about him,” as when he gave the law on Mount Sinai. 2. “Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne;” and therefore a just sentence shall come forth *against his enemies*, and in *behalf* of his *friends*, ^{<199702>}**Psalm 97:2-5.** 3. His appearance shall be very glorious; for the “heavens shall declare it, and all people shall see it,” ^{<199706>}**Psalm 97:6.**

II. The difference between the state of idolaters and the people of God.

1. *Confusion* and a *curse* shall fall upon the *former*: “They shall be confounded,” &c., ^{<199707>}**Psalm 97:7.**

2. He exhorts all in power, men-*magistrates*, &c., and all who excel in strength-*angels*, to worship him: “Worship him, all ye gods,” ^{<199707>}**Psalm 97:7.** All confidence should be reposed in him.

3. God's people rejoice when they find that it is their own Lord who is coming to judgment: "Zion heard, and was glad; the daughters of Judah rejoiced," ^{<19708>} **Psalm 97:8.**

4. And they rejoiced chiefly in knowing that their God "was high above all the earth, and exalted far above all gods," ^{<19709>} **Psalm 97:9.**

III. The *expostulation*, which gives us the *character* by which God's people may be known. He exhorts them to *love God, and to hate evil*. Hence we see that the true followers of God, 1. Love him; 2. Hate evil, as the infallible consequence of loving him, ^{<19710>} **Psalm 97:10.**

He shows them the gracious reward which God promises.

1. "He preserveth the souls of his saints." Often their *lives*, in an especial manner, are *preserved* by him; but always their *souls*. The accuser of the brethren shall not hurt them.

2. "He delivereth them out of the hands of the wicked." Sometimes out of their hand, that they fall not into it; and sometimes out of their hand, when they are in it. This is their *first* reward, ^{<19710>} **Psalm 97:10.**

A *second* reward is in the next verse: that in their miseries they shall be filled with spiritual happiness, when perhaps they little expect it: "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart," ^{<19711>} **Psalm 97:11.**

1. By *light* we may understand a peculiar manifestation of God's favour; comfort, peace, and joy; or deliverance from their spiritual and temporal oppressors.

2. This is *sown* as a seed. For the light of comfort, of peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Spirit, though it may be clouded in times of heaviness, through manifold temptations, yet it will spring forth again, like the corn, which, after it is sown, lies hidden for some time, under the clods of the earth; yet all that time it is *vegetating* and coming forth to public view. And deliverance from their enemies, though slow, will come; though the rod of the wicked *come* into the lot of the just, it shall not *rest* there.

3. From these premises the psalmist draws this conclusion: Since God is preparing those blessings for you that fear and love him, then, 1. "Rejoice in the Lord;" glory in him as the Fountain of your blessedness. 2. "Give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." Remember the good he has

done you, the grace he has bestowed on you, and the holiness you may yet receive from him; and rejoice in the encouragement, and give thanks. Rejoice that ye may be *holy*, for in that your *happiness* consists.

PSALMS

PSALM 98

God is celebrated for his wondrous works, 1, 2; for the exact fulfilment of his gracious promises, 3. The manner in which he is to be praised, 4-6. Inanimate creation called to bear a part in this concert, 7, 8. The justice of his judgments, 9.

NOTES ON PSALM 98

In the *Hebrew* this is simply termed **rwmzm** *mizmor*, a Psalm. In the *Chaldee*, *A prophetic Psalm*. In the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *A Psalm of David*. In the *Syriac* it is attributed to *David*, and stated to be composed concerning the “Restoration of the Israelites from Egypt; but is to be understood spiritually of the advent of the Messiah, and the vocation of the Gentiles to the Christian faith.”

The Psalm in its subject is very like the *ninety-sixth*. It was probably written to celebrate the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity; but is to be understood prophetically of the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ.

Verse 1. A new song] A song of *excellence*. Give him the *highest* praise. See on ^{<1990B>}**Psalm 96:1**.

Hath done marvellous things] **twal pn** *niphlaoth*, “miracles, “ the same word as in ^{<1996B>}**Psalm 96:3**, where we translate it *wonders*.

His holy arm] His Almighty power,—

Hath gotten him the victory.] **wl h[yvwh** *hoshiah llo*, “hath made salvation to himself.”

Verse 2. Made known his salvation] He has delivered his people in such a way as to show that it was supernatural, and that their confidence in the unseen God was not in vain.

Verse 3. He hath remembered his mercy] His gracious promises to their forefathers.

And his truth] Faithfully accomplishing what he had promised. All this was fulfilled under the Gospel.

Verse 5. With-the voice of a Psalm.] I think **hrmz** *zimrah*, which we translate *Psalm*, means either a *musical instrument*, or a *species of ode* modulated by different voices.

Verse 6. With trumpets] **twrxxj** *chatsotseroth*. Some kind of tubular instruments, of the form and management of which we know nothing.

And sound of cornet] **rpwv** *shophar*, the word commonly used for what we call *trumpet*.

Verse 7. Let the sea roar] These are either fine poetic images; or, if we take them as referring to the promulgation of the Gospel, by the *sea* all maritime countries and commercial nations may be intended.

Verse 8. Let the floods clap their hands] **twrh** *neharoth*, properly *the rivers*-possibly meaning immense *continents*, where only *large rivers* are found; thus including *inland* people, as well as *maritime nations*, and those on the sea-coasts generally; as in those early times little more than the *coasts* of the sea were known. The Gospel shall be preached in the most secluded nations of the world.

Let the hills be joyful] All the inhabitants of *rocky* and *mountainous* countries.

Verse 9. For he cometh to judge the earth] He comes to make known his salvation, and show his merciful designs to all the children of men.

With righteousness shall he judge the world] His word shall not be confined; all shall know him, from the least to the greatest: he shall show that he is loving to every man, and hateth nothing that he hath made. See the notes on ^{<49610>}**Psalm 96:10-13**. There is a very great similarity between this Psalm and the Song or *Magnificat* of the Blessed Virgin. I shall note some of the parallels, chiefly from Bishop Nicholson.

This Psalm is an evident prophecy of Christ's coming to save the world; and what is here *foretold* by David is, in the Blessed *Virgin's* song, chanted forth as being *accomplished*. David is the *Voice*, and Mary is the *Echo*.

1. DAVID. "O sing unto the Lord a new song." (The Voice.)

MARY. "My soul doth magnify the Lord." (The Echo.)

2. DAVID. "He hath done marvellous things." (The Voice.)

MARY. "He that is mighty hath done great things." (The Echo.)

3. DAVID. "With his own right hand and holy arm hath he gotten himself the victory." (The Voice.)

MARY. "He hath showed strength with his arm and scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts." (The Echo.)

4. DAVID. "The Lord hath made known his salvation; his righteousness hath he openly showed," &c. (The Voice.)

MARY. "His mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation." (The Echo.)

5. DAVID. "He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel." (The Voice.)

MARY. "He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy." (The Echo.)

These parallels are very striking; and it seems as if Mary had this Psalm in her eye when she composed her song of triumph. And this is a farther argument that the whole Psalm, whether it record the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, or the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, is yet to be ultimately understood of the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ, and the proclamation of his Gospel through all the nations of the earth: and taken in this view, no language can be too strong, nor poetic imagery too high, to point out the unsearchable riches of Christ.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH PSALM

This Psalm has the *two* following parts:—

I. An *exhortation* to sing to the Lord, and the *reasons* of it, ^{<1980>}Psalm 98:1-3.

II. A *new invitation* to praise him, and that it be *universal*, ^{<1980>}Psalm 98:4-9.

I. He calls upon them to praise God: 1. *Sing-a song* or hymn, to *the Lord*-and to none other. A *new song*-a song of excellency.

For this exhortation and command he gives the reasons. His work was a work of power and holiness.

1. "He hath done marvellous things." He has opened his greatness and goodness in the work of redemption. What *marvels* has not Christ done? 1. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. 2. Born of a virgin. 3. Healed all manner of diseases. 4. Fed thousands with a few loaves and fishes. 5. Raised the dead. 6. And what was more *marvellous*, died himself. 7. Rose again by his own power. 8. Ascended to heaven. 9. Sent down the Holy Ghost. 10. And made his apostles and their testimony the instruments of enlightening, and ultimately converting, the world.

2. "His right hand and his holy arm hath got him the victory." 1. It was all *his own work*, whatever were the *instruments*; for without his energy they could do nothing. 2. It was his *holy arm*-no *bloody sword*, but a *holy hand*, to do a *holy work*. 3. "He got himself the victory" over sin, *Satan*, *death*, and *hell*.

3. This salvation was *made known*:—1. By *himself* to the *Jews*. 2. By his *apostles* to *all nations*.

4. This salvation has been *applied*. 1. He hath showed his *righteousness*-his method of *justifying sinners* through his own blood, and *sanctifying* them by his own Spirit. 2. This he hath *openly* showed, plainly revealing the whole in his Gospel. 3. He has done this in the *sight of the heathen*, calling them to be partakers of the same salvation promised to Abraham and to his posterity, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

5. That which moved him to do this; his *mercy*, and *truth*: 1. "He hath remembered his mercy." This mercy was to the *house of Israel*, and through them to the *Gentiles*; for the Gentiles were the *first* in the promise and covenant. There was no *Jew* when the covenant was made with Abraham: it was made with him while he was yet in uncircumcision; consequently the *Gentiles*, the *whole human race*, were originally included in that covenant. The descendants of Jacob were made depositaries of it for a season; but they, not having benefited by it, were rejected, and the salvation of Christ was given to the Gentiles, for whom it was originally intended, and who have kept the faith, and are daily profiting by it. 2. It is called *mercy*; for it was the merest mercy that said: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." 3. He *remembered* this, it was never out of the Divine mind; "Jesus was the Lamb slain from the

foundation of the world.” 4. As this mercy was intended for every human soul; so it is here *prophetically* said: “All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.” This Gospel has been preached, is now in the course of being preached, and shortly will be preached to every people under heaven.

II. A new invitation to praise God; and to do this in every possible way.

1. “Make a joyful noise.” Jump for joy, because of this most glorious news.

2. As *all* are interested in it, so let *all* do it: “All the earth.”

3. In all possible ways. With *harp, psaltery, trumpet, cornet*; with *vocal, chordal, and pneumatic* music. But it is the *joyful* music, the *heart* music, which the Lord seeks.

4. “Before the Lord.” In his immediate presence. Let all be sincere, pure, and holy. Remember the eye of the Lord is upon you: do not draw near with your *lips, pipes, or stringed* instruments, while your *hearts* are far from him.

5. And to make the music full, as if the inanimate creation had *ears and hands* to give an *applause* at the relation, and *feet* to *dance* because of it, he says: “Let the sea roar, the floods clap their hands, and the hills be joyful together.”

And for all this he gives a reason, with which he concludes: “For he cometh to judge the earth;” which may be referred to his *first* and *second* coming.

1. If to the *first*, then the sense is—Let all creatures rejoice because he comes to *judge*, that is, to enlighten, order, and govern the world. For this purpose he was incarnated, suffered, died, and rose again for the redemption of mankind; and has sent his holy *Gospel* to enlighten the world, and his *Spirit* to apply its truths to the hearts of men.

2. If we consider this as referring to his *last coming*, then let all men rejoice, as he comes to destroy evil, to root out incorrigible sinners, and to make a new heaven and a new earth.

3. All this shall be done with that rectitude of judgment, that there shall be nothing crooked, oblique, or savouring of iniquity in it: “For he shall judge the world, and the people with equity.”

PSALMS

PSALM 99

The empire of God in the world and the Church, 1, 2. He ought to be praised, 3. Justice and judgment are his chief glory, 4. He should be worshipped as among the saints of old, whom he graciously answered and saved, 5-8. Exalt him because he is holy, 9.

NOTES ON PSALM 99

The *Hebrew* and *Chaldee* have no *title*; all the *versions* but the *Chaldee* attribute it to *David*. The *Syriac* says it concerns “the slaughter of the Midianites which Moses and the children of Israel had taken captive; and is a prophecy concerning the glory of the kingdom of Christ.” But the mention of *Samuel* shows that it cannot be referred to the time of *Moses*. *Calmet* thinks that it was sung at the dedication of the city, or of the second temple, after the return from the Babylonish captivity. Eight of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS. join it to the preceding psalm.

Verse 1. The Lord reigneth] See *Clarke’s* note on “~~<1970>~~ Psalm 97:1”.

Let the people tremble] He will establish his kingdom in spite of his enemies; let those who oppose him tremble for the consequences.

He sitteth between the cherubims] This is in reference to the *ark*, at each end of which was a cherub of glory; and the *shechinah*, or symbol of the Divine Presence, appeared on the lid of the ark, called also the *mercy-seat*, between the cherubim. *Sitting between the cherubim* implies God’s *graciousness* and *mercy*. While then, in his reign, he was terrible to sinners, he is on the *throne of grace* to all who fear, love, and obey him. Though this *symbol* were not in the *second temple*, yet the Divine Being might very well be thus denominated, because it had become one of his titles, he having thus appeared under the *tabernacle* and *first temple*.

Verse 2. The Lord is great in Zion] It is among his own worshippers that he has manifested his *power* and *glory* in an especial manner. *There* he is known, and *there* he is worthily magnified.

Verse 3. Let them praise thy great and terrible name] Let them confess thee to be great and terrible: let them tremble before thee.

For it is holy.] *awh vwdq kadosh hu*. As this not only ends this verse but the *fifth* also, and in effect the *ninth*, it seems to be a species of *chorus* which was sung in a very solemn manner at the conclusion of each of these parts. His *holiness*-the immaculate purity of his nature, was the reason why he should be exalted, praised, and worshipped.

Verse 4. The king's strength] If this Psalm were written by David, he must mean by it that he was God's *vicegerent* or *deputy*, and that, even as king, God was *his strength*, and the *pattern* according to which equity, judgment, and righteousness should be executed in Jacob.

Verse 5. Worship at his footstool] Probably meaning the *ark* on which the Divine glory was manifested. Sometimes the *earth* is called God's *footstool*, ^{<1155>}Matthew 5:35; ^{<2601>}Isaiah 66:1; sometimes *Jerusalem*; sometimes the *temple*, ^{<2001>}Lamentations 2:1; sometimes the *tabernacle*, ^{<1937>}Psalms 32:7; and sometimes the *ark*, ^{<1302>}1 Chronicles 28:2. The Israelites, when they worshipped, turned their faces toward the *ark*, because that was the place where was the symbol of the Divine Presence.

For he is holy.] The burden chanted by the *chorus*.

Verse 6. Moses and Aaron] As Moses and Aaron among the priests, and as Samuel among the prophets, worshipped God in humility, gratitude, and the spirit of obedience, and received the strongest tokens of the Divine favour; so worship ye the Lord, that he may bless, support, and save you. Moses was properly the priest of the Hebrews before Aaron and his family were appointed to that office.

Verse 7. He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar] That is, he directed all their operations, marchings, and encampments by this cloudy pillar. See ^{<1230>}Exodus 33:9.

They kept his testimonies] Do ye the same, and God will be *your* portion as he was *theirs*.

Verse 8. Thou-forgavest them] When the people had sinned, and wrath was about to descend on them, Moses and Aaron interceded for them, and they were not destroyed.

Tookst vengeance of their inventions.] God spared them, but showed his displeasure at their misdoings. He chastised, but did not consume them. This is amply proved in the history of this people.

Verse 9. Worship at his holy hill] Worship him *publicly* in the *temple*.

For the Lord our God is holy.] The words of the *chorus*; as in the *third* and *fifth* verses.

ANALYSIS OF THE NINETY-NINTH PSALM

There are *two* parts in this Psalm:—

I. A description of the kingdom of God.

1. From the *majesty* and *terror* of it against his enemies, ^{<19901>}**Psalm 99:1-3.**
2. From its *equity* in the execution of *judgment* and *justice*, ^{<19904>}**Psalm 99:4.**
3. From his *patience* and *clemency* in giving audience to his servants, ^{<19906>}**Psalm 99:6-8.**

II. A demand of praise and honour of all that acknowledge him for their King, begun at the *third* verse, repeated at the *fifth*, and continued in the *last*. The Psalm contains a prophecy of the kingdom of Christ, and its glory.

- I. 1. The terror, power, and majesty of this kingdom: “The Lord reigneth.”
 1. He bids defiance to his enemies: “Let the people tremble.”
 2. “He sitteth between the cherubim.” He is always present with his people; they need not fear, though *the earth be moved*.
 3. “He is great in Zion.” More potent and higher than all people.
 4. “His name is great and terrible.” His *enemies* have every thing to *fear*, while his *friends* have every thing to *hope*.
2. The psalmist describes this kingdom, from its *justice* and *equity*.
 1. “He loveth judgment.” This is one of his perfections.
 2. “He establishes equity.” Gives just and equal laws to all.
 3. “He executes judgment in Jacob.” None of his followers shall live without law; they are obedient children, living according to his will.
 4. And therefore he requires them to *exalt and adore* him.
 5. They are to *worship at his foot-stool*—all their approaches are to be made in the *deepest reverence*, with the *truest self-abasement*.
 6. “For he is holy;” and he requires all his followers to be holy also.
3. He describes it from the *mercy* and *clemency* of the ruler.
 1. He showed his mercy and *kindness* to *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Samuel*, as intercessors for the people. “They called upon God,” for themselves and for the people; “and he answered them.”
 1. See the intercession of *Moses*, ^{<12321>}**Exodus**

32:31; 2. Of Aaron, ^{<01646>}**Numbers 16:46-48**. 3. Of Samuel, ^{<0076>}**1 Samuel 7:5, 9, 10**. 4. He spake to Moses, ^{<0238>}**Exodus 33:8, 9, 11**; and to Aaron, ^{<0126>}**Numbers 12:5-8**.

And now he adds the *reason* why he heard them:—

1. “They kept his testimonies.” Those precepts that were common to all others.
2. “And the ordinances that he gave them.” As public persons who were to rule in Church and state.

And that it was a great mercy that the Lord heard them, the prophet acknowledges by this *apostrophe*—

1. “Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God.” Which the history shows.
2. “Thou forgavest them;” that is, the *people* for whom they prayed: for in Hebrew the *relative* is often put without an *antecedent*.
3. “Thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.” The *golden calf* was broken to pieces, ^{<0221>}**Exodus 32:20**; and the *false gods* were put away ^{<0078>}**1 Samuel 7:3, 4**. The people were not consumed, though their sin was in a certain manner visited upon them. See ^{<0142>}**Numbers 14:23, 30; 20:12**.

II. The psalmist concludes with a *demand of praise* to this kind God.

1. “Exalt the Lord.” Show that he is high, holy, just, good, and kind.
2. “Worship at his holy hill.” Attend his public worship, and show a godly example in this way to all others. He who is indifferent about the *public worship* of God is generally not less so in *private devotion*.
3. The reason for all this is: “The Lord our God is holy.” He requires this worship because it is a chief *means* by which he communicates *his holiness* to his followers. Without this holiness there is no happiness here, and without it none shall ever see God. Get *holiness*, that you may get happiness *here*, and heaven *hereafter*.

PSALMS

PSALM 100

All nations are exhorted to praise the Lord, 1, 2; to acknowledge him to be the Sovereign God and their Creator and that they are his people and the flock of his pasture, 3; to worship him publicly, and be grateful for his mercies, 4. The reasons on which this is founded; his own goodness, his everlasting mercy, and his ever-during truth, 5.

NOTES ON PSALM 100

This Psalm is entitled in the Hebrew **hdwtl rwmzm** *mizmor letheadah*, not “A Psalm of Praise,” as we have it, but “A Psalm for the confession, or for the confession-offering,” very properly translated by the Chaldee: **atdwt ^brwq l [aj bv** *shibcha al kurban todetha*, “Praise for the sacrifice (or offering) of confession.” The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, and *Æthiopic* have followed this sense. The Arabic attributes it to *David*. The Syriac has the following prefixed: “Without a name. Concerning Joshua the son of Nun, when he had ended the war with the Ammonites: but in the new covenant it relates to the conversion of the Gentiles to the faith.” It is likely that it was composed after the captivity, as a form of thanksgiving to God for that great deliverance, as well as an inducement to the people to consecrate themselves to him, and to be exact in the performance of the acts of public worship.

Verse 1. Make a joyful noise] **w[yrh** *hariu, exult, triumph, leap for joy.*

All ye lands.] Not only Jews, but Gentiles, for the Lord bestows his benefits on all with a liberal hand.

Verse 2. Serve the Lord with gladness] It is your privilege and duty to be happy in your religious worship. The religion of the true God is intended to remove human misery, and to make mankind happy. He whom the religion of Christ has not made happy does not understand that religion, or does not make a proper use of it.

Verse 3. Know ye that the Lord he is God] Acknowledge in every possible way, both in public and private, that Jehovah, the uncreated self-existent, and eternal Being, is *Elohim*, the God who is in covenant with man, to instruct, redeem, love, and make him finally happy.

It is **he** that **hath made us**] He is our *Creator* and has consequently the only right in and over us.

And not we ourselves] **wnj na al w velo anachnu**. I can never think that this is the true reading, though found in the present Hebrew text, in the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Syriac*. Was there ever a people on earth, however grossly heathenish, that did believe, or could believe, that *they had made themselves*? In *twenty-six* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. we have **wnj na wl w velo anachnu**, “and HIS we are;” **wl lo**, the pronoun, being put for **al lo**, the *negative* particle. This is the reading of the *Targum*, or Chaldee paraphrase **anj na hyl ydw vedileyh anachna**, “and his we are,” and is the reading of the text in the Complutensian Polyglot, of both the Psalters which were printed in 1477, and is the *keri*, or marginal reading in most Masoretic Bibles. Every person must see, from the nature of the subject that it is the genuine reading. The position is founded on the maxim that what a man invents, constructs out of his own materials, without assistance in genius, materials or execution from any other person, is HIS OWN; and to it, its use, and produce, he has the only right. *God made us*, therefore *we are* HIS: we are his people, and should acknowledge him for our God; we are the sheep of his pasture, and should devote the lives to him constantly which he continually supports.

Verse 4. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving] Publicly worship God; and when ye come to the house of prayer, be thankful that you have such a privilege; and when you *enter his courts*, praise him for the permission. The word **hdwtb bethodah**, which we render *with thanksgiving*, is properly *with the confession-offering* or *sacrifice*. See on the *title*. See Clarke “^{<19A01>}**Psalm 100:1**”.

Bless his name.] Bless *Jehovah*, that he is your *Elohim*; see ^{<19A01>}**Psalm 100:3**. In our liturgic service we say, “Speak good of his name;” we cannot do otherwise; we have nothing *but good* to speak of our God.

Verse 5. For the Lord is good] GOODNESS, the perfect, eternal opposition to all *badness* and *evil*, is essential to God. *Mercy* and *compassion* are modifications of his *goodness*; and as his *nature* is *eternal*, so his *mercy*, springing from his *goodness*, must be *everlasting*. And as TRUTH is an essential characteristic of an infinitely intelligent and perfect nature; therefore *God's truth* must endure *from generation to generation*.

Whatsoever he has *promised* must be fulfilled, through all the successive generations of men, as long as sun and moon shall last.

As this is a very important Psalm, and has long made a part of our *public worship*, I shall lay it before the reader in the oldest vernacular Versions I have hitherto met with,—the *Anglo-Saxon* and the *Anglo-Scottish*, with a literal interlineary translation of the former.

The Anglo-Saxon Hundredth Psalm

Rhyme ye the Lord all earth, serve the Lord in bliss;

1. [Anglo-Saxon]

Infare in sight his in blithness;

2. [Anglo-Saxon]

Wit ye, for that Lord he is God, he did us & not self we;

3. [Anglo-Saxon]

Folk his & sheep leeseway his; fare into gates his in confession, into courts is in hymns confess him.

4. [Anglo-Saxon]

Praise name his, for that winsom is; Lord thro' eternity mildheartedness his, & unto on kindred & kindred sothfastnes his

5. [Anglo-Saxon]

The reader will see that, in order to make this translation as literal as possible, I have preserved some old English words which we had from the Anglo-Saxon, and which have nearly become obsolete: e.g., *Infare*, “to go in;” *blithness*, “joy, exultation;” *wit ye*, “know ye;” *did*, the preterite of *to do*, “made, created,” the literal translation of the Hebrew, **hc** [*asah*, *he made*; *leeseway*, “pasturage on a common;” *winsom*, “cheerful, merry;” *mildheartedness*, “tenderness of heart, compassion;” *sothfastness*, “steady to the sooth or truth, fast to truth.”

I might have noticed some various readings in Anglo-Saxon MSS.; e.g., ^{<9A00>}**Psalm 100:1** for [A.S.] *idrymeth*, “rhyme ye;” [A.S.] *winsumiath*, “be winsom, be joyful.” And ^{<9A00>}**Psalm 100:5**, for [A.S.] *winsom*, “cheerful;” [A.S.], *swete*, “sweet.”

Anglo-Scottish Version of the Hundredth Psalm

1. Joyes to God al the erth; serbes to Lord in gladnes.
2. Enters in his sight with joying.
3. Wittes for Lorde he is God; he made us and nocht we;
4. Folke of hym, and schepe of his pasture; enters the gates of hym in schrift; hys Halles in ympnyis; schryves to hym.
5. Loues his name, for soft is Lorde; withouten end in his mercy; and in generation and generation the sothfastnes of hym.

Thus our forefathers *said* and *sung* in heart and mouth and with their tongues made confession to salvation. There are but few words here which require explanation: Ver. 3, *Wittes*, “wot ye, know ye.” Ver. 4, *Schrift*, “confession;” *schryves*, “confess ye.” Ver. 5, *Loues*, “praise ye, laud ye.” *Sothfastness*, as above, steadfastness in the truth.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDREDTH PSALM

There are *two* parts in this Psalm:—

I. An *exhortation* to praise God, and the manner in which it is to be done, <19A0B> **Psalm 100:1-4.**

II. The *reasons* on which this is founded, <19A0B> **Psalm 100:3-5.**

I. In his exhortation to praise God it is required,—

1. That the praise be *universal*: “All ye lands.”
2. That it be *heartly*: “Make a joyful noise.” Let the soul be cheerful in the work.
3. That it be not *partial* nor restrained: “Make a joyful noise-serve-be glad-sing-be thankful-give praise-bless his name.” The various expressions show the completeness of this blessed word.
4. That it be sincere-done in *his presence*.
5. That it be an *intelligent* service: “Know ye.”
6. That it be *frequent* and *public*: “Enter his gates-go into his courts.”
7. That *gratitude* shall be a part of it: “With thanksgiving.”

II. The *reasons* on which this is grounded; they are,—

1. Drawn from the *nature* of God: “Know ye that Jehovah is Elohim,” the true God; therefore, alone worthy to be worshipped.
2. Drawn from the *benefits* bestowed on us: 1. “He has made us”—capable of knowing him, and being eternally happy with him. 2. He has called upon us by his *grace* to be “his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” He both *governs* and *feeds* us.

And that we may be the more cheerful in this work he puts us in mind of the Divine *attributes* engaged in our redemption, *goodness*, *mercy*, and *truth*.

1. “He is good.” This is his very *nature*.
2. “He is merciful.” This *flows* from his *goodness*.
3. “He is true;” keeping covenant for ever with them that fear him; and *fulfilling* all his *promises* to the believing and obedient.

And that we may have the more confidence,

1. “His mercy is everlasting.” It *continues* through all the changes and chances of this life to them who trust in him; and extends through all the generations of men.
2. His truth is like his mercy, it is pledged to fulfil his promises. “God is not man that he should lie;” he has promised, and will save to the uttermost all who come to him through Christ Jesus: “Be therefore thankful to him, and speak good of his name.”

PSALMS

PSALM 101

The subject proposed, mercy and judgment, 1. The psalmist's resolution in respect to his private conduct, 2. He will put away evil, inward and outward, 3. No evil person shall stand in his presence, 4; nor any slanderer of his neighbour, 4, 5. He will encourage the faithful and upright, 6; but the deceitful, the liars, and the profligate, he will cast out of the city of God, 7, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 101

The *Hebrew* and all the *Versions* attribute this Psalm to *David*. It shows us the resolutions he formed when he came to the throne; and it is a perfect model according to which a wise prince should regulate his conduct and his government.

Verse 1. I will sing of mercy and judgment] David might say, Adverse and prosperous providences have been of the utmost use to my soul; therefore, I will thank God for *both*. Or, as he was probably now called to the government of *all the tribes*, he might make a resolution that he would show **dsj** *chesed*, incessant benevolence, to the upright; and **cpvm** *mishpat*, the execution of judgment, to the wicked; and would make the conduct of God the model of his own.

Verse 2. I will behave myself wisely] God's law prescribes a perfect way of life; in this perfect way I have professed to walk, and I must act *wisely* in order to walk in it.

When wilt thou come unto me?] I can neither walk in this way, nor grow *wise* unto salvation, unless *thou come unto me* by thy grace and Spirit; for without thee I can do nothing.

I will walk within my house] It is easier for most men to walk with a perfect heart in the *Church*, or even in the *world*, than in their *own families*. How many are as meek as lambs among *others*, when at *home* they are *wasps* or *tigers*! The man who, in the midst of family provocations, maintains a Christian character, *being meek, gentle, and long-suffering* to his *wife*, his *children*, and his *servants*, has got a *perfect heart*, and adorns the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things.

The original is very emphatic; **Ēlhta ethhallech**, “I will set myself to walk,” I will make it a determined point thus to walk. I will bear and forbear with children, servants, &c., not speaking rashly, nor giving way to bad tempers. Through various motives a man will behave with propriety and decorum among others; but none of these motives operate in his own house, where he feels himself master, and consequently under no restraint.

Verse 3. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes] I will undertake no unjust wars; will enter into no sinful alliances; will not oppress my subjects by excessive taxation, to support extravagance in my court. I will not look favourably on *things* or *words of Belial*. What is *good for nothing* or evil in its operation, what is wicked in its principle, and what would lead me away from righteousness and truth, I will never set before my eyes.

Them that turn aside] I shall particularly abominate the conduct of those who apostatize from the true religion, and those who deny its Divine authority, and who live without having their conduct governed by its influence, such shall never be put in a place of political trust or confidence by me.

Verse 4. A froward heart] Rash and headstrong men shall not be employed by me.

I will not know a wicked person.] I will give no countenance to sinners of any kind; and whatever is *evil* shall be an object of my abhorrence.

Verse 5. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour] All flatterers and time-servers, and those who by insinuations and false accusations endeavour to supplant the upright, that they may obtain their offices for themselves or their dependants, will I consider as enemies to the state, I will abominate, and expel them from my court.

The Chaldee gives a remarkable meaning to the Hebrew, **wh[r rtsb ynvI m melasheni bassether reehu**, which we translate, *Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour*, and which it renders thus, **hyrbj I [ytyl t ^vyI y[tvmd demishtaey lishan telitai al chabreyah**: “He who speaks with the *triple tongue* against his neighbour.” That is, the tongue by which he slays *three* persons, viz., 1. The *man* whom he slanders; 2. *Him* to whom he *communicates* the slander; and, 3. *Himself*, the slanderer. Every slanderer has his *triple tongue*, and by every *slander* inflicts those *three* deadly wounds. Such a person deserves to be *cut off*. On this subject St.

Jerome speaks nearly in the same way: *Ille qui detrahit, et se, et illum qui audit, demergit*; “He who slanders ruins both himself and him who hears him;” he might have added, *and him who is slandered*, for this is often the case; the *innocent* are ruined by detraction.

A high look and a proud heart] One who is seeking preferment; who sticks at nothing to gain it; and one who behaves himself haughtily and insolently in his office.

Will not I suffer.] *I kwa al lo uchal*, I cannot away with. These persons especially will I drive from my presence, and from all state employments.

Verse 6. Mine eyes] My approbation.

Upon the faithful] The humble, upright followers of God.

That they may dwell with me] Be my confidants and privy counsellors. No irreligious or wicked man, whatever his abilities may be, shall be countenanced or supported by me. I will purify my court from the base, the irreligious, the avaricious, the venal, the profligate, and the wicked.

He that walketh in a perfect way] He that is truly religious.

He shall serve me.] Shall be my prime minister, and the chief officer in my army, and over my finances.

Verse 7. He that worketh deceit-that telleth lies] I will expel from my court all sycophants and flatterers. *Tiberius* encouraged flatterers; *Titus* burned some, *banished* several others, and *sold* many for *slaves*.

Verse 8. I will early destroy] I will take the first opportunity of destroying all the wicked of the land. I will purify my court, purge Jerusalem, and cleanse the whole land of every abomination and abominable person; so that the city of my God, where *holiness* alone should dwell, shall indeed become *the Holy City*; that the *state* may be made *prosperous*, and the *people* happy. Such an administration must have been a good one, where such pious caution was used in choosing all the officers of the state.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FIRST PSALM

There are *two* parts of this Psalm:—

I. The *sum*, with the dedication of it, ^{<19A101>}**Psalm 101:1.**

II. The full explanation of *mercy* and *judgment*, and how practiced:—

1. Towards *himself*, ^{<19A102>}**Psalm 101:2-5.**
2. Towards *ungodly* men, ^{<19A104>}**Psalm 101:4, 5, 7, 8.**
3. Towards all *good* men, ^{<19A106>}**Psalm 101:6.**

I. The sum of the Psalm, *mercy* and *judgment*, the two great virtues of a king.

1. *Mercy* in countenancing, giving audience, judging, and rewarding the good.
2. *Judgment* in discountenancing, being a terror to and punishing the evil doers.

II. He begins with his own reformation and that of his *house*, that he may set a godly example to his *kingdom*.

1. “I will behave myself wisely:” most act *foolishly*; I shall be guided by Divine wisdom.
2. “I am in a perfect way:” I have professed to believe in the God of Israel, and I must walk suitably to this profession.
3. “When wilt thou come unto me?” I am sincere in my resolves; but without thee I can do nothing. Stand by me, and I will walk uprightly.

In his house he resolves, “I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.”

1. “I will walk:” it shall be my constant employment.
2. “I will walk in my house:” I will see that my *family* fear God.
3. “I will walk with a perfect heart:” I shall do nothing for *show*; all shall be sincere and pious.

In order to walk in this perfect way, he promises,—

1. “I will set no wicked thing before my eyes:” evil desires enter more frequently into the soul by the *eye* than by any of the other senses.
2. “I hate the work of them that turn aside:” he that would leave sin must hate and abhor it: he that *leaves God* is an object of abhorrence.

3. "It shall not cleave to me:" it will cleave to him who cleaves to it. He who does not *hate* it, will *cleave* to it.

He shows what he will be towards the *ungodly*.

1. "A froward heart shall depart from me:" the headstrong, stubborn, and refractory.

2. "I will not know the wicked:" I shall not only not approve of such, but I will cultivate no acquaintance with them.

These wicked persons he particularizes. They are,

1. *Slanderers*: "Him that slandereth his neighbour I will cut off."

2. The *ambitious*: "Him that hath a high look," who wants influence and honour.

3. The *proud*: the haughty, who thinks all born to be his vassals.

How he will treat the *godly*.

1. "His eye shall be upon the faithful." Of them he will take especial care; he shall dwell with me.

2. The truly religious, "he that walks in a perfect way," shall be employed by himself. "He shall serve me."

He farther states what he will do in reference to the *ungodly*.

1. No fraudulent person shall dwell in his house: "He that worketh deceit," &c.

2. *Liars shall be banished out of his sight*.

In this work he tells us how he would proceed.

1. "I will early destroy." I will make *despatch*, that the *land* be not polluted.

2. The *end*, in reference to the Church: "I will cut off the wicked from the city of the Lord." The city, the seat of government, the place of God's *altars*, must be kept pure. There must be a thorough, a radical reform. No corruption or abuse, either in things *political*, *domestic*, or *religious*, shall be tolerated. All must be holy, as he who has called us is holy. This was a

reformation according to God's word; not according to the caprice of the multitude.

PSALMS

PSALM 102

The complaint and miserable state of the poor captives, 1-11; the expectation of deliverance, 12-14; the conversion of the heathen, 15-18; the termination of the captivity, 19-22; the great frailty of man, 23, 24; the unchangeableness of God, 25-27; the permanence of the Church, 28.

NOTES ON PSALM 102

The *Hebrew*, and nearly all the *Versions*, give the following *title* to this Psalm: *A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and pours out his sighing before the Lord.* There seems to be little doubt that this is the prayer of the captives in Babylon, when, towards the end of the captivity, they were almost worn out with oppression, cruelty, and distress. The Psalm has been attributed to *Daniel*, to *Jeremiah*, to *Nehemiah*, or to some of the other *prophets* who flourished during the time of the captivity. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has applied the *twenty-fifth*, *twenty-sixth*, and *twenty-seventh* verses to our Lord, and the perpetuity of his kingdom.

Verse 1. Hear my prayer] The chief parts of the Psalm answer well to the title: it is the *language of the deepest distress*, and well directed to *Him* from whom alone help can come.

Verse 3. My days are consumed like smoke] He represents himself (for the psalmist speaks in the name of the people) under the notion of a *pile of combustible matter*, placed upon a *fire*, which soon consumes it; part flying away in *smoke*, and the residue lying on the hearth in the form of *charred coal* and *ashes*. The *Chaldeans* were the *fire*, and the *captive Jews* the *fuel*, thus converted into *smoke* and *ashes*.

Verse 4. My heart is smitten, and withered like grass] The metaphor here is taken from grass cut down in the meadow. It is first *smitten* with the *scythe*, and then *withered* by the *sun*. Thus the Jews were smitten with the judgments of God; and they are now withered under the fire of the *Chaldeans*.

Verse 6. I am like a pelican of the wilderness] It may be the *pelican* or the *bittern*. The original, **taq kaath**, is mentioned ^{<B118>}**Leviticus 11:18**, and is there described. See the note. See Clarke “^{<B118>}**Leviticus 11:18**”.

Owl of the desert.] **cwk cos**, some species of *owl*; probably the night raven. See the notes referred to above.

Verse 7. As a sparrow alone] **rwpX tsippor**, seems to be often used for any small bird, such as the *swallow*, *sparrow*, or the like. *Bochart* supposes the *screech owl* is intended.

Verse 8. They that are mad against me are sworn against me.] The Chaldeans are determined to destroy us; and they have bound themselves *by oath* to do it. See a similar case related ^{<A2312>}**Acts 23:12-14**, where a number of Jews had bound themselves by an *oath* neither to eat nor drink till they had slain Paul.

Verse 9. I have eaten ashes like bread] Fearful of what they might do, we all humbled ourselves before thee, and sought thy protection; well knowing that, unless we were supernaturally assisted, we must all have perished; our enemies having sworn our destruction.

Verse 10. For thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.] Thou hast lifted me on high, that thou Lightest dash me down with the *greater force*. We were *exalted* in thy *favour* beyond any people, and now thou hast made us the *lowest* and most *abject* of the children of men.

Verse 11. My days are like a shadow that declineth] Or rather, *My days decline like the shadow*. I have passed my *meridian*, and the sun of my prosperity is about to set for ever. There may be here an allusion to the declination of the sun towards the south, which, by shortening their days, would greatly lengthen their nights. Similar to the exclamation of a contemporary prophet, ^{<A081>}**Jeremiah 8:20**: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” There is now scarcely any human hope of our deliverance.

Verse 12. But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever] Our life is a shadow; we can scarcely be called *beings* when compared with thee, for thou art *eternal*. Have mercy upon us, *creatures of a day*, and thy kindness shall be a *memorial* in all our *generations*.

Verse 13. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion] While he is humbled at the footstool of mercy, and earnestly praying for mercy, an answer of peace is given; he is assured, not only that they *shall be delivered*, but that the time of deliverance is *at hand*. The *set time*-the *seventy years* predicted by Jeremiah, was ended; and God gave him to see that he was ever mindful of his promises.

Verse 14. Thy servants take pleasure in her stones] Though Jerusalem was at this time in a heap of ruins, yet even her rubbish was sacred in the eyes of the pious; for this had been *the city of the great King*.

Verse 15. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord] It is granted that after the edict of Cyrus to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, which was about *four hundred and ninety years* before Christ, the name of the true God was more generally known among the heathen; and the translating the Sacred Writings into Greek, by the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, about *two hundred and eighty-five years* before the Christian era, spread a measure of the light of God in the Gentile world which they had not before seen. Add to this, the dispersion of the Jews into different parts of the Roman empire, after Judea became a Roman province, which took place about *sixty years* before the advent of our Lord; and we may consider these as so many preparatory steps to the conversion of the heathen by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And to this last general illumination of the Gentile world the psalmist must allude here, when he speaks of “the heathen fearing God’s name, and all the kings of the earth his glory.”

Verse 16. When the Lord shall build up Zion] It is such a difficult thing, so wholly improbable, so far out of the reach of human power, that when God does it, he must manifest his power and glory in a most extraordinary manner.

Verse 17. The prayer of the destitute] *r[r[h haarar* of him who is laid in utter ruin, who is entirely wasted.

Verse 18. The people which shall be created] “The Gentiles, who shall be brought to the knowledge of salvation by Christ,” as the *Syriac* states in its inscription to this Psalm: how often the conversion of the soul to God is represented as a *new creation*, no reader of the New Testament need be told. See ^{<41210>}**Ephesians 2:10; 4:24;** ^{<40517>}**2 Corinthians 5:17;** ^{<40615>}**Galatians 6:15.** Even the publication of the Gospel, and its influence

among men, is represented under the notion of “creating a new heaven and a new earth,” ^{<2657>} **Isaiah 65:17, 18.**

Verse 19. For he hath looked down] This, with the three following verses, seems to me to contain a glorious prophecy of the incarnation of Christ, and the gathering in of the Jews and the Gentiles to him. *The Lord looks down from heaven*, and sees the whole earth groaning and travailing in pain; his eye affects his heart, and he purposes their salvation.

Verse 20. To hear the groaning] By sin, all the inhabitants of the earth are *miserable*. They have broken the Divine laws, are under the arrest of judgment, and all cast into *prison*. They have been tried, *found guilty*, and *appointed to die*; they *groan* under their chains, are alarmed at the prospect of death, and implore mercy.

Verse 21. To declare the name of the Lord] To publish that Messenger of the Covenant in whom the name of the Lord is, that Messiah in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt; and to commence at *Jerusalem*, that the first offers of mercy might be made to the Jews, from whom the word of reconciliation was to go out to all the ends of the earth.

Verse 22. When the people are gathered together] When all the *Gentiles* are enlightened, and the kings of the earth brought to pay homage to the King of kings.

Verse 23. He weakened my strength in the way] We are brought so low in our captivity by oppression, by every species of hard usage, and by death, that there is now no hope of our restoration by any efforts of our own.

Verse 24. I said, O my God] This and the following verses seem to be the *form of prayer* which the captives used previously to their deliverance.

Thy years are throughout all generations.] This was a frequent argument used to induce God to hear prayer. We are *frail* and *perishing*; thou art *everlasting*: deliver us, and we will glorify thee.

Verse 25. Of old hast thou laid the foundation] None taught of God ever imagined the world to have been *eternal*. *Of old*, לִפְנַיִם *lephanim*, before there were any *faces* or *appearances*, thou didst lay the foundations of the earth. It was created by thee; it did not grow by *accretion* or *aggregation* from a *pre-existent nucleus*. There was *nothing*; and thou

didst produce *being-substance* or *matter*. Out of that created matter thou didst make the *earth* and the *heavens*.

Verse 26. They shall perish] Nothing can be eternal *a parte ante*, or *a parte post*, but thyself. Even that which thou hast created, because not necessarily *eternal*, must be perishable; necessary *duration* belongs to God only; and it is by his will and energy alone that universal nature is preserved in existence, and preserved from running into speedy disorder, decay, and ruin.

Yea, all of them shall wax old] Every thing must *deteriorate*, unless *preserved* by thy *renewing* and *invigorating energy*. Even the *heavens* and the *earth* are subject to this law; for that which is not, from the infinite perfection of its own nature, ETERNAL, must be perishable; therefore the heavens and the earth must necessarily come to an end. They contain the *seeds* of their own dissolution. It is true that in sublunary things, the *vicissitudes of seasons* is a sort of check to the principle of dissolution; but it only partially corrects this tendency. Even the productions of the earth *wear out* or *deteriorate*. Plant the same seed or grain for several years consecutively, and it degenerates so as at last not to be worth the labour of tillage, however expensively the soil may be manured in which it is planted. I may instance in *wheat* and in the *potatoe*, the two grand supporters of life in European countries. All other seeds and plants, as far as they have fallen under my observation, are subject to the same law.

Verse 27. But thou art the same] *awh htaw veattah* HU, *but thou art* HE, that is, *The ETERNAL*; and, consequently, he who only has *immortality*.

Thy years shall have no end.] *wnty al lo yittammu*, “they shall not be completed.” Every thing has its revolution—its conception, growth, perfection, decay, dissolution, and death, or corruption. It may be said that *regeneration* restores all these substances; and so it does in a measure, but not without *deterioration*. The *breed of animals*, as well as *vegetables*, *wears out*; but God’s eternal round has *no completion*. I repeat it,—what is *necessarily eternal* is unchangeable and imperishable; all created beings are perishable and mutable, because not eternal. God alone is eternal; therefore God alone is imperishable and immutable.

Verse 28. The children of thy servants shall continue] Thy *Church* shall be permanent, because founded *on thee*; it shall live throughout all the revolutions of time. And as thy followers are made *partakers of the Divine*

nature, they shall live in *union with God* in the other world, deriving *eternal duration* from the *inexhaustible Fountain of being*. Nothing can be permanent but by God's supporting and renewing influence.

ANALYSIS OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SECOND PSALM

There are *two* general parts in this Psalm:—

I. A description of the calamities of the Church, under the person of an afflicted man, ^{<19A371>} **Psalm 102:1-11.**

II. The consolation afforded in these calamities, and the ground of it, ^{<19A212>} **Psalm 102:12-28.**

I. The description, &c., is formed into a *prayer* proposed in the *two first verses*:—

1. "Hear my prayer."
2. "Hide not thy face."

In this prayer he complains, and shows his wretched state by various metaphors or figures.

1. A consumption of strength: "My days are consumed."
2. From continual *weeping*: "My bones cleave to my skin."
3. From his *solitude*: "Like a pelican in the wilderness."
4. From his continual *watching*: "I watch, and am like a sparrow," &c.
5. From the *reproach* of his enemies. "Mine enemies reproach me."
6. From his *sadness*: "I have eaten ashes like bread."

All these increased, from a *sense of God's displeasure*.

1. "Because of thine indignation."
2. Because of his *sufferings*: "Thou hast lifted me up, and hast cast me down."
3. And the *effect* produced: "My days are as a shadow."

II. He comforts himself in the promises of God:—

1. "I am withered like grass: but thou shalt endure for ever."

2. I shall soon be forgotten; “but thy remembrance is unto all generations.”
3. Thou seemest to take no heed: but “thou wilt arise.”

He was the more confident,—

1. Because the *set time* to favour Zion was come.
2. This he saw more clearly from the *concern* with which God had filled the hearts of the people: “Thy servants take pleasure in her stones.”
3. He consoled himself in the prospect of the *conversion of the heathen* themselves: “So the heathen shall fear thy name.”
4. For this he gives a particular reason: Because “the Lord shall build up Zion.”
5. And he will do this, because of the *prayers of the people*: “He will regard the prayer,” &c.

This should be done in such a *manner*, that,—

1. *Record* should be made of it: “This shall be written.”
2. And it should be a blessing to those that were unborn: “The people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.”

And for this he assigns the *proper reasons*.

1. “The Lord looked down from heaven.”
2. “He heard the groans of the prisoners.”

These mercies call for *gratitude* and *obedience*:—

1. They should “declare the name of the Lord.”
2. And this will take place “when the people are gathered together,” &c.

The psalmist fears that he shall *not live* to see this deliverance:—

1. “For he weakened my strength in the way,—he shortened my days.”
2. Yet he earnestly desires to see it: “Take me not away.”

To strengthen this petition, he pleads God’s *unchangeableness*; and he proves God to be *eternal*, because he is *immutable*.

1. Not so the *earth*, for it had a *beginning*: “Of old thou hast laid,” &c.
2. Not so the *heavens*; for they are “the work of thy hands.”
3. Neither shall they continue: “They shall perish,” &c.

But God is *always the same*. Every thing that is *mutable* acquires by its change some *property, quality, form* or *accident*, which *it had not before*: but God, being an infinite Spirit, and infinitely perfect, can suffer no loss, can have no addition. For as he *wants nothing*, nothing can be *added* to him; as he *inhabits eternity*, nothing can be *taken from him*. In him, therefore, there is no possibility of *change*; and, consequently, none of *decay* or *perishing*.

From these considerations the psalmist draws this comfortable conclusion:—

1. His Church and servants shall continue also: “The children of thy servants,”—the apostles, with the patriarchs, shall dwell in thy kingdom—in the new Jerusalem.
2. “And their seed;” as many as are begotten by the Gospel, if they remain in the faith that works by love, “shall be established,”—persevere, remain, continue *before thee*—live in thy presence for ever. As thou art eternal, so thou wilt unite them to thyself and make *them* eternally happy.

PSALMS

PSALM 103

God is praised for his benefits to his people, 1, 2; he forgives their iniquities, and heals their diseases, 3; redeems their lives, crowns them with loving-kindness, 4; satisfies them with good things, renews their youth, 5; he helps the oppressed, makes his ways known, is merciful and gracious, and keeps not his anger for ever, 6-9; his forbearance, and pardoning mercy, 10-12; he is a tender and considerate Father, 13, 14; the frail state of man, 15, 16; God's everlasting mercy, and universal dominion, 17-19; all his angels, his hosts, and his works, are invited to praise him, 20-22.

NOTES ON PSALM 103

The *inscription* in the *Hebrew*, and in all the *Versions*, gives this Psalm to *David*; and yet many of the ancients believed it to refer to the times of the captivity, or rather to its *conclusion*, in which the redeemed Jews give thanks to God for their restoration. It is a Psalm of inimitable sweetness and excellence; contains the most affectionate sentiments of gratitude to God for his mercies; and the most consoling motives to continue to trust in God, and be obedient to him.

Verse 1. Bless the Lord] He calls on his soul, and all its faculties and powers, to magnify God for his mercies. Under such a weight of obligation the lips can do little; the soul and all its powers must be engaged.

Verse 2. Forget not all his benefits] Call them into recollection; particularize the chief of them; and here record them for an everlasting memorial.

Verse 3. Who forgiveth] The benefits are the following, 1. Forgiveness of sin. 2. Restoration of health: "Who healeth all thy diseases."

Verse 4. Who redeemeth] 3. Preservation from destruction. *l awgh haggeroel*, properly, *redemption of life by the kinsman*; possibly looking forward, in the spirit of prophecy, to him who became partaker of our flesh and blood, that he might have the right to redeem our souls from death by dying in our stead. 4. Changing and ennobling his state; weaving a crown for him out of *loving-kindness* and *tender mercies*.

Verse 5. Who satisfieth thy mouth] 5. For continual communications of spiritual and temporal good; so that the vigour of his mind was constantly supported and increased.

Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.] There is such a vast variety of the eagle, or genus *Falco*, that it is not easy to determine which is meant here. The Hebrew רִעַן *neser* is a general name for such as were known in the land of Judea; which were probably such as belong to the genus *Aquila*, comprehending *forty-one* species and *seven* varieties.

There are as many *legends* of the *eagle* among the ancient writers, as there are of some saints in the calendar; and all *equally true*. Even among *modern divines*, *Bible Dictionary* men, and such like, the most ridiculous tales concerning this bird continue to be propagated; and no small portion of them have been crowded into comments on this very verse. One specimen my *old Psalter* affords, which, for its curiosity, I shall lay before the reader:—

Trans. *Renewed sal be als of aeren thi youthed.*

Par. The arne when he is greved with grete elde, his neb waxis so gretely, that he may nogt open his mouth and take mete: bot then he smytes his neb to the stane, and has away the solgh, and than he gaes til mete, and be commes yong a gayne. Swa Criste duse a way fra us oure elde of syn and mortalite, that settes us to ete oure brede in hevене, and newes us in hym.

The plain English of all this is:—

“When the arne [*eagle*, from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], a word which Dr. Jamieson has not entered in his dictionary] is oppressed with old age, his bill grows so much that he cannot open his mouth in order to take meat. He then smites his bill against a stone, and breaks off the slough—the excrescence that prevented him from eating; and then he goes to his ordinary food, and becomes young again. So Christ takes away from us our old age of sin and death, and gives us to eat of that bread which comes down from heaven: and thus gives us a new life in himself.”

I believe the meaning of the psalmist is much more simple: he refers to the *moulting* of birds, which, in most, takes place annually, in which they cast their old feathers and get a new plumage. To express this, he might as well

have chosen any bird, as this is common to all the feathered race; but he chose the *king of the birds*, because of his bulk, his strength, and vivacity.

The *long life* of the eagle might have induced the psalmist to give it the preference. An eagle was nine years in the possession of *Owen Holland*, Esq., of Conway, in Wales, and had lived *thirty-two years* in the possession of the gentleman who made it a present to him: but of its previous age, for it came from Ireland, we are not informed. *Keysler* relates that an eagle died at Vienna, after a confinement of *one hundred and four years*!

The *eagle* can subsist a long time without food. That first mentioned above, through the neglect of a servant, was *twenty-one* days without food, and yet survived this long fast.

The meaning and moral of the psalmist are not difficult of comprehension. The Israelites, when redeemed from their captivity, should be so blessed by their God that they should re-acquire their political strength and vigour; and should be so quickened by the Divine Spirit, that old things should be passed away, and all things become new.

Verse 6. The Lord executeth] This shall be done because the Lord will avenge his elect who have cried unto him day and night for his deliverance: “He is slow to anger;” but he will punish. “He is plenteous in mercy,” and he will save. The persevering sinner shall be destroyed; the humble penitent shall be saved.

Verse 7. He made known his ways unto Moses] From the earliest part of our history he has been our protector and defence. His wonderful *acts* in behalf of the *children of Israel* are so many *proofs* of his *mercy*, power, and goodness; and so many *reasons* why *we* should now trust in him.

Verse 8. The Lord is merciful] See Clarke’s note on “~~19815~~ Psalm 86:15”.

Verse 9. He will not always chide] He will not contend with us continually. He has often reproved, often punished us; but his mercy ever rejoiced over judgment.

Verse 10. He has not dealt unity us after our sins] He has never apportioned our *punishment* to our *sins*, nor has he regulated the exercise of his *mercy* by our merits.

Verse 11. For as the heaven is high above the earth] Great and provoking as our crimes may have been, yet his mercies have, in their

magnitude and number, surpassed these, as far as the heavens are elevated beyond the earth.

Verse 12. As far as the east is from the west] As the east and the west can never meet in one point, but be for ever at the same distance from each other, so our sins and their decreed punishment are removed to an eternal distance by his mercy.

Verse 13. Like as a father pitieth his children] This is a very emphatic verse, and may be thus translated: “As the tender compassions of a father towards his children; so the tender compassions of Jehovah towards them that fear him.” Nothing can place the tenderness and concern of God for his creatures in a stronger light than this. What yearnings of bowels does a *father* feel toward the *disobedient child*, who, sensible of his ingratitude and disobedience, falls at his parent’s feet, covered with confusion and melted into tears, with, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy son!” The same in *kind*, but infinitely more exquisite, does God feel when the penitent falls at his feet, and implores his mercy through Christ crucified.

Verse 14. For he knoweth our frame] *wnrxy yitsrenu*, “our formation;” the *manner* in which we are constructed, and the *materials* of which we are made. He knows we cannot contend with him, and if he uses his power against us, we must be crushed to destruction. In all his conduct towards us he considers the frailty of our nature, the untowardness of our circumstances, the strength and subtlety of temptation, and the sure party (till the heart is renewed) that the tempter has within us. Though all these things are against us, yet it must ever be said, whatever use we make of it, “the grace of God is sufficient for us.” But alas! alas! who makes use of that sufficient grace? Here, then, is cause for condemnation. But, O amazing mercy! if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are but dust. The man who can say, in the face of these Scriptures, *Let us sin that grace may abound*, is a brute and demon, who has neither lot nor part in this thing.

Verse 15. His days are as grass] See Clarke’s note on “^{<19015>}Psalm 90:5”.

Verse 16. The wind passeth over it] Referring perhaps to some blasting pestilential wind.

Verse 17. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting] **dsj** *chesed* signifies more particularly the *exuberant goodness of God*. This is an attribute of his nature, and must be from everlasting to everlasting; and hence, his righteousness (**tqdx** *tsidketh*)-his merciful *mode of justifying the ungodly*, is extended from one generation to another.

Unto children's children.] It is still in force, and the doctrine of reconciliation through Christ shall continue to be preached till the conclusion of time.

Verse 18. To such as keep his covenant] The spirit of which was, *I will be your GOD; WE will be thy PEOPLE*. From the covenant came the *commandments*, and their obligation *to remember and do them*; and on such *keepers* of the covenant, and *doers* of the commandments, God promises to pour out his mercy through all generations.

Verse 19. The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens] There he is Sovereign, but his dominion extends equally over all the earth; for his *kingdom*—regal government, influence, and sway, *ruleth over all*.

Verse 20. Bless the Lord, ye his angels] Every person who has a sense of God's goodness to his soul feels his own powers inadequate to the praise which he ought to offer; and therefore naturally calls upon the holiest of men, and the supreme angels, to assist him in this work.

That excel in strength] Some take **hk yrbg** *gibborey coach*, the *mighty in strength*, for another class of the hierarchy,—*they that do his commandments, hearkening to his words*; and consider them to be that order of beings who are particularly employed in operations among and for the children of men; probably such as are called *powers* in the New Testament.

Verse 21. All ye his hosts; ye ministers of his] We know almost nothing of the economy of the heavenly host; and, therefore, cannot tell what is the difference between *angels, mighty powers, hosts, and ministers* who do his pleasure. All owe their being and all its blessings to God; all depend upon

his bounty; and without him they can do nothing; therefore, all should praise him.

Verse 22. Bless the Lord, all his works] Let every thing he has done be so considered as to show forth his praise.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.] Let *me* never forget my obligation to his mercy; for with tender mercies and loving-kindness has he crowned me. I will therefore be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name.

ANALYSIS OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD PSALM

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

I. The *exordium*, in which the psalmist invites his own soul to praise the Lord, ^{<19A30>}**Psalm 103:1, 2.**

II. The *narration*, being a declaration of God's benefits conferred on him and others, and the causes of those benefits, ^{<19A31>}**Psalm 103:3-19.**

III. The *conclusion*, in which he calls on all creatures to assist him in praising the Lord, ^{<19A32>}**Psalm 103:20-22.**

I. The *exordium*,—

1. Bless God. Think on the benefit, and praise the Benefactor.
2. Let the *soul* join in this. Let it be done heartily; *lip-labour* is little worth.
3. "All that is within me." Every faculty,—understanding, will, memory, judgment, affections, desires, &c.
4. "Bless Jehovah," who gave thee thy being, and all thy blessings.
5. "Forget not his benefits." Most forget their obligations both to God and man; but *ingratitude*, which is the source of *forgetfulness*, is abominable.
6. "All his benefits." Thou hast already for gotten many; forget no more. The word *yl wmg gemuley*, signifies, literally, *retributions* or *recompenses*, as the *Vulgate* has well expressed it. And of what kind are these *recompenses*? Invariably *good* for *evil*; nor hast thou ever offered him one accent of praise that he has not compensated with a *blessing* of *infinite value*.

II. The *narration*. A declaration of benefits. 1. To *himself*. 2. To the *Church*. These were,—1. *Spiritual*; 2. *Temporal* benefits.

First spiritual benefit-justification: “He forgiveth all thine iniquities.”

Second spiritual benefit-regeneration or sanctification: “Healeth all thy diseases.”

Third spiritual benefit-redemption from the first and second death, in consequence of being thus justified and sanctified.

Fourth spiritual benefit-glorification anticipated: “Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercy.” The *crown* comes from the *loving-kindness* and *tender mercy* of God; not from any *merit* in man.

The *temporal* benefits are,—

1. Abundance of the necessaries of life: “Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things.”

2. Health and long life: “Thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” See the note on this passage.

The benefits to the whole *Church* are,—

1. *Defence and deliverance*: “The Lord executes judgment.”

2. *Manifestation of his will*: “He made known his ways,” &c.

All these spring from the *four attributes* mentioned below,—

1. “He is merciful,” $\mu\omega j \ r$ *rachum*, bearing a paternal affection to his intelligent creatures, especially to those who fear him.

2. “Gracious,” $\wedge\omega nj$ *channun*, the Giver of grace and favour; for he who has a fatherly heart will *give*.

3. “Slow to anger,” $\mu\upsilon\pi\alpha \ \ddot{E}ra$ *erech appayim*, long in nostrils, not hasty; not *apt to be angry*.

4. “Plenteous in mercy,” $dsj \ br$ *rab chesed*, multiplying kindness. Gives abundantly from his own bounty, not according to our *merit*.

The effects of all these are,—

1. Because he is *merciful*: “He will not always chide.”

2. Because he is *gracious*: “He deals not with us after our sin.”
3. Because he is *slow to anger*: “He will not keep his anger forever.”
4. Because he is *plenteous in mercies*: His mercies surpass our sins as much as heaven surpasses the earth.
5. Because he is *like a father*: He “pities his children;” considers their frame, and makes all the allowance that *justice* mingled with *mercy* can make.
6. And as he is *righteous*-true, and faithful in performing his covenant, his mercy is everlasting to those that fear him.

But let it be remembered who they are that have a right to expect such blessings:—

1. “Those who fear him.”
2. “Those who keep his covenant.”
3. “Those who remember his commandments, and do them.”

That he is *able* to do all that he has promised, the psalmist marks his *dominion*:—

1. It is not circumscribed: “His throne is in heaven.”
2. It takes in all *places* and all *nations*. For “his kingdom ruleth over all;” he is King of kings, and Lord of lords.

III. The *conclusion*. For these benefits he invites all creatures to praise the Lord.

1. The *angels*, whom he describes,—1. From their *excellence*: “Ye that excel in strength.” 2. From their obedience: “Ye that do his commandments.” 3. From their *readiness* and *cheerfulness* in it: “Ye that hearken to the voice of his words,”—who are ever ready, at the slightest intimation, to perform his will.

2. All the *hosts* or *armies* of God,—archangels, principalities, dominions, powers, thrones, &c.

3. He invites all the creatures of God to praise him, whether *animate* or *inanimate*: “All creatures, in all places of his dominion.” This extends

throughout immensity. For this there is the strongest reason—he *made* all—*rules* over all—”is in all places” *with* all—*preserves* all—*moves* all.

4. To show that he who calls upon others will not be backward himself to praise God; as he began, so he concludes, with “Bless the Lord, O my soul!” Thus he had the high praises of God continually in his mouth.

And thus finishes this most excellent and inimitable Psalm. The *old Psalter* concludes thus: “Blysses to Lorde al his werks in ilk stede of his Lordschip: blisse my saule to Lorde. When men well lyfes, al thair werks blysses God. Fra blyssyng we cum forth to blyssyngs, gawe agayne, and tharein dwell we.”

The more we praise God, the more occasion we shall see to praise him, and the more spiritually minded we shall become. *Praise* proceeds from *gratitude*; gratitude from a sense of *obligation*; and both *praise* and *gratitude* will be in *proportion* to the *weight* of that obligation; and the *weight* will be in proportion to the *sense* we have of God’s *great goodness* and our own *unworthiness*. As the reader’s heart may be in a heavenly frame, I shall help him to express his feelings by the following *inimitable verses*, which express the substance of the preceding Psalm:—

*From all that dwell below the skies
Let the Creator’s praise arise!
Let the Redeemer’s grace be sung
In every land, by every tongue!*

*Eternal are thy mercies, Lord!
Eternal truth attends thy word!
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
Till sun shall rise and set no more.*

*Praise GOD, from whom all blessings flow!
Praise Him, all creatures here below!
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host!
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST!*

Amen and Amen.

PSALMS

PSALM 104

The majesty and power of God manifested in the creation of the heavens and the atmosphere, 1-3; of the earth and sea, 4-9; of the springs, fountains, and rivers, 10-13; of vegetables and trees, 14-18; of the sun and moon, 19; of day and night, and their uses, 20-23; of the riches of the earth, 24; of the sea, its inhabitants, and its uses, 25, 26; of God's general providence in providing food for all kinds of animals, 27-31; of earthquakes and volcanoes, 32. God is praised for his majesty, and the instruction which his works afford, 33, 34. Sinners shall be destroyed, 35.

NOTES ON PSALM 104

This Psalm has no title either in the Hebrew or Chaldee; but it is attributed to David by the Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Syriac. It has the following title in the Septuagint, as it stands in the Complutensian Polyglot: **Ψαλμος τω δασιδ υπερ της του κοσμου συστασεως**, "A Psalm of David concerning the formation of the world." The Syriac says it is "A Psalm of David when he went with the priests to adore the Lord before the ark." It seems a continuation of the preceding Psalm; and it is written as a part of it in *nine* of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS. It is properly a poem on the works of God in the creation and government of the world; and some have considered it a sort of epitome of the history of the creation, as given in the book of Genesis.

Verse 1. O Lord my God, thou art very great] The works of God, which are the subject of this Psalm, particularly show the grandeur and majesty of God. The strongest proofs of the being of God, for common understandings, are derived from the works of creation, their magnitude, variety, number, economy, and use. And a proper consideration of those works presents a greater number of the attributes of the Divine nature than we can learn from any other source. Revelation alone is superior.

Verse 2. Who coverest thyself with light] Light, insufferable splendor, is the robe of the Divine Majesty. *Light* and *fire* are generally the accompaniments of the Supreme Being, when he manifests his presence to his creatures. He appeared thus to *Abraham* when he made a covenant with him, ^{<01517>}**Genesis 15:17**; and to *Moses* when he appointed him to bring the people out of Egypt, ^{<01918>}**Exodus 19:18**. *Moses* calls *God* a

consuming fire, ~~<FOOT>~~ **Deuteronomy 4:24**. When *Christ* was transfigured on the mount, his face shone like the sun, and his garment was white as the light, ~~<FOOT>~~ **Matthew 17:2**. And when the Lord manifests himself to the prophets, he is always surrounded with *fire*, and the most brilliant *light*.

Bishop *Lowth* has some fine remarks on the *imagery* and *metaphors* of this Psalm. The *exordium*, says he, is peculiarly magnificent, wherein the majesty of God is described, so far as we can investigate and comprehend it, from the admirable construction of nature; in which passage, as it was for the most part necessary to use translative images, the sacred poet has principally applied those which would be esteemed by the Hebrews the most elevated, and worthy such an argument; for they all, as it seems to me, are taken from the *tabernacle*. We will give these passages verbally, with a short illustration:—

tvbl rdhv dwh hod vehadar labashta.

“Thou hast put on honour and majesty.”

The original, tvbl , is frequently used when speaking of the *clothing* or *dress* of the *priests*.

Verse 2.

hml ck rwa hc[oteh or cassalmah.

“Covering thyself with light as with a garment.”

A manifest symbol of the Divine Presence; the light conspicuous in the holiest is pointed out under the same idea; and from this single example a simile is deduced to express the ineffable glory of God generally and universally.

h[yryk μymv hcwn noteh shamayim kayeriah.

“Stretching out the heavens like a curtain.”

The word h[yry, rendered here *curtain*, is that which denotes the *curtains* or *uncovering* of the whole *tabernacle*. This may also be an allusion to those curtains or awnings, stretched over an area, under which companies sit at weddings, feasts, religious festivals, curiously *painted under*, to give them the appearance of the visible heavens in the night-season.

Verse 3.

wytwyl [μymb hrqmh *hamekareh bammayim aliyothaiv.*

“Laying the beams of his chambers in the waters.”

The sacred writer expresses the wonderful nature of the *air* aptly, and regularly constructed, from various and flux elements, into one continued and stable series, by a metaphor drawn from the singular formation of the *tabernacle*, which, consisting of many and different parts, and easily reparable when there was need, was kept together by a perpetual juncture and contignation of them all together. The poet goes on:—

wbwrk μyb [μch *hassem abim rechubo,*
hwr ypnk I [Ēl hmh *hamehallech al canphey ruach.*

*“Making the clouds his chariot,
Walking upon the wings of the wind.”*

He had first expressed an image of the Divine Majesty, such as it resided in the holy of holies, discernible by a certain investiture of the most splendid light; he now denotes the same from that light of itself which the Divine Majesty exhibited, when it moved together with the ark, sitting on a circumambient cloud, and carried on high through the air. That seat of the Divine Presence is even called by the sacred historians, as its proper name, **hbkrmh** *hammercabah*, THE CHARIOT.

Verse 4.

twj r wykai m hc [*oseh malachaiv ruchoth,*
chl va wytrvm *mesharethaiv esh lohet.*

The elements are described as prompt and expedite to perform the Divine commands, like angels or ministers serving in the tabernacle; the Hebrew word **wytrvm** *mesharethaiv* being a word most common in the sacred ministrations.

Verse 5.

hynwkm I [xra dsy *yasad erets al mechonepha,*
d[w μl w [cwmt I b *bal tammot olam vaed.*

*“Laying the earth upon its foundations,
That it should not be shaken for evermore.”*

This image Bishop Lowth thinks evidently taken from the *tabernacle*, which was so laid upon its foundations that nothing could move it, and the dispensation to which it was attached, till the end purposed by the secret counsel of God was accomplished: and thus the *earth* is established, till the end of its creation shall be fully answered; and then it and its works shall be burnt up. On the above ground, the stability of the sanctuary and the stability of the earth are sometimes mentioned in the same words.

Verse 6. Thou coveredst it with the deep] This seems to be spoken in allusion to the creation of the earth, when it was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the waters invested the whole, till God separated the dry land from them; thus forming the seas and the terraqueous globe.

*The poet Ovid has nearly the same idea:—
Densior his tellus, elementaque grandia traxit,
Et pressa est gravitate sua; circumfluit humor
Ultima possedit, solidumque cœrcuit orbem.
Met. lib. i., ver. 29.*

*Earth sinks beneath, and draws a numerous throng
Of ponderous, thick, unwieldy seeds along:
About her coasts unruly waters roar;
And, rising on a ridge, insult the shore.
DRYDEN.*

Verse 7. At thy rebuke they fled] When God separated the *waters which were above the firmament* from those *below*, and caused the *dry land to appear*. He commanded the separation to take place; and the waters, as if instinct with life, hastened to obey.

At the voice of thy thunder] It is very likely God employed the *electric fluid* as an agent in this separation.

Verse 8. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys] Taking the words as they stand here, *springs* seem to be what are intended. But it is difficult to conceive how the water could ascend, through the fissures of mountains, to their tops, and then come down their sides so as to form rivulets to water the valleys. Most probably all the springs in mountains and hills are formed from waters which fall on their tops in the

form of rain, or from clouds that, passing over them, are arrested, and precipitate their contents, which, sinking down, are stopped by some solid strata, till, forcing their way at some aperture at their sides, they form springs and fountains. Possibly, however, *vapours* and *exhalations* are understood; these by *evaporation* ascend to the tops of mountains, where they are condensed and precipitated. Thus the vapours ascend, and then come down to the valleys, forming fountains and rivulets in those places which the providence of God has allotted them; that is, continuous valleys, with such a degree of *inclination* as determines their waters to run in that direction till they reach another river, or fall into the ocean.

Some have thought there is a reference to the *breaking up on the fountains of the great deep*, at the time of the flood; while the protrusion of the waters would raise the circumambient crust, so as to form mountains, the other parts, falling in to fill up the vacuum occasioned by the waters which were thrown up from the central abyss, would constitute *valleys*.

Ovid seems to paraphrase this verse:—

*Jussit et extendi campos, subsidere valles,
Fronde tegi sylvas, lapidosos surgere montes.
Met. lib. i., ver. 43.*

*“He shades the woods, the valleys he restrains
With rocky mountains, and extends the plains.”
DRYDEN.*

Verse 9. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass] And what is this *bound*? The *flux* and *reflux* of the sea, occasioned by the solar and lunar *attraction*, the *rotation* of the earth on its own axis, and the *gravitation* of the waters to the centre of the earth. And what is the *cause* of all these? The will and energy of God. Thus the sea is prevented from drowning the earth equally where there are *flat shores* as where the sea seems hemmed in by huge mounds of land and mountains. The *above*, not *these*, are the *bounds which it cannot pass, so that they cannot turn again to cover the earth*.

Verse 10. He sendeth the springs into the valleys] *Evaporation* is guided and regulated by Divine Providence. The sun has a certain power to raise a certain portion of vapours from a given space. God has apportioned the *aqueous* to the *terrene surface*, and the solar attraction to both. There is just as much aqueous *surface* as affords a sufficiency of vapours to be

raised by the solar attraction to water the *earthy surface*. Experiments have been instituted which prove that it requires a given space of aqueous surface to provide vapours for a given space of terrene surface; and the proportion appears ordinarily to be *seventeen of water to three of earth*; and this is the proportion that the aqueous bears to the terrene surface of the globe. See Ray's three Physico-theological Discourses.

Verse 11. The wild asses quench their thirst.] The *arp pere*, *onager* or *wild ass*, differs in nothing from the *tame ass*, only it has not a broken spirit, and is consequently more lively and active. It is so very swift that no horse except the Arab barb can overtake it. It is a gregarious animal, and they go in troops to feed and to drink. It is very timid, or rather jealous of its liberty, and therefore retires deep into the desert; yet even there the providence of God regards it; springs are provided, and it has the instinct to find them out.

Verse 12. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation] All fowls love verdure, and have their residence where they can find wood and water.

Verse 13. From his chambers] The *clouds*, as in ^{<1944B>} **Psalm 104:3.**

The earth is satisfied] The inhabitants of it.

Verse 14. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle] Doth God care for oxen? Yes, and there is not a beast of the field that does not share his merciful regards.

And herb for the service of man] Plants, esculent herbs, and nutritive grain in general; and thus *he brings forth food* (*יֵלֵךְ* | *lechem*, *bread*) *out of the earth*. In the germination and growth of a grain of wheat there is a profusion of miracles. God takes care of man, and of all those animals which are so necessary to the convenience and comfort of man.

Verse 15. And wine] *Wine*, in moderate quantity, has a wondrous tendency to revive and invigorate the human being. *Ardent spirits* exhilarate, but they *exhaust* the strength; and every dose leaves man the worse. Unadulterated wine, on the contrary, *exhilarates* and *invigorates*: it makes him cheerful, and provides for the continuance of that cheerfulness by *strengthening* the *muscles*, and *bracing* the *nerves*. This is its *use*. Those who continue drinking till wine inflames them, *abuse* this mercy of God.

Oil to make his face to shine] That is, to anoint the body; and particularly those parts most exposed to the sun and weather. This is of high importance in all arid lands and sultry climates. By it the pores are kept open, and perspiration maintained.

Bread which strengtheneth man's heart.] In hunger not only the *strength* is prostrated, but the *natural courage* is also abated. *Hunger* has no enterprise, emulation, nor courage. But when, in such circumstances, a little bread is received into the stomach, even before concoction can have time to prepare it for nutriment, the *strength* is restored, and the *spirits* revived. This is a surprising effect; and it has not yet been satisfactorily accounted for.

Three of the choicest and most important articles of life are here mentioned: WINE, for the support of the vital and intellectual spirits; BREAD, for the support of the nervous and muscular system; and OIL, as a seasoner of food, and for those *unctions* so necessary for the maintenance of health. Where *wine, oil, and bread* can be had in sufficient quantities, there *animal food*, ardent spirits, and all high-seasoned aliments, may be well dispensed with. Heavy taxes on these necessities of life are taxes on *life*, itself; and infallibly lead to adulteration of the articles themselves; especially *wine and oil*, which, in countries where they are highly taxed, are no longer to be found pure.

Verse 16. The trees of the Lord are full of sap] w[bcy *yisbeu*, “are saturated.”

The cedars of Lebanon] God's providence not only extends to *men and cattle*, but also to the trees of the field and forest. Many of these are not only sustained, but *planted* by his providence. Who ever planted the seeds of the cedars of Lebanon, or of the thousands of woods and forests on the globe? God himself sowed those seeds, and they have sprung up and flourished without the care of man.

Verse 17. Where the birds make their nests] *μυρpx tsipporim* signifies *swallows, sparrows, and small birds* in general; here opposed to the *hdysj chasidah* or *stork*. Perhaps the *heron* may be understood, which is said to be the first of all birds to build her nest, and she builds it on the very highest trees. The general meaning is, that God has provided shelter and support for the greatest and smallest birds; they are all objects of his providential regard.

Verse 18. The high hills are a refuge] The barren tops of the highest hills, and the craggy abrupt precipices of the most stupendous rocks, are not without their uses: they afford protection, refuge, and food, for creatures whose dispositions and habits are suited to such places; and thus no part of the creation is useless. The creatures who are their inhabitants are necessary *links* in the great *chain* of animated beings, and show the wisdom and providence of God.

For a description of the *coney*, see ^{<B1105>}**Leviticus 11:5**. The **י** [*y yael*, translated here the *wild goat*, is no doubt a creature of the *stag* or *deer* kind; the *ibex*, *chamois*, *antelope*, &c.

Verse 19. He appointed the moon for seasons] The heathens thought that the *sun* and *moon* were gods, and worshipped them as such. The psalmist shows, 1. That they are creatures dependent on God for their being and continuance; and, 2. That they were made for the use of man. See what has been said on these luminaries in the notes on ^{<O1014>}**Genesis 1:14, 16**.

Verse 20. Thou makest darkness] It is not the design of God that there should be either constant *darkness* or constant *light*. That man may *labour*, he gives him, by means of the *sun*, the *light of the day*; and that he may *rest* from his labour, and get his strength recruited, he gives him *night*, and comparative *darkness*. And as it would not be convenient for man and the wild beasts of the forest to collect their food *at the same time*, he has given the *night* to them as the proper time to procure their prey, and the *day* to rest in. When MAN *labours*, THEY *rest*; when MAN *rests*, THEY *labour*.

Verse 21. The young lions roar after their prey] It is said of the lion, that his *roaring* is so terrible as to astonish and quite unnerve the beast which he pursues; so that, though fleetier than himself, it falls down and becomes an easy prey.

Verse 22. The sun ariseth] The dawn of day is the warning for *man* to arise and betake himself to his work; and is the warning to them to retire to their dens.

Verse 24. O Lord, how manifold are thy works] In this verse there are *three* propositions: 1. The works of the Lord are multitudinous and varied. 2. They are so constructed as to show the most consummate wisdom in their *design*, and in the *end* for which they are formed. 3. They are all

God's *property*, and should be used only in reference to the end for which they were created. All *abuse* and *waste* of God's creatures are spoil and robbery on the property of the Creator. On this verse Mr. *Ray* has published an excellent work, entitled, "The Wisdom of God in the Creation," which the reader will do well, not only to consult, but carefully to read over and study.

Verse 25. This great and wide sea] The original is very emphatic: μυdy bj rw l wdg μyh hz *zeh haiyam gadol urechab yadayim*, "This very sea, great and extensive of hands." Its waters, like arms, encompassing all the terrene parts of the globe. I suppose the psalmist was within sight of the Mediterranean when he wrote these words.

Verse 26. There go the ships] By means of navigation, countries the most remote are connected, and all the inhabitants of the earth become known to each other. He appears at this time to have seen the ships under sail.

That leviathan] This may mean the *whale*, or any of the large marine animals. The *Septuagint* and *Vulgate* call it *dragon*. Sometimes the *crocodile* is intended by the original word.

To play therein.] Dreadful and tempestuous as the sea may appear, and uncontrollable in its billows and surges, it is only the field of *sport*, the *play-ground*, the *bowling-green* to those huge marine monsters.

Verse 27. These wait all upon thee] The innumerable *fry* of the smaller aquatic animals, as well as *whales*, *dolphins*, *porpoises*, and *sharks*, all have their meat from God. He has in his gracious providence furnished that sort of food which is suitable to all. And this provision is *various*; not only for *every kind* of fish does God provide food, but a *different kind* of aliment for each in its different *periods* of *growth*. Here are displayed the goodness and infinitely varied providence of God: "He giveth them their meat in due season."

Verse 28. That thou givest them they gather] All creatures are formed with such and such digestive organs, and the food proper for them is provided. Infinitely varied as are living creatures in their habits and internal economy, so are the aliments which God has caused the *air*, the *earth*, and the *waters* to produce.

Thou openest thine hand] An allusion to the act of scattering grain among fowls.

Verse 29. Thou hidest thy face] If thou bring dearth or famine on the *land*, contagion in the *air*, or any destruction on the provision made by the *waters*, then beasts, fowl, and fish die, and are dissolved.

Verse 30. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created] ^{warby} *yibbareun*, “They are created again.”

And thou renewest the face of the earth.] Do not these words plainly imply a *resurrection* of the bodies which have died, been dissolved, or turned to dust? And is not the brute creation principally intended here? Is it not on this account it is said, ^{1943B} **Psalm 104:31**, “the glory of the Lord shall endure for ever, (^μ ^l ^w [^l *leolam*,)” to be manifest in those *times* which are *secret*, when *Jehovah* himself *shall rejoice in his works*; when the brute creation shall be delivered from the bondage of its corruption? See the notes on ⁴¹⁸¹⁹ **Romans 8:19-23**.

Verse 32. He looketh on the earth] Even the look of God terrifies all created nature!

He toucheth the hills] So easy is it for God to burn up the earth and the worlds thereof, that even his *touch* kindles the mountains into flames! See *Etna*, *Vesuvius*, *Stromboli*, &c.; these are *ignited* by the touch of God. How majestic are these figures!

The renewal of the earth, and re-creation of deceased animals, shall take place when he shall shake terribly the heavens and the earth; when they shall be wrapped together as a scroll, and the earth and its works be dissolved, that is, after the general *convulsion* and *conflagration* of the world.

Verse 33. I will sing unto the Lord] The psalmist exulting in the glorious prospect of the renovation of all things, breaks out in triumphant anticipation of the great event, and says, I will sing unto the Lord ^{yyj} ^b *bechaiyai*, with my *lives*, the life that I *now* have, and the *life* that I *shall* have hereafter.

I will sing praise to my God] ^{ydw} [^b *beodi*, “in my eternity;” my going on, my endless progression. What astonishing ideas! But then, how shall this great work be brought about? and how shall the new earth be inhabited with righteous spirits only? The answer is,

Verse 35. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more.] Or, He shall consume the wicked and ungodly, till no more of them be found. Then the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God. No wonder, with these prospects before his eyes, he cries out, “Bless Jehovah, O my soul! Hallelujah!” And ye that hear of these things, *bless the Lord* also.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FOURTH PSALM

The scope of this Psalm is the same with that of the former, i.e., to excite them to praise God in consideration of his benefits; but yet on a different ground. In the former, for the benefits of grace conferred upon his Church; in this, for the gifts of nature bestowed in general upon all. Those flow immediately from his mercy; these, from his power, wisdom, and goodness, and depend upon his providence, and are manifest in the creation, governance, and preservation of all things. The creature then is the subject of this Psalm, relative to which we have a long but very methodical narration.

- I. The exhortation proposed briefly, ^{<19A40I>}**Psalm 104:1.**
- II. The exhortation urged by the inspection of the fabric, the beauty, order, and government of the world, ^{<19A40I>}**Psalm 104:1-33.**
- III. The duty practiced by himself, ^{<19A43>}**Psalm 104:33, 34.**
- IV. An imprecation on them that neglect the duty, ^{<19A43>}**Psalm 104:35.**

I. He begins with a double apostrophe:—

1. To his own soul, to praise God: “Bless the Lord, O my soul;” which was the conclusion of the former Psalm.
2. To his God: “O Lord my God,” whom he describes to be great and glorious. That he may set forth his majesty and glory, borrowing his figure from the person of some great king, presenting himself very glorious to his people in his robes, in his pavilion, with a glittering canopy extended over his throne; sometimes in his chariot, drawn by the swiftest horses, with his nobles, ministers, and servants, waiting on his pleasure.

In this way he describes the majesty of God in the works of the first and second day, for by that order he proceeds in setting forth God’s works, that in which they were made.

1. His robe is the light, the work of the first day, which is the purest, the most illustrious and cheerful of all God's creatures. With this "he is clothed as with a garment," for he is light, ^{<430101>}**John 1:1**; and he dwells in that inaccessible light that no man hath seen, nor can see, ^{<40616>}**1 Timothy 6:16**.

2. His pavilion stretched round about him is the heavens, the work of the second day. These are as the hangings and curtains of his chamber of presence, by his fiat and power stretched out as we now see them: "He stretched out the heavens as a curtain."

3. His palace built in a most miraculous manner. The beams are laid, not as usual on a solid body, but upon that which is most fluent: "He lays the beams of his chambers in the waters." In ^{<010107>}**Genesis 1:7** we read of the "waters above the firmament," which were a part of the second day's work; and of these the prophet surely speaks.

4. His chariot, the clouds: "Who makes the clouds his chariot." Upon these he rides in a most wonderful manner, in all places he pleases; which are now in this place, and then instantly removed to another.

5. The horses that draw it, the *winds, alipedes*, as the poets feigned the horses who drew the chariot of the sun. The psalmist intends to show that by the power of God they are brought upon the face of heaven, and removed at his pleasure.

6. His attendants, angels: "He maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire." No creature of greater quickness and agility than a spirit, no element more active than *fire*. These blessed spirits he sends forth as he pleases, to defend his servants; and as a flame of fire to consume and burn up his enemies: in which appears his might and majesty.

II. Next, the prophet descends from the heavens, and out of the air, and speaks of the work of the third day; and begins with the earth, that element which is best known to us, in which he shows the power and wisdom of God many ways.

1. In the foundation of it upon its centre. Strange it is that so great and heavy a body should remain in the midst of it and not sink; this the prophet attributes to the power and providence of God: "Who laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed for ever."

2. Another part of his providence about the *earth* was, that the water, being the lighter element, covered the earth, and thus rendered it useless. God, either by taking some parts of the upper superficies out of the earth in some places, made it more hollow, and putting them in others, made it convex; or in other words, by raising some and depressing others, made room for the sea; this was the work of God's word, and the prophet speaks of this in the three following verses.

1. He shows in what condition the *earth* was in the first creation; it was covered, and under water: "Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains."

2. He shows that the earth became uncovered by the voice, power, and fiat of God: "Let the waters be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." This the psalmist here calls the rebuke of God, the voice of thunder; for God no sooner spake than it was done: "At thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of thy thunder they were afraid."

3. And so there became a new world. The mountains and valleys take the lower place; the mists and vapours *go up by the mountains*.

4. There they inclose them: "Thou hast set a bound," &c. Yet not violently kept there, but restrained by an ordinary law of nature, it being natural for water to descend to the lower places.

III. He next speaks of the rivers and springs, and shows God's wonderful providence over them:—

1. "He sendeth the springs," the streams of water, from the hills "into the valleys."

2. "The end of this infinitely declares God's providence; it is for the sustenance of beasts and fowls, or they must perish for thirst: "The springs and rivers give drink to every beast of the field, the wild asses," &c.

IV. But the springs and rivers cannot water all parts of the earth; therefore, his wisdom devised the rain and the clouds.

"He watereth the hills from his chambers." The effect of which is,—

1. In general, the satisfaction of the earth, which, being thirsty, gapes for rain: "The earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works."

2. In particular, the effects and consequences of the dews. 1. Grass for the cattle: “He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle.” 2. Herbs for meat and medicine: “And herbs for the service of man.” 3. All kinds of food: “And that he may bring forth food.” 4. “And wine that makes glad the heart of man,” lawfully used. 5. “And oil to make his face to shine.” Oil supplies and strengthens the nerves, and keeps the flesh smooth, fresh, and youthful. 6. “And bread which strengtheneth man’s heart;” for it is always the chief and necessary part of the service.

V. Neither hath the God of providence forgotten to provide us trees for shade, building, and fuel, as well as to yield us fruit.

1. “The trees of the Lord also.” His trees, because he first made them, and now causes them to grow. “They are full of sap,” which is another effect of the rain.

2. “Where the birds make their nests.”

3. Other creatures are not forgotten; not the goats nor the conies: “For the high hills,” &c.

The psalmist next mentions the work of the fourth day; the creation of the two great luminaries, the sun and the moon.

1. “God appointed the moon for certain seasons.”

2. “And the sun knoweth his going down.”

And in this division of time, the providence of God is admirable: “Thou makest darkness, and it is night.”

1. For the good of the beasts, even the wildest, that they be sustained. 1. The night comes, and the beasts of the forest creep forth: “The young lions,” &c. 2. Again, the day appears: “The sun ariseth, and they appear not,” &c.

2. For the good of man: “Man goeth forth to his labour.” Labour he must all day, and then take rest: “Labour till the evening.”

Upon the consideration of all which the prophet exclaims: “O God, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.”

1. "How manifold are thy works." How great, how excellent, how worthy of praise! such that I cannot express them.
2. "In wisdom hast thou made them all." Nothing is done by chance or rashness, but with great reason; neither too much nor too little.
3. "All the earth is full of thy riches." No place, no part of it, but thy works proclaim that thou art a bountiful and most wise Creator; an open handed and liberal bestower of riches.

The prophet has hitherto set forth God's wisdom in his works; in the heavens, air, the earth; and now he descends into the sea.

1. In the amplitude of it: It is the *great and wide sea*.
2. In the abundance of the fish, the work of the fifth day: "Wherein are things creeping innumerable."
3. In the useful art of navigation, which God taught by Noah's ark: "There go the ships."
4. In the whale: "There is that leviathan."

And the conservation of the creature now follows, verse 27 to 30; where their dependence is shown upon the providence of God, both for their meat, life, and continuation of their *species*. { ^{<19A47>} **Psalm 104:27-30** }

1. "These all wait upon thee;" they expect till thou givest.
2. "That thou mayest give them their meat." Meat fit for every season of the year, and when they want it.
3. "That thou givest them they gather." That, and no more nor less: and his power and blessing must co-operate with the second causes.
4. This he farther explains: "Thou openest thine hand, and they are filled with good."

Farther, life and death are in thy power. Death, and the forerunner of it; trouble.

1. "Thou hidest thy face;" seemest displeased, and withdrawest help and assistance; "and they are troubled."
2. "Thou takest away their breath; they die."

And life also.

1. “Thou sendest forth thy spirit,” a vital spirit, by restoring new individuals to every species.

2. And by this “thou renewest the face of the earth;” which, if not done, the whole would fail in an age.

Now, after this long catalogue of the creatures, and God’s power, wisdom, and goodness made most manifest in the creation, governance, and sustentation of them, he descends, ~~19442~~ **Psalm 104:32.**

1. “Let the glory of the Lord,” his glory, for his wisdom, and goodness and power, “endure for ever.” Hallowed be his name!

2. “The Lord shall rejoice in his works.” Let man be so careful to use them well, that by the abuse he grieve not God, and cause him to repent that he made them.

3. Which if it happen, it would be remembered that he is a God, and able to punish the ungrateful person: “For if he looketh on the earth with a threatening brow, it trembleth.”

He makes then an open profession of his of practice.

1. “I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live,” &c.

2. And this he would do with delight: “My meditation of him shall be sweet,” &c.

3. And he concludes with an imprecation against unthankful and negligent persons, who regard not the works of God, and will not see his glory, power, wisdom, and goodness, in his creating, governing, and sustaining this universe; and therefore very little praise him. Against these he prays that they may be confounded or converted.

“But, O my soul,” be not thou like to them,—”bless the Lord. Hallelujah.”

PSALMS

PSALM 105

An exhortation to praise God for his wondrous works, 1-5; his goodness to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 6-16; to Joseph in Egypt, 17-22; to Israel in Egypt, 23-25; to Moses in the same land, 26; the plagues sent on the Egyptians, 27-36; the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt, 37, 38; how he supported them in the wilderness, 39-43; and brought them into Canaan, 44, 45.

NOTES ON PSALM 105

We find several verses of this Psalm in ^{<13167>}1 Chronicles 16:7-14 &c., from which it is evident that David was the author of the principal part of it: but it was probably enlarged and sung at the restoration of the people from the Babylonish captivity. The *hallelujah* which terminates the preceding Psalm, is made the *title* of this by the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*: but it has no title either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*. The Syriac considers it a paraphrase on the words, “Fear not, Jacob, to go down into Egypt; and teach us spiritually not to fear when we are obliged to contend with devils; for God is our shield, and will fight for us.” The Psalm is a history of God’s dealings with Abraham and his posterity, till their settlement in the promised land.

Verse 1. O give thanks] He had been meditating on God’s gracious dealings with their fathers; and he calls upon himself and all others to magnify God for his mercies.

Verse 2. Talk ye of all his wondrous works.] *wytal pn niphleothaiv*, “of his miracles.” Who have so many of these to boast of as Christians! Christianity is a tissue of miracles; and every part of the work of grace on the soul is a miracle. Genuine Christian converts may talk of miracles from morning to night; and they *should talk of them*, and recommend to others their miracle-working God and Saviour.

Verse 3. Glory ye in his holy name] Show the name Jesus: exult in it-praise it. His name was called *Jesus*; because he came to save his people from their sins.

Let the heart of them rejoice] That is, the heart of those *shall* rejoice who seek the Lord: therefore it is added,—

Verse 4. Seek the Lord] Worship the one only Supreme Being, as the only and all-sufficient good for the soul of man.

And his strength] Man is *weak*; and needs connexion with the *strong* God that he may be enabled to avoid evil and do good.

Seek his face] Reconciliation to him. Live not without a sense of his favour.

Evermore.] Let this be thy chief business. In and above all thy seeking, seek this.

Verse 5. Remember his marvellous works] Keep up communion with thy Maker, that thou mayest neither forget him nor his works.

The judgments of his mouth] Whatsoever he has spoken concerning good or evil. His commands, promises, threatenings; and particularly what he has foretold, and what he has done.

Verse 6. O ye seed of Abraham] Ye Jews especially, who have been the peculiar objects of the Divine favour.

Verse 7. He is the Lord our God] He is *Jehovah*, the self-existent and eternal God. He is *our God*, he is our portion; has taken us for his people, and makes us happy in his love.

The following abstract of the history of the Israelites presents but few difficulties. See Clarke's notes on "~~1970~~ Psalm 78:1", &c.

Verse 12. But a few men] When all appearances were against them, and nothing but the arm of God could have brought them through their difficulties, and given them a settlement in the promised land.

Verse 13. When they went from one nation to another] From several circumstances in the history of the travels of the ancient Hebrews, we find that the wilderness through which they then passed was well peopled.

Verse 15. Touch not mine anointed] It is supposed that the *patriarchs* are here intended; but the whole people of Israel may be meant. They were a kingdom of *priests* and *kings* unto God; and *prophets*, *priests*, and *kings* were always *anointed*.

Verse 19. Until the time that his word came] This appears to refer to the completion of Joseph's interpretation of the dreams of the chief butler and baker.

The word of the Lord tried him.] This seems to refer to the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, called *hwby trma imrath Yehovah*, "the oracle of the Lord," because sent by him to Pharaoh. See ^{<014126>}**Genesis 41:26**, and *Kennicott in loco*.

Verse 25. He turned their heart] "Their heart was turned." So the *Syriac* and *Arabic*. After befriending the Hebrews on Joseph's account, to whom they were so deeply indebted, finding them to multiply greatly in the land, and at last to become more powerful than the Egyptians themselves, they turned their attention to the adoption of measures, in order to prevent the Hebrews from possessing themselves of the government of the whole land; they curtailed them of their privileges, and endeavoured to depress them by all possible means, and by a variety of legal enactments. This appears to be the sole meaning of the phrase, "He turned their heart;" or, "their heart was turned."

Verse 27. They showed his signs] Here is a reference to the *plagues* with which God afflicted the Egyptians. See the places in the margin, and the notes on them.

Verse 28. They rebelled not against his word.] Instead of *wrm al w velo maru*, "they rebelled," some think that a *v shin* has been lost from before the word, and that it should be read *wrmv al w velo shamru*, "they did not observe or keep his word." Or the words may be spoken of *Moses* and *Aaron*; they received the commandment of God, and they did not rebel against it. They believed what he had spoken, and acted according to his orders. It could not be spoken of the *Egyptians*; for they rebelled against his words through the whole course of the transactions.

Verse 33. He smote their vines also, and their fig trees] This is not mentioned in Exodus; but we have had it before, ^{<197847>}**Psalm 78:47**.

Verse 41. He opened the rock, and the waters rushed out] See **Clarke's note on** "^{<021705>}**Exodus 17:6**", to which I can now add, that a piece of this rock, broken off by the hand of my nephew, E. S. A. Clarke, in the course of the present year [1822,] now lies before me. It is fine *granite*; and so well distinguished as a granite, that the *feldt-spar*, the *mica*, and the

quartz, of which granite is composed, appear very distinctly. It is worthy of remark, that, as *granite* is supposed, in the most accredited *systems of geology*, to be the very *basis* of the *earth*, the *original rock*, and all other substances to be superimpositions upon it, and as the decompositions of the *feldt-spar* produce pure vegetable earth, this rock should be used for this purpose, and should be an emblem of Jesus Christ, the Creator and Redeemer of the human race; and that it should signify him who is the *basis of all things*; who upholds all by the word of his power; without whom nothing is *stable*, nothing *fruitful*; from whom alone the *water of life* proceeds; and in whose name only is salvation. *And that rock* (in the wilderness) *was Christ!* and it is the only *remaining emblem* of him in creation.

Verse 45. That they might observe his statutes] That they might be properly *instructed*, and properly *disciplined*. This is the end proposed by Divine revelation: men are to be made wise unto salvation, and then to be brought under the yoke of obedience. He who is not conformed to God's word shall not enter into Christ's kingdom.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FIFTH PSALM

The *title* of this Psalm is *Hallelujah*, as are also the two following; and the first fifteen verses of it were sung at the bringing up of the ark by *David*, <3160> **1 Chronicles 16:1, 7-36.**

The scope of it is the same with the two former Psalms, "that we praise God;" but yet with this difference: in the hundred and third, that he be magnified "for his benefits of redemption;" in the hundred and fourth, "for the manifestation of his power and providence in creating, governing, and sustaining the world;" but in this, "for the gracious covenant he made with Abraham, and, in him, with his whole Church."

I. An exhortation to praise God, <9A50> **Psalm 105:1-7.**

II. An enumeration of the favours God bestowed to persuade to it, <9A50> **Psalm 105:7-45.**

I. He that loves his prince truly desires also that others should magnify and honour him. This was David's case; he was a true lover of his God, and set a true estimate upon him. He honoured and praised God himself, and desired that others should do the same outwardly and inwards with heart and tongue: he thought all too little, and therefore, he repeats the duty often, and shows how it is to be done.

1. By giving of thanks: “O give thanks unto the Lord.”
2. By invocation: “Call upon his name.”
3. By communication: “Make known his deeds among the people.”
4. By voices, psalms, and hymns: “Sing unto him; sing psalms unto him.”
5. By frequent colloquies of his works: “Talk ye of all his wondrous works.”
6. By boasting of him: “Glory ye in his holy name.” Profess that you are happy men, that God’s holy name was ever made known to you. “He that glories, let him glory in the Lord;” ^{<471017>} **2 Corinthians 10:17.**

He invites all outwardly to exhibit praise; and now he advises that it be done inwardly also, with exultation and gladness of heart.

1. “Let the heart of them rejoice.” The Holy Spirit does not sing but out of a joyous heart.
2. “Let them seek the Lord.” For, indeed, they only who seek him rejoice heartily: they can acquiesce in God, in his promises of grace, pardon, and acceptance; which is so necessary to every one who will make his approaches to the throne of grace, and have his praise rendered acceptable, that the prophet seriously urges the duty:—
 - (1) “Seek the Lord.” Cast all impiety and wickedness away: seek him.
 - (2) “Seek his strength.” Which at that time was the ark, it being the symbol of his presence. Seek him in his Church.
 - (3) “Seek his face evermore.” His favour, and grace, and reconciliation; seek them in his word and sacraments, &c.
 - (4) “Evermore seek him.” Now and then is too little; it must be our constant work.

Having thus spoken of the heart, he comes to the memory: “Remember, forget not.” And the things to be remembered are, 1. *His marvellous works.* 2. *His wonders.* 3. *His judgments;* which three are the substance of this whole Psalm, and are explained according to their heads. They ought to be particularly remembered by the Israelites, the posterity of Abraham, and the sons of Jacob.

“Remember his marvellous works,” &c. “O ye seed of Abraham, his servant; ye children of Jacob, his chosen.” Remember that he made *Abraham* and chose *Jacob* to be his servants, gave you laws, and showed you with what rites he would be worshipped. Forget them not.

II. But at the *seventh* verse the prophet begins his narration; and tells the *Israelites*, and in them us, what marvellous works God had done for his people, all which he presses as arguments to his people that they should praise, honour, worship, and obey him. There is much reason for it.

1. “He is the Lord our God.” The same argument prefaces the commandments: “I am the Lord thy God.”

2. “His judgments are in all the earth.” He is a mighty Monarch, and has all nature under his empire.

And if neither of these move, yet there is another, drawn from his many and infinite favours: “On you *Israelites*,” and all mankind as well; for on the fall of man his covenant was, *That the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head*; and this he forgot not: “He hath remembered his covenant,” &c.

1. “Which covenant he made with Abraham,” and confirmed it by sacrifice, ^{<0153>}**Genesis 15:13.**

2. “His oath unto Isaac,” ^{<0233>}**Genesis 26:3, 4.**

3. “And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law,” &c.; ^{<0283>}**Genesis 28:13-15.**

4. The form of the covenant recited: “Saying, Unto thee will I give,” &c.; for it was divided to the tribes by lots.

Which covenant God made with their fathers and them, not out of any merit that could be in them; ^{<0303>}**Deuteronomy 8:4-6;** ^{<0342>}**Joshua 24:2.**

1. “When there were but a few men,” and humble; “yea, very few.”

2. And they “strangers” in the land. For the patriarchs only sojourned in *Canaan*.

3. Yea, “when they went from one nation to another,” &c.

Now when they were in this condition, *very few, strangers, sojourners, and pilgrims*, God protected and defended them.

1. “He suffered no man to do them wrong,” &c.; no, not the greatest, for “he reproved even kings for their sakes.”

2. For he gave the command: “Touch not mine anointed,”—*Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, who were anointed with the Holy Ghost, though not with material oil; “and do my prophets no harm,” i.e., the same men, for they were prophets. Abraham foresaw the bondage of his seed in *Egypt*; *Isaac* foretold what should befall *Esau*’s posterity, ^{<012738>}**Genesis 27:38-40**; and *Jacob*, by a prophetic spirit, gave his blessings, ^{<014301>}**Genesis 49:1-28**. Of *Abraham* it is expressly said, “He is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee,” ^{<012107>}**Genesis 20:7**.

Two of these mercies, the covenant and protection, are already named; and now he goes on and insists upon the third, ^{<194516>}**Psalm 105:16-23**, for which there was infinite matter of praise for the wonderful wisdom of God, that brought out of the greatest evils the chiefest good, by preserving their lives in *Egypt* in the midst of famine, ^{<013717>}**Genesis 37:17-36**.

1. “Moreover he called for a famine upon the land.” It came not by chance.

2. “He brake the whole staff of bread,” the upholder of our lives; and this he brake when he ordered that there should be no ploughing, sowing, nor harvest, ^{<014505>}**Genesis 45:5-7**.

3. By this famine the patriarchs were to suffer; yet God provided for their subsistence: “He sent a man, (a wise man,) before them,”—Joseph.

4. This Joseph was sold by the envy and cruelty of his brethren.

And now he comes, 1. To his base usage. 2. His advancement.

1. By the false accusation of *Potiphar*’s wife, who turned her base love into hatred: “His feet were hurt with fetters of iron.”

2. “He was laid in iron;” or, as some read, “the iron entered into his soul.” Grief that he should lie under foul aspersions.

There he lay: “Until the time that his word came.” So long then he lay in prison, and no longer.

1. “Until the time that his word came:” his word-God’s word for his deliverance. Or, as others: “Joseph’s word to the butler.”

2. “The word of the Lord tried him.” God tried his patience: or the interpretation of the dreams proved that by the Lord he spake.

And now follows his honour and advancement:—

1. *Pharaoh*, by his *butler*, hearing of *Joseph’s* wisdom: “He sent,” &c.
2. “Even the ruler of the people let him go free.” A work fit for a king.

And his advancement follows:—

1. “He made him lord of his house.”
2. “A ruler of all his substance.” A viceroy, a grand vizier.

The king’s end in it; not only in the famine to provide bread for their bodies, but for the good of their souls.

1. To punish the rebellious: “To bind his princes at his pleasure.”
2. To instruct his counsellors in wisdom, arts, sciences, religion. It is supposed that all the learning in which the Egyptians excelled was first taught them by *Joseph*.

The fourth benefit follows of God towards his people, ^{<19A52>}**Psalm 105:22-37**, which was their nourishment, increase in Egypt, their oppression, and deliverance.

1. He begins with Jacob’s descent thither: 1. “Israel also, Joseph’s father, went down into Egypt,” ^{<04412>}**Genesis 46:2**. “And Jacob with all his family,” &c.

2. He proceeds with their strange increase there; for it is wonderful that in so short a time they should grow into such a multitude, ^{<00107>}**Exodus 1:7**. At their going out they were six hundred thousand, besides children, ^{<02137>}**Exodus 12:37**: “And he increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies,” ^{<00109>}**Exodus 1:9**.

This was the occasion of their afflictions, bondage, and sufferings; for,—

1. “He turned the Egyptians’ hearts to hate his people.” He suffered them to be turned: “For there arose another king,” &c.
2. “And to deal subtilly with his people. Come on, say they,” &c.

“To set over them taskmasters,” &c.; ^{<0011>}**Exodus 1:11**. But when they saw “that the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied,” ^{<19A512>}**Psalm 105:12**, then they ordered “that all the male children should be strangled by the midwives,” ^{<19A516>}**Psalm 105:16**. And when even this would not do, then *Pharaoh* charged “that every son that was born,” &c., ^{<19A522>}**Psalm 105:22**. Thus subtly they dealt; but it did not hinder their multiplication. There is no counsel against God.

Now God, seeing their affliction, and hearing their groans, sent them a deliverer.

1. “He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen.”
2. “They showed his signs among them.” 1. To the Israelites; 2. “And wonders in the land of Ham.”

The catalogue follows:—

1. “He sent darkness,” &c.
2. “He turned their waters into blood,” &c.
3. “The land brought forth frogs,” &c.
4. “He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies,” &c.
5. “He gave them hail for rain,” &c.
6. “He smote the vines also, and the fig-trees,” &c.
7. “He spake, and the locusts came,” &c.
8. “He smote also the first-born of their land,” &c.

These were the wonders that God wrought in Egypt by the hand of *Moses* and *Aaron* for the deliverance of his people, which the psalmist briefly records that they might remember-be thankful, and praise him.

The fifth benefit that the psalmist records is, that God brought not out his people beggars, but enriched them with the spoils of Egypt.

1. “He brought them forth with silver and gold.” For they were sent by God to ask jewels: and when the Jews pretend by their example to rob more honest men than themselves, when they can show an immediate commission from God to do it, I am content that they borrow, and never restore; rob and spoil whom they please. Till this be shown, they are thieves and sacrilegious persons.

2. Farther, they left the *Egyptians* afflicted with some strange disease, of which their first-born had died; yet they were healthy: “There was not one, no, not one feeble person, among them.”

The terror of them was so great, and the fear of death so instant, that, regarding not their jewels, they urged them to be gone—they thrust them out; which the prophet expresses: “Egypt was glad when they departed.”

The sixth benefit follows after their departure, which was “the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night. He spread a cloud for a covering,” &c.; which most interpret as if the cloud kept off the heat of the sun; and therefore the prophet says: “He spread it for a covering.”

The seventh benefit was *quails* and *manna*:—

1. “The people asked, and he brought quails.” Those given ^{<0168>}**Exodus 16:3, 8, 12, 13.**

2. “And satisfied them with the bread of heaven”—*manna*, because it was made of the sweet dew descending from the air, and therefore called heavenly bread; the earth having nothing to do with its production.

The eighth benefit was the water out of the rock; “for they travelled through a dry wilderness.”

1. “He opened the rock.” He did not turn the rock into water, but opened a passage for the fountain he had made.

2. *For the waters gushed out* upon the passage being made for them.

3. “And they ran in dry places.”

Now here he inserts the reason both of the former and latter benefits, which was his covenant and promise to Abraham: “For he remembered his holy promise,” &c.

The ninth benefit was, he brought them not only out of Egypt; but that too in such a manner that they had reason to exult and triumph, ^{<0150>}**Exodus 15:1-21**: “And he brought forth his people with joy,” &c.

And to make the number of his benefits complete, he adds a tenth, which was the exact fulfilling of his promise, his introduction of them into *Canaan*, ejection of the inhabitants, and the donation of their inheritances to his people, which they afterwards possessed.

“He gave them the lands of the heathen,” &c. The houses they built not, the vines they planted not, the lands they tilled not, fell to them.

For which benefits God requires no more than their obedience: this he requires as his due and tribute. He bestowed so many benefits on them for one end only: “That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws.” Hallelujah! “Let *your* light so shine before men, that they may glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

PSALMS

PSALM 106

God is praised for his manifold mercies, 1-3. The prophet prays for himself, 4, 5. A recapitulation of the history of the Hebrew people: of God's mercies toward them, and their rebellions, 6-39. The judgments and afflictions which their transgressions brought upon them, 40-42. God's mercy to them notwithstanding their transgressions, 43-46. He prays for their restoration, 47, 48.

NOTES ON PSALM 106

As a part of the preceding Psalm is found in ^{<3167>}**1 Chronicles 16:7-14**, so the first and two last verses of *this* are found in the same place, (^{<3164>}**1 Chronicles 16:34-36**), and yet it is supposed by eminent commentators to be a prayer of the captives in Babylon, who acknowledge the mercies of God, confess their own sins, and those of their forefathers, and implore the Lord to gather them from among the heathen, and restore them to their own country. In none of the *Versions* except the *Syriac* has it any title, except HALLELUJAH, *Praise ye the Lord*, the word with which the original commences. The *Syriac* gives us a sort of table of its contents; or rather shows us the subjects to which it may be *applied*, and the uses we should make of it. After stating that it has no title, it says, "It calls upon men to observe the Divine precepts, and teaches us that the more the Jews transgressed, the more we should fear. That we should not talk together in the church, nor ever contend with our brethren on any account; and especially when we assist in the celebration of the Divine mysteries and in prayer: and that when we sin we should repent." All this is very good: but it would be difficult to find these subjects in the Psalm, or any thing on which they could be rationally founded. But it shows us that the Scriptures were very easily *accommodated* to particular uses, not originally intended: and hence arose much of the practice of *spiritualizing* and *allegorizing*; which, to say the least of it, has been of no use to the Church of Christ.

Verse 1. Praise ye the Lord] This, which is a sort of *title*, is wanting in several MSS., and in the *Syriac Version*.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good] Ye who live by his bounty should praise his mercy. God is the good Being, and of all kinds of good he is the Author and Dispenser. That the term *God* among our Anglo-Saxon

ancestors, expressed both the Supreme Being and *good* or *goodness*, is evident from the Anglo-Saxon version of this clause: [Anglo-Saxon] “Confess Lord for that God, (or good,) for that on world mildheartness his.” Which the old Psalter thus translates and paraphrases:—

Trans. Schifes to Lorde for he is gude; for in worlde the mercy of him.

Par. Schryfes synes, and louyngs to God. for he is gude of kynde, that nane do bot aske his mercy; for it lastes to the worlds ende in wriches whame it comfortes and delyvers: and the blysfulhede that is gyfen through mercy is endles. That is:—

Confess your sins, and give praise to God, for he is good in his nature to all that ask his mercy; for it lasts to the world’s end in comforting and delivering the wretched: and the blessedness that is given through mercy is endless.

Verse 2. Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?] His acts are all acts of *might*; and particularly those in behalf of his followers.

Verse 3. Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.] How near do the *Anglo-Saxon*, the ancient *Scottish Version*, and the *present translation*, approach to each other!

Anglo-Saxon. [A.S.]. “Blessed they that holdeth doom, and doth righteousness in ilkere tide.”

Anglo-Scottish. Blisful tha that kepes dome, and duse rightwisnes in ilk tyme.

Those are truly blessed, or happy, whose hearts are devoted to God, and who live in the habit of obedience. Those, the general tenor of whose life is not conformed to the will of God, have no true happiness.

Verse 4. Remember me] This and the following clauses are read in the plural by several MSS.: *Remember US—that WE may rejoice,—that WE may glory, &c.*: and thus *all the Versions* except the *Chaldee*; and this is more agreeable to the context.

Verse 5. That I may see the good of thy chosen] That I may enjoy the good, for so the word *see* is understood among the Hebrews. “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall *see* God,”—they shall *enjoy* him, possess his favour, and be made like unto him.

Verse 6. We have sinned] Here the confession begins; what preceded was only the *introduction* to what follows: Our *forefathers sinned*, and suffered; we, like them, have sinned, and do suffer.

Verse 7. Our fathers understood not] They did not regard the operation of God's hands; and therefore they understood neither his designs nor their own interest.

At the sea, even at the Red Sea.] Some of the rabbins suppose that the repetition of the words point out *two* faults of the Israelites at the Red Sea. 1. They murmured against Moses for bringing them out of Egypt, when they saw the sea before them, and Pharaoh behind them. 2. When the waters were divided, they were afraid to enter in, lest they should stick in the mud which appeared at the bottom. The word seems to be added by way of explanation, and perhaps may refer to the above: *they provoked* μυ Ι [*al yam*, "AT the sea;" āws μyb *beyam suph*, "IN the sea *Suph*," or *Red Sea*. They provoked him *at* it and *in* it.

Verse 8. He saved them for his name's sake] wmv ^ [ml *lemaan shemo*, "on account of his name;" to manifest his own power, goodness, and perfections. There was nothing which he could draw from them as a reason why he should save them; therefore he drew the reason from himself. There is a singular gloss in the old *Psalter* on this verse: "Whan thai cam oute of Egypt to the rede Se, whare thai were closed on a syde with a hylle that na man mygt passe: on another side was the rede See: behynde tham was men of Egypt foluand; and for this thai began to gruch, forgetand Gods mygt: bot than he safed tham, depertand the Se in twelfe, to ilk kynde of Isrel a passage." It seems as if this author thought there were *twelve* passages made through the Red Sea, that each tribe should have a passage to itself.

Verse 9. He rebuked the Red Sea] In the descriptions of the psalmist *every thing has life*. The *sea* is an *animated being*, behaves itself proudly, is rebuked, and retires in confusion.

Verse 10. The hand of him that hated them] Pharaoh.

Verse 12. Then believed they] Just while the miracle was before their eyes.

Verse 13. They soon forgot his works] Three days afterwards, at the waters of Marah, ⲁⲓⲛⲁ **Exodus 15:24.**

They waited not for his counsel] They were impatient, and would not wait till God should in his own way fulfil his own designs.

Verse 15. Sent leanness] They despised the manna, and called it *light*, that is, *innutritive, bread*. God gave *flesh* as they desired, but gave no blessing with it; and in consequence they did not fatten, but grew *lean* upon it. Their souls also suffered want.

Verse 16. They envied Moses] A reference to the case of *Korah* and his company.

Aaron the saint.] The *anointed*, the *high priest* of the Lord.

Verse 20. Thus they changed their glory] That is, their God, who was their glory; and they worshipped an ox in his stead. See the use St Paul makes of this, ^{<50123>}**Romans 1:23**; see also the note there. **See Clarke “Ro 1:23”**. The incorruptible God was thus served by all the heathen world.

Verse 22. Wondrous works in the land of Ham] The plagues inflicted on the *Egyptians*. Egypt is called the *Land of Ham* or *Cham*, because it was peopled by *Misraim* the son of *Cham*.

Verse 23. Moses his chosen] Or elect; (Vulgate, *electus ejus*; *Septuagint*, ο εκλεκτος αυτου;) the person that he had *appointed* for this work. It would be very difficult to show that this word in any part of the Old Testament refers to the *eternal state* of any man, much less to the doctrine of *unconditional election* and *reprobation*.

Verse 28. They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor] The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, and others, have *Belphegor*; the *Syriac* and *Arabic*, the *idol Phegor*, or *Phaaur*; the [*ain* in the word being pronounced as *gh*.

Ate the sacrifices or the dead] μytm *methim*, of *dead men*. Most of the heathen idols were *men*, who had been deified after their death; many of whom had been execrated during their life.

Verse 33. They provoked his spirit] wrmh *himru*, from hrm *marah*, to *rebel*: they brought it into a rebellious state; he was soured and irritated, and was off his guard.

So that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.] For this *sentence* we have only these *two words* in the Hebrew, wytpcb acbyw *vayebatte*

bisephathaiv, he stuttered or stammered with his lips, indicating that he was transported with anger. See the notes on ^{<HEB>}Numbers 20:10-12.

Verse 36. They served their idols] מִיְּבֵי־עֲמָלָם [*atsabbeyhem*, their labours or griefs-idols, so called because of the *pains* taken in *forming* them, the *labor* in *worshipping* them, and the *grief* occasioned by the *Divine judgments* against the people for their idolatry.

Verse 37. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.] See the places referred to in the margin. That *causing their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Moloch* did not always mean they *burnt them to death* in the flames, is very probable. But all the heathen had *human sacrifices*; of this their history is full. *Unto devils*, מַיְדֵי־לַשְׁשֵׁדִים *lashshedim*, to *demons*. *Devil* is never in Scripture used in the *plural*; there is but *ONE devil*, though there are *MANY demons*.

Verse 39. And went a whoring.] By *fornication*, *whoredom*, and *idolatry*, the Scripture often expresses *idolatry* and *idolatrous acts*. I have given the reason of this in other places. Besides being false to the true God, to whom they are represented as *betrothed* and *married*, (and their acts of idolatry were breaches of this solemn engagement,) the worship of idols was frequently accompanied with various acts of *impurity*.

The translation in the *Anglo-Saxon* is very remarkable: [A.S.] *and they fornicated*. In *Anglo-Saxon*, [A.S.] signifies *to fire, to ignite*; [A.S.] *to commit adultery*. So [A.S.] is a *prostitute, a whore*; and [A.S.] is *to go a whoring, to fornicate*; probably from [A.S.], or [A.S.] *to fire*, and [A.S.], *to lie*, or [A.S.], *a glutton*;—one *who lies with fire*, who is *ignited* by it, who is *greedily intent* upon the act by which he is *inflamed*. And do not the words themselves show that in former times whoredom was punished, as it is now, by a disease which produces the *sensation of burning* in the unhappy prostitutes, whether male or female? And to this meaning the following seems particularly to be *applicable*.

Verse 40. Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled] God *kindled a fire* in his judgments for those who by their flagitious conduct had *inflamed* themselves with their idols, and the *impure rites* with which they were worshipped.

Verse 43. Many times did he deliver them] See the Book of *Judges*; it is a history of the rebellions and deliverances of the Israelites.

Verse 46. He made them also to be pitied] This was particularly true as to the Babylonish captivity; for *Cyrus* gave them their liberty; *Darius* favoured them, and granted them several privileges; and *Artaxerxes* sent back Nehemiah, and helped him to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. See the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah; and see *Calmet*.

Verse 47. Save us. O Lord-and gather us] These words, says *Calmet*, are found in the hymn that was sung at the ceremony of bringing the ark to Jerusalem, ^{<13165>}**1 Chronicles 16:35, 36**; but it is supposed they were added by Ezra or some other prophet: here they are in their natural place. The author of the Psalm begs the Lord to gather the Israelites who were dispersed through different countries; for at the dedication of the second temple, under Nehemiah, (where it is probable this Psalm, with the cvth and the cviith, was sung,) there were very few Jews who had as yet returned from their captivity.

Verse 48. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel] Here both *gratitude* and *confidence* are expressed; *gratitude* for what God had already wrought, and *confidence* that he would finish the great work of their restoration.

From everlasting to everlasting] מִלְּוָה דְּלִמְוָה מִן הַאֱלֹהִים לְעֹלָם וָעֶד, “from the hidden term to the hidden term,” from the beginning of time to the end of time, from eternity and on to eternity. [Anglo-Saxon], Anglo-Saxon. *Fra worlde and into worlde*, *old Psalter*; which it paraphrases thus: *Fra with outen beginning, & withouten endyng*.

And let all the people say, Amen.] Let the people join in the prayer and in the thanksgiving, that God may hear and answer. Anglo-Saxon: [A.S.]; “And, quoth all folk, be it, be it.” *Hallelujah*-Praise ye Jehovah! Let his name be eternally magnified! Amen.

This is the end of the *fourth book* of the Psalms.

ANALYSIS OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH PSALM

The intention of the prophet in this Psalm is to express God’s long-suffering in bearing with rebellious sinners, and yet in pardoning them upon the confession of their sins, and turning to him; both which he exemplifies by a long narration of Israel’s rebellions, repentance, and turning to God, and God’s dealing with them, which gave him just occasion to praise God, and to pray for his Church and people.

I. An exhortation to praise God, with the reasons in general, ^{<19A01>}**Psalm 106:1**; and who are fit to perform this duty, ^{<19A02>}**Psalm 106:2, 3**.

II. A petition and prayer directed to God in his own person for the whole Church, and the end of it, ^{<19A03>}**Psalm 106:4, 5**.

III. A confession of sin, particularly of the Israelites', together with God's patience with them, and their repentance, ^{<19A04>}**Psalm 106:6-46**.

IV. His prayer that God would collect his Church out of all nations, that they might meet and praise him, ^{<19A05>}**Psalm 106:47, 48**.

I. "Praise Ye the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord." To this the prophet invites, for two reasons:—

1. "Because he is good." He is beforehand with us, and prevents men with many benefits.

2. "Because his mercy endures for ever." It is everlasting, and far exceeds our sins and miseries; for after men have offended him, and deserve no mercy, yet he receives the penitent offenders. But who is sufficient for these things? Who is fit to praise him, and set forth his mercies? "Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?" That is, the infinite benefits exhibited to his people. Or, Who can show forth all his praise in preserving, pardoning, and propagating his Church?

They alone are happy men "who keep judgment, and do righteousness at all times."

1. They are happy in prosperity and adversity, they dwell in the house of God, under his protection.

2. "They keep his judgments." Follow in their lives the strict rules of the Divine law, by which they judge all their actions, and so keep faith and a good conscience.

3. "They do righteousness at all times." They approve that which is right, true, and just; condemn, hate, and punish what is unjust: such are fit to praise God with their tongues, because they praise him in their lives.

II. After the prophet had invited men to praise God, and showed who were fit to do it, he begins his petition, which he proposes in his own person for the whole Church.

1. "Remember me." Me; but not me alone, rather thy whole Church. By what we suffer, thou hast seemed to forget thy covenant and promise; but now call it to mind again.
2. Which I expect, not for any desert of mine, but merely from thy good will: "Remember me with the favour," &c.
3. "O visit me;" but not in wrath, for such a visitation there is; but in mercy and grace.
4. "With thy salvation." Save me at this time from my sins, and from my present calamities.

And to this end I desire thy favour, thy salvation.

1. "That I may see the good of thy chosen." Be a partaker of and in their happiness.
2. "That I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation." Partake of it.
3. "That I may glory with thine inheritance." Glorify thee with them.

But observe here the three eminent titles given to God's Church:—

1. They are a "chosen" people; which is a glorious and gracious title, and intimates favour.
2. They are his "nation," his peculiar people.
3. They are his "inheritance."

III. In the following part of the Psalm, ⁻¹⁹⁴⁶⁷⁻**Psalm 106:7-46**, he makes use of a new argument to move God to mercy. He represents not the present condition the people of God are in, not their captivity, miseries, and afflictions, but ingenuously confesses how they had offended God, and how justly they suffered.

1. "We have sinned with our fathers." Trodden in their steps, and filled up the measure of their sins.
2. "We have committed iniquity." Not only from infirmity, but choice.
3. "We have done wickedly." The intent and purpose in it was evil. And by these three steps he exaggerates the sin; the *act*, the *frequency*, the *intent*; as every true confessor to God ought never to extenuate, but to aggravate the offence against himself.

And because he had mentioned their fathers at large, now he instances their rebellions: “Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt;” that is, they laid them not to heart.

1. “They remembered not the multitude of thy mercies,” &c. When they saw Pharaoh’s army on one side, and the sea on the other, they grew heartless, diffident, and murmured.

2. This was their sin at that time; but God was then merciful to them: “Nevertheless he saved them.”

For which he assigns two reasons:—

1. “For his name’s sake.” To advance his glory and honour.

2. “That he might make his mighty power to be known.” Pharaoh and the Egyptians might have taken notice of it by the plagues he had already brought upon them.

In the following verses, by a distribution, he shows the manner of their deliverance.

1. By God’s rebuke, and drying up of the sea: “He rebuked the Red Sea also,” &c.

2. By the unheard—of way: “He led them through the depths as through the wilderness;” there was no more water there to offend them than in the sands of Arabia.

3. By the consequence of it: “And he saved them by the hand of him,” &c.

4. “And the waters covered their enemies,” &c.

The effect was, for the present,

1. It extorted from them a confession that God was true in his promises: “Then believed they his words.”

2. It excited them to praise him: “They sang his praise,” ^{<02150>}**Exodus 15:1-21**. But these very men who were forced to confess his power and sing his praises for the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, were scarcely departed from those banks, when they, for want of a little bread and water, grew as impatient and distrustful as they were before.

1. They made haste to forget: “They soon forgot;” which aggravates their sin.
2. They forgot his omnipotence, his providence.
3. “They waited not for his council.” With patience they expected not the end, why God in his wisdom suffered them now to wait, which was, to prove their faith, hope, and love.
4. And what they did at this time they did also at others: “For they lusted exceedingly in the wilderness.”

Now God yielded to these desires of the people: “He gave them bread, flesh, and water.”

1. And he gave them their request, ^{<01612>}**Exodus 16:12**.
2. “But he sent leanness into their souls.” Which certainly has reference to the quails in ^{<04113>}**Numbers 11:20, 33**, where the people ate, and died of plague.

Another rebellion the prophet now touches, which was, when they rose up against the king and the priest.

1. “They envied also Moses in the camp;” objecting that he had usurped a power over them, and taken it upon his own head.
2. “And Aaron, the saint of the Lord.” He whom God had chosen, anointed, and sanctified to the priest’s office.

The punishment follows, ^{<04163>}**Numbers 16:32, 35, 41, 49**.

1. “The earth opened, and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the congregation of Abiram.”
2. “And a fire was kindled in their company the flame burned up the wicked.” That is, the *two hundred and fifty* men that presumed to offer incense; and presently after the *fourteen thousand seven hundred* that murmured, and objected to *Moses and Aaron* that they had killed the people of the Lord.

Still the prophet goes on in his story of Israel’s stubbornness and rebellion; and comes to their grand sin, their idolatry in erecting the golden calf, ^{<02314>}**Exodus 32:4**.

1. "They made a calf in Horeb," &c., contrary to God's command.
2. "Thus they changed their glory." That is, the true God, who was indeed their glory, "into the similitude of an ox," a brute beast, "that eateth grass," a base creature, which much aggravates their sin.
3. But the *prophet* aggravates their stupidity and folly: "They forgat God," &c.

In the following verse are expressed God's just anger and mercy,—

1. His anger against their sins: "Therefore he saith," &c. Pronounced his will to destroy them.
2. His mercy, in that he spared them at the intercession of Moses: "Had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach." The breach and division which this sin had made between God and his people, like that in the wall of a besieged town, in which some valiant captain stands, and opposes himself against the assault of the enemy; so did Moses.

For his object was the same, it was "to turn away his wrath lest he should destroy;" and the end was answered—it was turned away.

Farther yet, he calls to mind a new rebellion, which fell out upon the report of the spies sent to search the land, ^{<04:33>}**Numbers 13:26**, &c.,
^{<04:40>}**Numbers 14:1-10**.

1. "They despised the pleasant land," and wished to return into Egypt,
^{<04:40>}**Numbers 14:1-5**.
2. "They believed not his word;" for they said, "Hath the Lord brought us," &c.
3. "But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not," &c., ^{<04:47>}**Numbers 14:27**. "Therefore he lifted up his hand against them," &c. As their sin, so their punishment, is extant; ^{<04:49>}**Numbers 14:29**: "Your carcasses shall fall in the wilderness; ye shall not come into the land."

This punishment fell upon the murmurers themselves; but if their children should be guilty of the like rebellion, they should not escape, for they too should be *overthrown*; which is fully brought to pass.

The prophet joins to that of the golden calf another piece of idolatry in the wilderness, to which there was joined fornication also, by the counsel of

Balaam and the policy of Balak. This caused them to eat and sacrifice to their god, ^{<0250>}**Numbers 25:1-3**, which the prophet next insists upon,—

1. “They joined themselves to Baal-peor,” because the idol was set up upon that mountain.
2. “And ate the offerings of the dead.” They left the sacrifice of the living God, and ate those meats which were offered to dead idols.

Upon which there followed God’s wrath and their own punishment:—

1. God was angry: “For they provoked him to wrath.”

“And the plague brake in upon them” like mighty waters, or as an army into a city at a breach; for there died of it *twenty-four thousand*,

^{<0250>}**Numbers 25:9**.

In the former idolatry God’s anger was averted by the intercession of *Moses*; in this, by the execution of judgment by *Phinehas*; for—

1. “There stood up Phinehas; “ moved, no question, with a zeal for God’s honour.
2. “And he executed judgment upon Zimri and Cozbi;” for which (let men conceive as they please—I see nothing to the contrary) he had his commission from Moses, or rather God; ^{<0250>}**Numbers 25:4, 5**.
3. The event was, the plague was stayed; the execution of offenders pacifies the anger of God.

Which zeal of his was well rewarded: “This was accounted to him for righteousness,” &c. This act was an act of righteousness, and an ample reward he had for it; for God established the dignity of the high priesthood in *Phinehas* and his posterity, as long as the Jewish commonwealth continued.

The prophet comes to another remarkable sin of the Jews, ^{<0400>}**Numbers 20:3, 13**, where the people chid Moses for want of water:—

1. “They angered him also at the waters of strife,” when they contradicted *Moses*.
2. “So that it went ill with Moses for their sakes;” for, being disturbed with choler, “he spake unadvisedly with his lips,”—”Hear now, ye rebels,” &c.; and he smote the rock. By their murmuring they so provoked his spirit to

bitterness, that he who at other times was cheerful, and ready to obey God's commands, now acted with reluctance.

Hitherto the prophet has set down several rebellions of the Jews during their abode in the wilderness; and now he shows how they behaved themselves after they came into the land of *Canaan*. Better, a man would think, they should be after God had fulfilled his word to them; but an Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor they their manners; disobedient, stubborn, and rebellious they remained.

1. God had expressly commanded that the nations of Canaan should be destroyed, ^{<B70>}**Deuteronomy 7:1-3**: "But they did not destroy the nations," &c.

2. "But they mingled among the heathen:" in leagues and marriages, ^{<A11>}**Judges 2:2; 3:5, 6**.

3. "And learned their works:" many superstitious and evil customs.

But, beyond all, they learned to be idolaters; forsook God for the devil.

1. "They served their idols, which was a snare unto them," for that they became their slaves, ^{<A214>}**Judges 2:14, 15**, &c.

2. "Yea, they sacrificed their sons," &c., to Moloch.

3. With inhuman sin, they "shed innocent blood;" the blood of innocent children, &c.

The consequences of which are double. First, A double pollution. Secondly, A heavy punishment.

1. A pollution of the land: "The land was defiled with blood."

2. A pollution of their own souls: "Thus were they defiled with their own works."

The judgment, or punishment, now follows; and a signification whence it proceeded; it came not by chance, but by God's order and anger.

1. "Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled," &c. For their idolatry, murder, whoredom; so that he was not only angry, but his anger was kindled to a flame.

2. Insomuch "that he abhorred his own inheritance."

And the punishment he inflicted on them was very just,—

1. “He gave them into the hand,” that is, the power, “of the heathen.” God had given the heathen into their hands to destroy them; which, because they did not, but learned their works, therefore God gave them into the hands of the heathen.

2. He made them their lords; and hard masters they were, as plainly appears from the Book of Judges, and 1 Samuel.

And *little* they; for the prophet in the next verse adds,

1. “Their enemies oppressed them:” tyrants, oppressors they were. Read the Book of Judges, &c.

2. “They were brought into subjection,” &c., under the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, &c.

In which condition God did not forget them, for “many times did he deliver them;” not once only, but often, as by *Gideon*, *Jephthah*, *Deborah*, *Samson*, and others. But, O the ingratitude of a sinful nation! instead of serving God, “they provoked him with their counsel,” that is, by following the dictates of their own hearts.

And so were very justly brought into the same case they were before; for “they were brought low for their iniquity.”

And now the prophet adds, which indeed he infers through the whole Psalm, the wonderful and immutable good will of God to them. Though he forgave and delivered them upon their repentance, and they in a short time provoked him again; yet he received them to grace, even after their relapses. And the causes that moved him to this were external and internal.

The cause that outwardly and occasionally moved him to it was their affliction and cry: “He regarded their affliction “ &c.

But the cause that inwardly swayed him was his word passed to them, and his mercy.

1. His word and his promise were passed to “Abraham, to be their God;” and he would not break it. “And he remembered for them his covenant.”

2. His tender affection that he bare them; this caused him to repent, and grieve that they should be in misery. “He repented,” &c.

3. And the effect which all these causes had was beneficial to them even in their bondage and captivity; for even their very enemies' hearts were often turned to do them good, as is evident in *Jeremiah, David, Daniel, Ezra, Zerubbabel, Mordecai*, and indeed the whole nation under the *Babylonian, Philistian, Egyptian, and Persian* kings, which the prophet sets down,

~~<19AG46>~~ **Psalm 106:46:** "He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives." According to the saying of the wise man: "When a man's ways please God, he will make his very enemies to be at peace with him," ~~<21IG07>~~ **Proverbs 16:7.**

4. And this sense makes the way plainer to what follows, the petition and the doxology; for if God showed himself merciful in the time of his anger, and made it apparent even to the very view of their enemies, encouragement they might have,—

1. To pray: "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen," &c.

2. Then to give thanks: 1. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. 2. And for it let the people do their duty; that is, the solemn and necessary forms: "Let all the people say, Amen. Hallelujah."

PSALMS

PSALM 107

A thanksgiving of the people for deliverance from difficulties and dangers; their state compared to a journey through a frightful wilderness, 1-9; to confinement in a dreary dungeon, 10-16; to a dangerous malady, 17-22; to a tempest at sea, 23-32. The psalmist calls on men to praise God for the merciful dispensations of his providence, in giving rain and fruitful seasons, after affliction by drought and famine, 33-38; for supporting the poor in affliction, and bringing down the oppressors, 39-41. The use which the righteous should make of these providences, 42; and the advantage to be derived from a due consideration of God's merciful providence, 43.

NOTES ON PSALM 107

This Psalm has no title, either in the Hebrew, or any of the Versions; the word "Hallelujah," which is prefixed to some of the latter, is no title, but was most probably borrowed from the conclusion of the preceding Psalm. The author is unknown; but it was probably like Psalms cv. and cvi., made and sung at the dedication of the second temple. The three Psalms seem to be on the same subject. In them the author has comprised the marvellous acts of the Lord towards his people; the transgressions of this people against God; the captivities and miseries they endured in consequence; and finally God's merciful kindness to them in their restoration from captivity, and re-establishment in their own land.

This Psalm seems to have been sung in parts: the 8th, 15th, 21st, and 31st verses, with the 6th, 13th, 19th, and 28th, forming what may be called the burden of the song. In singing of which the whole chorus joined.

We may easily perceive that the Psalm must have been sung in alternate parts, having a double burden, or *intercalary* verse often recurring, and another immediately following, giving a reason for the former. See the 8th and 9th, the 15th and 16th, the 21st and 22nd, the 31st and 32nd, and the 42nd and 43rd, which may be reckoned under the same denomination.

Dr. Lowth, in his 29th prelection, has made some excellent remarks on this Psalm. "It is observable," says he, "that after each of the intercalary verses one is added, expressive of deliverance or praise. I would farther observe, that if the Psalm be supposed to be made with a view to the alternate

response of one side of the choir to the other, then it may be considered as if it were written exactly after the method of the ancient pastorals, where, be the subject of their verse what it will, each swain endeavours to excel the other; and one may perceive their thoughts and expressions gradually to arise upon each other; and hence a manifest beauty may be discovered in this Divine pastoral. We will suppose, then, that the author composed it for the use of his brethren the Jews, when, in the joy of their hearts, they were assembled after their return from captivity. At such a time, what theme could be so proper for the subject of his poem, as the manifest goodness of Almighty God? The first performers, therefore, invite the whole nation to praise God for this; a great instance of it being their late return from captivity. At ^{<19A710>}**Psalm 107:10**, the other side take the subject, and rightly observe that the return of their great men, who were actually in chains, was a more remarkable instance of God's mercy to them, than the return of the people in general, who were only dispersed, we may suppose, up and down the open country. Then the first performers beautifully compare this unexpected deliverance to that which God sometimes vouchsafes to the languishing dying man, when he recalls, as it were, the sentence of death, and restores him to his former vigour. The others again compare it, with still greater strength and expression, to God's delivering the affrighted *mariner* from all the dreadful horrors of the ungovernable and arbitrary ocean. But the first, still resolved to outdo the rest, recur to that series of wonderful works which God had vouchsafed to their nation, ^{<19A732>}**Psalm 107:32**, and of which they had so lately such a convincing proof. Wherefore at last, as in a common chorus, they all conclude with exhorting each other to a serious consideration of these things, and to make a proper return to Almighty God for them.

“No doubt the composition of this Psalm is admirable throughout; and the descriptive part of it adds at least its share of beauty to the whole; but what is most to be admired is its *conciseness*, and withal the expressiveness of the diction, which strikes the imagination with inimitable elegance. The *weary* and *bewildered traveller*, the miserable *captive* in the hideous dungeon, the sick and dying man, the *seaman foundering* in a storm, are described in so affecting a manner, that they far exceed any thing of the kind, though never so much laboured.” I may add that had such an *Idyl* appeared in *Theocritus* or *Virgil*, or had it been found as a scene in any of the *Greek tragedians*, even in *Æschylus* himself, it would have been

praised up to the heavens, and probably been produced as their master-piece.

Verse 1. O give thanks] Here is a duty prescribed; and the reasons of it are immediately laid down. 1. He is *good*. This is his nature. 2. *His mercy endureth for ever*. This is the *stream* that flows from the *fountain* of his goodness.

Verse 2. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so] For they have had the fullest proof of this goodness, in being saved by the continuing stream of his mercy.

Verse 3. And gathered them out of the lands] Though many Jews returned into Jerusalem from various parts of the world, under the reigns of *Darius Hystaspes*, *Artaxerxes*, and *Alexander the Great*; yet this prophecy has its completion only under the Gospel, when all the ends of the earth hear the salvation of God.

Verse 4. They wandered in the wilderness] Here begins the *FINEST comparison*: the Israelites in captivity are compared to a *traveller in a dreary, uninhabited, and barren desert*, spent with hunger and thirst, as well as by the fatigues of the journey, ^{<19>}**Psalm 107:5.**

Verse 6. Then they cried unto the Lord] When the Israelites began to pray heartily, and the eyes of all the tribes were as the eyes of one man turned unto the Lord, then he delivered them out of their distresses.

Verse 7. That they might go to a city of habitation.] God stirred up the heart of *Cyrus* to give them liberty to return to their own land: and *Zerubbabel*, *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*, at different times, brought many of them back to Judea.

Verse 8. O that men would praise the Lord] This is what is called the *intercalary verse*, or *burden* of each *part* of this *responsive song*: see the *introduction*. God should be praised because he is *good*. We naturally speak highly of those who are eminent. God is infinitely excellent, and should be celebrated for his *perfections*. But *he does wonders for the children of men*; and, therefore, men should *praise the Lord*. And he is the more to be praised, because these wonders, **twal pn niphlaoth**, miracles of mercy and grace, are done for the *undeserving*. They are done **µda ynbI** *libney Adam*, for the children of *Adam*, the corrupt descendants of a rebel father.

Verse 9. For he satisfieth the longing soul] This is the reason which the psalmist gives for the *duty* of thankfulness which he prescribes. *The longing soul*, **hqqwv vpn** *nephesh shokekah*, *the soul that pushes forward in eager desire* after salvation.

Verse 10. Such as sit in darkness] Here begins the *SECOND similitude*, which he uses to illustrate the state of the captives in Babylon, viz., that of a *prisoner in a dreary dungeon*. 1. *They sit in or inhabit darkness*. They have no light, no peace, no prosperity. 2. “In the shadow of death.” The place where death reigns, over which he has projected his shadow; those against whom the sentence of death has been pronounced. 3. They are *bound* in this darkness, have no liberty to revisit the light, and cannot escape from their executioners. 4. They are *afflicted*, not only by want and privation in general, but they are tortured in the prison, **yn** [*oni*, afflicted, humbled, distressed. 5. Their fetters are such as they cannot break; they are *iron*. The reason of their being in this wretched state is given.

Verse 11. Because they rebelled against the words of God] 1. God showed them their duty and their interest, and commanded them to obey his word; but they cast off all subjection to his authority, acted as if they were independent of heaven and earth, and broke out into open rebellion against him. 2. He *counselled* and exhorted them to return to him: but they contemned his advice, and turned his counsel into ridicule. 3. As lenient means were ineffectual, he visited them in judgment: hence it is added,

Verse 12. He brought down their heart with labour] He delivered them into the hands of their enemies. and, as they would not be under subjection to GOD, he delivered them into slavery to wicked men: “So they fell down, and there was none to help;” God had forsaken them because they had forsaken him.

Verse 13. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble] This was the salutary effect which their afflictions produced: they began to cry to God for mercy and help; and God mercifully heard their prayer, and reversed their state; for,

Verse 14. He brought them out of darkness] 1. Gave them again peace and prosperity. 2. Repealed the *sentence of death*. 3. “Unbound the poor prisoners.” 4. Broke their iron bonds in sunder.

Verse 15. O that men, &c.] This is the *intercalary verse*, or *burden*, of the *second* part, as it was of the *first*. See ^{<19A708>} **Psalm 107:8**.

Verse 16. For he hath broken] This is the *reason* given for thanks to God for his deliverance of the captives. It was not a simple deliverance; it was done so as to manifest the *irresistible* power of God. He tore the prison in pieces, and cut the bars of iron asunder.

Verse 17. Fools because of their transgression] This is the **THIRD comparison**; the captivity being compared to *a person in a dangerous malady*. Our Version does not express this clause well: *Fools* μ[vp Ërdm *midderech pisham, because of the way of their transgressions, are afflicted*. Most human maladies are the fruits of sin; *misery* and *sin* are married together in bonds that can never be broken.

Verse 18. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat] A natural description of a sick man: appetite is gone, and all desire for food fails; nutriment is no longer necessary, for death has seized upon the whole frame. See a similar image, ^{<18333>} **Job 33:20**.

Verse 19. Then they cry] The effect produced by affliction as before.

Verse 20. He sent his word, and healed them] He spoke: “Be thou clean, be thou whole;” and immediately the disease departed; and thus they were *delivered from the destructions* that awaited them.

Verse 21. O that men, &c.] The *intercalary verse*, or *burden*, as before.

Verse 22. And let them sacrifice] For their *healing* they should bring a *sacrifice*; and they should offer the *life* of the innocent animal unto God, as he has spared their *lives*; and let them thus *confess* that God has spared *them* when they deserved to die; and let them *declare* also “his works with rejoicing;” for who will not rejoice when he is delivered from *death*?

Verse 23. They that go down to the sea in ships] This is the **FOURTH comparison**. Their captivity was as dangerous and alarming as a dreadful tempest at sea to a weather-beaten mariner.

Verse 24. These see the works of the Lord] Splendid, Divinely impressive, and glorious in *fine weather*.

His wonders in the deep.] Awfully terrible in a *tempest*.

Verse 25. For he commandeth] And what less than the command of God can raise up such winds as seem to heave old Ocean from his bed?

Verse 26. They mount up to the heaven] This is a most natural and striking description of the state of a ship at sea in a storm: when the *sea* appears to *run mountains high*, and the vessel seems for a moment to stand on the sharp ridge of one most stupendous, with a valley of a *frightful depth* between it and a similar mountain, which appears to be flying in the midst of heaven, that it may submerge the hapless bark, when she descends into the valley of death below. This is a sight the most terrific that can be imagined: nor can any man conceive or form an adequate idea of it, who has not himself been at sea in such a storm.

Their soul is melted because of trouble.] This is not less expressive than it is *descriptive*. The action of raising the vessel to the clouds, and precipitating her into the abyss, seems to dissolve the very soul: the whole mind seems to melt away, so that neither feeling, reflection, nor impression remains, nothing but the apprehension of inevitable destruction! When the ship is buffeted between conflicting waves, which threaten either to tear her asunder or crush her together; when she *reels to and fro, and staggers like a drunken man*, not being able to hold any certain course; when *sails* and *masts* are an incumbrance, and the *helm* of no use; when all *hope of safety* is taken away; and when the experienced *captain*, the skilful *pilot*, and the hardy *sailors*, cry out, with a voice more terrible than the cry of fire at midnight, *We are ALL lost! we are all LOST!* then, indeed, are they at *their wit's end*; or, as the inimitable original expresses it, [I btt μtmkj I j w vechol chochmatham tithballa, “and all their skill is swallowed up,”— seems to be gulped down by the frightful abyss into which the ship is about to be precipitated. Then, indeed, can the hand of God alone “bring them out of their distresses.” Then, a cry to the Almighty (and in such circumstances it is few that can lift up such a cry) is the only means that can be used to save the perishing wreck! Reader, dost thou ask why I paint thus, and from whose authority I describe? I answer: Not from any books describing storms, tempests, and shipwrecks; not from the relations of shipwrecked marines; not from viewing from the shore a tempest at sea, and seeing a vessel beat to pieces, and all its crew, one excepted, perish. Descriptions of this kind I have read, with the shipwrecked mariner I have conversed, the last scene mentioned above I have witnessed: but none of these could give the fearful impressions, the tremendous and soul-melting

apprehensions, described above. “*Where* then have you had them?” I answer, From the great deep. I have been at sea in the storm, and in the circumstances I describe; and, having *cried to the Lord in my trouble*, I am spared to describe the storm, and recount the tale of his mercy. None but either a man inspired by God, who, in describing, will show things *as they are*, or one who has been actually in these circumstances, can tell you with what propriety the psalmist speaks, or utter the thousandth part of the dangers and fearful apprehensions of those concerned in a tempest at sea, where all the winds of heaven seem collected to urge an already crazy vessel among the most tremendous rocks upon a lee shore! God save the reader from such circumstances!

*When, in the visitation of the winds,
He takes the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them,
With deafening clamours, on the slippery clouds,
That with the hurly death itself awakes!*
HENRY IV.

A storm at sea—the lifting the vessel to the clouds—her *sinking* into the vast marine valleys—the *melting of the soul*—and *being at their wit’s end*, are well touched by several of the ancient poets. See particularly Virgil’s description of the storm that dispersed the fleet of Æneas, who was himself not unacquainted with the dangers of the sea:—

*Tollimur in coelum curvato gurgite, et idem
Subducta ad manes imos descendimus unda.*
ÆN. iii., 364.

*Now on a towering arch of waves we rise,
Heaved on the bounding billows to the skies.
Then, as the roaring surge retreating fell,
We shoot down headlong to the gates of hell.*
PITT.

*Rector in incerto est, nec quid fugiatve, petatve,
Invenit: ambiguis ars stupet ipsa malis.*

“The pilot himself is in doubt what danger to shun; or whither to steer for safety he knows not: his skill is nonplussed by the choice of the difficulties before him.”

See more in the analysis.

Verse 29. He maketh the storm a calm] He causes the storm to stand *dumb*, and *hushes* the waves. See the original, where *sense* and *sound* emphatically meet:—

μϕυλ γ wvj yw hmmdl hras μqy

galleyhem vaiyecheshu lidemamah searah yakem

He shall cause the whirlwind to stand *dumb*, and he shall *hush* their billows.

Verse 30. Then are they glad because they be quiet] The turbulence of the sea being hushed, and the waves still, they rejoice to see an end to the tempest; and thus, having fine weather, a smooth sea, and fair wind, they are speedily brought to the *desired haven*.

Verse 31. O that men] The *intercalary* verse, or *burden*, as before. See ^{<19A7B>}Psalm 107:8.

Verse 32. Let them exalt him also in the congregation] Their deliverance from such imminent danger, and in a way which clearly showed the Divine interposition, demands, not only gratitude of heart and the song of praise at the end of the storm, but when they come to *shore* that they *publicly* acknowledge it in the congregation of God's people. I have been often pleased, when in sea-port towns, to see and hear notes sent to the minister from pious sailors, returning thanks to the Almighty for preservation from shipwreck, and, in general, from the dangers of the sea; and for bringing them back in safety to their own port. Thus "they exalt the Lord in the congregation, and praise him in the assembly of the elders." And is it not something of this kind that the psalmist requires?

Verse 33. He turneth rivers into a wilderness] After having, as above, illustrated the state of the Jews in their captivity, and the deliverance which God wrought for them, he now turns to the general conduct of God in reference to the poor and needy; and his gracious interpositions in their behalf, the providential supply of their wants, and his opposition to their oppressors. *On account of the wickedness of men*, he sometimes changes a *fruitful land into a desert*. See the general state of Egypt in the present time: once a fertile land; now an arid, sandy wilderness. Again, by his blessing on honest industry, he has changed deserts into highly fertile ground. And, as for the wickedness of their inhabitants, many lands are cursed and rendered barren; so, when a people acknowledge him in all their

ways, he blesses their toil, gives them rain and fruitful seasons, and fills their hearts with joy and gladness.

Verse 36. And there he maketh the hungry to dwell] All this seems to apply admirably to the first colonists of any place. They flee from a land of want, an *ingrata terra* that did not repay their toil, and they seek the wilderness where the land wants only cultivation to make it produce all the necessaries of life. He, by his providence, so guides their steps as to lead them to *rivers* which they can navigate, and from which they can procure plenty of fish, and shows them *wells* or *springs* which they have not digged. The *hungry dwell there*; and jointly agree, for convenience and defence, *to build them a city for habitation*. They sow the fields which they have cleared; and plant vineyards, and orchards which yield them in creasing fruits, ^{<19A737>} **Psalm 107:37**, and he multiplies their cattle greatly, and does not suffer them to decrease, ^{<19A738>} **Psalm 107:38**. What a fine picture is this of the first peopling and planting of *America*, and of the multiplication and extension of that people; of the Divine blessing on their industry, and the general and astonishing prosperity of their country! May they never again know what is spoken in the following verse:

Verse 39. Again, they are minished] Sometimes by war, or pestilence, or famine. How minished and brought low was the country already spoken of, by the long and destructive war which began in 1775, and was not ended till 1783! And what desolations, minishings, and ruin have been brought on the fertile empires of Europe by the war which commenced in 1792, and did not end till 1814! And how many millions of lives have been sacrificed in it, and souls sent unprepared into the eternal world! When God makes inquisition for blood, on whose heads will he find the blood of these slaughtered millions? Alas! O, alas!

Verse 40. He poureth contempt upon princes] How many have lately been raised from *nothing*, and set upon thrones! And how many have been cast down from thrones, and reduced to nothing! And where are now those mighty troublers of the earth? On both sides they are in general gone to give an account of themselves to God. And what an account!

Where there is **no way**.] Who can consider the fate of the late emperor of the French, *Napoleon*, without seeing the *hand of God* in his downfall! All the powers of Europe were leagued against him in vain; they were as stubble to his bow. “*HE came, HE saw, and HE conquered*” almost every where, till God, by a *Russian FROST*, destroyed his tens of thousands of

veteran troops. And afterwards his armies of *raw conscripts* would have over-matched the world had not a particular providence intervened at *Waterloo*, when all the *skill* and *valour* of his opponents had been nearly reduced to nothing. How terrible art thou, O Lord, in thy judgments! Thou art fearful in praises, doing wonders.

The dreary rock of St. Helena, where there was no way, saw a period to the mighty conqueror, who had strode over all the countries of Europe!

Verse 41. Yet setteth he the poor on high] This probably refers to the case of the *Israelites* and their restoration from captivity. But these are incidents which frequently occur, and mark the superintendence of a *benign Providence*, and the hand of a just *God*; and are applicable to a multitude of cases.

Verse 42. The righteous shall see it] The wicked are as inconsiderate as they are obstinate and headstrong.

And rejoice] To have such ample proofs that God ruleth in the earth, and that none that trust in him shall be desolate.

All iniquity shall stop her mouth.] God's judgments and mercies are so evident, and so distinctly marked, that atheism, infidelity, and irreligion are confounded, and the cause of error and falsehood has become hopeless. It was only the *mouth* that could do any thing; and that only by *lies*, *calumnies*, and *blasphemies*: but God *closes this mouth*, pours *contempt* upon the *head* and *judgment* upon the *heart*. This may also be applied to the case of the *Israelites* and the *Babylonians*. The former, when they turned to God, became *righteous*; the latter were a personification of *all iniquity*.

Verse 43. Whoso is wise] That is, He that is wise, he that fears God, and regards the operation of his hand *will observe*-lay up and keep, *these things*. He will hide them in his heart, that he sin not against Jehovah. He will encourage himself in the Lord, because he finds that he is a *never-failing spring of goodness* to the righteous.

They shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord] *hwby ydsj chasdey Jehovah*, the *exuberant goodness of Jehovah*. This is his peculiar and most prominent characteristic among men; for "judgment is his strange work." What a wonderful discourse on Divine Providence, and God's management of the world, does this inimitable Psalm contain! The ignorant

cannot read it without profit; and by the study of it, the *wise man* will become yet wiser.

ANALYSIS OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH PSALM

The title of this Psalm is *Hallelujah*, because it sets forth the praises of God for delivering such as are oppressed from four common miseries; after each of which is expressed those intercalary verses: “O that men would praise the Lord,” &c., “ They cried unto the Lord in their trouble.” It also praises God for his providence in its effects.

I. A preface in which he exhorts all to praise God, especially the redeemed, ^{<19A70>}**Psalm 107:1, 2.**

II. A declaration of his goodness in particular.

1. To the travellers and strangers, famished, ^{<19A70B>}**Psalm 107:3-9.**
2. To the prisoners and captives, ^{<19A70D>}**Psalm 107:10-16.**
3. To the sick, ^{<19A716>}**Psalm 107:16-23.**
4. To the mariners, ^{<19A723>}**Psalm 107:23-32.**

III. A praise of God’s power and providence. which is evidently seen in the changes and varieties in the world, of which he gives many instances, that prove him to be the sole Disposer and Governor of the universe, ^{<19A733>}**Psalm 107:33-42.**

IV. The conclusion, which sets forth the use we are to make of it, ^{<19A742>}**Psalm 107:42, 43.**

I. 1. This Psalm, like the former, begins: “That we celebrate and set forth God’s praise,” and for the same reasons. “O give thanks unto the Lord;” 1. “For he is good;” 2. And merciful: “For his mercy endureth for ever.”

2. And those whom he invites to perform this duty are all who are sensible that they have received any mercy or goodness from him in either soul or body, whom he calls the redeemed of the Lord; that men may know, when they are freed from any evil, that it is not by chance or their wisdom: God’s hand is in it; he is the First Cause; the rest are only his instruments.

1. “Let the redeemed of the Lord say,” i.e., that he is good and merciful.

2. “They say so whom he hath redeemed,” &c. If the Holy Ghost means, when he speaks of our redemption by Christ, *the enemy*, the devil, or some

tyrant, tribulations &c.; then a corporeal and temporal redemption is meant. The next verse seems to refer to their banishment.

3. “And gathered them out of the lands,” &c. Which is yet as true of our spiritual redemption. ^{<1081>}**Matthew 8:11;** ^{<1016>}**John 10:16; 11:52.**

II. Most expositors begin the *second* part at the second verse, but some at the fourth; but it is not material. In those two there was mention made of God’s goodness in their deliverance, in their collection from all lands. But the following is a declaration of what they suffered during their absence from their country. And this is the misery which the prophet first instances in this place, then shows the course the travellers took, and lastly acquaints us with the manner of their deliverance. Their misery was—

1. “That they wandered.” No small discomfort for an ingenious native to go from place to place as a vagrant. God’s people were for a time pilgrims; “few and evil were their days.”

2. The place adds to their misery. Travellers are not confined always to solitary places, they occasionally have company; but these “wandered in the wilderness in a solitary place,” &c. Literally it was fulfilled in the *Israelites*, while they travelled through the wilderness.

3. “Hungry and thirsty.” Men may wander and be solitary; and yet have a sufficient supply of food; but God’s people sometimes fast, as *Elijah*, *David*, &c.

4. And the famine was so great “that their soul,” that is, their life, “was ready to faint.” This is the *incrementum* that the prophet uses to aggravate the misery of the travellers, and the several steps by which it rises.

The prophet shows the course which these travellers and hungry souls took for ease and help; and that it did not fail them, nor any one else who has tried it.

1. “Then in their trouble.” God let them be brought into trouble to bring them back to himself.

2. “They cried.” In their petition they were very earnest; it was no cold prayer, which froze on the way before it got to heaven; but fervent. *A cry.*

3. “And they cried.” Not to any false god, but *unto the Lord.*

The success was answerable to their desire.

1. In general, "He delivered them out of their distresses."
2. But in particular, the deliverance was every way fit.
 1. "They wandered in the wilderness," &c., ~~19A7D4~~ **Psalm 107:4**. "But he led them forth, that they might go to a city of habitation."
 2. "They were hungry, and thirsty," &c. But "he filled the hungry soul," &c.

And upon this he concludes his exhortation to praise God, which he is so earnest for them to do, that he inserts the exhortation between each mention of the mercies.

1. The Lord delivered: "The Lord led them forth." Praise him then.
2. Of his mere mercy, not of desert. "For he is good."
3. And the effects of his goodness were seen in his works; let his praise then be as public as his works; "O that men," &c.

The *second* corporeal misery to which men are subject is captivity and imprisonment; he then shows the course the captives took, and God's mercy in their deliverance.

1. Captives; they were taken by the enemy, put in dungeons and prisons, where they were debarred the comfort of the sun: "For they sat in darkness," &c., and in fear of death.
2. Besides, in this place "they were fast bound with affliction," &c., because of their rebellion against the Lord: "The iron entered into their soul." "He brought them low;" but they sought help of the Lord. "They cried unto the Lord in their trouble." "And found the same favour as the travellers did. "And he saved them out of their distresses."

The manner was suitable to their distress.

1. "For they sat in darkness," &c. "But he brought them out," &c.
2. "They were bound in affliction and iron," &c. The prison was not so strong but he was stronger, and delivered them from captivity. Now the psalmist interposes his thanksgiving: "O that men," &c.

The *third* misery is some great sickness or pining away of the body under some grievous disease, such as when stung by fiery serpents, as the

Israelites. 1. He describes the danger under which they languished. 2. Shows the method they took for their recovery.

1. The appellation he fastens on the diseased persons, *fools*; not but that, generally speaking, they were wise enough; but in that they sinned with a high hand against God, “they are fools.”

2. Now such *fools* God often smites with an incurable disease: “Fools, because of their transgression,” &c. Not but that all sickness is from sin; but this that the prophet speaks of was their general apostasy, rebellion, and contempt of God’s will and commandment.

The effect was lamentable and double.

1. “Their soul abhorred all manner of meat.” Meat, with which the life of man is sustained, became loathsome to them, the disease was so grievous.

2. And deadly too; no art of the physician could cure them. “For they drew near to the gates of death,” that is, the grave, where Death exercises his power, as the judges of Israel did in the gates.

But these, being but dead men in the eye of man, took the same course as they did before.

1. “They cried unto the Lord in their trouble.”

2. And by God’s blessing they recovered; God was alone their Physician.

3. This was the manner of their cure. “He saved them out of their distress.”

1. “He sent his word, and healed them.” He said the word only, and they were made whole. Or if any medicine were made use of, it was his word which made it medicinal, as in the case of the bunch of figs, and therefore the prophet uses an apt word to put them in mind. “He sent his word,” as a great prince sends forth his ambassadors to do his commands. Most probably the centurion had this in his mind when he said, “Say the word only, and my servant shall be whole.”

2. “And he delivered them from their destructions,” which are opposed to their previous danger. “They drew nigh,” &c.

3. But he exhorts the saved to be thankful: “O that men,” &c.

And he adds,

1. "Let them sacrifice their sacrifices."

2. But with these conditions and limitations: 1. That it be with a thankful heart, for an outward sacrifice is nothing. 2. That with the sacrifice there go an annunciation; that men *declare* and *publish* that the cure came from God. 3. That it be done with rejoicing; that we have an experience of God's presence, favour, and mercy, for which the heart ought to rejoice more than for the cure of the body.

The *fourth* misery arises from the danger at sea.

1. He describes.

2. Shows the course they take in a storm.

3. And the event following upon their prayers.

Upon which he calls upon them, as upon the three before, to praise God.

1. "They that go down to the sea in ships." For the sea is lower than the earth.

2. "That do business in great waters." As merchants, mariners, &c.

3. "These men see the works of the Lord," &c. Others hear of them by relation, but these see them: they see the great whales, innumerable kinds of fish, and monsters; islands dispersed and safe in the waves, whirlpools, quicksands, rocks; and have experience of the virtue of the loadstone. They discover many stars we know not; and they behold the vast workings of the sea, which fill the most valiant with fear.

4. "For he commandeth," &c.

Now he describes the tempest:—

1. From the cause. God speaks the word.

2. By it "he raiseth the stormy wind."

3. Which, inspired by his word, "lifts up the waves thereof."

Fluctus ad sidera tollit.
"The waves arise to heaven."

4. "They" (that is, the passengers) "mount up to heaven," &c.

Hi summo in fluctu pendent, his unda dehiscens.

*“They hung upon the wave; the sea yawns under them;
and the bottom seems to be laid bare between the surges.”*

5. “Their soul its melted because of trouble.” Their spirit fails.

Extemplo Æneæ solvuntur frigora membra.

“The limbs of the hero himself dissolve with terror.”

6. “They reel to and fro.” Tossed this way and that way.

Tres Eurus ab alto in brevia, et syrtes urget.

“They are dashed against the shoals and quicksands.”

7. “They stagger and totter,” &c. An apt simile.

Cui dubli stantque labantque pedes.

“They cannot keep their feet.”

8. “And are at their wit’s end.” *Omnis sapientia eorum absorbetur.*—“Their judgment roves; their art fails; their skill is at an end.”

Et meminisse viæ media Palinurus in unda.

“Even the pilot loses his way in the troubled deep.”

Hitherto the prophet has poetically described the tempest and storm; and now he gives an account of the course they took to save their lives. “Then they cried unto the Lord,” &c. An old proverb says: *Qui nescit orare, discat navigare.* “He who knows not how to pray, let him learn to be a sailor.”

And the consequence of their praying was:

“And he brings them out,” &c. In this manner:—

1. “He makes the storm a calm.”

—————*Dicto citius tumida æquora placat.*

“By his word the swelling sea becomes calm.”

2. “So that the waves thereof are still.” *Et cunctus pelagi cecidit fragor.* “And the noise of it is hushed to silence.”

3. "Then they are glad," &c., no more reeling to and fro; whence arises their joy.

—————*Laeto testantur gaudia plausu.*

"The clapping of hands expresses their joy."

4. And to increase it: "So he brings them to their desired haven."

—————*Magno telluris amore,
Egressi optata nautæ potiuntur arena,
Et sale tabentes artus in littore ponunt.*

"The weather-beaten marines having reached the shore, in an ecstasy of joy kiss the sand, and lay themselves down upon the beach."

And now, in the last place, he calls upon them to pay their tribute of thankful duty for the miracle done them in their preservation: "O that men would praise the Lord," &c.

And probably in their danger they might have made a vow, which is frequently done in such cases. Read the Life of *Nazianzen*. This vow the prophet would have them pay openly.

1. "Let them exalt him also in the congregation," &c.

2. And that not only before the promiscuous multitude; but "let them praise him in the assembly of the elders," &c. *Sua tabula sacer votiva paries indicat, uvida suspendisse potenti vestimenta maris Deo.* "Let them here suspend their votive tablet; and hang their wet clothes against a wall, as a grateful offering to him who rules the seas."

III. The prophet had exalted God's mercies in freeing men from these four miseries and calamities; these travellers through the wilderness, captivity, sickness, shipwreck; and now he manifests his power, providence, and wisdom, in the vicissitudes we meet with below. In the earth we see strange mutations; in kingdoms, wonderful revolutions; yet we must go higher, and not rest short of the hand which governs all.

The prophet first instances the earth's changes.

1. "He turns rivers into a wilderness," &c. The fertility of any land arises from its rivers, as is apparent in Egypt from the overflowing of the *Nile*. And when Elisha would free the soil from barrenness, he first healed the

waters. The drying up of rivers produces famine, and when the channels are directed from their courses, the fruitful land becomes a wilderness.

2. And the cause of this is: “The iniquity of them that dwell therein.”

On the contrary, God illustrates his mercy by sometimes changing the wilderness into a fruitful and abundant place.

1. “He turneth the wilderness into a standing water,” &c. They shall be fruitful for man’s sake.

2. “For there he makes the hungry to dwell.” God puts it into men’s minds to plant colonies in some newly found and good land, where the hungry find plenty and are satisfied.

3. And to build houses: “That they may prepare a city,” &c.

Pars aptare locum tecto, pars ducere muros.

“Some dig out the foundations, others raise the walls.”

4. The endeavours of the colonists are: 1. “To sow fields.” 2. “To plant vineyards.” Which was the first trade in the world.

5. And God’s blessing on those endeavours: “God blessed them also.” 1. In children: “So that they multiplied greatly.” 2. In cattle: “And suffered not their cattle to decrease.”

But there is nothing in this world perpetual and stable: even those whom God had sometimes blessed and enriched continued not at one stay.

1. These are “minished, and brought low.”

2. These are “worn out by oppression,” &c. By some public calamity, war, famine, invasion, &c.

Even monarchs are subject to changes.

1. “He pours contempt upon princes.” It is a heavy judgment for princes, civil or ecclesiastical, to become contemptible; for then the reins of discipline are let loose, confusion follows, and all things grow worse. And this *for the iniquity of those*, &c.

2. “He causeth them to wander in the wilderness,” &c., which clause is subject to a double interpretation.

Either that he suffers princes to err in their counsels, lives, and example; or they enact unjust laws, favour wicked men, or oppress the good. But in the following verse there is some comfort.

“Yet setteth he the poor man on high,” &c. Delivers him from all affliction.

“And maketh him families like a flock.” Becomes his shepherd, and governs him by his special providence.

IV. He concludes the Psalm with an *epiphonema*, in which he persuades good men to consider the former promises, and lay them to heart; to observe the whole course of God’s providence, that they impute not the changes of the world to chance or fortune, but bless God for all his dispensations.

1. “The righteous shall see it,” &c. Consider, meditate upon it.

2. “And rejoice.” When they are assured that God is their Guardian, and that all he lays upon them is for their real good.

“And all iniquity shall stop her mouth.” By the observation of the event, at last evil doers shall not have cause to laugh and blaspheme, but to confess that all is justly and wisely done by God.

And this consideration is that of the wise man who looks afar off.

1. “Who is wise,” &c., so as to mark these changes in the world properly.

2. “And they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.” It shall be seen by them how ineffable is his mercy towards those who truly fear him, and call upon his name: but our life is hid with Christ in God.

PSALMS

PSALM 108

The psalmist encourages himself to praise the Lord for mercies he had received, 1-5. He prays for the Divine succour, 6; and encourages the people to expect their restoration, and the enjoyment of all their former privileges and possessions, 7-13.

NOTES ON PSALM 108

This Psalm is compounded of *two Psalms* which we have had already under review. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses, are the same with the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th verses of Psalm lvii. {^{<195707>} **Psalm 57:7-11**} And the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th, are the same with the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th of Psalm lx. {^{<191015>} **Psalm 60:5-12**} The *variations* are few, and of little moment, and the explanation may be seen in the notes on the preceding Psalms, which need not be repeated here. That the Psalms referred to were made by *David*, and were applicable to the then state of his affairs, has been the opinion of many; and it is probable that the captives in Babylon composed *this* out of two above, and applied it to the state of their affairs. Their captivity being now ended, or nearly at an end they look and pray for their restoration to their own land, as amply as it was possessed in the most prosperous days of *David*. The *Syriac* considers it as a prophecy of the vocation of the Gentiles. The *Hebrew* and all the *Versions* attribute it to *David*.

Verse 1. Even with my glory.] My greatest glory shall be in publishing thy praise. Some make the *glory* here to mean the LORD himself; some, the ARK of the *covenant*; some, the SOUL of the *psalmist*; others, his TONGUE; some, the GIFT OF PROPHECY; and some, the psalmist's SPIRIT or VEIN of *poetry*. See Clarke's notes on "^{<195708>} **Psalm 57:8**".

Verse 3. Among the people] The *Jews*.

Among the nations.] The *Gentiles*. Wherever this Psalm is sung or read, either among *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *David* may be said to sing praise to God.

Verse 7. God hath spoken in his holiness] *wvdqb bekodsho*; some think this means *in his Holy One*, referring to the *Prophet Jeremiah*, who

predicted the captivity, its duration of *seventy* years, and the deliverance from it.

Verse 10. The strong city] The possession of the *metropolis* is a sure proof of the subjugation of the country.

Verse 13. Through God we shall do valiantly] From him we derive our courage, from him our strength, and by him our success.

[For the ANALYSIS, see the Psalms from which this one is composed.]

PSALMS

PSALM 109

The psalmist speaks against his inveterate enemies, 1-5. He prays against them, and denounces God's judgments, 6-15. The reason on which this is grounded, 16-20. He prays for his own safety and salvation, using many arguments to induce God to have mercy upon him, 21-31.

NOTES ON PSALMS 109

The *title* of this Psalm, *To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*, has already often occurred, and on it the *Versions* offer nothing new. The *Syriac* says it is “a Psalm of David, when the people, without his knowledge, made *Absalom* king; on which account he was slain: but to us (Christians) he details the passion of Christ.” That it contains a prophecy against *Judas* and the enemies of our Lord, is evident from ^{<4013>}**Acts 1:20**. Probably, in its primary meaning, (for such a meaning it certainly has,) it may refer to *Ahithophel*. The execrations in it should be rendered in the *future* tense, as they are mere prophetic denunciations of God's displeasure against sinners. Taken in this light, it cannot be a stumbling-block to any person. God has a right to denounce those judgments which he will inflict on the workers of iniquity. But perhaps the whole may be the execrations of *David's* enemies against himself. See on ^{<19A7D>}**Psalm 107:20**. *Ahithophel*, who gave evil counsel against *David*, and being frustrated hanged himself, was no mean prototype of *Judas* the traitor; it was probably on this account that *St. Peter*, ^{<4013>}**Acts 1:20**, applied it to the case of *Judas*, as a prophetic declaration concerning him, or at least a subject that might be accommodated to his case.

Verse 1. Hold not thy peace] Be not silent; arise and defend my cause.

Verse 2. The mouth of the wicked and-the deceitful are opened against me] Many persons are continually uttering calumnies against me. Thou knowest my heart and its innocence; vindicate my uprightness against these calumniators.

Verse 4. For my love they are my adversaries] In their behalf I have performed many acts of kindness, and they are my adversaries notwithstanding; this shows principles the most vicious, and hearts the most corrupt. Many of the fathers and commentators have understood the

principal part of the things spoken here as referring to our Lord, and the treatment he received from the Jews; and whatever the original intention was, they may safely be applied to this case, as the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th verses are as highly illustrative of the conduct of the Jewish rulers towards our Lord as the following verses are of the conduct of Judas; but allowing these passages to be prophetic, it is the *Jewish state* rather than an *individual*, against which these awful denunciations are made, as it seems to be represented here under the person and character of an extremely hardened and wicked man; unless we consider the curses to be those of *David's* enemies. See Clarke's note on "^{<19A9D>}Psalm 109:20".

But I give myself unto prayer] *hl pt ynaw vaani thephillah*; "And I prayer." The *Chaldee*: *yl xa anaw vaana atsalley*, "but I pray." This gives a good sense, which is followed by the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*. The *Syriac*, "I will pray for them." This, not so correctly; as dreadful *imprecations*, not *prayers*, follow. But probably the whole ought to be interpreted according to the mode laid down, ^{<19A9D>}**Psalm 109:20**. The translation and paraphrase in the old Psalter are very simple:—

Trans. For that thyng that thai sulde haf lufed me, thai bakbited me; bot I prayed.

Par. That is, that sulde haf lufed me for I was godson, and thai bakbited me sayande, in Belzebug he castes oute fendes; bot I prayed for thaim.

Verse 6. Let Satan stand at his right hand.] As the word [^]CC *satan* means an *adversary* simply, though sometimes it is used to express the evil spirit *Satan*, I think it best to preserve here its grammatical meaning: "Let an *adversary* stand at his right hand:" i.e., Let him be *opposed* and *thwarted* in all his purposes.

All the *Versions* have devil, or some equivocal word. The *ARABIC* has [*Arabic*] *eblees*, the chief of the apostate spirits; but the name is probably corrupted from the *GREEK* *διαβολος* *diabolos*; from which the *LATIN* *diabolus*. the *ITALIAN* *diavolo*, the *SPANISH* *diablo*, the *FRENCH* *diable*, the *IRISH* or *CELTIC* *diabal*, the *DUTCH* *duivel*, the *GERMAN* *teufel*, the *ANGLO-SAXON* *deofal*, and the *ENGLISH* *devil*, are all derived. The original, *διαβολος*, comes from *δια βαλλειν* to shoot or pierce through.

Verse 7. Let him be condemned] [*vr axy yetse rasha*. "Let him come out a wicked man;" that is let his wickedness be made manifest.

Let his prayer become sin.] Thus paraphrased by Calmet: “Let him be accused, convicted, and condemned, and let the *defence* which he brings for his justification only serve to deepen his guilt, and hasten his condemnation.” I once more apprise the reader, that if these are not the words of *David’s* enemies against himself, (see on ^{<194920>} **Psalm 109:20,**) they are *prophetic denunciations* against a rebellious and apostate person or people, hardened in crime, and refusing to return to God.

Verse 8. Let another take his office.] The original is **wtdqp** *pekuddatho*, which the margin translates *charge*, and which literally means *superintendence, oversight, inspection* from actual visitations. The translation in our common Version is too technical. *His bishopric*, following the *Septuagint*, **επισκοπήν**, and *Vulgate*, *episcopatum*, and has given cause to some light people to be *witty*, who have said, “The first bishop we read of was bishop Judas.” But it would be easy to convict this witticism of blasphemy, as the word is used in many parts of the sacred writings, from Genesis downward, to signify offices and officers, appointed either by God immediately, or in the course of his providence, for the accomplishment of the most important purposes. It is applied to the patriarch *Joseph*, ^{<01304>} **Genesis 39:4**, **whdqpyw** *vaiyaphkidehu*, *he made him bishop*, alias *overseer*; therefore it might be as *wisely* said, and much more correctly, “The first bishop we read of was bishop Joseph;” and many such bishops there were of God’s making long before Judas was born. After all, Judas was no *traitor* when he was appointed to what is called his *bishopric, office, or charge* in the apostolate. Such witticisms as these amount to no argument, and serve no cause that is worthy of defence.

Our common Version, however, was not the first to use the word: it stands in the *Anglo-Saxon* [A.S.], “and his episcopacy let take other.” The old Psalter is nearly the same; I shall give the whole verse: **ƿfa be made his days, and his bysshopyrk another take.** “For Mathai was sett in stede of Judas; and his days was *fa* that hynged himself.”

Verse 9. Let his children be fatherless, &c.] It is said that Judas was a married man, against whom this verse, as well as the preceding is supposed to be spoken; and that it was to support them that he stole from the bag in which the property of the apostles was put, and of which he was the treasurer.

Verse 10. Let his children-beg] The father having lost his *office*, the children must necessarily be destitute; and this is the hardest lot to which any can become subject, after having been born to the expectation of an ample fortune.

Verse 11. Let the strangers spoil his labour.] Many of these execrations were literally fulfilled in the case of the miserable Jews, after the death of our Lord. They were not only expelled from their own country, after the destruction of Jerusalem, but they were prohibited from returning; and so taxed by the Roman government, that they were reduced to the lowest degree of poverty. *Domitian* expelled them from Rome; and they were obliged to take up their habitation without the gate *Capena*, in a wood contiguous to the city, for which they were obliged to pay a rent, and where the whole of their property was only a *basket and a little hay*. See JUVENAL, Sat. ver. 11:—

*Substitit ad veteres arcus, madidamque Capenam:
Hic ubi nocturne Numa constituebat amicæ,
Nunc sacri fontis nemus, et delubra locantur
Judæis: quorum cophinus, fœnumque supellex:
Omnis enim populo mercedem pendere jussa est
Arbor, et ejectis mendicat silva Camœnis.*

*He stopped a little at the conduit gate,
Where Numa modelled once the Roman state;
In nightly councils with his nymph retired:
Though now the sacred shades and founts are hired
By banished Jews, who their whole wealth can lay
In a small basket, on a wisp of hay.*

*Yet such our avarice is, that every tree
Pays for his head; nor sleep itself is free;
Nor place nor persons now are sacred held,
From their own grove the Muses are expelled.*

DRYDEN.

The same poet refers again to this wretched state of the Jews, Sat. vi., ver. 541; and shows to what vile extremities they were reduced in order to get a morsel of bread:—

*Cum dedit ille locum, cophino fænoque relicto,
Arcanam Judæa tremens mendicat in aurem,
Interpres legum Solymarum, et magna sacerdos
Arboris, ac summi fida internuncia coeli.
Implet et illa manum, sed parcius, ære minuto.
Qualia cunque voles Judæi somnia vendunt.*

Here a *Jewess* is represented as coming from the wood mentioned above, to gain a few *oboli* by fortune-telling; and, trembling lest she should be discovered, she leaves her *basket* and hay, and whispers lowly in the ear of some female, from whom she hopes employment in her line. She is here called by the poet the *interprestess of the laws of Solymæ*, or Jerusalem, and the *priestess of a tree*, because obliged, with the rest of her nation, to lodge in a *wood*; so that she and her countrymen might be said *to seek their bread out of desolate places, the stranger having spoiled their labour*. Perhaps the whole of the Psalm relates to their infidelities, rebellions, and the miseries inflicted on them from the crucifixion of our Lord till the present time. I should prefer this sense, if what is said on ^{19A03} **Psalm 109:20** be not considered a better mode of interpretation.

Verse 13. Let his posterity be cut off] It is a fact that the *distinction* among the Jewish tribes is entirely lost. Not a Jew in the world knows from what tribe he is sprung; and as to the royal family, it remains nowhere but in the person of Jesus the Messiah. He *alone* is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Except as it exists in him, *the name is blotted out*.

Verse 16. Persecuted the poor and needy man] In the case of Jesus Christ all the dictates of justice and mercy were destroyed, and they persecuted this poor man unto death. They acted from a diabolical malice. On common principles, their opposition to Christ cannot be accounted for.

Verse 17. As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him] The Jews said, when crucifying our Lord, *His blood be upon us and our children!* Never was an imprecation more dreadfully fulfilled.

Verse 18. Let it come into his bowels like water] Houbigant thinks this is an allusion to the *waters of jealousy*; and he is probably right,—the bitter waters that produce the curse. See ⁰⁴⁰⁵¹⁸ **Numbers 5:18**.

Verse 19. And for a girdle] Let the curse *cleave* to him throughout life: as the girdle binds all the clothes to the body, let the curse of God bind all mischiefs and maladies to his body and soul.

The *Hindoos*, *Budhists*, and others often wear a *gold* or *silver chain* about their waist. One of those chains, once the ornament of a *Moudeliar* in the island of Ceylon, lies now before me: it is silver, and curiously wrought.

Verse 20. Let **this be the reward of mine adversaries from the Lord, and of them that speak evil against my soul.**] Following the mode of interpretation already adopted, this may mean: All these maledictions shall be fulfilled on my enemies; they shall have them for their reward. So all the opposition made by the Jews against our Lord, and the obloquies and execrations wherewith they have loaded him and his religion, have fallen upon themselves; and they are awful examples of the wrath of God abiding on *them* that believe not.

But is not this verse a *key* to all that preceded it? The original, fairly interpreted, will lead us to a somewhat different meaning: *yvpn l [[r µyrbdhw hwhy tam yncc tl [p taz zoth peullath soteny meeth Yehovah, vehaddoberim ra al naphshi.* “This is the work of my adversaries before the Lord, and of those who speak evil against my soul,” or life. That is, all that is said from the *sixth* to the *twentieth* verse consists of the evil words and imprecations of my enemies against my soul, laboring to set the Lord, by imprecations, against me, that their curses may take effect. This, which is a reasonable interpretation, frees the whole Psalm from every difficulty. Surely, the curses contained in it are more like those which proceed from the mouth of the wicked, than from one inspired by the Spirit of the living God. Taking the words in this sense, which I am persuaded is the best, and which the original will well bear and several of the *Versions* countenance, then our translation may stand just as it is, only let the reader remember that at the *sixth* verse David begins to tell *how his enemies cursed HIM, while he prayed for THEM.*

Verse 21. But do thou for me] While they use horrible imprecations against me, and load me with their curses, *act thou for me*, and *deliver me* from their maledictions. While they *curse*, do thou *bless*. This verse is a farther proof of the correctness of the interpretation given above.

Verse 22. I am poor and needy] I am *afflicted* and *impoverished*; and *my heart is wounded*—my *very life* is sinking through distress.

Verse 23. I am gone like the shadow] “I have walked like the declining shadow,”—I have passed my meridian of health and life; and as the sun is going below the horizon, so am I about to go under the earth.

I am tossed up and down as the locust.] When swarms of locusts take wing, and infest the countries in the east, if the wind happen to blow *briskly*, the swarms are agitated and driven upon each other, so as to appear to be heaved to and fro, or tossed up and down. Dr. *Shaw*, who has seen this, says it gives a lively idea of the comparisons of the psalmist.

Verse 24. My knees are weak through fasting] That *hunger* is as soon felt in *weakening the knees*, as in producing an *uneasy sensation in the stomach*, is known by all who have ever felt it. Writers in all countries have referred to this effect of hunger. Thus *Tryphioderus* II. *Excid.* ver 155:—

τειρομενου βαρυθειεν ατερπει γουνατα λιμω.

*“Their knees might fail, by hunger’s force subdued;
And sink, unable to sustain their load.”*

MERRICK.

So *PLAUTUS*, *Curcul*, act. ii., scen. 3:—

Tenebræ oboriuntur, genua inedia succidunt.

“My eyes grow dim; my knees are weak with hunger.”

And *LUCRETIUS*, lib. iv. ver. 950:—

Brachia, palpebræque cadunt, poplitesque procumbunt.

“The arms, the eyelids fall; the knees give way.”

Both the *knees* and the *sight* are particularly affected by hunger.

Verse 25. When they looked upon me they soaked their heads.] Thus was David treated by *Shimei*, ^{<1065>} **2 Samuel 16:5, 6**, and our blessed Lord by the *Jews*, ^{<1273>} **Matthew 27:39**.

Verse 27. That they may know that this is thy hand] Let thy help be so manifest in my behalf, that they may see it is thy hand, and that thou hast undertaken for me. Or, if the words refer to the passion of our Lord, Let them see that I suffer not on my own account; “for the transgression of my people am I smitten.”

Verse 28. Let them curse, but bless thou] See on ^{<1930>} **Psalm 109:20**: Of the mode of interpretation recommended there, this verse gives additional proof.

Verse 29. Let them cover themselves] He here retorts their own curse,
<19A918> **Psalm 109:18.**

Verse 30. I will greatly praise the Lord] I have the fullest prospect of deliverance, and a plenary vindication of my innocence.

Verse 31. He shall stand at the right hand of the poor] Even if Satan himself be the accuser, God will vindicate the innocence of his servant. Pilate and the Jews condemned our Lord to death as a malefactor; God showed his immaculate innocence by his resurrection from the dead.

The whole of this Psalm is understood by many as referring solely to *Christ*, the traitor *Judas*, and the *wicked Jews*. This is the view taken of it in the analysis.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND NINTH PSALM

The later expositors expound this Psalm of *Doeg*, *Ahithophel*, and other persecutors of *David*; and so it may be understood in the type; but the ancient fathers apply it to *Judas*, and the Jews who put Christ to death; which opinion, being more probable, and because Peter (<40121> **Acts 1:20**) applies a passage out of <19A908> **Psalm 109:8** to *Judas*, I shall expound the Psalm as of Christ, whom David personated, and of *Judas*, and the malicious *Jews*, as understood in the persons of his wicked and slanderous enemies.

The Psalm has four parts:—

I. A short ejaculation, <19A901> **Psalm 109:1**, and the reasons expressed in a complaint of the fraud and malice of his enemies, <19A905> **Psalm 109:6.**

II. A bitter imprecation against their fury, <19A905> **Psalm 109:6-21.**

III. A supplication presented to God for himself, and the reasons, <19A925> **Psalm 109:21-30.**

IV. A profession of thanks.

I. He begins with an ejaculation: “Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise.”

1. Either actively, that is, “O God, whom I praise,” even in the greatest calamities.

2. Or passively; “Who art my praise:” The Witness and Advocate of my innocency when I am condemned by malicious tongues; which sense appears best for this place.

“Hold not thy peace.” *Tacere*, to be silent, in Scripture, when referred to God, is to connive, to rest, to appear not to regard; and, on the contrary, *loqui*, to speak, to do something for revenge or deliverance; it is what David here asks, that, when the malice of his enemies arrived at its height, God should not suffer them, but show his displeasure.

Then by way of complaint, he describes their malicious nature, which he aggravates by an elegant gradation. “For the mouth of the wicked:” and they were, 1. Impious. 2. Deceitful. 3. Liars.

1. “For the mouth of the wicked:” *Caiaphas, Judas, the priests, Jews, &c.*
2. “And the mouth of the deceitful,” &c. *They sought to entrap him in his words.*
3. “They have spoken against me,” &c. “He casteth out devils through Beelzebub,” &c.

And yet the mischief rises higher, even to hatred and malice.

1. “They compassed me about,” &c. Manifesting in plain words the malice they carried in their hearts. “This man is not of God,” &c.
2. “They hated me without a cause:” Wantonly, idly. They were not only evil, deceitful, and malicious; but very ungrateful. “He went about doing good;” and “How often would I have gathered you,” &c.; and for this love they returned hatred.
1. “For my love, they are my adversaries:” But, nevertheless,
2. “I give myself to prayer:” “Father, forgive them; they know not,” &c. Which base ingratitude of theirs he opens in fuller words. “They have rewarded me evil.” And Theognis truly says,—

ἡ χάρις ἀλλάξαι τὴν φύσιν οὐ δύναται.

No kindness can invert an evil nature:

A Jew will ever be a Jew.

II. The prophet, having complained of the malice, spiteful usage, and ingratitude of his nation, their crafty dealing with him, and their lies against him, proceeds to pray against them, and that in most bitter and fearful imprecations. Enemies he foresaw they would be to the flourishing state of Christ's Church, and that nothing had power to restrain or amend them; and therefore he curses them with a curse the most bitter that ever fell from the lips of man. In particular *Judas*, who was guide to them who took Jesus, is pointed out; but, as Augustine observes, he represented the person of the whole synagogue; therefore, it is involved necessarily. But some understanding these curses as uttered by the Jews against *David*. See **Clarke's note on "^{<19>Psalm 109:20}".**

1. "Set thou a wicked man over him," &c.: A fearful imprecation. Subject him to the will of some impious and wicked man, to whose lust and violence he may be no better than a slave. Others understand by a *wicked man* a false teacher, who may seduce him by false doctrines.

2. "Let Satan stand at his right hand:" Have full power over him. Let him stand; which signifies a perpetual endeavour to urge him forward till he effect his intended mischief. And so it was with *Judas* and the *Jews*; Satan was their guide, and they followed him.

The second is, "When he shall be judged, let him be condemned;"—find no mercy, no favour, at the judge's hands; thus, when *Judas*, accused and condemned by his own conscience, went to the high priest, who had bribed him, he would not acquit him; and *Judas*, in despair and grief for his sin, "went out and hanged himself."

The third, "Let his prayer become sin:" He turned his ear from hearing God, why then should God hear him? No prayer is acceptable to God but through Christ, and that out of a sincere heart; any other prayers become sin.

The fourth is the shortening of their life and honour.

1. "Let his days be few:" Length of days is promised only to the obedient, and is a blessing; but the prayer is that this man's life be a short one, and so *Judas*'s was.

2. "And let another take his office:" Which must be applied to *Judas*, since St. Peter (^{<40>}**Acts 1:20**) so interprets it; and it is at this day as true of the

Jews, for they have no high priest. Another, after the order of *Melchizedek*, has succeeded Aaron's priesthood.

The fifth is—

1. "Let his children be fatherless," &c.: Which follows on the former curse.
2. "Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg:" And such the Jews are to this day; and beggars they were for a long time after the overthrow of Jerusalem.

The sixth execration is upon his goods.

1. "Let the extortioner catch all that he hath:" Probably the publicans.
2. "And let the strangers spoil his labour:" Which was verified by the soldiers of *Titus*, who ripped up the bellies of the captive *Jews* to see if they had swallowed gold.

But the prophet again returns to his children.

1. "Let there be none to extend mercy unto him," &c.: To beg, or to want, is a misery; but there is some comfort in it when beggars meet with some to relieve it. But the prophet says, Let there be none to pity him, or his. *Judas* found none to pity him.

2. Men, because they must die themselves, desire, if possible, to be immortal in their issue. *Bellarmino* observes that *Judas* had no issue; for that *Matthias*, who came in his place, did not derive his office from him. Though a posterity of the *Jews* remained after the flesh, yet, in the next generation, their ecclesiastical and civil polity was at an end; and since their dispersion they are without king, without priest, without sacrifice, without altar, without ephod, and without teraphim, as foretold by *Hosea*.

3. "Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered," &c.: This imprecation answers God's threat: "I will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." And this curse has come upon the Jews to the uttermost; they are self-devoted: "Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children." The guilt of his blood is yet upon them; the iniquity of their fathers is yet remembered; and the sin of their mother, the synagogue, is not yet done away.

He repeats again the sin of their fathers, and the sin of the synagogue; this verse being but the exposition of the former.

1. "Let them be before the Lord continually:" The sin their father and mother committed, never let it be forgotten by God.

2. "That he may cut off the memory," &c.: Except it be in contempt.

The prophet having now finished his execrations, acquaints us with the causes of them.

1. Their want of pity to them in distress: "Have ye no regard, all ye that pass by?" ^{<2012>}**Lamentations 1:12.** It is but just then "that they find judgment without mercy, that would show no mercy."

2. So far from that, "that he persecuted the poor and needy man," &c., which is the second cause; the inhumanity of *Judas* and the Jews against Christ, who is here called-1. *Poor*, because, "when he was rich, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich;" ^{<1002>}**2 Corinthians 9:2.** *The needy man*: "For the foxes have holes, &c.,

^{<1058>}**Luke 9:58.** 3. *The broken in heart.* For he was in agony, and his soul was troubled, when he sweated great drops of blood; when he cried, "My God, my God!" not with compunction or contrition for any fault he had committed, but from a sense of pain, and his solicitude for the salvation of mankind.

In this verse there is noted the extreme cruelty and inhumanity of the *Jews*; for whoever persecutes a man for his life is inclined to it either from some real or supposed injury, or else through envy: but Christ was humble and lowly in heart; he went about doing good, and yet they persecuted him.

But, thirdly, he complains: "He loved cursing;" therefore, it is but reason that he should have what he loved: "As he clothed himself with cursing—so let it come," &c. No man can love a curse or hate a blessing, if it be proposed to the will under the form of a curse or blessing: but a man is said to love a curse when he follows a wicked course, and avoids the blessing of a good life. This *Judas* and the *Jews* did: *Judas*, by loving money more than his Master; the *Jews*, by—"Let his blood," &c.

Neque enim lex justior ulla est. &c.

It is just that a man should suffer for his own wicked inventions. But the prophet adds, Let it sit close to him as a garment; let it be converted into his substance: let him carry it perpetually, &c.

1. "As he clothed himself with cursing," &c. As in clothes he delights in.

2. "So let it come as waters," &c. As the stomach concocts and turns every thing into the very flesh of the animal; so let his curse be converted into his nature and manners.

3. "Let it come as oil into his bones," &c. Oil will pierce the bones; water will not.

This curse must be of great efficacy; he must always carry it.

1. "Let it be unto him," &c. Stick close as a garment.

2. "And for a girdle," &c. Compass him round about.

For a garment some read *pallium*; a cloak that a man puts off at home, and calls for when he goes abroad: thus let God set an outward mark upon him; let him be known as a cast-away.

If *Doeg* were the type of *Judas*, as most agree, in this Psalm, then by the girdle might be understood *cingulum militare*, the military girdle, which, while they were of that profession they cast not off: and he, *Doeg*, being a military man, the curse was to cleave to him, and compass him as his girdle.

The prophet concludes this part of the Psalm with an exclamation, as being persuaded his curses were not in vain.

"Let this be the reward of mine adversaries," &c., who say that I am a deceiver, and deny me to be the Saviour of the world.

III. The prophet now turns from curses to prayer: and in the person of Christ, directs it to God for protection and deliverance both of himself and the whole Church.

1. "But do thou for me," &c. He asks help against his persecutors on these three grounds: 1. Because his Lord was *Jehovah*, the fountain of all being and power. 2. Because it would be for his honour: "Do it for thy name's sake." Thy faithfulness and goodness to the Church, and justice in executing vengeance on her enemies. 3. Do it, *because thy mercy is good*-easily inclined to succour the miserable.

2. "Deliver me," may have reference to Christ's prayer, "Father, save me from this hour," &c.

1. "Deliver me," for I am destitute of all human help.

2. "Deliver me," for my heart is wounded within me.

And to these he adds many other reasons; and uses two similes, the one drawn from the shadow of the evening, the other from the *locust*.

1. "I am gone like a shadow: " &c. Which passes away in a moment silently: so was Christ led away as a prisoner, without any murmur: "He was led as a lamb," &c., ^{<2530>}**Isaiah 53:7**. Thus the apostles and martyrs died patiently.

2. "I am tossed up and down as the locust." From one tribunal to another, as the locust carried from place to place, ^{<02102>}**Exodus 10:12, 19**.

Secondly, he reasons from his bodily debility.

1. "My knees are weak through fasting." The little sustenance Christ took before his passion and his watching in prayer all night.

2. "And my flesh faileth of fatness," through the excess of his fatigue, and the anguish of his Spirit: thus he could not bear his cross.

3. A third reason why God should pity and deliver is drawn from the opprobrious usage and the scorn they put upon him, than which there is nothing more painful to an ingenuous and noble nature: "I am become also a reproach unto them," &c. The *four* Gospels are an ample comment upon this verse.

The second part of his prayer is for a speedy resurrection: "Help me, O Lord my God: O save me," &c. And he supports his petition with a strong reason, drawn from the final cause: "Save me, that they may know," &c. That all men, the Jews especially may be convinced by my rising again, in despite of the watch and the seal, that it was not their malice and power that brought me to this ignominious death, but that my passion, suffering, and death proceeded from thy hand: "By his resurrection he was declared," ^{<50104>}**Romans 1:4**. And in the close of his prayer he sings a triumph over his enemies, the *devil*, *Judas*, the *Jews*, those bitter enemies, to him and his Church.

1. "Let them curse." Speak evil of me and my followers.

2. "But bless thou." Bless all nations that have faith in me.

3. "When they arise." For, 1. Arise they will, and endeavour by every means to destroy my kingdom; 2. But "let them be ashamed." Confounded that their wishes are frustrated.

4. "But let thy servant (which condition Christ took upon himself) rejoice;" because thy name is thereby glorified.

And he continues his execrations by way of explanation. "Let mine adversaries," &c, be confounded at the last day, for their ingratitude and malice, before angels and men.

IV. He closes all with thanks, which he opposes to the confusion of the wicked.

1. "I will greatly praise the Lord." With affection and a great jubilee.

2. "I will praise him among the multitude." Before all the world.

For which he assigns this reason,—

1. "He shall stand at the right hand of the poor." That is, such as are *poor in spirit*, who ask and find mercy from God: to such I will be as a shield and buckler.

2. "I will stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him," &c. From the devil and all his instruments. Christ is the all-covering shield of his Church: "He hath blotted out the handwriting of ordinances," &c. So that, *cum a mundo damnamur, a Christo ab solvemur*. "When we are condemned by the world, we are absolved by Christ."

PSALMS

PSALM 110

The Messiah sits in his kingdom at the right hand of God, his enemies being subdued under him, 1, 2. The nature and extent of his government, 3. His everlasting priesthood, 4. His execution of justice and judgment, 5, 6. The reason on which all this is founded, his passion and exaltation, 7.

NOTES ON PSALM 110

The *Hebrew*, and all the *Versions*, except the *Arabic*, attribute this Psalm to *David*: nor can this be doubted, as it is thus attributed in the New Testament; see the places in the margin. We have in it the celebration of some great potentates accession to the crown; but the subject is so grand, the expressions so noble, and the object raised so far above what can be called *human*, that no history has ever mentioned a prince to whom a literal application of this Psalm can be made. To Jesus Christ alone, to his everlasting priesthood and government, as King of kings and Lord of lords, can it be applied.

The *Jews*, aware of the advantage which the Christian religion must derive from this Psalm, have laboured hard and in vain to give it a contrary sense. Some have attributed it to *Eliezer*, the servant or steward of Abraham; and state that he composed it on the occasion of his master's victory over the *four kings* at the valley of *Shaveh*, ^{<01144>} **Genesis 14:14-17**. Others say it was done by *David*, in commemoration of his victory over the Philistines. Others make *Solomon* the author. Some refer it to *Hezekiah*, and others to *Zerubbabel*, &c.: but the bare reading of the Psalm will show the vanity of these pretensions. A King is described here who is *David's* Lord, and sits at the right hand of God; a conqueror, reigning at Jerusalem, King from all eternity—having an everlasting priesthood, Judge of all nations, triumphing over all potentates, indefatigable in all his operations, and successful in all his enterprises. Where has there ever appeared a prince in whom all these characters met? There never was one, nor is it possible that there ever can be one such, the Person excepted to whom the Psalm is applied by the authority of the Holy Spirit himself. That the Jews who lived in the time of our Lord believed this Psalm to have been written by David, and that it spoke of the Messiah alone, is evident from this, that when our Lord quoted it, and drew arguments from it in favour of his mission,

◀1020▶ **Matthew 22:42**, they did not attempt to gainsay it. St. *Peter*, ▶4023▶ **Acts 2:34**, and St. *Paul*, ▶461525▶ **1 Corinthians 15:25**; ▶80113▶ **Hebrews 1:13; 5:6, 10; 7:17; 10:12, 13**, apply it to show that Jesus is the Messiah. Nor was there any attempt to contradict them; not even an intimation that they had misapplied it, or mistaken its meaning. Many of the later Jews also have granted that it applied to the *Messiah*, though they dispute its application to Jesus of Nazareth. All the critics and commentators whom I have consulted apply it to our Lord; nor does it appear to me to be capable of interpretation on any other ground. Before I proceed to take a general view of it, I shall set down the chief of the *various readings* found in the MSS. on this Psalm.

Ver. 1. *Said unto my Lord*. Instead of **yndal ladoni**, “my Lord,” one MS. seems to have read **hwyl layhovah**, “Jehovah said unto Jehovah, ‘Sit thou on my right hand,’” &c. See *Deuteronomy Rossi*.

Thy footstool. **Ëyl grl µdh hadom leragleycha**, “the footstool to thy feet.” But *eight* MSS. drop the prefix **l le**; and read the word in the *genitive* case, with the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, and *Arabic*. Many also read the word in the *singular* number.

Ver. 3. Instead of **vdq yrdhb behadrey kodesh**, “in the beauties of holiness,” **vdq yrrhb beharerey kodesh**, “in the mountains of holiness,” is the reading of *thirty-four* of *Kennicott’s* MSS., and *fifty-three* of those of *Deuteronomy Rossi*, and also of several printed editions.

Instead of **Ëtdl y yaldutheca**, “of thy youth,” **Ëytdl y yaladticha**, “I have begotten thee,” is the reading, as to the *consonants*, of *sixty-two* of *Kennicott’s* and *twenty-three* of *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS., and of some ancient editions, with the *Septuagint*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*.

Ver. 4. *After the order*, **ytrbd l [al dibrathi, wtrbd dibratho**, “HIS order,” is the reading of *twelve* of *Kennicott’s* and *Deuteronomy Rossi’s* MSS.

Ver. 5. *The Lord*, **ynda adonai**: but **hwyl Yehovah** is the reading of a great number of the MSS. in the above collections.

Ver. 6. Instead of **µywgµ baggoyim**, “among the heathens” or *nations*, **µywg goyim**, “he shall judge the *heathen*,” is the reading of one ancient MS.

Instead of **var rosh**, “the head,” **yvar rashey**, “the heads,” is the reading of one MS., with the *Chaldee, Septuagint, Vulgate, and Anglo-Saxon*.

Ver. 7. For **pyry yarim**, “he shall lift up,” **pwry yarom**, “shall be lifted up,” is the reading of six MSS. and the *Syriac*.

Instead of **var rosh**, “THE head,” **wvar rosho**, “HIS head,” is the reading of two MSS. and the *Syriac*.

A few add **hy wl l h halelu Yah**, “Praise ye Jehovah;” but this was probably taken from the beginning of the following Psalm.

The learned *Venema* has taken great pains to expound this Psalm: he considers it a Divine oracle, partly relating to David’s Lord, and partly to David himself.

1. David’s Lord is here inducted to the highest honour, regal and sacerdotal, with the promise of a most flourishing kingdom, founded in Zion, but extending *every where*, till every enemy should be subdued.
2. David is here promised God’s protection; that his enemies shall never prevail against him; but he must go through many sufferings in order to reach a state of glory.
3. The time in which this oracle or prophecy was delivered was probably a little after the time when David had brought home the ark, and before he had his wars with the neighbouring idolatrous nations. The kingdom was *confirmed* in his hand; but it was not yet *extended* over the neighbouring nations.

Verse 1. The Lord said unto my Lord] *Jehovah* said unto my *Adonai*. That David’s Lord is the Messiah, is confirmed by our Lord himself and by the apostles Peter and Paul, as we have already seen.

Sit thou at my right hand] This implies the possession of the utmost confidence, power, and preeminence.

Until I make thine enemies] Jesus shall reign till all his enemies are subdued under him. Jesus Christ, as GOD, ever dwelt in the fulness of the Godhead; but it was as *God—man* that, after his resurrection, he was raised to the *right hand of the Majesty on high*, ever to appear in the presence of God for us.

Verse 2. The rod of thy strength] *The Gospel*—the doctrine of Christ crucified; which is the powerful sceptre of the Lord that bought us; is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; and is the power of God to salvation to all them that believe.

The kingdom of our Lord was to be founded in Zion, and thence, by gradual conquests, to be extended over the whole earth. It was in Zion the preaching of the Gospel first began; and it is by the Gospel that Christ rules, even in the midst of his enemies; for the Gospel extends a moralizing influence over multitudes who do not receive it to their salvation.

Verse 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power] This verse has been wofully perverted. It has been supposed to point out the irresistible operation of the grace of God on the souls of the elect, thereby making them willing to receive Christ as their Saviour. Now, whether this doctrine be true or false, it is not in this text, nor can it receive the smallest countenance from it. There has been much spoken against the doctrine of what is called *free will* by persons who seem not to have understood the term. *Will* is a free principle. *Free will* is as absurd as *bound will*, it is not *will* if it be *not free*; and if it be *bound* it is no *will*. *Volition* is essential to the being of the soul, and to all rational and intellectual beings. This is the most essential discrimination between *matter* and *spirit*. MATTER can have no *choice*; SPIRIT has. Ratiocination is essential to intellect; and from these *volition* is inseparable. God uniformly treats *man* as a *free agent*; and on this principle the whole of Divine revelation is constructed, as is also the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. If man be *forced* to believe, *he* believes not at all; it is the *forcing power* that believes, not the *machine* forced. If he be forced to *obey*, it is the forcing power that *obeys*; and he, as a machine, shows only the effect of this irresistible force. If man be incapable of *willing good*, and *nilling evil*, he is incapable of being *saved* as a rational being; and if he acts only under an *overwhelming compulsion*, he is as incapable of being damned. In short, this doctrine reduces him either to a *punctum stans*, which by the *vis inertiae* is incapable of being moved but as acted upon by foreign influence; or, as an intellectual being, to nonentity. “But if the text supports the doctrine laid upon it, vain are all these reasonings.” *Granted*. Let us examine the text. The Hebrew words are the following: **Ēl yj μwyb tbdn Ēm**[*ammecha nedaboth beyom cheylecha*, which literally translated are, *Thy princely people, or free people, in the day of thy power*; and are thus paraphrased by the *Chaldee*:

“Thy people, O house of Israel, who willingly labour in the law, thou shalt be helped by them in the day that thou goest to battle.”

The *Syriac* has: “This praiseworthy people in the day of thy power.”

The *Vulgate*: “With thee is the principle or origin (*principium*) in the day of thy power.” And this is referred, by its interpreters, to the Godhead of Christ; and they illustrate it by ^{<43010>}**John 1:1**: *In principio erat Verbum*, “In the beginning was the Word.”

The *Septuagint* is the same; and they use the word as St. John has it in the Greek text: *μετα σου η αρχη εν ημερα της δυναμεως σου*, “With thee is the Arche, or principle, in the day of thy power.”

The *Æthiopic* is the same; and the *Arabic* nearly so, but rather more express: “The government, [*Arabic*] *riasad*, exists with thee in the day of thy power.”

The *Anglo-Saxon*, [A.S.]. With thee the principle in day of thy greatness.”

The old *Psalter*, ~~With the begynnyns in day of thi vertu~~. Which it thus paraphrases: “I, the fader begynnyng with the, begynnyng I and thou, an begynnyng of al thyng in day of thi vertu.”

Coverdale thus: “In the day of thy power shal my people offre the free-will offeringes with a holy worship.” So *Tindal*, *Cardmarden*, *Beck*, and the *Liturgic Version*.

The *Bible* printed by *Barker*, the king’s printer, 4to. Lond. 1615, renders the whole verse thus: “Thy people *shall come* willingly at the time of *assembling* thine army in the holy beauty; the youth of thy womb *shall be* as the morning dew.”

By the authors of the *Universal History*, vol. iii., p. 223, the whole passage is thus explained: “The Lord shall send the rod, or sceptre, of thy power out of Sion,” i.e., out of the tribe of Judah: compare ^{<01491>}**Genesis 49:20**, and ^{<19768>}**Psalm 78:68**. “Rule thou over thy free-will people;” for none, but such are fit to be Christ’s subjects: see ^{<01129>}**Matthew 11:29**. “In the midst of thine enemies,” Jews and heathens; or, in a spiritual sense, the world, the flesh, and the devil. “In the day of thy power,” i.e., when all power shall be given him, both in heaven and earth; ^{<02818>}**Matthew 28:18**. “In the beauties of holiness,” which is the peculiar characteristic of Christ’s reign, and of his religion.

None of the *ancient Versions*, nor of our *modern translations*, give any sense to the words that countenances the doctrine above referred to; it merely expresses the character of the people who shall constitute the kingdom of Christ. **bdn nadab** signifies to be *free, liberal, willing, noble*; and especially *liberality in bringing offerings to the Lord*, ^{<1231>}**Exodus 25:2; 35:21, 29**. And **bydn nadib** signifies a *nobleman, a prince*, ^{<1821>}**Job 21:8**; and also *liberality*. **hbdn nedabah** signifies a *free-will offering*-an offering made by superabundant gratitude; one *not commanded*: see ^{<1231>}**Exodus 36:3**; ^{<1871>}**Leviticus 7:16**, and elsewhere. Now the **twbdn μ[am nedaboth** is the people of liberality-the princely, noble, and generous people; Christ's real subjects; his own children, who form his Church, and are the salt of the world; the bountiful people, who live only to get good from God that they may do good to man. Is there, has there ever been, any religion under heaven that has produced the *liberality*, the *kindness*, the *charity*, that characterize *Christianity*? Well may the followers of Christ be termed the *am nedaboth*-the cheerfully beneficent people. They *hear* his call, come *freely*, stay *willingly*, act *nobly*, live *purely*, and obey *cheerfully*.

The *day of Christ's power* is the time of the Gospel, the reign of the Holy Spirit in the souls of his people. *Whenever and wherever* the Gospel is preached in sincerity and purity, *then and there* is the day or time of Christ's power. It is the time of his exaltation. The days of his *flesh* were the days of his *weakness*; the time of his *exaltation* is the day of his *power*.

In the beauties of holiness] **vdq yrdhb** *behadrey kodesh*, "In the splendid garments of holiness." An allusion to the beautiful garments of the high priest. Whatever is intended or expressed by superb garments, they possess, in holiness of heart and life, indicative of their Divine birth, noble dispositions, courage, &c. Their garb is such as becomes the children of so great a King. Or, They shall appear on *the mountains of holiness*, bringing glad tidings to Zion.

From the womb of the morning] As the *dew* flows from the womb of the morning, so shall all the godly from thee. They are *the dew of thy youth*; they are the *offspring* of thy own *nativity*. As the human nature of our Lord was begotten by the creative energy of God in the womb of the Virgin; so the followers of God are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but by the Divine Spirit.

Youth may be put here, not only for *young men*, but for *soldiers*;—so the *Trojana juventus* “the Trojan troops,” or *soldiers*, in Virgil, *Æn.* i. ver. 467;—and for persons, courageous, heroic, strong, active, and vigorous. Such were the apostles, and first preachers of the Gospel; and, indeed, all genuine Christians. They may be fully compared to *dew*, for the following reasons:—

1. Like dew, they had their origin from heaven.
2. Like dew, they fructified the earth.
3. Like dew, they were innumerable.
4. Like dew, they were diffused over the earth.
5. Like dew, they came from the morning; the *dawn*, the *beginning* of the *Gospel day* of salvation.

1. As the morning arises in the EAST, and the *sun*, which produces it, proceeds to the WEST; so was the coming of the Son of man, and of his disciples and apostles.

2. They began in the EAST—Asia Proper and Asia Minor; and shone unto the WEST—Europe, America, &c. Scarcely any part of the world has been hidden from the bright and enlivening power of the Sun of Righteousness; and *now* this glorious sun is walking in the greatness of its strength.

*Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land.*

*Lo, the promise of a shower
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
All the spirit of his love.*

The heavenly dew is dropping every where from the womb of the morning; and all the ends of the earth are about to see the salvation of God.

Verse 4. The Lord hath sworn] Has most firmly purposed, and will most certainly perform it, feeling himself bound by his *purpose*, as an *honest man* would by his *oath*.

And will not repent] Will never change this purpose; it is perfectly without condition, and without contingency. Nothing is left here to the will of man or angel. Christ shall be incarnated, and the Gospel of his salvation

shall be preached over the whole earth. This is an *irresistible decree* of that God who loves mankind.

Thou art a priest for ever] The word ^hnk *cohen* signifies, not only a *priest*, but also a *prince*; as, in the patriarchal times, most heads of families had and exercised both *political* and *sacerdotal authority* over all their descendants. Every priest had a *threefold* office: 1. He was an *instructor* of the family or tribe over which he presided. 2. He *offered sacrifices* for the sins of the people, to reconcile them to God, and give them access to his presence. 3. He was their *mediator*, and interceded for them. So is Christ, the grand, the universal *Instructor*, by his word and Spirit; the *Lamb of God*, who, by his *sacrificial offering* of himself, takes away the sin of the world, and still continues to exhibit himself before the throne in his sacrificial character; and also the great *Mediator* between God and man: and in these characters he is a *PRIEST for ever*. He will instruct, apply the sacrificial offering, and intercede for man, till time shall be no more.

After the order of Melchizedek.] For the elucidation of this point, the reader is requested to refer to the notes on ^{<0148>}**Genesis 14:18, 19**, See **Clarke** “^{<0148>}**Genesis 14:18**”; “^{<0149>}**Genesis 14:19**” and to the *observations* at the end of that chapter, see **Clarke** “^{<0142>}**Genesis 14:24**”, where the subject, relative to the *person, name, and office* of this ancient king, is fully discussed; and it will be necessary to read that note, &c., as if appended to this place.

Melchizedek was *king of Salem*, that is, *king of Jerusalem*; for *Salem* was its ancient name: but ^{ml} c *salem* signifies *peace*, and ^{qdx} *tsedek*, *righteousness*. Christ is styled the *Prince of peace*; and he is the *king* that rules in the empire of righteousness; and all *peace* and *righteousness* proceed from him, ^{<807>}**Hebrews 7:2**.

He is *priest after the order of Melchizedek*—after his *pattern*; in the same kind or manner of way in which this ancient king was priest.

Calmet properly observes that there were *three orders* of priesthood. 1. That of *royalty*. All ancient kings being, in virtue of their office, *priests* also. This seems to have been considered as the *natural right* of royalty, as it obtained in almost every nation of the earth, from the beginning of the world down to the end of the Roman empire. 2. That of the *first-born*. This right appertained naturally to Reuben, as the first-born in the family of Jacob. 3. That of the *Levites*, instituted by God himself, and taken from

Reuben, because of his transgression. The Levitical *priesthood* ended with the *Jewish polity*; and that also of the *first-born*, which had been absorbed in it. This *order*, therefore, was not perpetual; it was intended to last only for a time. But that of *royalty* is perpetual, though not now in general use, because founded in what is called *natural right*. It is, therefore, according to this most ancient order, that Christ is a Priest for ever. The kings of England as *heads of the Church* appointing all bishops, continue to assume, in a certain way, this original right.

Melchizedek is said to be “without father without mother, without beginning of days, or end of life.” We have no account of his *parents*; nothing of his *birth*; nothing of his *death*. Christ, as to his Divine nature, is without father or mother, and without beginning of days; nor can he have any end. Other priests could not continue by reason of death; but he is the Eternal, he cannot die, and therefore can have no successor: “*He is a priest FOR EVER.*” Therefore, as Melchizedek was a priest and a king, and had no successor, so shall Christ be: of the increase and government of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Melchizedek was *priest of the Most High God*; and consequently not of *one people* or *nation*, but of the *universe*. Aaron was priest of *one people*, and for a *time* only; JESUS is priest of *all mankind*, and *for ever*. He tasted death for every man; he is the King eternal; he has the keys of hell and of death. As God is the King and Governor of all human beings, Christ, being the *priest of the Most High God*, must also be the *priest for and over* all whom this most high God made and governs; and therefore he is the priest, the atoning sacrifice, of the *whole human race*. In this the main similitude consists between the *order of Melchizedek* and *that of Christ*.

Verse 5. The Lord at thy right hand] Here *Venema* thinks the Psalm speaks of *David*. As Jesus is at the right hand of God, so he will be at thy hand, giving thee all the support and comfort requisite.

Shall strike through kings] As he did in the case of Abraham, ^{<0140>}**Genesis 14:1-16**, (for to this there seems to be an allusion,) where he smote *four kings*, and *filled the pits* with the *dead bodies* of their troops. That the allusion is to the above transaction seems the most probable; because in the same chapter, where the *defeat of the four kings* is mentioned, we have the account of *Melchizedek coming to meet Abraham*, and receiving the *tenth of the spoils*.

Verse 6. He shall judge among the heathen] David shall greatly extend his dominion, and rule over the *Idumeans, Moabites, Philistines, &c.*

He shall fill—with the dead bodies] He shall fill pits—make heaps of slain; there shall be an immense slaughter among his enemies.

He shall wound the heads] He shall so bring down the power of all the neighbouring kings, as to cause them to acknowledge him as their lord, and pay him tribute.

Verse 7. He shall drink of the brook in the way] He shall have sore travail, and but little ease and refreshment: but he shall still go *on* from conquering to conquer.

Therefore shall he lift up the head.] Or *his head*. He shall succeed in all his enterprises, and at last be peaceably settled in his ample dominions.

But these verses, as well as the former, may be applied to our Lord. The fifth verse may be an address to Jehovah: *Adonai at thy right hand, O Jehovah, shall smite kings*—bring down all powers hostile to his empire, *in the day of his wrath*—when, after having borne long, he arises and shakes terribly the rulers of the earth.

Ver. 6. *He shall judge*, give laws, *among the heathen*—send his Gospel to the whole *Gentile world*. *He shall fill* the field of battle with the dead bodies of the slain, who had resisted his empire, and would not have him to reign over them.

He shall wound the heads over many countries.—This must be spoken against some person possessing a very extensive sway. Perhaps Antichrist is meant; he who has so *many countries* under his *spiritual domination*. Christ shall destroy every person, and every thing, which opposes the universal spread of his own empire. He will be a *King*, as well as a *Priest* for ever.

Ver. 7. *He shall drink of the brook*—he shall suffer sorely, and even *die* in the struggle: but in that death his enemies shall all perish; and *he shall lift up the head*—he shall rise again from the dead, possessing all power in heaven and earth, *ascend* to the throne of glory, and reign till time shall be no more. He must suffer and die, in order to have the *triumphs* already mentioned.

While all have acknowledged that this Psalm is of the utmost importance, and that it speaks of Christ's *priesthood* and *victories*, it is amazing how various the interpretations are which are given of different passages. I have endeavoured to give the general sense in the preceding notes, and to explain all the particular expressions that have been thought most *difficult*: and by giving the *various readings* from the MSS., have left it to the learned reader to make farther improvements.

It has, however, long appeared to me that there is a *key* by which all the difficulties in the Psalm may be unlocked. As this has not been suggested by any other, as far as I know, I shall without apology lay it before the reader:—

The hundred and tenth Psalm is a WAR SONG, and every phrase and term in it is MILITARY.

1. In the *first* place may be considered here the *proclamation* of the *Divine purpose* relative to the *sacerdotal, prophetic, and regal offices* of the LORD JESUS CHRIST: “*Jehovah said unto my Lord, SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND.*”

2. A grievous *battle*, and consequent *victory* over the enemy, foretold: I WILL MAKE THINE ENEMIES THE FOOTSTOOL TO THY FEET, ~~1930B~~ **Psalm 110:1.**

3. The *ensign* displayed: “THE LORD SHALL SEND FORTH THE ROD OF THY STRENGTH; the *pole* on which the banner shall be *displayed*, at the *head* of his *strength*-his numerous and *powerful forces*.”

4. The *inscription, device, or motto* on this *ensign*: “RULE THOU IN THE MIDST OF THINE ENEMIES,” ~~1930B~~ **Psalm 110:2.**

5. The *muster of the troops*. A host of bold, spirited *volunteers*; not *mercenaries*, neither *kidnapped* nor *impressed*; but **twbdn μ[am nedaboth**, a volunteer people; high-born, loyal subjects; veteran soldiers; every man *bringing gifts* to his General and King.

6. The *regimentals* or *uniform* in which they shall appear: “THE BEAUTIES OF HOLINESS;

vdq yr dh *hadrey kodesh, the splendid garments of holiness*. The apparel showing the *richness* of the King, and the *worth* and *order* of the *soldiers*; every man being determined to do his duty, and feeling assured of

conquest. The Lacedæmonian soldiers were clothed in *scarlet*; and never went to battle without *crowns* and *garlands* upon their heads, being always sure of victory. *Potter's Ant.*, vol. ii., p. 55.

7. The *number* of the troops: THEY SHALL BE AS THE DROPS OF DEW AT BREAK OF DAY:—*innumerable*; and this shall be in consequence **Ĕtdl y yalduthecha**, of *thy nativity*—the *manifestation of Jesus*. THOU shalt be born unto *men*; THEY shall be born of *thy Spirit*, ^{<191013>}**Psalm 110:3**.

8. The *title* of the *commander*: “THOU ART A PRIEST,” **ˆhk** *cohen*, a *Priest* and a *Prince*. So was *Agamemnon* in *Homer*, and *Æneas* in *Virgil*. Both were *princes*; both were *priests* and both were *heroes*.

9. The *perpetuity* of this office: “FOR EVER;” **μl w[l** *leolam*, for *futurity*—for *all time*-till the earth and the heavens are no more.

10. The *resolution* of *setting up* such a *Priest* and *King*, and *levying* such an *army*: ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK. The *Commander*, *muster*, and *establishment* of the *corps* shall be according to the *plan* of that *ancient king* and *priest*; or, translating the words literally, **qdx ykl m ytrbd l [** *al dabarti malki tsedek*, all shall be executed as *I have spoken to my righteous king*; I have sworn, and will not change my purpose. All my purposes shall be fulfilled. This *speaking* may refer to the *purpose*, ^{<191014>}**Psalm 110:1**, confirmed by an *oath*, ^{<191015>}**Psalm 110:4**.

11. *Victory* gained: ADONAI AT THY RIGHT HAND HATH TRANSFIXED (**xj m machats**) *KINGS* IN THE DAY OF HIS WRATH, i.e., of *battle* and *victory*. Jesus, the Almighty King and Conqueror, fights and gains his battles, while *sitting* at the *right hand* of the *Majesty on high*, ^{<191016>}**Psalm 110:5**.

12. *Judgment* instituted and executed: “HE SHALL JUDGE AMONG THE HEATHEN,” **μygb** *baggoyim*, among the *nations*. He shall bring forth, judge, and condemn his enemies; and he shall *fill pits with the bodies* of executed criminals, ^{<191017>}**Psalm 110:6**.

13. *False religion*, supporting itself by the *secular arm*, under the name of *true religion*, shall be destroyed. **hbr xra l [var xj m machats rosh al erets rabbah**; “He smites the head that is over an extensive land” or country. The *priesthood* that is not according to the *order of Melchizedek* shall be destroyed; and all *government* that is not according to him who is

the eternal King and Priest, shall be brought down and annihilated. Who is this great HEAD? this *usurping power*? this *antichristian authority*? Let the Italian archbishop answer, ^{<39016>}**Psalm 110:6**.

14. *Refreshment* and *rest*, the fruits of the victories which have been gained: “HE SHALL DRINK OF THE BROOK IN THE WAY; THEREFORE, SHALL HE LIFT UP THE HEAD.” He and his victorious army, having defeated and pursued his enemies, and being spent with fatigue and thirst, are refreshed by drinking from a rivulet providentially met with in the way. But the rout being now complete and final,

15. The emperor is proclaimed and *triumphs*: *God lifts up the HEAD*,—**var** *rosh*, the CHIEF, the CAPTAIN; as the word often means. Jesus, the *Captain of our salvation*, has a complete *triumph*; eternal peace and tranquillity are established. The *Messiah* is all in all—the last enemy, *Death*, is destroyed. Jesus, having overcome, has sat down with the Father upon his throne; and his *soldiers*, having also overcome through the blood of the Lamb, seated with him on the same throne, are for ever with the Lord. They *see him as he is*; and eternally contemplate and enjoy his glory:—

*“Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.”*

Hallelujah! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Amen, Amen.

ANALYSIS OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH PSALM

This Psalm is short in appearance, but deep and copious in mysteries. The subject, without doubt, is *Christ*; since both *St. Peter* (^{<40234>}**Acts 2:34**) and *St. Paul* (^{<30113>}**Hebrews 1:13**) expound it of *Christ*; and in ^{<40244>}**Matthew 22:44**, *Christ* applies it to himself.

In this Psalm *Christ* is described as a Priest and a King.

- I. *Christ*'s kingdom, in the three first verses.
- II. His priesthood, from the fourth to the seventh.

I. In reference to his kingdom the prophet acquaints us, 1. With his person; 2. With his power, and the acquisition of it; 3. The continuance of it; 4. The execution of it—First, Over his enemies; Secondly, Over his own people, which is the sum of the three first verses.

1. The person who was to reign was David's Lord; his son according to the flesh, but his Lord as equal to God; ^{<50176>}**Philippians 2:6, 7**. As made flesh, and born of a virgin, the son of David; but as *Immanuel*, the Lord of David, which the Jews not understanding could not reply to Christ's question, ^{<4026>}**Matthew 22:45**.

2. As to his power, the Author of it was God: "The Lord said to my Lord," &c. Decreed it from everlasting. And again, "The Seed of the woman," &c.

3. And of his kingdom. He took possession, when the Lord said unto him, "Sit thou on my right hand." Christ, as the Son of God, was ever at God's right hand, equal to him in might and majesty; but, as man, was exalted to honour, not before his glorious ascension, ^{<40234>}**Acts 2:34**; ^{<40120>}**Ephesians 1:20**; ^{<50189>}**Philippians 2:9**.

4. For the continuance of it. It is to be UNTIL, which notes, not a portion of time, but a perpetuity. "Sit TILL *I* make, &c. Sit at God's right hand, that is, in power and glory, till he shall say to all the wicked, "Depart from me," ^{<40241>}**Matthew 25:41**, but not so as to be then dethroned. But when once all his enemies shall be made his footstool, then he shall visibly rule, "sitting at his Father's right hand for evermore;" go on to reign, neither desist to propagate and enlarge thy kingdom, till all men bow the knee to thy name, till all opponents be overthrown.

The beginning of this kingdom was in Zion: "The Lord shall send." &c.

1. The rod of his power was his sceptre; that is, "His word, the Gospel, the wisdom of God," ^{<50123>}**1 Thessalonians 2:13**; "The sword of the Spirit," ^{<40617>}**Ephesians 6:17**; "The mighty power of God," &c., ^{<40116>}**Romans 1:16**.

2. And this was to be sent out of *Zion*, ^{<5018>}**Isaiah 2:3**. "It behoved Christ to suffer," &c., ^{<40246>}**Luke 24:46**. The sound of the apostle's words went into all lands; but *Zion* must first hear, ^{<44346>}**Acts 13:46**.

And now the prophet comes to the execution of his power: "Rule thou in the midst," &c. Converting all such as believe his Gospel, and confounding those who will not have him to reign over them. Now these enemies are the most in number; for the Church however greatly increased, is still surrounded by Turks, Jews, &c. *Rule* thou; be thou Ruler; go on, and set up thy standard universally; for believers are easily dealt with; they love thy government.

1. “For thy people shall be willing.” Not forced by compulsion; “they shall flow together as water,” ~~2:3~~ **Isaiah 2:3.**

2. But not before thy grace has brought down their hearts: “In the day of thy power,” that is, in the days of thy solemn assemblies, when the Gospel light shall be sent forth, and the apostles and messengers go abroad to preach thy truth.

3. The third quality of this good people is, “that they be holy.” For some read the words thus: “They shall offer freewill-offerings with a holy worship.” Our last translators point it, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” Here they pause, and read on thus: “In the beauty of holiness from the womb of the morning.” The *Vulgate*, *In splendoribus sanctorum*, “In the splendour of the saints,” and stops there; but let the reading be as it will, all expositors are agreed that holiness must be the ornament of Christ’s Church:—

4. Which sanctity these good people have not from themselves, but by the influence of the Holy Spirit, for “they shall worship in the beauty,” &c. This is a very difficult place, and the rendering of it is so various, so perplexed by the several modes of pointing it, that the difficulty is increased. But see the notes. The fathers expound this passage of Christ himself, and the later divines, of his people, which is most probable. By their *youth* they understand their regeneration; by the *dews*, the graces bestowed on them; which come immediately from God. The prophet phrases it, “From the womb of the morning.” As if the Holy Ghost had said, “The preaching of thy word shall bring forth a great and good people, plentiful as the drops of the morning dew. As the secret and refreshing dews come from heaven to refresh the earth, so thy power, regenerating the hearts of men by the secret operation of thy Holy Spirit, shall produce an immortal seed, children begotten to God. ‘Thou hast the dew,’ the grace of God, to beautify thy youth, and to make them holy by the direct influence of thy Spirit, to produce entire regeneration.”

II. The prophet, having foretold Christ’s kingdom, now predicts his priesthood, under which his prophetic office may be implied. That Messiah was to be a priest at his coming, God sware:—

1. “The Lord sware.” His word of assurance was given with his oath. In the priesthood of Christ lies the main weight of our redemption; therefore

God swears that he shall be a priest to offer himself, and to intercede for us, without which he had in vain been our Prophet and our King.

2. “And will not repent.” This is also added for our greater assurance. God is sometimes represented as repenting, as in the case of *Nineveh*; but now that he was to save the world by this Priest, his Son, he takes an oath to do it, and he will not repent. His sentence for judgment is ever conditional; but his decree for mercy is absolute. “He will not repent,” &c.

The matter of the oath follows: “Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

1. *Thou* is emphatical: *Thou—David’s* Lord, art a Priest, and none such a Priest as *thou*.
2. *Art*; for this priest was the *I am*; therefore, justly said, *Thou art*.
3. *A Priest*; whose office the apostle describes, ^{<S806>}**Hebrews 5:1**.
4. *For ever*—Not as Aaron and his successors, who were priests, &c., ^{<S872>}**Hebrews 7:23, 24**.
5. *After the order*—The right, the law, the custom, the rites. See the notes.
6. *Of Melchizedek*.—Which is opposed to the order of *Aaron*. He was not then to be a priest after the order of *Aaron* but by a former and higher order.

The difference lies in this:—

1. In the constitution of him to the priesthood. He was made with an oath; and so were not any of Aaron’s order, ^{<S871>}**Hebrews 7:20, 21**.
2. In the succession. In Aaron’s priesthood, the high priest, being mortal, died, and another succeeded; but this priest, as *Melchizedek*, “had neither beginning of days nor end of life,” ^{<S873>}**Hebrews 7:3**.
3. *Melchizedek* was priest and king: so was Christ. *Aaron* was only a priest.
4. “Aaron and his sons offered up oxen,” &c., ^{<B166>}**Leviticus 16:6**. “But Christ, being holy,” &c., offered no sacrifice for *himself*, but for *our* sins, ^{<S839>}**Isaiah 53:9**.
5. “Aaron was a local priest; but Christ an universal priest,” ^{<B422>}**John 4:22**.

6. “Aaron was anointed with material oil; Christ, with the Holy Ghost,”
<Q118> **Luke 4:18, 21.**

7. “Aaron’s priesthood was temporary; Christ’s for ever.”

A priest is to be,—

1. A person taken from among men, but select, fit for the office; thus was Christ a perfect man.

2. A priest must be ordained by God: “For no man,” &c. “So Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest.” “Thou art my Son,” &c.

3. The high priest was ordained of men in things pertaining to God, to be their advocate, mediator, interpreter, and reconciler, in all those things in which men make their addresses to God, or God is to signify his will to them; and so was Christ, for he is the Advocate, the Mediator for his people; he reconciles them to God, he interprets his will to us by preaching his Gospel to the poor.

4. The high priest was ordained that he might offer gifts and sacrifices for sin. Their sacrifices were the blood of bulls, &c.; but Christ was most infinitely precious, even *his own blood*, <Q119> **Ephesians 5:2;** <S0126> **Hebrews 9:26; 10:10-12.**

5. The high priest must have compassion on the ignorant, and those who are out of the way; such was Christ: “For we have not,” &c., <S0115> **Hebrews 4:15.**

6. Lastly, the high priest was compassed with infirmities; and so was Christ: “In all things it became him,” &c. “He took our infirmities,” &c.

It remains now to show,—

1. How he is “a priest for ever?”

2. How a priest “after the order of Melchizedek?”

He is “a priest for ever,” in respect to his person, office, and effect.

1. In respect of his person and office. For he succeeded no priest, his vocation being immediate. Neither is any to succeed him in this priesthood; “for he lives for ever,” and therefore needs not, as the priests under the old law, any successor to continue his priesthood.

2. A priest he is for ever in respect of the effect: because by that sacrifice which he once offered on the cross he purchased the inestimable effects of redemption and eternal salvation, in which sense the priesthood is eternal.

“That Christ is a priest for ever” is evident; but it remains to be shown how he is *a priest after the order*-the rite, the manner, the word, and power given and prescribed to *Melchizedek*.

1. This *Melchizedek* was king of *Salem*, and priest of the most high God, ^{<01418>}**Genesis 14:18**; so was Christ a King of *Jerusalem* above, God’s own city, and a priest, “offering himself a sacrifice for sin.”

2. *Melchizedek* is by interpretation *king of righteousness*; so is Christ *the Lord our righteousness*, ^{<2236>}**Jeremiah 23:6**; ^{<40130>}**1 Corinthians 1:30**.

3. *Melchizedek* is *king of Salem*, i.e., peace; so Christ is the Prince of peace, ^{<2306>}**Isaiah 9:6**.

4. “Melchizedek was without father or mother;” so was this our priest, as revealed by God to us, “without beginning of days or end of life,” as touching his Godhead.

5. “Melchizedek blessed Abraham;” so Christ us “in turning every one of us away from his iniquities.”

6. “Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine to refresh Abraham’s army;” so Christ instituted the sacrament, set forth in bread and wine, to refresh the hungry and thirsty souls of his genuine followers.

After the prophet had said “that the Messiah shall be a priest,” &c., he intimates in this verse that, notwithstanding all opposition that shall be made against him, yet his priesthood should be eternal; for,

1. “The Lord is on thy right hand.” Giving thee power in defence of his Church.

2. “And this thy Lord shall strike through kings,” &c. The greatest of thy enemies.

3. “In the day of his wrath.” For such a day there is, and it will come, when the proudest tyrant shall not escape.

In the following verse Christ is described as a valiant conqueror.

1. “He shall rule and judge.” Not only the Jews, but all people.

2. “He shall fill the places,” &c. Make such a slaughter among his enemies, as enraged soldiers do in the storming of a city, when they fill the trenches with the dead bodies.

“He shall wound the heads,” &c. Even kings and monarchs, those in the greatest power and authority.

The prophet, through the whole of the Psalm, had spoken of Christ’s exaltation: that he was set at God’s right hand; by oath was made a priest; and that, in defence of his kingdom and priesthood, he would subdue, conquer, and break to pieces his enemies. In this last verse he tells us by what means he came to this honour: his cross was the way to the crown; his passion and humiliation, to his exaltation: “He,” saith David, “shall drink of the brook by the way; therefore, shall he lift up his head;” as if he had said, with the apostle: “He humbled himself, and became obedient to death,” &c.

1. “He shall drink.” To drink, is to be afflicted, ^{<4912>}**Jeremiah 49:12.**

2. “He shall drink of the brook,” *I j n nachal*, of the torrent; and that is more than of the cup, for a cup contains but a certain portion of sorrows, but a torrent, a whole flood of miseries. In a cup, that which is drunk may be clear and clean; but in a torrent, a man can expect nothing but muddy and troubled water. Thus the prophet intimates here that the drink offered him should be much and troubled. And in his passion he descended into the depth of the torrent, and drank deep of it.

3. “In the way.” On his journey that preceded his resurrection and ascension.

But *claritas humilitatis præmium*, “glory is the reward of humility.” Because he thus humbled himself and willingly underwent his death and passion, for the glory of his Father, and the salvation of man; therefore shall God “lift up his head.” He shall ascend into heaven; sit on his right hand, and be constituted the Judge of quick and dead. He shall rise from the dead and have all power committed to him in heaven and earth.

PSALMS

PSALM 111

The psalmist praises the Lord, and extols his works as great, honourable, glorious, and magnificent, 1-4; his providence and kindness to his followers, 5-8; the redemption he has granted to his people, 9. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, 10.

NOTES ON PSALM 111

This is one of the *alphabetical* or *acrostic* Psalms: but it is rather different from those we have already seen, as the first *eight* verses contain each *two members*; and each member commences with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. But the two last verses are composed of *three members* each, characterized the same way, making *twenty-two members* or hemistichs in the whole, to each of which a consecutive letter of the alphabet is prefixed. But this division is not proper: it should follow the arrangement in the Hebrew poetry, where every hemistich stands by itself, and each contains a complete sense. The Psalm has no *title* in the Hebrew, unless the word *Hallelujah* be considered as such; and the thanksgivings which it contains were probably composed for the benefit of the Jews after their return from captivity.

Verse 1. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart] If we profess to “sing to the praise and glory of God,” the *heart*, and the *whole heart*, without division and distraction, must be employed in the work.

In the assembly] *dwsb besod*, in the *secret assembly*-the *private religious meetings* for the *communion of saints*. And in the *congregation*, *hd[edah*, the *general assembly*-the *public congregation*. There were such meetings as the former ever since God had a Church on the earth; and to convey general information, there must be *public assemblies*.

Verse 2. The works of the Lord are great] *μγl dg gedolim*, *vast in magnitude*; as *μybr rabbim* signifies their *multitude* and *variety*.

Sought out] Investigated, carefully examined.

Of all them that have pleasure therein.] By all that delight in them: by every genuine philosopher; every lover of nature; he who traces out the

great First Cause by means of his works. And the man that does so will be astonished at the perfections of the Creator, and admire all the operations of his hands.

Verse 3. His work is honourable, &c.] He has done nothing in *nature* or *grace* that does not redound to his own honour and glory; and because all is done in *righteousness*, it *endureth for ever*.

Verse 4. He hath made his wonderful works] He who seeks them out will never *forget* them; and every thing of God's framing is done in such a way, as to strike the imagination, interest the senses, and charm and edify the intellect. But the psalmist may here intend principally the works of God in behalf of the Jewish people; and particularly in their deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, which this Psalm is supposed to celebrate.

Verse 5. He hath given meat] אָרַץ *tereph*, PREY. This may allude to the *quails* in the wilderness. The word signifies what is taken in *hunting*—wild beasts, venison, or *fowls* of any kind; particularly such as were proper for food. It also signifies *spoil* taken from enemies. And he may also refer to the wondrous manner in which they were fed and supported during their captivity; and by his support he proved that he was mindful of his covenant. He had promised such blessings; he was faithful to his promises.

Verse 6. The power of his works] They have seen that these things did not arrive in the common course of nature, it was not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts they were done. And it required a display of the power of God to give them the heritage of the heathen.

Verse 7. Verity and judgment] His works are *verity* or *truth*, because they were wrought for the fulfilment of the promises he made to their fathers. And they were *just*; for their punishment was in consequence of their infidelities: and the punishment of the Babylonians was only in consequence of their gross iniquities; and in both respects he had proved his work to be according to justice and judgment.

Verse 8. They stand fast for ever] מְיֻכָּמָם *semuchim*, they are *propped up, buttressed, for ever*. They can never fail; for God's power supports his works, and his providence preserves the record of what he has done.

Verse 9. He sent redemption] He sent Moses to redeem them out of Egypt; various *judges* to deliver them out of the hands of their oppressors;

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel, to deliver them from Babylon; and the Lord Jesus to redeem a whole lost world from sin, misery, and death.

Holy and reverend is his name.] The word *reverend* comes to us from the Latins, *reverendus*, and is compounded of *re*, intensive, and *vereor*, to be feared; and *most* or *right* reverend, *reverendissimus*, signifies *to be greatly feared*. These terms are now only titles of ecclesiastical respect, especially in the *Protestant* ministry; but there was a time in which these were no empty titles. Such was the power of the clergy, that, when they walked not in the fear of the Lord, they caused the *people to fear*, and *they themselves* were *to be feared*; but, when the *secular power* was added to the *spiritual*, they were then truly *reverendi* and *reverendissimi*, *to be feared* and *greatly to be feared*. But *reverend* is not applied to God in this way; nor does the word **arwn nora** bear this signification; it rather means *terrible: Holy and terrible, or holy and tremendous, is his name*. This title belongs not to *man*; nor does any minister, in assuming the title *reverend*, assume *this*. Indeed, the word *reverend*, as now used, gives us a very imperfect conception of the original term. *Holy and tremendous is God's name*. He is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders, both in the way of judgment and in the way of mercy.

Verse 10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom] The original stands thus: **hwhy tary hmkj tyvar** *reshith chokmah, yirath Jehovah, The beginning of wisdom is the fear of Jehovah. Wisdom* itself begins with this *fear*; true *wisdom* has this for its commencement. It is the first ingredient in it, and is an essential part of it. In vain does any man pretend to be *wise* who does *not fear the Lord*; and he who fears the Lord departs from evil: he who lives in sin neither fears God, nor is wise.

A good understanding have all they that do his commandments] These last words we add as necessary to make up the sense; but there is no need of this expedient, as the words of the original literally read thus: "The beginning of wisdom is the fear of Jehovah; good discernment to the doers." That is, They who act according to the dictates of wisdom, the commencement of which is the fear of Jehovah, have a sound understanding, discern their duty and their interest, and live to secure their own peace, their neighbour's good, and God's glory.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH PSALM

It is supposed that this hymn was set by the author to be sung at the passover; and that it might be the more readily learned and remembered, the colons are in number as many as, and arranged in the order of, the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. It is an exhortation to praise God for his wonderful benefits bestowed on the world at large, and especially on Israel and the Church.

There are *three* parts in this Psalm:—

I. A resolution of the psalmist to praise God; the manner in which he would do so; and the company with whom he would do it, ^{<9B10>}**Psalm 111:1.**

II. An expression of the reasons which moved him to praise God, viz., his admirable benefits, special and general, ^{<9B10>}**Psalm 111:2-9.**

III. An inference from the premises by way of sentiment in which he commends the fear of God, ^{<9B10>}**Psalm 111:10.**

I. The title of this Psalm is, “Hallelujah, praise ye the Lord;” and he adds,—

1. “I will praise the Lord.” And shows how it should be done.

2. Not hypocritically; not with the lips only, but “with the heart.”

3. “With the whole heart.”

4. Not only secretly, but also “in the assembly of the upright,” &c. 1. Both in the assembly, where these good and upright men are. 2. And also in a mixed multitude, and secretly among good men.

II. And, having made a pious confession of his readiness to practise the duty, he next sets down the ground and matter of his praise.

First. His works of *power*, in the creation and conservation of the world, or the favours shown to the Church: “And these works of the Lord are great.” 1. *Great*, not only for variety and beauty, but also in base creatures his wisdom is admirable, and to be admired. 2. *Great*; for it was great to take to himself a people out of another people, to make a covenant with them, and to reveal his promises, and give them a law, to settle among them a policy for Church and state. 3. Fools and impious men, indeed, but

little consider these works; they think not of their Author: but in the eyes of all wise men “they are sought out,” &c.

Secondly. His works of wisdom, in governing the creatures he has created, and in guiding and collecting his Church. 1. It is *honourable*; and much more so its Author. 2. And *glorious*; far above the works of princes. 3. And *righteous*: “He is a righteous God, and his righteousness endureth for ever.” For he never departs from the exact rule of justice.

Which record must be kept:—

“He hath made his wonderful works,” &c. As in the Jewish hosts.

Thirdly. His works of *mercy*. They proceed from mere mercy: “For the Lord is gracious,” &c. 1. “Gracious,” in doing these works. 2. “Full of compassion,” as a father towards his children.

Of these the prophet gives several instances:—

1. “He hath given meat,” &c. He nourished his people for forty years in the wilderness, giving them meat from heaven.
2. “He will ever be mindful,” &c. Notwithstanding their provocations.
3. “He hath showed his people,” &c. As in the turning of *Jordan* backwards, overthrowing *Jericho*, staying the sun and moon, &c.
4. “That he might give them,” &c. By the expulsion of the Canaanites: “The works of the Lord are great,” &c.

He now uses an acclamation: “The works of his hands are,”—

1. *Verity*. Making good his promise to *Abraham*.
2. *Judgment*. Executed on idolaters and profane persons.

And shows unto all the world that,—

1. “All his commandments are sure.” That his laws, especially his moral laws, are of everlasting obligation on all.
2. That these commands “stand fast for ever;” for they are established in truth, equity, justice, and reason.

The prophet next speaks of a mercy far exceeding all the rest, the work of human redemption by Christ. This may be thus expounded, and better than in reference to the redemption of Israel out of Egypt.

1. "He sent redemption," &c. A Redeemer so long promised.
2. "He hath commanded his covenant," &c. Which is still extant.

III. The prophet, having enumerated many of God's works of power, wisdom, and mercy, concludes the Psalm with three acclamations.

"Holy and reverend," &c. Either in his service, or whenever he is signified.

1. *Holy*—unpolluted by hypocrisy. The command is, "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

2. *Reverend*—not rashly or negligently performed. Or, as some read it, *terrible*; and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The second acclamation follows upon the preceding:—

1. This fear "is the beginning of wisdom." For these men begin to be wise; "to eschew evil, and do good."
2. This fear, if it be right, will be practical: "For a good understanding," &c.

The third acclamation is, "His praise endureth for ever." Which some refer to God, others to man; but both are true. For the praise must continue for ever: "His power, mercy," &c.

If referred to man then the sense will be,—

1. "His praise." For "they that dwell in thy house," &c., ^{<19840>}**Psalm 84:4**.
2. Or "His praise." The commendation of a good man "will be had in everlasting remembrance," ^{<19336>}**Psalm 112:6**. "The name of the wicked shall rot," &c.; ^{<20007>}**Proverbs 10:7**. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," &c.; ^{<10251>}**Matthew 25:21**. His praise is in this world lasting, but in the world to come everlasting.

PSALMS

PSALM 112

The blessedness of the man that fears the Lord, both as it regards himself and his family, 1-3; his conduct to his family, his neighbours, and the poor, 4-9; the envy of the wicked at his prosperity, 10.

NOTES ON PSALM 112

This is another of the acrostic or alphabetical Psalms, under the title *Hallelujah*. It is formed exactly as the preceding in the division of its verses. It has *ten* verses in the whole: the first eight contain each two hemistichs, beginning with a consecutive letter of the alphabet; the *ninth* and *tenth* verses, three each, making twenty-two in the whole. It is understood to have been written after the captivity, and probably by Zechariah and Haggai: to them it is ascribed by the Vulgate.

Verse 1. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord] This seems to be the continuation of the preceding Psalm: *there* it was asserted that the *beginning of wisdom was the fear of the Lord*; and *here* the blessedness of the man who *thus fears* is stated.

That **delighteth greatly]** It is not enough to *fear God*, we must also *love him*: *fear* will deter us from *evil*; *love* will lead us to *obedience*. And the more a man fears and loves God, the more obedient will he be; till at last he *will delight greatly in the commandments* of his Maker.

Verse 2. His seed shall be mighty] w[r̄z *zaro*, his *posterity*. So the word should always be understood in this connection.

Verse 3. Wealth and riches shall be in his house] This is often the case: a godly man must save both *time* and *money*. Before he was converted he lost much time, and squandered his money. All this he now saves, and therefore wealth and riches must be in his house; and if he does not distribute to the necessities of the poor, they will continue to accumulate till they be his curse; or God will, by his providence, sweep them away. Both **hqdx** *tsedakah* and **δικαιοσυνη** are often used to signify, not only *justice* and *righteousness*, but also *beneficence* and *almsgiving*; and this is most probably the meaning here. See ^{<1833>}**Psalm 112:9**.

Verse 4. There ariseth light in the darkness] The upright are always happy; and when tribulations come, God lifts up the light of his countenance upon him, and causes all occurrences to work together for his good.

He is **gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.**] He enjoys the *favour* of God; that *grace* makes him *compassionate*; and in the general tenor of his conduct he is righteous. From these principles he *shows favour* (^{<98375>}**Psalm 112:5**) to him that *needs* it; that is, to the real poor he *gives* of his substance; and others he obliges by *lending*, they not being utterly in want, but standing in need only of a little *present help*. But he takes heed to *whom* he *gives* and to *whom* he *lends*; that in the first case his bounty may be well applied, and in the second he may not oblige the person who only seeks, under the notion of a loan, to appropriate the money *borrowed*. To prevent evils of this kind he acts prudently, and *guides his affairs with discretion*, (^{<98375>}**Psalm 112:5**).

Verse 7. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings] He knows that God governs the world, therefore he fears not for futurity. And as to the *calumnies* of men, he fears *them* not, because *his heart is fixed*—determined to walk in the path of duty, whatever persecutions he may suffer, for *he trusts in the Lord*.

Verse 8. His heart is established] wbl Ēwms *samuch libbo*, “his heart is propped up;” he is *buttressed up* by the strength of his Maker.

Verse 9. He hath dispersed] He has scattered abroad his munificence; he has given particularly to the *poor*; his *righteousness*—his almsgiving, his charity, *remaineth for ever*. See on (^{<98375>}**Psalm 112:3**).

His horn] His power and authority *shall be exalted with honour*. He shall rise to influence only through his own worth, and not by extortion or flattery.

Verse 10. The wicked shall see it] [vr *rasha*, the *wicked one*. Some think *Satan* is meant. It is distinguished from py[vr *reshaim*, *wicked men*, in the conclusion of the verse.

Shall gnash with his teeth] Through spite and ill will.

And melt away] Through envy and hopeless expectation of similar good; for *his desire* in reference to *himself*, and in reference to him who is the object of his *envy*, *shall perish*-shall come to nothing.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH PSALM

The psalmist, having put it down for an infallible maxim, in the close of the former Psalm, “that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” in this sets down the felicity of that man who fears God, in several particulars.

There are two parts in this Psalm:—

- I. A general proposition, that he is blessed.
- II. An enumeration of particulars in which that blessedness consists,
~~<BIB2>~~ **Psalm 112:2-10.**

I. To the first part he prefixes a hallelujah, “praise the Lord,” which is the intent and scope of the Psalm; that he be praised for those rewards of piety he bestows on such as fear him.

He delivers this one general proposition to persuade them to piety: “Blessed is the man,” &c., that believes, honours, and serves him.

For fear a man should mistake, supposing he fears the Lord when he really does not, he adds these three restrictions to his proposition:—

1. “Keep his commandments.” An obedient fear.
2. “He delights in them,” &c. Is pleased with their equity, and loves them.
3. “He delights greatly,” &c. It must be a thankful and ready fear, performed with alacrity and earnestness, done with all the heart.

II. In the rest of the Psalm he insists on what this blessedness consists in:—

1. That the righteous shall have temporal goods, and that they shall be blessings.
2. That though they shall enjoy them, they are not exempted from crosses,
~~<BIB2>~~ **2 Timothy 3:12.**

3. That God distributes these temporal blessings not equally, but most profitably for him.

This being premised, he enumerates the blessings here promised:—

1. "His seed shall be mighty," &c. Which was verified in Abraham and his posterity: "I will show mercy to thousands," &c.
2. "Wealth and riches," &c. That is, abundance of all things *shall be in his house*, and remain in it for his just dealing; and contentment preserves his well obtained goods to his posterity.
3. "Unto the upright there ariseth light," &c. The light of counsel and consolation, in the midst of doubts, tribulations, and afflictions, which the prophet ascribes to God's mercy and goodness.
4. He hath bowels of compassion, of which he shows two effects: 1. "A good man showeth favour," &c. Easily forgives an injury. 2. Imagines he is not born for himself, but to do good to others.
5. "He will guide his affairs with discretion." Discern between truth and falsehood; be no acceptor of persons, but in all things just and upright.
6. He is patient and constant. Troubles and dangers may increase; but in the midst of all he looks to heaven, and remains firm in his principles.
7. "The righteous shall be had," &c. His name is written in the book of life, and it is precious in the Church, such as those of the martyrs; while the wicked are detested, such as Judas, Cain, Pilate. At the last day the one shall have "Come, ye blessed;" the other, "Go, ye cursed."
8. "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings." Scandals may arise; but he remembers "the servant is not above his lord," therefore he bears all patiently, and for these reasons: 1. "Because his heart is fixed," &c. He has a sure rock; God will clear his innocency. 2. "His heart is established," &c. He knows God will take care of him.

9. The ninth felicity to the righteous is, God has given him a charitable heart. 1. "He hath dispersed," acts liberally, that others as well as himself may reap. 2. He does it freely, without looking for any thing again: "He gives." 3. "He hath given to the poor." To those who need his kindness.

For this liberality he is a great gainer in two respects:—

1. "The good work he hath done," &c. His charity and piety are increased by it.
2. "His horn," &c. His power, honour, dignity, and glory.

His last felicity is,

1. "The wicked shall see it," and be grieved at his felicity.
2. "He shall gnash his teeth" as a mad dog, and seek his ruin.
3. But shall not be able to harm him: "The desire of the wicked shall perish." He that fears God is a happy man; he that fears him not, most unhappy. Reader, in what state art thou? Happy or unhappy?

PSALMS

PSALM 113

An exhortation to bless God for his own excellencies, 1-6; and for his great mercy to the poor and necessitous, 7-9.

NOTES ON PSALM 113

Psalms 113., 114., 115., 116., 117., and 118., form the great *Hallel*, and were sung by the Jews on their most solemn festivals, and particularly at the *passover*. To these reference is made by the *evangelists*, ^{<113>}**Matthew 26:30**, and ^{<114>}**Mark 14:26**, there called the *hymn* which Jesus and his disciples sung at the *passover*, for the whole of the Psalms were considered as one grand hymn or thanksgiving. It was probably composed after the return from the captivity. It has no title but *Hallelujah* in the *Hebrew* and ancient *Versions*.

Verse 1. Praise, O ye servants] Probably an address to the Levites. The Anglo-Saxon has [A.S.], *praise the Lord, ye knaves*. Knave or knave signified among our ancestors a *servant*; sometimes a *male, a young man*.

Verse 3. From the rising of the sun] From morning to evening be always employed in the work. Or it may be a call on *all mankind* to praise God for his innumerable mercies to the *human race*. Praise him from *one end of the world unto the other*. And therefore the psalmist adds,

Verse 4. The Lord is high above all nations] He governs all, he provides for all; therefore let all give him praise.

Verse 5. Who is like unto the Lord] Those who are highly exalted are generally unapproachable; they are proud and overbearing; or so surrounded with *magnificence* and *flatterers*, that to them the poor have no access; but *God, though infinitely exalted, humbleth himself to behold even heaven* itself, and much more does he *humble himself* when he condescends to behold *earth* and her inhabitants; (^{<113>}**Psalm 113:6**.) But so does he love his creatures that he rejoices over even the meanest of them to do them good.

Verse 7. He raiseth up the poor] The poorest man, in the meanest and most abject circumstances, is an object of his merciful regards. He may

here allude to the wretched state of the captives in Babylon, whom God raised up out of that dust and dunghill. Others apply it to the resurrection of the dead.

Verse 8. With the princes] *uybydn nedebim*, very properly translated by the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], the aldermen, the most respectable of his people.

Verse 9. He maketh the barren woman to keep house] This is a figure to point out the *desolate, decreasing state* of the captives in Babylon, and the happy change which took place on their return to their own land. These are nearly the words of Hannah, ^{<0075>}**1 Samuel 2:5**.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH PSALM

The scope of this Psalm is the same with those that went before, that is, to excite men to praise God.

This Psalm contains three parts:—

- I. An exhortation to God's servants to praise him.
- II. A form set down how and where to praise him, ^{<0032>}**Psalm 113:2, 3**.
- III. The reasons to persuade us to it. 1. By his infinite power, ^{<0034>}**Psalm 113:4, 5**. 2. His providence, as displayed in heaven and earth, ^{<0036>}**Psalm 113:6**.

I. The prophet exhorts men "to praise the Lord;" and,

1. He doubles and trebles his exhortation, that it be not coldly but zealously done, or else to show that he alone is worthy of praise.

2. "Praise the Lord, O ye servants," &c.: They are to praise him, for he is their Lord; praise him likewise with a pure heart.

II. The manner of praising him. Say,

1. "Blessed be the name of the Lord." ^{<1802>}**Job 1:21**.

2. "From this time forth," &c.: In prosperity or adversity, in this life or the future.

3. "From the rising of the sun," &c.: In all places, even over all the world.

III: And now follow the reasons to persuade men to praise God.

1. Because of his majesty, infinite power, and glory, which extend not to earth alone, but heaven also: “The Lord is high above,” &c.

2. Because of his providence, benignity, and bounty, which being united with so much majesty, appear the more admirable. “Who is like the Lord,” &c. None in heaven or on earth are to be compared to him. “Yet he humbleth himself,” &c. He is present with the highest angels, and with the poorest of his creatures, to help them.

In “humbling himself to behold the things on earth” he gives two instances:

1. In states and kingdoms. 2. In private families.

1. In states: “He raiseth up the poor,” &c.: Let then no man say, that God does not regard them that are of low estate; he raiseth up the poor, to the end “that he may set him with the princes,” &c.

2. In private families: “He maketh the barren woman,” &c. “Children are a heritage of the Lord.” Some expositors refer the meaning of this last verse to the Church of the *Gentiles*: “Rejoice, O barren,” &c. ^{<2540>} **Isaiah 54:1.**

PSALMS

PSALM 114

Miracles wrought at the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, at the Red Sea, and at Jordan, 1-6; and at the rock of Horeb, 7, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 114

This Psalm has no *title*. The word *Hallelujah* is prefixed in all the Versions except the *Chaldee* and *Syriac*. It seems like a fragment, or a part of another Psalm. In many MSS. it is only the *beginning* of the following; both making but one Psalm in all the Versions, except the *Chaldee*. It is elegantly and energetically composed; but begins and ends very abruptly, if we separate it from the following. As to the *author* of this Psalm, there have been various opinions; some have given the honour of it to *Shadrach*, *Meshech*, and *Abed-nego*; others to *Esther*; and others, to *Mordecai*.

Verse 1. A people of strange language] This may mean no more than a *barbarous* people; a people whom they did not know, and who did not worship their God. But it is a fact that the language of the Egyptians in the time of Joseph was so different from that of the Hebrews that they could not understand each other. See ^{<1816>}Psalm 81:5; ^{<1423>}Genesis 42:23.

The *Chaldee* has here *yarbrb ym[m meammey barbarey]*, which gives reason to believe that the word is *Chaldee*, or more properly *Phœnician*. See this word fully explained in the note on ^{<423>}Acts 28:2. My old *Psalter* understood the word as referring to the *religious* state of the Egyptians: *In gangyng of Isrel oute of Egipt, of the house of Jacob fra hethen folke.*

Verse 2. Judah was his sanctuary] He set up his true worship among the Jews, and took them for his peculiar people.

And **Israel his dominion.**] These words are a proof, were there none other, that this Psalm was composed *after* the days of David, and *after* the division of the tribes, for then the distinction of *Israel* and *Judah* took place.

Verse 3. The sea saw it, and fled] Mr. Addison has properly observed (see Spect. No. 461) that the author of this Psalm designedly works for effect, in pointing out the miraculous driving back the Red Sea and the

river Jordan, and the commotion of the hills and mountains, without mentioning any *agent*. At last, when the reader sees the sea rapidly retiring from the shore, Jordan retreating to its source, and the mountains and hills running away like a flock of affrighted sheep, that the passage of the Israelites might be every where uninterrupted; then the *cause* of all is suddenly introduced, and the *presence of God* in his grandeur solves every difficulty.

Verse 5. What ailed thee, O thou sea] The original is very abrupt; and the *prosopopœia*, or personification very fine and expressive:—

*What to thee, O sea, that thou fleddest away!
O Jordan, that thou didst roll back!
Ye mountains, that ye leaped like rams!
And ye hills, like the young of the fold!*

After these very sublime interrogations, God appears; and the psalmist proceeds as if answering his own questions:—

*At the appearance of the Lord, O earth, thou didst tremble;
At the appearance of the strong God of Jacob.
Converting the rock into a pool of waters;
The granite into water springs.*

I know the present Hebrew text reads *yl wj chuli*, “tremble thou,” in the *imperative*; but almost all the *Versions* understood the word in *past* tense, and read as if the psalmist was answering his own questions, as stated in the translation above. “Tremble thou, O earth.” As if he had said, Thou mayest well tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.

Verse 8. The flint] I have translated *vyml j challamish*, GRANITE; for such is the rock of Horeb, a piece of which now lies before me.

This short and apparently imperfect Psalm, for elegance and sublimity, yields to few in the whole book.

It is so well translated in the old *Psalter*, that I think I shall gratify the reader by laying it before him.

Ver. 1. In gangyng of Isrel oute of Egypt,
Of the house of Jacob fra hethen folke.

Ver. 2. *Made is Jude his halawpung
Isrel might of hym.*

Ver. 3. *The se sawe and fled,
Jurdan turned is agayne;*

Ver. 4. *Hawes gladed als wethers,
And hilles als lambes of schepe.*

Ver. 5. *What is to the se, that thou fled?
And thou Jordane that thou ert turned agayne?*

Ver. 6. *Hawes gladded als wethers?
And hils als lambes of schepe.*

Ver. 7. *Fra the face of Lorde styrde is the erth,
Fra the face of God of Iacob;*

Ver. 8. *That turnes the stane in stank of waters,
And roche in wels of waters.*

And, as a still more ancient specimen of our language, I shall insert the Anglo-Saxon, with a literal reading, line for line, as near to the Saxon as possible, merely to show the affinity of the languages.

Ver. 1. [Anglo-Saxon]

Ver. 2. [Anglo-Saxon]

Ver. 3. [Anglo-Saxon]

Ver. 4. [Anglo-Saxon]

Ver. 5. [Anglo-Saxon]

Ver. 6. [Anglo-Saxon]

Ver. 7. [Anglo-Saxon]

Ver. 8. [Anglo-Saxon]

*Ver. 1. On outgang Israel of Egypt,
House Jacob of folk foreigners;*

*Ver. 2. Made is Jacob holyness his;
Israel andweald (government) his.*

*Ver. 3. Sea saw, and flew!
Jordan turned underback!*

*Ver. 4. Mounts they fain (rejoiced) so (as) rams,
And burghs (hillocks) so (as) lamb-sheep.*

*Ver. 5. What is the sea, that thou flew?
And thou river for that thou turned is underback?*

*Ver. 6. Mounts ye fained (rejoiced) so so rams;
And hills so so lambs-sheep.*

*Ver. 7. From sight Lord's stirred is earth;
From sight God of Jacob.*

*Ver. 8. Who turned stone in mere waters;
And cliffs in wells waters.*

I have retained some words above in nearly their Saxon form, because they still exist in our old writers; or, with little variation, in those of the present day:—

Ver. 2. *Andweald*, government. Hence *weal* and *wealth*, *commonweal* or *wealth*; the general government, that which produces the *welfare* of the country.

Ver. 4. *Faegnodon*, fained—desired fervently, felt delight in expectation.

Ver. 4. *Burgh*, a hill—a mound or heap of earth, such as was raised up over the dead. Hence a *barrow*; and hence the word *bury*, to inhume the dead.

Ver. 8. *Mere*, or *meer*, a large pool of water, a lake, a *lough*, still in use in the north of England. Gentlemen's ponds, or large sheets of water so called; and hence *Winander-mere*. a large lake in Westmoreland. *Mere* also signifies *limit* or *boundary*; hence the *Mersey*, the river which divides Lancashire from Cheshire, and serves as a *boundary* to both counties. The *mere* that spreads itself out to the *sea*.

Instead of *cludas*, which signifies *rocks*, one MS. has [Anglo-Saxon] *clyf*, which signifies a *craggy mountain* or *broken rock*.

The reader will see from this specimen how much of our ancient language still remains in the present; and perhaps also how much, in his opinion, we have amplified and improved our mother tongue.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FOURTEENTH PSALM

David in this Psalm chants forth the wonderful works and miracles that God wrought, when he brought forth Israel out of Egypt.

This Psalm has *two* parts:—

I. A narration of Israel's deliverance, amplified by the state they were in, ^{<19B40>}**Psalm 114:1**; the state to which they were brought, ^{<19B42>}**Psalm 114:2**; the miracles then done, ^{<19B43>}**Psalm 114:3**; and the law given, ^{<19B44>}**Psalm 114:4**.

II. A *prosopopœia* set down by way of dialogue: 1. The prophet asks the sea and *Jordan* why they fled, ^{<19B45>}**Psalm 114:5, 6**. 2. To which the answer is, that "the earth trembled," &c., ^{<19B47>}**Psalm 114:7, 8**.

I. In the narration, Israel's condition is set down by way of comparison, in order that their deliverance might make the deeper impression. We must recollect that *Jacob* and *Judah* in this place signify the whole nation of the Israelites that descended out of Jacob's loins; but of the house of *Jacob* there is made particular mention, because with him they came into *Egypt*; and of *Judah*, because from him they were called *Jews*. This being premised. 1. We are presented with the condition of the Jews *before* their deliverance; before they were formed into a state or Church; they were among "a people of a strange language."

2. The condition of the Jews *after* their deliverance: "When Israel went out of Egypt," &c., then "Judah was his sanctuary," &c. 1. "His sanctuary: "A people sanctified and adopted by him, consecrated to his worship as holy temples and sanctuaries, and having a holy priest to govern them in points of piety. 2. "His dominion:" In which he reigned as King by his laws and Spirit, and appointed godly magistrates to rule them in matters of policy; for the government was a theocracy, till they cast it off by choosing a king.

The prophet explains the manner of their deliverance, which was by miracles and signs; and gives us these instances:—

1. "The sea saw it, and fled," as the people advanced to it. "At the presence of the Lord it turned back all night," ^{<121-21>}**Exodus 14:21**. In a poetical strain he attributes this to the sense of the sea. "The sea saw," &c.

2. "Jordan was driven back," &c. Forty years after, when they were entering the promised land, then Jordan suffered a long reflux, ^{<1815>}**Joshua 3:15-17**.

3. At *Sinai*, when the law was given, then the mountains and hills quaked: “The mountains skipped like rams,” &c.

II. This Psalm abounds with poetical imagery; and having related the wonderful deliverances wrought for God’s people, the psalmist expostulates with the sea and mountains, and interrogates them as to what so strangely altered their course. “What ailed thee, O thou sea, &c.?—Ye mountains that ye skipped like rams,” &c.

To which, in the person of the earth speaking to herself, the prophet answers; thus making both a *prosopopæia* and an *apostrophe*.

1. “Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord,” &c. As if it had been said, Would you know the reason why we fly? The cause is, the Lord has appeared and showed his force and power, and laid his commands upon us; and therefore, not abiding his presence, the mountains are moved, &c.

2. Of his power this miracle is sufficient for an instance: “Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.” Causing not only waters to flow from thence, but turning the very substance of a flint, which is apter to yield fire than water, into that fluid element, ^{<0B01>}**Numbers 20:11**. See Clarke’s note on ^{<1B48>}“**Psalm 114:8**”.

PSALMS

PSALM 115

God alone is to be glorified, 1-3. The vanity of idols, 4-8. Israel, the house of Aaron, and all that fear God, are exhorted to trust in the Lord, 9-11. The Lord's goodness to his people, and his gracious promises, 12-16. As the dead cannot praise him, the living should, 17, 18.

NOTES ON PSALM 115

This Psalm is written as a part of the preceding by *eighteen* of Kennicott's and *fifty-three* of Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS.; by some ancient editions; the *Septuagint*, the *Syriac*, the *Vulgate*, the *Æthiopic*, the *Arabic*, and the *Anglo-Saxon*. The old *Anglo-Scottish* Psalter reads it consecutively with the foregoing. Who the author of both was, we know not, nor on what occasion it was written. It seems to be an *epinikion* or triumphal song, in which the victory gained is entirely ascribed to Jehovah.

Verse 1. Not unto us, O Lord] We take no merit to ourselves; as thine is the kingdom, and the power in that kingdom, so is thy glory.

For thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.] Thy mercy gave thy promise, thy truth fulfilled it.

Verse 2. Wherefore should the heathen say] This appears to refer to a time in which the Israelites had suffered some sad reverses, so as to be brought very low, and to be marked by the heathen.

Verse 3. He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.] There was too much cause for his abandoning us to our enemies; yet he still lives and rules in heaven and in earth.

Verse 4. Their idols are silver, &c.] They are metal, stone, and wood. They are generally made in the form of man, but can neither see, hear, smell, feel, walk, nor speak. How brutish to trust in such! And next to these, in stupidity and inanity, must they be who form them, with the expectation of deriving any good from them. So obviously vain was the whole system of idolatry, that the more serious heathens ridiculed it, and it was a butt for the jests of their freethinkers and buffoons. How keen are those words of Juvenal!

—————*Audis*—————
Jupiter, haec? nec labra moves, cum mittere vocem.
Debueras, vel marmoreus vel aeneus? aut cur
In carbone tuo charta pia thura soluta
Ponimus, et sectum vituli jecur, albaque porci
Omenta? ut video, nullum discrimen habendum est.
Effigies inter vestras, statuamque Bathylli.
SAT. xiii., ver. 113.

“Dost thou hear, O Jupiter, these things? nor move thy lips when thou oughtest to speak out, whether thou art of marble or of bronze? Or, why do we put the sacred incense on thy altar from the opened paper, and the extracted liver of a calf, and the white caul of a hog? As far as I can discern there is no difference between thy statue and that of Bathyllus.”

This irony will appear the keener, when it is known that Bathyllus was a fiddler and player, whose image by the order of Polycrates, was erected in the temple of Juno at Samos. See ^{<234101>}**Isaiah 41:1**. &c.; ^{<23467>}**Isaiah 46:7**; ^{<24104>}**Jeremiah 10:4, 5**, &c.; and ^{<49515>}**Psalm 135:15, 16**.

Verse 9. O Israel] The body of the Jewish people.

Verse 10. O house of Aaron] All the different classes of the priesthood.

Verse 11. Ye that fear the Lord] All real penitents, and sincere believers, *trust in the Lord*, in the almighty, omniscient, and infinitely good Jehovah.

He is their help and shield] He is the succour, support, guardian, and defence of all who put their confidence in him.

Verse 12. The Lord hath been mindful] He has never yet wholly abandoned us to our enemies.

He will bless the house of Israel] He will bless the people as a nation; he will bless the priesthood and Levites; he will bless all of them who fear him, great and small, in whatsoever station or circumstances found. There is a great deal of emphasis in this verse: several words are redoubled to make the subject the more affecting. I give a literal translation:—

Ver. 12: “The Lord has been mindful of us he will bless the house of Israel; she will bless the house of Aaron. Ver. 13: He will bless them that fear Jehovah, the small with the great. Ver. 14: Jehovah will add upon you, upon you and upon all your children. Ver. 15:

Blessed are ye of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. Ver. 16: The heavens of heavens are the Lord's: but the earth he hath given to the sons of Adam."

Jehovah is absolute Master of the universe. He has made the heavens of heavens, and also the earth; and this he gives to the children of Adam. When he exiled him from *paradise*, he turned him out into the *earth*, and gave it to him and his sons for ever, that they might dress, till, and eat of its produce all their days.

Verse 17. The dead praise not the Lord] *μῦτμῆ* *hammethim*, those dead men who worshipped as gods dumb idols, dying in their sins, worship not Jehovah; nor can any of those who *go down into silence* praise thee: earth is the place in which to praise the Lord for his mercies, and get a preparation for his glory.

Verse 18. But we will bless the Lord] Our fathers, who received so much from thy bounty, are *dead*, their *tongues* are *silent* in the *grave*; we are in their place, and wish to magnify thy name, for thou hast dealt bountifully with us. But grant us those farther blessings before we die which we so much need; and we will praise thee as *living* monuments of thy mercy, and the praise we begin *now* shall continue for ever and ever.

The *Targum*, for "neither any that go down into silence," has "nor any that descend into the house of earthly sepulture," that is, the *tomb*. The Anglo-Saxon: [A.S.], *neither all they that go down into hell. Neogh the dede sal loue the Lorde, ne al that lyghes in hell*. Old Psalter. The word *hell* among our ancestors meant originally the *covered*, or *hidden obscure* place, from *helan*, to *cover* or *conceal*: it now expresses only the *place of endless torment*.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH PSALM

The prophet, being zealous of God's honour, which the heathens were solicitous to give to their idols, earnestly beseeches God to manifest that power which belongs to him alone, and which he will not give to another.

This Psalm, has *four* parts:—

I, His petition for God's honour, ^{<19E501>}Psalm 115:1; which belongs to no idol, ^{<19E518>}Psalm 115:3-9.

II. An exhortation to praise God, and hope in him, ^{<19E510>}Psalm 115:10-12.

III. The benefit that will arise from it, a blessing, ^{<19512>}**Psalm 115:12-16.**

IV. A profession, that for the blessing they will bless God, ^{<19517>}**Psalm 115:17, 18.**

1. Some join this Psalm to the former, conceiving that the prophet, having expressed the goodness of God in the deliverance of his people from *Egypt*, would not have any of the glory attributed to *Moses* or *Aaron*, but wholly to God. Therefore he begins:—

1. “Not unto us,” &c. Or any leader among us.
2. “But unto thy name,” &c. We seek it not; take it wholly to thyself.

And this, for these reasons, he desires might always be shown to his people.

1. “Give glory to thy name,” &c. For the manifestation of his mercy.
2. “Do it for thy truth’s sake.” As a promise-keeping God.
3. “Wherefore should the heathen say,” &c. Give them not occasion to blaspheme, as if thou hadst forsaken thy people. Should the heathen ask, we can answer: “As for our God, he is in the heavens, which his miracles testify. He can deliver or afflict his people as he pleases.”

But where are their gods?

1. “Their idols are silver and gold.” The mere productions of the earth.
2. “The work of men’s hands.” Works, and not makers of works.
3. They are of no use or power, though formed like men: “For they have mouths,” &c. “They have hands, but they handle not,” &c. They have not the power of articulating sounds; they are lower than even the beasts that perish.

The prophet, having thus described the idols, now notices their makers.

1. “They that make them,” &c. Quite senseless people.
2. “So is every one that puts his trust,” &c. Christ says, “Having eyes,” &c.

^{<19518>}**Mark 8:18**

II. The prophet, having passed this sarcasm upon the idols and idolaters, leaves them, and exhorts the *Israelites*.

1. "O Israel, trust thou," &c. You are God's servants; and to encourage them he adds, "He is their help," &c. The protector of the whole nation.

2. "A house of Levi," &c. You are the leaders and guides in religion; and therefore, you ought especially to trust in him who is the shield of your tribe.

3. "Ye that fear the Lord," &c. In whatever nation you live; for all who fear him, and do righteously, are accepted of him.

III. That this exhortation might be the deeper rooted, he puts them in mind that God "hath been mindful of us," by his special providence.

1. "He will bless the house of Israel" as a nation.

2. "He will bless the house of Aaron" as the priesthood.

3. "He will bless them that fear the Lord," &c., without distinction.

The prophet, taking his example from God, pours his blessing upon them also, and upon their children.

1. "The Lord shall increase you," &c.

2. "Ye are the blessed of the Lord," &c. Though the world speak evil of you.

3. "The Lord which made heaven and earth." Which words are added that they may be assured that their blessings are real, and come forth from his hand directly and alone.

4. They come from one able to bless; for, 1. The heaven, even the heavens, &c. In them he especially shows his presence, majesty, and glory; but sends his dews and rain upon the earth. 2. As for the earth, *he hath given it*, &c., that by his blessing upon their labours they might have food and raiment; therefore praise him.

IV. For this is the true end of their being: which he illustrates by an antithesis.

1. "For the dead praise not the Lord," &c. These temporal blessings are not felt by the dead—they need them not: but the living should render continual thanks for them to God their author.

2. But we that are upon earth enjoy his protection and temporal care of us, and besides we have his far richer spiritual blessings; therefore, “we will bless the Lord,” &c., by ourselves while we live, and aim by our instructions and prayers that our posterity may do the same when we are gone down into silence.

3. However, ye that are alive this day, “praise ye the Lord.”

PSALMS

PSALM 116

The psalmist praises God for his deliverance from thralldom, which he compares to death and the grave, 1-9. The exercises through which he had passed, 10, 11. His gratitude for these mercies, and resolution to live to God's glory, 12-19.

NOTES ON PSALM 116

This Psalm is also without a *title*, and its *author* is unknown. It appears to have been written after the captivity, and to be a thanksgiving to God for that glorious event. The psalmist compares this captivity to *death* and the *grave*; and shows the happy return to the promised land, called here, *The land of the living*. The people recollect the vows of God which were upon them, and purpose to fulfil them. They exult at being enabled to worship God in the temple at Jerusalem.

The *Syriac*, which abounds in conjectural prefaces, supposes this Psalm to have been written on the occasion of Saul coming to the mouth of the cave in which David lay hidden; but spiritually taken, it relates to the bringing of a new people, the Gentiles, to the Christian faith. In a few MSS. this Psalm is joined to the preceding. Many think it relates wholly to the passion, death, and triumph of Christ. Most of the fathers were of this opinion.

Verse 1. I love the Lord because he hath heard] How vain and foolish is the *talk*, "To love God for his benefits to us is mercenary, and cannot be pure love!" Whether pure or impure, there is no other love that can flow from the heart of the creature to its Creator. *We love him*, said the holiest of Christ's disciples, *because he first loved us*; and the increase of our love and filial obedience is in proportion to the increased sense we have of our obligation to him. We love him for the benefits bestowed on us. *Love begets love*.

Verse 2. Because he hath inclined his ear] The psalmist represents himself to be so sick and weak, that he could scarcely speak. The Lord, in condescension to this weakness, is here considered as *bowing down his ear to the mouth of the feeble suppliant*, that he may receive every word of his prayer.

Therefore will I call upon him] I have had such blessed success in my application to him, that I purpose to invoke him as long as I shall live. He that prays much will be emboldened to pray more, because none can supplicate the throne of grace in vain.

Verse 3. The sorrows of death] *twm yl bj chebley maveth*, the *cables* or *cords of death*; alluding to their bonds and fetters during their captivity; or to the cords by which a criminal is bound who is about to be led out to execution; or to the bandages in which the dead were enveloped, when head, arms, body, and limbs were all *laced down* together.

The pains of hell] *l wav yr xm metsarey sheol*, the *straitnesses of the grave*. So little expectation was there of life, that he speaks as if he were condemned, executed, and *closed up* in the tomb. Or, he may refer here to the *small niches* in cemeteries, where the coffins of the dead were placed.

Because this Psalm has been used in the thanksgiving of women after safe delivery, it has been supposed that the pain suffered in the act of parturition was equal for the time to the torments of the damned. But this supposition is shockingly absurd; the utmost power of human nature could not, for a moment, endure the wrath of God, the deathless worm, and the unquenchable fire. The body must die, be decomposed, and be built up on indestructible principles, before this punishment can be borne.

Verse 5. Gracious is the Lord] In his own nature.

And righteous] In all his dealings with men.

Our God is merciful.] Of tender compassion to all penitents.

Verse 6. The Lord preserved the simple] *µyatp pethaim*, which all the Versions render *little ones*. Those who are meek and lowly of heart, who feel the spirit of little children, these he preserves, as he does little children; and he mentions this circumstance, because the Lord has a peculiar regard for these *young ones*, and gives his angels charge concerning them. Were it otherwise, children are exposed to so many dangers and deaths, that most of them would fall victims to accidents in their infancy.

Verse 7. Return unto thy rest, O my soul] God is the *centre* to which all immortal spirits tend, and in connexion with which alone they can find rest. Every thing *separated* from its *centre* is in a state of *violence*; and, if intelligent, cannot be happy. All human souls, while separated from God by

sin, are in a state of violence, agitation, and misery. From God all spirits come; to him all must return, in order to be finally happy. This is true in the general case; though, probably, the *rest* spoken of here means the *promised land*, into which they were now *returning*.

A proof of the late origin of this Psalm is exhibited in this verse, in the words **ykyj wnmI** *limenuchaichi*, “to thy rest,” and **ykyI** [*alaichi*, “to thee,” which are both *Chaldaisms*.

Verse 8. Thou hast delivered my soul from death] Thou hast rescued my *life* from the *destruction* to which it was exposed.

Mine eyes from tears] Thou hast turned my *sorrow* into *joy*.

My feet from falling.] Thou hast taken me out of the land of *snares* and *pitfalls*, and brought me into a *plain path*. How very near does our ancient mother tongue come to this:— [Anglo-Saxon]. *For thou he nerode sawle mine of deathe, eapan mine of tearum; fet mine of slide*. And this language is but a little improved in the old Psalter:—

For he toke my saule fra dede; my eghen fra teres; my fete fra slippyng.

Verse 9. I will walk before the Lord] **ËI hta** *ethhallech*, I will *set myself to walk*. I am *determined to walk*; my *eyes* are now brightened, so that I can *see*; my *feet* are *strengthened*, so that I can *walk*; and my *soul* is *alive*, so that I can *walk* with the *living*.

The *Vulgate*, the *Septuagint*, the *Æthiopic*, the *Arabic*, and the *Anglo-Saxon* end this Psalm here, which is numbered the cxivth; and begin with the *tenth* verse another Psalm, which they number cxvth; but this division is not acknowledged by the *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, and *Syriac*.

Verse 10. I believed, therefore have I spoken] Distressed and afflicted as I was, I ever believed thy promises to be true; but I had great struggles to maintain my confidence; for my afflictions were great, oppressive, and of long standing.

It is scarcely worth observing that the letters called *heemantic* by the Hebrew grammarians, and which are used in forming the *derivatives* from the *roots*, are taken from the *first* word in this verse, **ytnmah** *heemanti*, “I have believed;” as the *prefixes* in that language are found in the technical

words **bl kw hvm** *Mosheh vecaleb*, “Moses and Caleb;” and the *formatives of the future* are found in the word **ˆtya** *eythan*, “strength.”

Verse 11. I said in my haste] This is variously translated: *I said in my flight*, CHALDEE. In my *excess*, or *ecstasy*, VULGATE. In my *ecstasy*, **εκστασει**, SEPTUAGINT. [Arabic] *tahayury*, in my *giddiness*, ARABIC. In my *fear* or *tremor*, SYRIAC. [Anglo-Saxon], *I quoth in outgoing mine*, when I was *beside* myself, ANGLO-SAXON. *In myn oute passyng*, *old Psalter*. When passion got the better of my reason, when I looked not at God, but at my afflictions, and the impossibility of human relief.

All men are liars.] **bzk ʔdah l k** *col haadam cozeb*, “the whole of man is a lie.” Falsity is diffused through his nature; deception proceeds from his tongue; his actions are often counterfeit. He is imposed on by others, and imposes in his turn; and on none is there any dependence till God converts their heart.

*“O what a thing were man, if his attires
Should alter with his mind,
And, like a dolphin’s skin,
His clothes combine with his desires!
Surely if each one saw another’s heart,
There would be no commerce;
All would disperse,
And live apart.”*
HERBERT.

To the same purpose I shall give the following Italian proverb:—

*Con arte e con inganno,
Si vive mezzo l’anno.
Con inganno e con arte
Si vive l’ altro parti.*

*“Men live half the year by deceit and by art;
By art and deceit men live the other part.”*

Who gives this bad character of mankind? MAN.

Verse 12. What shall I render] **byva hm** *mah ashib*, “What shall I return?”

For his benefits] *yhwł wmgł tagmulohi*, “His retributions,” the returns he had made to my prayers and faith.

Verse 13. I will take the cup of salvation] Literally, *The cup of salvation, or deliverance, will I lift up*. Alluding to the action in taking the *cup of blessing* among the Jews, which, when the person or master of the family *lifted up*, he said these words, “Blessed be the Lord, the Maker of the world, who has created the fruit of the vine!”

But it may probably allude to the libation-offering, ^{<04207>}**Numbers 28:7**; for the *three* last verses seem to intimate that the psalmist was now at the temple, offering the meat-offering, drink-offering, and sacrifices to the Lord. *Cup* is often used by the Hebrews to denote *plenty* or *abundance*. So, *the cup of trembling*, an abundance of *misery*; *the cup of salvation*, an abundance of *happiness*.

And call upon the name of the Lord.] I will *invoke* his name, that I may get more of the same blessings; for the only *return* that God requires is, that we ask for *more*. Who is like GOD? One reason why we should never more come to a fellow-mortal for a favour is, we have received so many already. A strong reason why we should claim the utmost salvation of God is, because we are already *so much in debt* to his mercy. Now this is the only way we have of discharging our debts to God; and yet, strange to tell, every such attempt to discharge the debt only serves to *increase* it! Yet, notwithstanding, the debtor and creditor are represented as both *pleased*, both *profited*, and both *happy* in each other! Reader, pray to him, invoke his name; receive the cup-accept the abundance of salvation which he has provided thee, that thou mayest love and serve him with a perfect heart.

Verse 14. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.] He was probably now bringing his offering to the temple. These words are repeated, ^{<19658>}**Psalm 116:18**.

Verse 15. Precious in the sight of the Lord] Many have understood this verse as meaning, “the saints are too precious in the Lord’s sight, lightly to give them over to death:” and this, *Calmet* contends, is the true sense of the text. Though they have many enemies, their lives are precious in his sight, and their foes shall not prevail against them.

Verse 16. I am thy servant] Thou hast preserved me alive. I live *with, for, and to* THEE. I am thy *willing domestic, the son of thine handmaid*-like one

born in thy house of a woman already thy property. I am a *servant*, son of *thy servant*, made free by thy kindness; but, refusing *to go out*, I have had my *ear bored to thy door-post*, and am to continue by *free choice* in thy house for ever. He alludes here to the case of the servant who, in the year of jubilee being entitled to his liberty, refused to leave his master's house; and suffered his ear to be bored to the door-post, as a proof that by his own consent he agreed to continue in his master's house for ever.

Verse 17. I will offer to thee] As it is most probable that this Psalm celebrates the *deliverance from Babylon*, it is no wonder that we find the psalmist so intent on performing the *rites* of his religion in the temple at Jerusalem, which had been burnt with fire, and was now reviving out of its ruins, the temple service having been wholly interrupted for nearly four-score years.

Verse 19. In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.] He speaks as if present in the city, offering his vowed *sacrifices* in the temple to the Lord.

Most of this Psalm has been applied to *our Lord* and his *Church*; and in this way it has been considered as *prophetic*; and, taken thus, it is innocently accommodated, and is very edifying. This is the interpretation given of the whole by the *old Psalter*.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND SIXTEENTH PSALM

This Psalm is gratulatory; for it shows how great straits the psalmist was brought into, from which God delivered him.

This Psalm has *three* parts:—

I. The psalmist makes profession of his love, and shows the reasons of it: God's goodness in hearing and delivering him from his low and sad condition, ^{<19801>}**Psalm 116:1-9.**

II. He professes his duty and faith, ^{<19809>}**Psalm 116:9-11.**

III. He promises to be thankful, and in what manner, ^{<198612>}**Psalm 116:12-19.**

I. He begins with the expression of his content and love: "I love the Lord." And he gives these reasons:—

1. "Because he hath heard," &c. This is reason enough why I should love him.

2. "Because he hath inclined," &c. An evidence that he was heard. Upon which experience that he was heard he adds: "Therefore will I call," &c.

Another reason which moved him to love God was, that he heard him in the extremity of his deep distress; for,—

1. "The sorrows of death," &c. Death is the king of fear.
2. "The pains of hell," &c. He feared the anger of God for his sins.
3. "I found trouble and sorrow." The psalmist was sensible of his condition: though others might suppose him compassed with prosperity, yet he knew himself distressed.

But he prayed to the Lord.

1. "Then." In these troubles and pangs.
2. "I called upon," &c. Invocation to God was his sole refuge.
3. "O Lord, I beseech thee," &c. He sets down the very words of his prayer.

And then, that he might show that he prayed to God in faith and hope, he points out the attributes of God for the encouragement of others.

1. "God is gracious." It is he who inspires prayer and repentance, remits sin, and pardons those who fly in faith to him for mercy.
2. "And righteous and just." He will perform what he has promised.
3. "Yea, our God is merciful." He mingles mercy with his justice; he corrects with a father's hand, and loves to forgive rather than to punish. Of which David gives an instance in himself: "I was brought low, and he helped me." And all others may find the same who come in the way that I did to him for pardon.

Another reason he gives for loving God was, the tranquillity of soul he found after this storm was over: "Therefore, return unto thy rest, O my soul." Hitherto thou hast been tossed up and down on the waves of sorrow, finding no port or haven: now faith has opened to thee a harbour where thou mayest be safe: "For the Lord hath dealt," &c.: but of his infinite mercy he has given thee joy for sadness.

He attributes to him the whole of his work.

1. "Thou hast delivered," &c. Turned my heaviness into joy, by removing all fear of death.

2. "Thou hast delivered my eyes," &c. Made me joyful.

3. "Thou hast delivered my feet," &c. When my infirmity is great, the devil takes advantage of me that I might fall; but now thou hast settled my feet-made me able to resist him. And this God does for all who call upon him, and trust in him.

II. The psalmist, having expressed his sorrows and God's goodness, now professes his dutiful attachment, 1. By his obedience; 2. By a faithful confession of his errors, and future confidence.

1. "I will walk before the Lord," &c. Be careful to please God, by walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

He professes his faith, on which he will evermore rely.

1. "I believed, and therefore," &c. Which confidence came from faith.

2. "I was greatly afflicted," &c.; but I became docile and humble to the Spirit of God. When David was tossed between hope and despair, he found those sorrows were not easily quieted; for "I said in my haste," &c.

Which clause is differently understood by commentators.

1. Some suppose it to be an amplification of his former grief. I was so amazed, and overwhelmed with sorrow, that if any one reminded me of God's promises, "I said in my haste, All men are liars." I will not believe God; he hath no care for me.

2. Others again refer this clause to the preceding: They talk of happiness and felicity, but none is to be found in the land of the living.

3. Some again refer it to *Absalom*, who deceived *David* by his vow at *Hebron*; or to *Ahithophel*, who revolted from him.

4. Again, others suppose that he taxed even *Samuel* himself that he spoke not by God's Spirit, when he anointed him king over Israel; because, during Saul's persecution, there appeared so little hope of it. But the first sense is the most cogent.

III. Henceforth, to the end of the Psalm, David declares his gratitude: "What shall I render to the Lord," &c. As if he had said, I acknowledge the

benefits God has bestowed upon me; but in what way can I best evince my gratitude?

1. "I will take the cup of salvation." Here interpreters vary as to what is to be understood by the *cup of salvation*. 1. Some refer it to the ucharistical sacrifices of the old law, in which, when a man offered a sacrifice to God for some deliverance, he made a feast to the people, as did David, 1 Chron. i., ii., iii. 2. The fathers understood it of the cup of patience and affliction, which is often in Scripture called a cup, ~~AND~~ **Matthew 20:22**. 3. But here it seems to signify plenty, abundance, &c. See the note.

2. "I will pay my vows," &c. It was usual in God's service to make vows, or to confess his name in an open assembly. God cares for all his people, however circumstanced; for *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*. The servants of God trouble themselves in vain when they distrust him; for in life he is with them, and in death he will not forsake them.

The psalmist does not become proud upon God's favours; but in all humility, though a king, he exclaims,—

1. "O Lord, truly I *am* thy servant," &c.

2. And yet no slave, but a willing servant: "Thou hast loosed my bonds,"—taken from my neck the bonds of fear: thou hast made me thy servant through love.

3. And therefore will I do what thy servants ought to do.

Showing his earnestness he repeats again, "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord." *Within* the Church, and at all times, he would praise and do him worship. What is not done according to God's word and Spirit is of little service. He who neglects *public worship* is not very likely to keep up private devotion, either in his *family* or in his *closet*. "I will pay my vows in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem."

PSALMS

PSALM 117

The psalmist calls upon the nations of the world to praise the Lord for his mercy and kindness, and for the fulfilment of his promises, 1, 2.

NOTES ON PSALM 117

This is the shortest Psalm in the whole collection; it is written as a part of the preceding in thirty-two of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., and is found thus printed in some ancient editions. The whole Psalm is omitted in one of *Kennicott's* and in two of *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. It celebrates the redemption from the Babylonish captivity, the grand type of the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus.

The *Syriac* says: "It was spoken concerning Ananias and his followers when they came out of the furnace; but it also foretells the vocation of the Gentiles by the preaching of the Gospel." In this way St. Paul applies it, <SISI> **Romans 15:11.**

Verse 1. O praise the Lord, all ye nations] Let all the *Gentiles* praise him, for he provides for their eternal salvation.

Praise him, all ye people.] All ye *Jews*, praise him; for ye have long been his peculiar people. And while he sends his Son to be *a light to the Gentiles*, he sends him also to be *the glory of his people Israel*.

Verse 2. For his merciful kindness is great] *rbg gabar*, is *strong*: it is not only *great* in *bulk* or *number*, but it is *powerful*; it *prevails* over *sin*, *Satan*, *death*, and *hell*.

And the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.] Whatsoever he has *promised*, that he will most infallibly *fulfill*. He has promised to *send his Son into the world*, and thus he *has done*. He has promised that he should *die for transgressors*, and this he *did*. He has promised to *receive all who come unto him* through Christ Jesus, and this he invariably *does*. He has promised that his *Gospel shall be preached in every nation*, and this he is *doing*; the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. Therefore, *Praise ye the Lord!*

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEENTH PSALM

This Psalm contains a *doxology* to God for his *mercy* and *truth*; and it is *prophetical*, having reference to the calling of the Gentiles; ^{<1900>}**Romans 15:11**.

It contains two parts:—

- I. An *exhortation* to praise God.
- II. The *reason* for it.

I. 1. He speaks to the *Gentiles*: “Praise the Lord, all ye nations.” Praise him for the *promise* of salvation; and then, when fulfilled, praise him for the *enjoyment* of this salvation,—for the *remission* of sins, and gift of the *Holy Ghost*.

2. He speaks to the converted *Jews*, whom he notes under the name of *people*, as they are called ^{<1900>}**Psalm 2:1**; ^{<4025>}**Acts 4:25**. As they and the *Gentiles* are intended to make *one Church*, so they should join in the praise of him of *whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*.

II. The *reason* given:—

1. Because *his mercy is great*. It is strong; *confirmed* toward us, in sending his Son to save both Jews and Gentiles from their sins.

2. Because the truth of his promises is *fulfilled*. The promised Messiah *is come*, and *has performed* all that was prophesied of him.

3. Because this truth is *forever*. His *promises* and their *fulfilment* belong to *all generations*. There will never be another Messiah; Jesus is the true one: he tasted death for every man; he forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin; and his blood cleanses from all unrighteousness. Now, for all this, “Praise ye the Lord!”

[*N. B.* Proclaiming the eternal mercy of God in Christ is more likely to persuade sinners to return to their Maker than all the fire of hell.]

PSALMS

PSALM 118

A general exhortation to praise God for his mercy, 1-4. The psalmist, by his own experience, encourages the people to trust in God, and shows them the advantage of it, 5-9; then describes his enemies, and shows how God enabled him to destroy them, 10-13. The people rejoice on the account, 15, 16. He speaks again of the help he received from the Lord; and desires admission into the temple, that he may enter and praise the Lord, 17-19. The gate is opened, 20. He offers praise, 21. The priests, &c., acknowledge the hand of the Lord in the deliverance wrought, 22-24. The psalmist prays for prosperity, 25. The priest performs his office, blesses the people, and all join in praise, 26, 27. The psalmist expresses his confidence, 28. The general doxology, or chorus, 29.

NOTES ON PSALM 118

Most probably David was the author of this Psalm, though many think it was written after the captivity. It partakes of David's spirit, and every where shows the hand of a *master*. The *style* is grand and noble; the *subject*, majestic.

Dr. *Kennicott*, who joins this and the *hundred and seventeenth* Psalm together, considers the whole as a *dialogue*, and divides it accordingly. The whole of the *hundred and seventeenth* he gives to the *psalmist* as *part the first*, with the first four verses of the *hundred and eighteenth*. The *second part*, which is from the *fifth* verse to the *twenty-first* inclusive, he gives to the *Messiah*. The *third part*, from the *twenty-second* verse to the *twenty-seventh*, he gives to the *chorus*. And the *fourth part*, the *twenty-eighth* and *twenty-ninth* verses, he gives to the *psalmist*. Of the whole he has given an improved version.

Bishop *Horsley* is still different. He considers the *hundred and seventeenth* Psalm as only the exordium of this. The whole poem, he states, is a triumphant processional song. The scene passes at the front gate of the temple. A *conqueror* with his train appears before it; he demands admittance to return thanks for his deliverance and final success, in an expedition of great difficulty and danger. The *conqueror* and his *train* sing the *hundred and seventeenth* Psalm, and the first four verses of the *hundred and eighteenth*, as they advance to the gate of the temple, in this manner.—The *hundred and seventeenth* Psalm, *Chorus of the whole*

procession. The *first* verse of the *hundred and eighteenth Psalm*, A *single voice.* The *second*, Another *single voice.* The *third*, A *third single voice.* The *fourth*, *Chorus of the whole procession.* Arrived at the temple gate, the *conqueror alone* sings the *fifth, sixth, and seventh* verses. The *eighth and ninth* are sung by his *train in chorus.* The *conqueror, again alone,* sings the *tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth* verses. His *train, in chorus,* sing the *fifteenth and sixteenth.* The *conqueror alone* sings the *seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth* verses. The *twentieth* is sung by the *priests and Levites* within, in *chorus.* The *twenty-fifth* by the *conqueror alone* within the gates. The *twenty-sixth*, by the *priests and Levites* in *chorus.* The *twenty-seventh*, by the *conqueror's train* in *chorus.* The *twenty-eighth*, by the *conqueror alone.* The *twenty-ninth*, by the *united chorus of priests and Levites, and the conqueror's train,* all within the gates. "Now," the learned bishop adds, "the *Jewish temple* was a type of *heaven*; the *priests* within represent the *angelic host* attending round the throne of God in heaven; the *Conqueror* is *Messiah*; and his *train*, the *redeemed.*" On this distribution the bishop has given a new version. The simple distribution into parts, which I have given in the *contents*, is, in my opinion, the best. Ingenious as Dr. *Kennicott* and Bishop *Horsley* are, they seem to me too *mechanical.* This is the last of those Psalms which form the great *hallel*, which the Jews sung at the end of the *passover.*

Verse 2. Let Israel now say] Seeing the hand of the Lord so visibly, and the deliverance gained, that *God's mercy endureth for ever.*

Verse 3. The house of Aaron] The priesthood is still preserved, and the temple worship restored.

Verse 4. That fear the Lord] All sincere penitents and genuine believers. See the notes on ^{<1850>} **Psalm 115:9-11.**

Verse 5. I called upon the Lord] I am a standing proof and living witness of God's mercy. Take encouragement from me.

Verse 7. The Lord taketh my part with them that help me] Literally, *The Lord is to me among my helpers. Therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.* Literally, *And I shall look among them that hate me.* As God is on my side, I fear not to look the whole of them in the face. I shall see them defeated.

Verse 8. Better to trust in the Lord] Man is feeble, ignorant, fickle, and capricious; it is better to trust in Jehovah than in such.

Verse 9. In princes.] Men of high estate are generally *proud, vain-glorious, self-confident, and rash*: it is better to trust in God than in them. Often they *cannot* deliver, and often they *will not* when they *can*. However, in the concerns of our *salvation*, and in matters which belong to *Providence*, they can do nothing.

Verse 10. All nations compassed me about] This is by some supposed to relate to David, at the commencement of his reign, when all the neighbouring Philistine nations endeavoured to prevent him from establishing himself in the kingdom. Others suppose it may refer to the Samaritans, Idumeans, *Ammonites*, and others, who endeavoured to prevent the Jews from rebuilding their city and their temple after their return from captivity in Babylon.

But in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.] Dr. *Kennicott* renders $\mu\lambda$ *yama* *amilam*, "I shall *disappoint* them;" Bishop *Horsley*, "I cut them to pieces;" Mr. *N. Berlin*, *repuli eas*, "I have *repelled* them." "I will *cut them off*;" *Chaldee*. *Ultus sum in eos*, "I am *avenged* on them;" *Vulgate*. So the *Septuagint*.

Verse 12. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns] I shall refer to Dr. *Delaney's* note on this passage. The reader has here in miniature two of the finest images in Homer; which, if his curiosity demands to be gratified, he will find illustrated and enlarged, *Iliad* ii., ver. 86.

-----Επεσσευοντο δε λαοι.
 Ηυτε εθνεα εισι μελισσων αδιναων,
 Περης εκ γλαφυρης αιει νεον ερχομεναων,
 Βοτρυδον δε πετονται επ ανθειςιν ειαρινοισιν,
 Αι μεν τ̄ ενθα αλις πεποτηται, αι δε τε ανθα
 Ὡς των εθνεα πολλα νεων απο και κλισιαων
 Ηιονος προπαροιθε βαθειης εστιχοωντο
 Ιλαδον εις αγορην.

-----*The following host,
 Poured forth by thousands, darkens all the coast.
 As from some rocky cleft the shepherd sees,
 Clustering in heaps on heaps, the driving bees,*

*Rolling and blackening, swarms succeeding swarms,
With deeper murmurs and more hoarse alarms:
Dusky they spread a close embodied crowd,
And o'er the vale descends the living cloud;*

*So from the tents and ships a lengthening train
Spreads all the beach, and wide o'ershades the plain;
Along the region runs a deafening sound;
Beneath their footsteps groans the trembling ground.
POPE.*

The other image, *the fire consuming the thorns*, we find in the same book, ver. 455:—

ηυτε πυρ αιδηλον επιφλεγει ασπετον υλην,
ουρεος εν κορυφης, εκαθεν δε τε φαινεται αυγη,
ως των ερχομενων, απο χαλκου θεσπεσιοιο
αιγλη παμφανοωσα δι αιθερος ουρανον ικεν.

*As on some mountain, through the lofty grove,
The crackling flames ascend and blaze above;
The fires expanding, as the winds arise,
Shoot their long beams, and kindle half the skies;
So, from the polished arms, and brazen shields,
A gleamy splendour flashed along the fields.
POPE.*

The arms resembling a gleaming *fire* is common both to the psalmist and Homer; but the idea of that fire being *quenched* when the army was *conquered*, is peculiar to the psalmist.

Verse 13. Thou hast thrust sore at me] In pushing thou hast pushed me that I might fall.

But the Lord helped me.] Though he possessed skill, courage, and strength, yet these could not have prevailed had not God been his *helper*; and to him he gives the glory of the victory.

Verse 15. The voice of rejoicing] *Formerly* there was nothing but wailings; but *now* there is universal joy because of the *salvation*—the deliverance, which God has wrought for us.

Verse 16. The right hand of the Lord is exalted] Jehovah *lifted up* his right hand, and with it performed prodigies of power.

Verse 17. I shall not die] I was nigh unto death; but I am preserved,—preserved to publish the wondrous works of the Lord.

Verse 19. Open to me the gates] Throw open the doors of the temple, that I may enter and perform my vows unto the Lord.

Verse 20. This gate of the Lord] Supposed to be the answer of the Levites to the request of the king.

Verse 21. I will praise thee] He is now got within the gates, and breaks out into thanksgivings for the mercies he had received. *He is become my salvation*—he himself hath saved me from all mine enemies.

Verses 22. - 23. The stone which the builders refused] See a full elucidation of these two verses in **Clarke's notes on “^{<1214>}Matthew 21:42”**.

Verse 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made] As the Lord hath called me to triumph, this is the day which he hath appointed for that purpose. This is a *gracious opportunity*; I will improve it to his glory.

Verse 25. Save now, I beseech thee] These words were sung by the Jews on the feast of tabernacles, when carrying green branches in their hands; and from the **an h[yvwh hoshiah nna**, we have the word *hosanna*. This was sung by the Jewish children when Christ made his public entry into Jerusalem. See ^{<1210>}**Matthew 21:9**, and see the note there, **See Clarke “^{<1210>}Matthew 21:9”**, in which the word and the circumstance are both explained.

Verse 26. We have blessed you] The answer of the Levites to the king.

Verse 27. God is the Lord] Rather **hwhy I a El Yehovah**, the strong God Jehovah.

Which hath showed us light] **wml rayw vaiyaer lanu**, “And he will illuminate us.” Perhaps at this time a Divine splendour shone upon the whole procession; a proof of God's approbation.

Bind the sacrifice with cords] The *Chaldee* paraphrases this verse thus: “Samuel the prophet said, Bind the little one with chains for a solemn sacrifice, until ye have sacrificed him and sprinkled his blood on the horns of the altar.” It is supposed that the words refer to the feast of tabernacles,

and **gj** *chag* here means the *festival victim*. Several translate the original “keep the festival with thick boughs of the horns of the altar.” In this sense the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* understood the passage. David in this entry into the temple was a type of our blessed Lord, who made a similar entry, as related ^{<12108>} **Matthew 21:8-10**.

Verse 29. O give thanks unto the Lord] This is the general doxology or chorus. All join in thanksgiving, and they *end* as they began: “His mercy endureth for ever.” It began at the creation of man; it will continue till the earth is burnt up.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH PSALM

The parts of this Psalm are the following:—

- I. An exhortation to praise God for his mercy, ^{<19801>} **Psalm 118:1-5**.
- II. A persuasion to trust in God, and that from the psalmist’s own example, who called upon God, and was delivered from trouble, ^{<19815>} **Psalm 118:5-14**.
- III. The exultation of the Church for it, ^{<19815>} **Psalm 118:15-18**.
- IV. A solemn thanksgiving kept for it, and in what manner it was celebrated, ^{<19819>} **Psalm 118:19-27**.
- V. A short doxology.
 1. The psalmist invites all to praise God: “O give thanks,” &c., and adds his reasons:—
 1. “For he is good.” How briefly and powerfully spoken! He is absolutely good.
 2. “He is good, and ever good.” To us he is a merciful God, which flows from his goodness; his mercy created, redeemed, protects, and will crown us. Thus his mercy extends especially to his people; therefore,—
 1. “Let Israel now say,” &c. The whole nation.
 2. “Let the house of Aaron,” &c. That whole consecrated tribe.
 3. “Let them now that fear the Lord,” &c. Proselytes, &c.

II. And thus, having given a general recommendation of his mercy, he descends to instance in what it consists; that is, God's great deliverance of him.

1. "I was in distress," &c. A frequent case with God's people, as well as with David.

2. "I called upon the lord," &c. I fled to him, not trusting in myself, and found mercy.

3. "The Lord answered me, and set me in a large place." This was the issue.

Upon which experience the psalmist exults, and attributes it to God's mercy.

1. "The Lord is my helper," &c. The Lord is for me, therefore I shall not suffer.

2. "The Lord takes my part," &c. I shall be in safety, while my enemies will be cast down, and the Church freed.

From which he deduces a third inference:—

1, "It is better to trust in the Lord," &c. He is both able and willing to help.

2. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." *David* found this in the case of *Achish*, king of *Gath*.

In a song of triumph he acquaints us in what dangers he was, and from which God delivered him. It is good then to trust in the Lord.

1. "All nations compassed me about," &c., but to no purpose.

2. "They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about," &c.

3. "They compassed me about like bees," &c. Angry, and armed with stings; but my trust is alone in the Lord. In his name, and by his help, "I will destroy them."

He told us of a multitude of enemies; and for the overthrow of these he sang his triumph.

1. "Thou hast thrust sore at me," &c. I was in great danger; there was little hope of escape.

2. "But the Lord helped me." No help was in myself, but the Lord.

In the next verse he fully acknowledges the Lord as his strength.

1. "My strength." By which I resist my enemies.

2. "My salvation." To deliver me from my enemies.

3. "My song." Him whom I joyfully sing after my deliverance.

III. And that this song might be fuller, he calls for the whole choir to sing with him. His delivery concerned the whole Church, and therefore it must be sung by the whole Church; and so it was kept as a jubilee, a day of thanksgiving.

1. "The voice of rejoicing," &c. They congratulate their own safety in mine.

2. "The right hand of the Lord," &c. This anthem the whole choir sang.

Now this anthem was no sooner ended by the choir, than the psalmist took his harp again; and, exulting over his enemies, sings, "I shall not die," &c. Not be heart-broken, but "declare the works of the Lord."

And among his works this is one:—

1. "The Lord hath chastened me sore," &c. Within have I struggled hard with sin; without have I been assaulted with bitter enemies.

2. "But he hath not given me over," &c. I acknowledge in this his fatherly affection.

IV. It is supposed that this Psalm was composed by *David*, in order that it might be sung when the people and the priests were assembled before the Lord, for the purpose of thanksgiving; we may, with *Junius*, form it into a dialogue.

1. David speaks of the *priests* and *Levites* who had the care of the tabernacle: "Open to me the gates," &c., that is, the Lord's house; "for I will go in to them," &c.

2. To this the priests reply, "This is the gate," &c. The sole gate of justice that leads to him.

David replies, showing in brief his reason: "I will praise thee," &c.; and to the *twenty-eighth* verse, he shows how God had settled him in his

kingdom, making him “the head of the corner;” which words, though they refer to David, there is no doubt of their having reference also to Christ, of whom *David* was a type; and of Christ then I shall rather interpret them.

“The stone which the builders refused,” &c.

1. The Church is sometimes in Scripture called a building; the saints are the living stones, and Christ is “the chief Corner-stone.”
2. But the *Jews*, the priests, to whom belonged the office of building the Church, refused this stone: “We will not have this man,” &c.
3. But “he is become the head of the corner.” And whoever is not connected with him cannot be saved. 1. “This was the Lord’s doing,” &c. That Christ became our salvation. 2. “And it is marvellous in our eyes.” And so it ever must be, that Christ should die, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

In commemoration of so great a work, a day should be set apart.

1. “This is the day,” &c. Which without doubt was the day of the resurrection; the Lord making it a high and holy day.
2. “We will be glad and rejoice,” &c. Adam’s fall was a doleful day. On the day of Christ’s resurrection we will be glad.
3. In the midst of our rejoicing we will pray, and sound forth Hosanna to the Son of David. This was done by the people on the entering of Christ into *Jerusalem*. It was the opinion of the Jews that this form of acclamation would be used before the *Messiah*.

The whole prophecy of Christ’s coming, riding into Jerusalem in triumph, rejection, passion, &c., being thus explained, the prophet puts this into the mouths of the priests:—

1. “We have blessed you.” All true happiness is under this King.
2. “Out of the house of the Lord,” &c. From out of the Church.
3. “God is the Lord,” &c. Revealed unto us his Son as the Light of the world.
4. “Bind the sacrifice with cords,” &c. Be thankful to him, and meet in the Church to celebrate your thanksgivings.

V. The prophet concludes with a doxology.

1. "Thou art my God," I have taken thee for my portion.
2. "And I will praise thee;" which he doubles: "Thou art my God, and I will exalt thee." Which repetition shows his ardent desire of evincing his gratitude.

And thus the psalmist concludes with the same exhortation with which he began the Psalm.

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." And let him that readeth, and him that heareth, say, Amen!

THIS is an uncommonly fine Psalm, and among the many noble ones it is one of the most noble. Its beauties are so many and so prominent that every reader, whose mind is at all influenced by spiritual things, must see, feel, and admire them.

The 22nd verse, "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner," must have been a *proverbial* expression; but what gave birth to it I cannot find; but, like all other proverbs, it doubtless had its origin from some *fact*. One thing is evident from the Jewish doctors. The most enlightened of them understand this as a prophecy of the *Messiah*; and it was this general opinion, as well as the knowledge that the Spirit of prophecy thus intended it, that caused our Lord to apply it to himself, ~~42142~~ **Matthew 21:42**; nor did any of them attempt to dispute the propriety of the application.

PSALMS

PSALM 119

The various excellencies and important uses of the law or revelation of God.

NOTES ON PSALM 119

This is another of the *alphabetical* or *acrostic* Psalms. It is divided into *twenty-two* parts, answering to the *number* of letters in the *Hebrew alphabet*. Every *part* is divided into *eight verses*; and each verse begins with that letter of the alphabet which forms the *title* of the part, e.g.: The *eight* first verses have **a** *aleph* prefixed, the second *eight* **b** *beth*, each of the *eight* verses beginning with *that* letter; and so of the rest. All *connexion*, as might be naturally expected, is sacrificed to this artificial and methodical arrangement.

It is not easy to give any general *Analysis* of this Psalm; it is enough to say that it treats in general on the privileges and happiness of those who observe the law of the Lord. That law is exhibited by various names and epithets tending to show its various excellences. Earnest prayers are offered to God for wisdom to understand it, and for grace to observe it faithfully. These particulars may be collected from the *whole* composition, and appear less or more in *every part*.

The words which express that *revelation* which God had then given to men, or some *particular characteristic* of it, are generally reckoned to be the *ten* following: 1. *Testimonies*; 2. *Commandments*; 3. *Precepts*; 4. *Word*; 5. *Law*; 6. *Ways*; 7. *Truth*; 8. *Judgments*; 9. *Righteousness*; 10. *Statutes*. To these some add the following: 1. *Faithfulness*; 2. *Judgment*; 3. *Name*; but these are not used in the sense of the other *ten* words. I believe it is almost universally asserted that in *every verse* of this Psalm one or other of those *ten* words is used, except in ver. 122; but on a closer inspection we shall find that none of them is used in the above sense in the 84th, 90th, 121st, 122nd, and 132nd. See the notes on these verses.

{ ~~119:84~~ Psalm 119:84, 90, 121, 122, 132 }

To save myself unnecessary repetition, and the reader time and trouble, I shall here, once for all, explain the above words, which the reader will do well to keep in remembrance.

I. The LAW, **hrwt** TORAH, from **hry** *yarah*, to *direct, guide, teach, make straight*, or *even, point forward*; because it *guides, directs, and instructs* in the way of righteousness; makes our path *straight*, shows what is *even and right*, and points us *onward* to peace, truth, and happiness. It is even our *school-master* to bring us to Christ, that we may be justified through faith; and by it is the knowledge of sin.

II. STATUTES, **µyqj** CHUKKIM, from **qj** *chak*, to *mark, trace out, describe*, and *ordain*; because they *mark out* our way describe the line of conduct we are to pursue and *order* or *ordain* what we are to observe.

III. PRECEPTS, **µydwqp** PIKKUDIM, from **dqp** *pakad*, to *take notice or care* of a thing, to *attend*, have *respect to*, to *appoint*, to *visit*; because they take *notice* of our way, have *respect* to the whole of our life and conversation, *superintend, overlook*, and *visit* us in all the concerns and duties of life.

IV. COMMANDMENTS, **twxm** MITSVOTH, from **hwx** *tasvah* to *command, order, ordain*; because they show us what we should do, and what we should leave undone, and exact our obedience.

V. TESTIMONIES, **twd[** EDOTH, from **d[** *ad*, denoting *beyond, farther, all along*, to *bear witness*, or *testimony*. The rites and ceremonies of the law; because they point out matters *beyond* themselves, being *types and representations* of the good things that were to come.

VI. JUDGMENTS, **µycpvm** MISHPATIM, from **cpv** *shaphat*, to *judge, determine, regulate, order*, and *discern*, because they *judge* concerning our words and works; show the *rules* by which they should be *regulated*; and cause us to *discern* what is *right and wrong*, and *decide* accordingly.

VII. TRUTH, **hnwma** EMUNAH, from **ˆma** *aman*, to *make steady, constant, to settle, trust, believe*. The *law* that is established steady, confirmed, and ordered in all things, and sure; which should be *believed* on the authority of God, and *trusted* to as an infallible *testimony* from Him who cannot *lie* nor deceive.

VIII. WORD, **rbd** *dabar*, from the same root, to *discourse, utter one's sentiments, speak consecutively and intelligibly*; in which it appears to differ from **l l m** *malal*, to *utter articulate sounds*. Any prophecy or immediate communication from heaven, as well as the whole body of Divine revelation, is emphatically called **hwhy rbd** *debar Yehovah, the word of Jehovah*. On the same ground we call the whole *Old and New Testament* THE WORD OF THE LORD, as we term the volume in which they are contained THE BIBLE-THE BOOK. In his revelation God speaks to man; shows him, in a clear, concise, intelligible, and rational way, his interest, his duty, his privileges; and, in a word, the reasonable service that he requires of him.

IX. WAY, **Ērd** *DERECH*, from the same root, to *proceed, go on, walk, tread*. The way in which God goes in order to instruct and save man; the way in which man must tread in order to be safe, holy, and happy. *God's manner of acting or proceeding* in providence and grace; and the way that man should take in order to answer the end of his creation and redemption.

X. RIGHTEOUSNESS, **hqdx** *TSEDAKAH* from **qdx** *tsadak*, to *do justice, to give full weight*. That which teaches a man to give to all their *due*; to give GOD his *due*, MAN his *due*, and HIMSELF his *due*; for every man has duties to *God, his neighbor, and himself*, to perform. This word is applied to *God's judgments, testimonies, and commandments*; they are all *righteous, give to all their due, and require what is due from every one*.

The *three* words, which some *add* here, are, 1. FAITHFULNESS, **hnwma** *EMUNAH*: but see this under No. VII., nor does it appear in ^{<1989>}Psalm **119:90**, where it occurs, to be used as a characteristic of God's *law*, but rather his exact fulfilment of his *promises* to man.

The *second* is JUDGMENT, **cpvm** *mishpat*. See this under No. VI.: it occurs in ^{<1988>}Psalm **119:84, 121**: "When wilt thou execute judgment," &c.; but is not used in those places as one of the *ten words*.

The *third* is NAME, **μν** *shem*, see ^{<19913>}Psalm **119:132**: but this is no characteristic of God's *law*; it refers here simply to himself. *Those that love thy NAME* is the same as *those that love THEE*. Bishop *Nicholson* inserts *promises* among the *ten words*: but this occurs no where in the Psalm.

We might, and with much more propriety, add a *fourth*, **hrma** IMRAH, from **rma amar**, to *branch out, spread, or diffuse itself*, as the *branches of a tree*; and which is often used for a *word spoken, a speech*. This often occurs in the Psalm: and we regularly translate it *word*, and put no difference or distinction between it and **rbd dabar**, No. VIII.: but it is not exactly the *same*; **rbd dabar** may apply more properly to *history, relation, description*, and such like; while, **Ëtrma imrathecha**, *thy word*, may mean an *immediate oracle*, delivered solemnly from God to his prophet for the instruction of men. But the two words appear often indifferently used; and it would not be easy to ascertain the different shades of meaning between these two roots.

Having thus far introduced the Psalm to the reader's attention, I should probably speak at large of the *elegance* of its composition, and the *importance* and *utility* of its matter. Like all other portions of Divine revelation, it is elegant, important, and useful; and while I admire the fecundity of the psalmist's genius, the unabating flow of his poetic vein, his numerous synonyms, and his *copia verborum*, by which he is enabled to expand, diversify, and illustrate the same idea; presenting it to his reader in all possible points of view, so as to render it pleasing, instructive, and impressive; I cannot rob the rest of the book of its just praise by setting this, as many have done, above all the pieces it contains. It is by far the largest, the most artificial, and most diversified; yet, in proportion to its length, it contains the fewest ideas of any Psalm in the Book.

Several of the ancients, particularly the *Greek fathers*, have considered it as an abridgement of David's life; in which he expresses all the states through which he had passed; the trials, persecutions, succours, and encouragements he had received. The *Latin fathers* perceive in it all the morality of the Gospel, and rules for a man's conduct in every situation of life. Cassiodorus asserts that it contains the sentiments of the prophets, apostles, martyrs, and all the saints. In the introduction to the Book of Psalms, I have conjectured that many of them were composed from notes taken at different times, and in widely different circumstances; hence the different states described in the same Psalm, which could not have been at one and the same time the experience of the same person. It is most likely that this Psalm was composed in this way, and this, as well as its *acrostical* arrangement, will account for its general want of connexion.

Though the most judicious interpreters assign it to the times of the Babylonish captivity; yet there are so many things in it descriptive of David's state, experience, and affairs, that I am led to think it might have come from his pen; or if composed at or under the captivity, was formed out of his notes and *memoranda*.

I shall now make short remarks on the principal subjects in each part; and, at the end of each, endeavour by the *Analysis* to show the *connexion* which the *eight* verses of each have among themselves, and the use which the reader should make of them. In all the *Versions* except the *Chaldee* this Psalm is numbered 118.

LETTER **a** ALEPH.— *First Division*

Verse 1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way] **Ĕrd ymymt yrva** *ashrey temimey darech*, “O the blessedness of the perfect ones in the way.” This Psalm begins something like the *first*, where see the notes. {^{<190101>} **Psalm 1:1**} By the *perfect*, which is the proper meaning of the original word, we are to understand those who sincerely believe what God has spoken, religiously observe all the rules and ceremonies of his religion, and have their lives and hearts regulated by the spirit of love, fear, and obedience. This is farther stated in the *second* verse.

Verse 3. They also do no iniquity] They avoid all idolatry, injustice, and wrong; and they walk in God's ways, not in those ways to which an evil heart might entice them, nor those in which the thoughtless and the profligate tread.

Verse 4. Thy precepts diligently.] **dam meod**, “superlatively, to the uttermost.” God has never given a commandment, the observance of which he knew to be *impossible*. And to whatsoever he has commanded he requires *obedience*; and *his grace is sufficient for us*. We must not trifle with God.

Verse 5. O that my ways were directed] “I wish that my way may be *confirmed to keep thy statutes*.” Without thee I can do nothing; my soul is *unstable* and *fickle*; and it will continue *weak* and *uncertain* till thou *strengthen* and establish it.

Verse 6. Then shall I not be ashamed] Every act of transgression in the wicked man tends to *harden his heart*; and render it *callous*. If a man who

fears God is so unhappy as to fall into sin, his conscience reproaches him, and he is *ashamed* before God and man. This is a full proof that God's Spirit has not utterly departed from him, and that he may repent, believe and be *healed*.

Unto all thy commandments.] God requires *universal obedience*, and all things are possible to him whom Christ strengthens; and all things are possible to him that believes. *Allow* that *any* of God's commandments *may* be transgressed, and we shall soon have the whole decalogue set aside.

Verse 8. O forsake me not utterly.] *dam d[ad meod*, "to utter dereliction;" never leave me to my own strength, nor to my own heart!

ANALYSIS OF LETTER ALEPH.— First Division

I. In this first *octonary* the prophet commends to us the law of God, and persuades us to practise it by two arguments: 1. Happiness, ^{<19301>} **Psalm 119:1, 2.** 2. The excellence of the Lawgiver, ^{<19304>} **Psalm 119:4.**

II. He shows his affection to this law, desiring grace to keep it, ^{<19305>} **Psalm 119:5.**

On which he knew there would follow two effects:

1. Peace of conscience: "He should not be ashamed," &c.
2. Thankfulness to God for his teaching, ^{<19307>} **Psalm 119:7.**

"Blessed are they who are undefiled in the way," &c.

"Blessed are they who keep his testimonies," &c.

"They also do no iniquity," &c.

I. The *first argument* used by the prophet to persuade men to obedience is *blessedness*. He that would be happy must be obedient; and his obedience, if true, may be thus discerned:—

1. "He must be undefiled in the way." Keep himself from sin.
2. "He must walk in the law of the Lord," &c. Which is the *rule* of our faith, life, and worship.
3. "He must keep his testimonies." Search them out in God's word.
4. "He must seek him with a whole heart." With sincerity search his law to the utmost, both what it *bids*, and what it *forbids*, in order to know the mind of the Lawgiver.

5. "They also do no iniquity." They work no iniquity with 1. Purpose of heart; 2. Delight; 3. With perseverance; 4. Nor at all, when the heart is fully sanctified unto God; Christ dwelling in it by faith.

6. *They walk in his way*, which the wicked do not: but the righteous have taken it for their path through life; and should they at any time swerve from it, they come back by repentance and confession to God.

The prophet's *second argument* to persuade to obedience is the authority of the Lawgiver. All disobedience proceeds either from contempt of God's laws, or rebellion against them: but David brings to our mind the authority of the Lawgiver, from a consideration of *who* he is who commands our obedience as his servants: "Thou hast commanded that we keep,' &c.

1. *Thou*, who knowest when we err, and wilt punish us.

2. *Hast commanded*-absolutely enjoined.

3. *That we keep*, &c.—they cannot be dispensed with.

4. *Diligently*, &c. Not negligently or lazily, or Satan will take advantage of us.

II. The blessedness promised to the keepers of God's law moved the prophet to send forth this ardent prayer, "O that my ways," &c.

1. *David* was a great king, and yet desires to be obedient.

2. He answers God's *command* by a *prayer*, to be enabled to perform it by his grace.

3. "O that my ways," &c. My counsels, actions, &c., were conformable to the straitness and regularity of thy law.

4. He knew he could not be too closely united to God, and therefore he prays to be directed.

Which prayer he knew God would hear; and that the effect would be quietness of soul, and boldness at a throne of grace.

1. "Then shall I not be confounded," &c. If his heart were right with God, he should not fly from him, as did *Adam*: that was the effect of disobedience.

2. If God *directed his ways* to the keeping of his commandments, he should find no amazement in his conscience, but holy boldness.

And this effect will produce another fruit, a thankful heart.

1. “I will praise thee.” Give thee thanks for they grace and assistance.

2. “With uprightness of heart.” Not with his tongue only, but with an honest and upright heart.

3. But this could not be done till God had taught him: “I will praise thee when I shall have learned,” &c. Not to know them only with my *understanding*, but to make them the *rule of my life*, which cannot be but by the *influence* of the *Spirit of GOD*.

And what follows upon this will be a firm purpose of heart to be obedient to God’s laws.

1. “I will keep thy statutes.” So am I fully resolved and decreed with myself. And it is a great help to godliness to *resolve to live a godly life*; for how shall that be *performed* which is not purposed.

2. And yet this purpose or conclusion he makes in *God’s strength*; and therefore constantly prays: “O forsake me not utterly.” Without thy aid I can do nothing: but if at any time in thy just judgment thou desert me, that I may know and feel my own weakness, and learn the better to fly to thee, let it not be an utter desertion. Forsake me not, neither too much nor too long.

LETTER: **b BETH** — *Second Division*

Verse 9. A young man cleanse his way] *j ra orach*, which we translate *way* here, signifies a *track*, a *rut*, such as is made by the wheel of a cart or chariot. A *young sinner* has no *broad beaten* path; he has his *private ways* of offence, his *secret pollutions*: and how shall he *be cleansed* from these? how can he be saved from what will destroy mind, body, and soul? Let him hear what follows; the description is from God.

1. He is to *consider* that his way is *impure*; and how abominable this must make him appear in the sight of God.

2. He must examine it *according to God’s word*, and carefully hear what God has said concerning *him* and *it*.

3. He must *take heed* to it, **rmvl** *lishmor*, to *keep guard*, and *preserve his way*-his general course of life, from all defilement.

Verse 10. With my whole heart have I sought thee] 4. He must *seek God*; make *earnest prayer* and *supplication* to him for *Divine light*, for a *tender conscience*, and for *strength* to walk uprightly. 5. His *whole heart*; all his affections must be engaged here, or he cannot succeed. If he keep any affection for the idol or abomination; if his *heart* do not give it before the Lord, he may make many prayers, but God will answer none of them. 6. He must *take care to keep in the path of duty*, of abstinence and self-denial; not permitting either his *eye*, his *hand*, or his *heart* to *wander* from the *commandments* of his Maker.

Verse 11. Thy word have I hid in my heart] 7. He must *treasure up* those portions of *God's word* in his mind and heart which speak against uncleanness of every kind; and that recommend purity, chastity, and holiness. The word of Christ should dwell *richly* in him. If God's word be only in his *Bible*, and not also in his *heart*, he may soon and easily be surprised into his *besetting sin*.

Verse 12. Blessed art thou] 8. He must *acknowledge the mercy of God*, in so far preserving him from all the *consequences* of his sin. 9. He should beg of him to become his *teacher*, that his heart and conscience might be *instructed* in the *spirituality* of his statutes.

Verse 13. With my lips have I declared] 10. He should *declare* to his own heart, and to all his *companions in iniquity*, God's *judgments* against himself and them; that if his *long-suffering mercy* have not made a proper impression on their hearts, they may tremble at his approaching *judgments*.

Verse 14. I have rejoiced] 11. He must consider it his *chief happiness* to be found in the *path of obedience*, giving his whole heart and strength to God; and when enabled to do it, he should rejoice more in it than if he had gained thousands of gold and silver. O how great is the treasure of a tender and approving conscience!

Verse 15. I will meditate] 12. He should encourage self-examination and reflection; and meditate frequently on God's words, works, and ways-and especially on his gracious dealings towards him. 13. He should *keep his eye* upon *God's steps*; setting the example of his Saviour before his eyes, going *where* he would go, and *nowhere* else; *doing* what he would do, and

nothing else; keeping the *company* that he would *keep*, and *none* else; and doing every thing in reference to the *final judgment*.

Verse 16. I will delight myself] The word is very emphatical: [*v[tva eshtaasha, I will skip about and jump for joy.* 14. He must exult in God's word as his treasure, live in the spirit of obedience as his work, and ever glory in God, who has called him to such a *state* of salvation. 15. He must never forget what God has *done for him, done in him*, and promised *farther to do*; and he must not *forget* the *promises* he had made, and the *vows* of the Lord that are upon him. Any young man who attends to these *fifteen* particulars will get his impure way cleansed; victory over his sin; and, if he abide faithful to the Lord that bought him, an eternal heaven at last among them that are *sanctified*.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER BETH.— Second Division

In the first part the psalmist, having commended God's law, from its Author-God, and its end-happiness, shows us in the *second* part the efficacy and utility of it to a *holy life*, without which there can be no *happiness*. And in order to show this effect, he chooses the most unlikely *subject*.

I. A *young man*, in whom the law of the members is most strong; he wants experience; he is headstrong, and generally under the government, not of reason nor religion, but of his own passions.

II. The psalmist shows that, to cleanse the way of such, he must "take heed to them," watch over them, and "remember his Creator in the days of his youth."

As a man must become *holy* in order to be *happy*, he shows how this holiness is to be attained, and adduces his own experience.

1. Seek God with thy "whole heart." Be truly sensible of your wants.
2. Keep and remember what God says: "Thy words have I hidden," &c.
3. Reduce all this to practice: "That I might not sin against thee."
4. Bless God for what he has given: "Blessed art thou," &c.
5. Ask more: "Teach me thy statutes."

6. Be ready to communicate his knowledge to others: “With my lips have I declared.”

7. Let it have a due effect on thy own heart: “I have rejoiced,” &c.

8. Meditate frequently upon them: “I will meditate,” &c.

9. Deeply reflect on them: “I will have respect,” &c. As food undigested will not nourish the body, so the word of God not considered with deep meditation and reflection will not feed the soul.

10. Having pursued the above course, he should continue in it, and then his happiness would be secured: “I will not forget thy word. I will (in consequence) delight myself in thy statutes.”

LETTER **g** GIMEL.— *Third Division*

Verse 17. Deal bountifully] **l mg** *gemol*, reward thy servant. Let him have the return of his faith and prayers, that the Divine *life* may be preserved in his soul! Then he will keep thy word. From **l mg** *gamal*, to reward, &c., comes the name of **g gimel**, the *third* letter in the Hebrew alphabet, which is prefixed to every verse in this *part*, and commences it with its own name. This is a stroke of the psalmist’s *art* and *ingenuity*.

Verse 18. Open thou mine eyes] **yny[l g** *gal eynai*, reveal my eyes, illuminate my understanding, take away the veil that is on my heart, and then shall I see wonders in thy law. The Holy Scriptures are plain enough; but the heart of man is *darkened* by sin. The *Bible* does not so much need a *comment*, as the *soul* does the *light of the Holy Spirit*. Were it not for the darkness of the human intellect, the things relative to salvation would be easily apprehended.

Verse 19. I am a stranger in the earth] In the *land*. Being obliged to wander about from place to place, I am like a *stranger* even in my *own country*. If it refer to the *captives* in *Babylon*, it may mean that they felt themselves there as in a state of *exile*; for, although they had been *seventy* years in it, they still felt it as a *strange* land, because they considered Palestine their *home*.

Verse 20. My soul breaketh] We have a similar expression: *It broke my heart*, *That is heart-breaking*, *She died of a broken heart*. It expresses excessive longing, grievous disappointment, hopeless love, accumulated

sorrow. By this we may see the *hungering* and *thirsting* which the psalmist had after righteousness, often mingled with much *despondency*.

Verse 21. Thou hast rebuked the proud] This was done often in the case of David; and was true also in reference to the Babylonians, who held the Israelites in subjection, and whose kings were among the proudest of human beings. Instead of **μydz** *zedim*, the *proud*, some MSS. read **μyrz** *zarim*, *strangers*, and one reads **μywg** *goyim*, the *heathen*; and so the *Syriac*.

Verse 22. Remove from me reproach and contempt] Of these the captives in Babylon had a more than ordinary load.

Verse 23. Princes also did sit] It is very likely that the *nobles* of Babylon did often, by wicked misrepresentations, render the minds of the kings of the empire evil affected towards the Jews.

Verse 24. Thy testimonies also are-my counsellors.] ytx[yvna *anshey atsathi*, “the men of my counsel.” I sit with them; and I consider every testimony thou hast given as a particular counsellor; one whose advice I especially need.

The Analysis will farther explain the particular uses of this part.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER GIMEL.— Third Division

In this division the psalmist—

I. Reckons up the *impediments* he may meet with in endeavouring to keep God’s law.

II. Prays God to remove them.

First impediment. A *dead soul* and a *dull heart*; and therefore he prays for grace that he may *live* and keep *God’s word*.

Second impediment. *Blindness of understanding*: “Open my eyes, that I may see wonders in thy law.” The wonderful equity, wisdom, and profit of it.

Third impediment. His *wayfaring* and *uncertain situation*: I am a “stranger upon the earth;” therefore, “hide not thy commandments from me.” Should I be frequently destitute of thy ordinances, leave me not without thy Spirit’s teaching.

Fourth impediment. His infirmity and imperfection: “My soul breaks,” &c. I wish to be at *all times*, what I am *sometimes*, full of desire, fervour, zeal, prayer, and faith. Then shall I be what I should be, when my heart is *steady* in seeking thy salvation.

Fifth impediment. Pride of heart. This he saw in *others*, and was afraid that it might take place in himself; and he knew if it did, he should *wander from the commandment*, and come under a *curse*.

Sixth impediment. The *reproach* and *contempt* he met with in consequence of his endeavours to live a godly life. Against this he prays as a grievous temptation: “Remove from me reproach and contempt.”

Seventh impediment. The *rulers of the people plotted against his life*; they even met in council about it: “Princes did also sit and speak against me.” It is difficult to bear reproach even for Christ’s sake; though it should be a matter of glorying; but he must be strong in the faith, who can stand against *keen raillery*, and *state persecution*.

But what effect had all this upon the psalmist?

1. He cleaved to God’s *testimonies*, and conscientiously *observed* them.
2. He made them his *counsellors*—drew all his wisdom from them; and he was amply rewarded, for they became *his delight*. Every man profits who is faithful to his God.

LETTER d DALETH.— *Fourth Division*

Verse 25. My soul cleaveth unto the dust] It would be best to translate *yvpn naphshi*, *my life*; and then *cleaving to the dust* may imply an apprehension of *approaching death*; and this agrees best with the petition.

Quicken thou me] *ynyj chaiyeni*, “make me alive.” Keep me from going down into the dust.

Verse 26. I have declared my ways] *ytrps sippiarti*, “I have numbered my ways,” I have searched them out; I have investigated them. And that he had earnestly prayed for pardon of what was wrong in them, is evident; for he adds, “Thou heardest me.”

Verse 28. My soul melteth] *āl d dalaph* signifies *to distil*, *to drop as tears from the eye*. As my distresses cause the *tears to distil* from my eyes,

so the overwhelming load of my afflictions causes my life to *ebb* and *leak* out.

Verse 29. The way of lying] The propensity to *falsity* and *prevarication*, whatsoever is contrary to *truth*. *Remove me* from its solicitations, and *remove* it from *me*. “Grant me thy law graciously;” give it to me as a rule of moral conduct; but give it to me graciously through the *Gospel*; and then it will not be the letter that killeth, but will be sanctified to me, so as to become to me holy, just, and GOOD.

Verse 30. I have chosen the way of truth] And that I may continue in its “remove from me the way of lying.” See above.

Verse 31. I have stuck] *ytqbd dabakti*, I have *cleaved* to, been *glued* to, them: the same word as in ^{<49325>} **Psalm 119:25**. My *soul cleaves* as much to *thy testimonies*, as my *life* has *cleaved* to the *dust*.

O Lord, put me not to shame.] Let my sins and follies be blotted out by thy mercy; and so hide and cover them that they shall never appear, either in *this* or the *coming world*, to my *shame* and *confusion*! How many need to be importunate with God in this prayer!

Verse 32. I will run] The particle *yk*, which we translate *when*, should be translated *because*: *Because thou shalt enlarge*, or dilate, *my heart*; make plain my path by cleansing me from my impurity, and taking the hinderances out of my way. I *will* then run without dread of stumbling, and every day make sensible progress.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER DALETH.— Fourth Division

The psalmist—

- I. Sets down the state of an *imperfect* man.
- II. *Confesses* it.
- III. *Asks grace and mercy*.
- IV. *Professes* what in consequence he would do.

I. 1. “My soul cleaveth unto the dust:” His affections cleaved to things below, instead of being set on things above.

2. “Quicken thou me:” Give me a life *according to thy law*. By cleaving to the earth, he was earthly; by cleaving to the flesh, he was carnal; but by living according to the spiritual law, he was to become one spirit with God.

II. He *confesses* his imperfections.

1. "I have declared my ways." I acknowledge all my wanderings, sins, follies, and unfaithfulness, I have hidden nothing from thee.

2. Thou didst *hear me*; forgavest me out of thy mere mercy.

3. Do the like now: "Teach me thy statutes." These two things should be sought together: *mercy* to pardon, and *grace* to assist and renew.

III. He proceeds in this *prayer*.

1. "Make me to understand:" Where the *mind* is *darkened*, the *heart* cannot be *well ordered*.

2. He that asks *good things* from God should ask them for a *good end*: "Make me to understand; so shall I talk," &c.

3. He would show *God's wondrous works*: I shall talk of thy wondrous *law*,—thy wondrous *Gospel*,—thy wondrous *mercy* in saving sinners,—the wondrous *means* thou usest, &c.

IV. He returns to his confession, and states what he *purposes to do*.

1. "My soul melts:" I am full of trouble and distress.

2. "Strengthen thou me:" Give me the grace thou hast promised.

3. "Remove from me the way of lying:" Give me power to avoid all sin.

4. "Grant me thy law graciously:" Print the matter of it in my heart, and abolish my corruption.

5. He *chooses the truth*.

6. He *adheres* to it.

7. He will *continue* in it.

8. Yea, and with *greater diligence* than ever. To make up for lost time, he will now *run*: and, while running, keep in God's way. Some run, but they run *out* of it.

LETTER **h** **HE** .— *Fifth Division*

Verse 33. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes] To understand the spiritual reference of all the statutes, &c, under the law, required a teaching which could only come from God.

I shall keep it unto the end.] Here is a *good thing* asked for a good *end*. He wishes for heavenly teaching; not to make a parade of it, but to enable him to discern his duty, that he might act accordingly.

Verse 34. With my whole heart.] I will not trifle with my God, I will not divide my affections with the world; God shall have all.

Verse 36. Not to covetousness.] Let me have no inordinate love for gain of any kind, nor for any thing that may grieve thy Spirit, or induce me to seek my happiness here *below*.

Verse 37. From beholding vanity] An idol, worldly pleasure, beauty, finery; any thing that is vain, empty, or transitory. Let me not *behold* it; let me not *dwell upon* it. Let me remember *Achan*: he *saw*,—he *coveted*,—he *took*,—he *hid* his theft, and was *slain* for his sin.

Verse 38. Stablish thy word] Fulfil the promises thou hast made to me.

Verse 39. Turn away my reproach, which I fear] This may be understood of the reproach which a man may meet with in consequence of living a godly life, for such a life was never *fashionable* in any *time* or *country*. But I have found the following note on the passage: “I have done a *secret evil*; my soul is sorry for it: if it become *public*, it will be a heavy reproach to me. O God, turn it away, and let it never meet the eye of man!”—*Anon*.

Verse 40. Behold, I have longed] Thou searchest the heart; thou knowest that I have long desired thy salvation; thou seest that this desire still remains. Behold it! it is thy work; and through thy mercy I breathe after thy mercy.

Quicken me] I am *dying*; O give me the spirit of life in Christ Jesus!

ANALYSIS OF LETTER HE .— Fifth Division

In this part, which is wholly *precatory*, the psalmist prays,—

I. That God would *illuminate* his mind.

II. That he would *remove all those hinderances* which might prevent him from doing his duty.

I. 1. The first petition is for illumination: “Teach me;” point me out *what* I am to *learn*, and *how* I am to learn it.

2. The second is, “Give me understanding.” Let me *comprehend*, that I may *profit* by this teaching.

3. The *end* for which he asks,—that he “may keep the law.”

He specifies the manner: 1. He will be no *temporizer*; he will keep it “to the end.” 2. He will be no *hypocrite*; he will keep it “with his whole heart.”

1. He prays for *power*: “Make me to go.” Without thy Spirit’s help I can do nothing: I do not know the way without thy *teaching*; I cannot walk in it without thy *help*.

2. He wishes to go in *the path*; the way in which all God’s followers have walked.

3. It is a *path*, not a public road; a path where no *beast* goes, and *men* seldom.

4. He gives a *reason* why his petition should be granted: “Therein do I delight.”

II. He prays to have all impediments removed.

1. “Incline my heart.” Bind it down to a willing obedience.

2. “Not to covetousness.” Keep me from the *love of money*, the *world*, the *creature*.

3. He prays against the *desire of the eye*: “Turn away mine eyes.” Let the eye of my body be turned away *from* vanity; the eye of my mind turned away to thee.

4. Let me find the benefit of this turning: “Stablish thy word,”—make good thy word; give me grace to stand.

5. For which he gives this reason: “I am thy servant, and am devoted to thy fear.”

6. He is afraid of the consequences if he be not faithful: "Turn away my reproach." Let it not be said, at the day of judgment, "I was hungry, and you gave me no meat," &c.

7. He knows if God condemns it must be justly: "For thy judgments are good." *Man may condemn where thou approvest; he may approve where thou condemnest. Thy judgments alone are good.*

8. He concludes, desiring the Lord to look on the state of his heart: "Behold!" 1. Is not my heart right before thee? 2. If so, *quicken me; make me alive, and keep me alive!* Without the *latter*, the *former* will answer no end.

LETTER W VAU.— *Sixth Division*

Verse 41. Let thy mercies come] Let me speedily see the accomplishment of all my prayers! Let me have *thy salvation*-such a deliverance as it becomes thy greatness and goodness to impart. Let it be *according to thy word*-thy exceeding great and precious promises.

Verse 42. So shall I have wherewith to answer] Many say, "My hope in thy mercy is vain;" but when thou fulfilllest thy promises to me, then shall I answer to the confusion of their infidelity.

Verse 43. Take not the word of truth] Grant that the assurances which thy prophets have given to the people of approaching deliverance may not fall to the ground; let it appear that *they* have spoken *thy mind*, and that *thou* hast fulfilled *their word*.

Verse 45. I will walk at liberty] When freed from the present bondage, we shall rejoice in obedience to thy testimonies; we shall *delight* to keep all thy ordinances.

Verse 46. I will speak-before kings] Dr. *Delaney* supposes that this is spoken in reference to *Achish, king of Gath*, whom David had instructed in the Jewish religion; but we have already seen that it is most likely that the Psalm was compiled under the Babylonish captivity. But the words may with more propriety be referred to the case of *Daniel*, and other bold and faithful Israelites, who spoke courageously before *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*, and *Darius*. See the books of *Daniel*, *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*.

Verse 47. Thy commandments, which I have loved.] O shame to Christians who feel so little affection to the *Gospel of Christ*, when we see

such cordial, conscientious, and inviolate attachment in a Jew to the laws and ordinances of Moses, that did not afford a thousandth part of the privileges!

Verse 48. My hands also will I lift up] I will present every victim and sacrifice which the law requires. I will make prayer and supplication before thee, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER VAU.— Sixth Division

The psalmist prays for *mercy*, and promises to show his *thankfulness two ways*:—

- I. By a bold confession of God's law.
- II. By holy obedience to it.

The whole section consists of two petitions and six promises.

I. I. *First petition*. "Let thy mercies come also unto me—even thy salvation." He joins these two, *mercy* and *salvation*, as *cause* and *effect*; for God's *mercy* can alone bring *salvation*.

This being granted, he vows to be thankful and courageous.

1. He vows to confess God's law, and answer any adversary who may say, "It is vain for him to hope in the Lord," by showing that God has fulfilled his word.

2. That he *will put his trust in God*; because he is omnipotent and merciful.

II. The *second petition* is, "Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth." For which he gives a reason: "I have hoped in thy judgments."

1. "Take not thy word," in which I boast and glory before my adversaries.

2. "Take not the word out of my mouth," so that I dare not speak nor openly profess it.

3. "Take it not away utterly." If for my unfaithfulness thou shouldst shut my mouth for a time, restore thy favour to me, that I may again make confession unto salvation.

4. For which he gives this reason: "I have hoped," &c. I trust in thy fidelity and justice, that thou wilt accomplish, in *promises* and *threatenings*, whatsoever thou hast engaged to perform.

II. Now he shows his *thankfulness* by determining to make confession of God's mercy in a holy life; serving God.

1. With a *free heart*: "I will walk at liberty;" sin shall have no dominion over me.

2. With a *loosened tongue*: "I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings." It is a difficult thing to speak to great men concerning their salvation; it requires great boldness, and equal *humility*. *Rudeness*, under the guise of *zeal*, spoils every good.

3. With *heartly affection*: "I will delight myself." He who can *delight* in his *duty* has made considerable progress in *piety*.

4. With *corresponding practice*: "My hands will I lift up." My life shall declare that I have not received the grace of God in vain.

5. With a *considerate mind*: "I will meditate in thy statutes." My understanding shall frequently examine them, approve of them, and turn them over to a heart full of fervent affection.

6. This was a work to which he *was accustomed*: "I have loved thy commandments and statutes." Love feels no loads, and habit is a second nature.

LETTER Z ZAIN.— *Seventh Division*

Verse 49. Remember the word] Thou hast *promised* to redeem us from our captivity; on that *word* we have built our *hope*. *Remember* that thou hast thus promised, and *see* that we thus *hope*.

Verse 50. This is my comfort] While enduring our harsh captivity, we anticipated our enlargement; and thy *word of promise* was the *means* of keeping our souls *alive*.

Verse 51. The proud have had me] We have been treated, not only with oppressive *cruelty*, but also with *contempt*, because we still professed to *trust in thee*, the living God, who because of our transgressions hadst been greatly displeased with us; *yet we have not declined from thy law*.

Verse 52. I remembered thy judgments of old] The word *judgments* is here taken for *providential dealing*; and indeed *kind treatment*; that which God showed to the Hebrews in bearing with and blessing them. And it was the recollection of *these judgments* that caused him to *comfort* himself.

Verse 53. Horror hath taken hold upon me] The word *hp[l z zilaphah*, which we render *horror*, is thought to signify the pestilential burning wind called by the Arabs *simoom*. Here it strongly marks the idea that the psalmist had of the destructive nature of *sin*; it is pestilential; it is corrupting, mortal.

Verse 54. Thy statutes have been my songs] During our captivity all our consolation was derived from singing thy praises, and chanting among our fellow-captives portions of thy law, and the precepts it contains.

Verse 55. I have remembered thy name] Thou art *Jehovah*; and as *our God* thou hast made thyself known unto us. In the deepest *night* of our affliction this has consoled me.

Verse 56. This I had, because I kept thy precepts.] Though thou didst leave us under the power of our enemies, yet thou hast not left us without the consolations of thy Spirit.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER ZAIN.— Seventh Division

In this part the psalmist—

I. Prays.

II. Shows his trust in God, notwithstanding his discouragements.

III. Commends the word of God, by showing what blessed effects it had produced in him.

I. 1. He prays: “Remember;” accomplish and perfect thy promise. God’s promises are made to prayer and faith; if men do not exert these, God will not fulfil the others.

2. “Made to thy servant:” The promises are made to the *obedient*. It is in vain to desire God to remember *his promises* made to *us*, if we make no conscience to perform *our promises* made to *him*.

3. “Wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust:” This is a forcible argument to induce God to fulfil his promises. They are thy promises; thou hast made them to us; and thou hast caused us to hope, because made by thee, that they shall be fulfilled.

II. He shows that the hope he had in God made him steady, even in afflictions.

1. “This is my comfort in affliction:” That is, God’s word and promise.

2. "Thy word hath quickened me;" brought me *life, strength, and courage*.
3. He mentions his afflictions. 1. The proud have had me in derision. 2. Yet I have not declined from thy law. 3. For in my afflictions I remembered thy judgments; his casting down the proud and exalting the humble. And, 4. From these considerations he derived comfort.

III. His knowledge of God's purity and judgments caused him to commiserate the state of the wicked.

1. "Horror hath taken hold upon me:" For those who trampled under foot God's word, and persecuted the righteous, he grieved; not because of the evil they did him, but of the evil they did themselves. He describes those men.
2. They forsook God's laws. Probably *apostate* Israelites.
3. He was not without consolation, though much afflicted and harassed. He took delight in God's law, and made his *songs* of it.
4. And this was a source of joy to him both day and night.
5. He concludes with this acclamation: "This I had;" I had this spirit, this power, this comfort, "because I kept thy precepts." While I suffered *for* God, I was enabled to rejoice *in* God. As I made him my portion, so he has been my praise.

LETTER **j** CHETH.— *Eighth Division*

Verse 57. Thou art **my portion, O Lord**] From the *fifty-seventh* to the *sixtieth* verse may be seen the *progress* of the work of grace on the human heart, from the first dawn of heavenly light till the soul is filled with the fulness of God. But as I consider this Psalm as *notes* selected from *diaries* of past experience, formed at different times; and that the author has been obliged, for the support of his *acrostic* plan, to interchange circumstances, putting that sometimes *behind* which in the order of grace comes *before*; because, to put it in its right place, the *letters* would not accord with the *alphabetical arrangement*; I shall therefore follow what I conceive to be its *order* in the *connexion of grace*, and not in the *order* in which the words are here laid down. See Clarke on "~~1980~~ Psalm 119:60".

Verse 58. See Clarke on "~~1980~~ Psalm 119:60".

Verse 59. FIRST.—**I thought on my ways]** *ytbvj chashabti*, I deeply pondered them; I turned them upside down; I viewed my conduct on all sides. The word, as used here, is a metaphor taken from *embroidering*, where the *figure* must appear the *same* on the *one side* as it does on the *other*; therefore, the cloth must be turned on each side every time the needle is set in, to see that the stitch be fairly set. Thus narrowly and scrupulously did the psalmist examine his conduct; and the result was, a deep conviction that he had departed from the way of God and truth.

SECONDLY.—**And turned my feet unto thy testimonies.]** Having made the above discovery, and finding himself under the displeasure of God, he abandoned every evil way, took God's word for his directory, and set out fairly in the way of life and salvation.

Verse 60. THIRDLY.—**I made haste, and delayed not]** He did this with the utmost *speed*; and did not trifle with his convictions, nor seek to drown the voice of conscience.

The original word, which we translate *delayed not*, is amazingly emphatical. *ythmhmth al w velo hithmahmahti*, I did not stand *what-what-whating*; or, as we used to express the same sentiment, *shilly-shallying* with myself: I was *determined*, and so set out. The *Hebrew* word, as well as the *English*, strongly marks indecision of mind, positive action being suspended, because the mind is so unfixed as not to be able to make a choice.

Ver. 58. FOURTHLY.—Being determined in his heart, he tells us, *I entreated thy favour with my whole heart*. He found he had sinned; that he needed *mercy*; that he had no time to lose; that he must be importunate; and therefore he sought that *mercy with all his soul*.

FIFTHLY.—Feeling that he *deserved* nothing but wrath, that he had no *right* to any good, he cries for *mercy* in the way that God had promised to convey it: "Be merciful unto me!" And to this he is encouraged only by the *promise* of God; and therefore prays, "Be merciful unto me ACCORDING to thy WORD."

Ver. 57. SIXTHLY.—To keep himself firm in his present resolutions, he binds himself unto the Lord. "I have said that I would keep thy words." Thy vows are upon me, and I must not add to my guilt by breaking them.

SEVENTHLY.—He did not seek in vain; God reveals himself in the fulness of blessedness to him, so that he is enabled to exclaim, *Thou art my portion, O Lord!* My whole soul trusts in thee, my spirit rests supremely satisfied with thee. I have no other inheritance, nor do I desire any. Here then is the way to *seek*, the way to *find*, and the way to be *happy*. Other effects of this conversion may be seen below.

Verse 61. The bands of the wicked have robbed me] *yl bj chebley*, the cables, cords, or snares of the wicked. They have *hunted* us like wild beasts; many they have taken for prey, and many they have destroyed.

Verse 62. At midnight I will rise] We are so overpowered with a sense of thy goodness, that in season and out of season we will return thee thanks.

Verse 63. I am a companion] This was the natural consequence of his own conversion; he abandoned the workers of iniquity, and associated with them that feared the Lord.

Verse 64. The earth is full of thy mercy] What an astonishing operation has the grace of God! In the midst of want, poverty, affliction, and bondage, it makes those who possess it happy! When Christ dwells in the heart by faith, we have nothing but *goodness* around us. Others may complain; but to us even the earth appears full of the mercy of the Lord.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER CHETH.— Eighth Division

In this part we have—

- I. The assertion of the psalmist, that *God* was his *portion*; and his resolution upon it to keep God's law.
- II. His *prayer* for grace to enable him to do it.
- III. His *profession* of *duty* and a *holy life*.
- IV. His *concluding* acclamation and *prayer*.

I. "Thou art my portion:" Let others choose as they please, *thou* art sufficient for *me*; I ask no more.

1. And on this I resolve to be thy *obedient servant*: "I have said, that I would keep thy words."

2. But thou knowest I am unable without thy grace to do this; therefore I must entreat thy favour: "Be merciful unto me." There are three helps to a godly life, all which we meet here, viz.:—

1. *Determination*. This makes a man *begin* well: "I have said."
2. *Supplication*. This makes a man *continue* well: "I entreated."
3. *Consideration*. This makes a man, when he *errs*, *come back* to the way again.

II. He was ready to co-operate with grace: "I have thought on my ways." If we be not workers with God, vain are our prayers. *Two things* are required of us: 1. *Aversion* from evil. 2. *Conversion* to good. Both must meet together.

1. Aversion from evil: "I thought on my ways." But he did not rest here.
2. Conversion to good: "I turned my feet unto thy testimonies."

III. And his sincerity is shown many ways:—

1. By his *readiness* and *zeal*: "I made haste, and delayed not."
2. By his *courage* and *constancy*. Though he was *plundered*, for his adherence to God, *by the bands of the wicked*, yet he *did not forget God's law*.
3. By his *fervour* about it. He was always employed in the work; and would rather take something from his natural rest, than not gratify his hunger and thirst after righteousness: "At midnight I will rise to give thanks."
4. By *selecting his company*. "He who walks with the lame will learn to limp:" therefore avoiding the society of the wicked, he seeks the company of them *that fear the Lord* and *keep his precepts*.

IV. He concludes with an *acclamation* and *prayer*.

1. "The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy." There is not a creature that is not a partaker of thy goodness; let *me* have my portion in it.
2. "Teach me thy statutes." That is, continue to instruct me. I need constant teaching, line upon line, and precept upon precept. Teach thou, and I will learn; and as I learn from thy teaching, I will practise by thy grace.

LETTER C TETH.— *Ninth Division*

Verse 65. Thou hast dealt well with thy servant] Whatsoever thy word has promised, thou hast fulfilled. Every *servant* of God can testify that God has done him nothing but *good*, and therefore he can speak *good* of his name.

Verse 66. Teach me good judgment and knowledge] yndml t [dw
 μ [c bwc *tob taam vedaath lammnedeni. Teach me* (to have) a *good taste and discernment*. Let me see and know the importance of Divine things, and give me a *relish* for them.

Verse 67. Before I was afflicted I went astray] Many have been humbled under affliction, and taught to know themselves and humble themselves before God, that probably without this could never have been saved; after this, they have been serious and faithful. *Affliction* sanctified is a great blessing; unsanctified, it is an additional curse.

Verse 68. Thou art good] And because thou art good, *thou doest good*; and because thou delightest to do good, *teach me thy statutes*.

Verse 69. The proud have forged a lie] The poor captives in Babylon had their conduct and motives continually misrepresented, and themselves belied and calumniated.

Verse 70. Their heart is as fat as grease] They are egregiously stupid, they have fed themselves without fear; they are become *flesh-brutalized*, and given over to vile affections, and have no kind of *spiritual relish*: but *I delight in thy law*-I have, through thy goodness, a *spiritual feeling* and a spiritual appetite.

Verse 71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted] See on ^{<19967>} **Psalm 119:67**.

Verse 72. The law of thy mouth is better] Who can say this? Who *prefers* the law of his God, the Christ that bought him, and the heaven to which he hopes to go, when he can live no longer upon earth, *to thousands of gold and silver*? Yea, how many are there who, like Judas, *sell their Saviour* even for *thirty* pieces of silver? Hear this, ye lovers of the world and of money!

As the letter **C** *teth* begins but few words, not forty, in the Hebrew language, there is less *variety* under this division than under any of the preceding.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER TETH.— Ninth Division

The psalmist, having been afflicted, shows,—

- I. How graciously God dealt with him, in bringing him profitably through it.
- II. Prays for a right judgment and knowledge.
- III. Expresses his love to God's law, and the value he set upon it.

I. The psalmist gives thanks for mercy granted in affliction.

1. "Thou hast dealt graciously with thy servant." Graciously in afflicting him, and graciously in relieving him.
2. And this thou hast done "according to thy word." Thou hast fulfilled thy *promise*.

II. He prays to be taught of God:—

1. "Teach me good judgment." Many judge badly; for they think that affliction is a sign of God's displeasure. Let me have that *good judgment* that receives it as a fatherly correction from thee.
2. He asks for *science* and *knowledge*. A spiritual perception, and taste for heavenly things.
3. For this he gives his reason: "I have believed thy commandments." If we believe not God, we cannot profit by his word.
4. There is something remarkable in the *manner* of asking: 1. A good or *sound judgment*. 2. *Knowledge*; for without a *sound judgment*, *knowledge* is of no use.

III. He acknowledges that God's *chastisements* had done him *good*.

1. "Before I was afflicted." Prosperity is often the mother or error.
2. "Now I have kept thy word." *Schola crucis, schola lucis*, "The school of the cross is the school of light."

3. He acknowledges that the *good God* had done him *good*. To have a right notion of God is a great blessing.

IV. Much of the psalmist's *affliction* proceeded from *wicked men*. These he describes:—

1. They were *proud*. Pride is the mother of *rebellion*, both against *God* and *man*.

2. They were *liars*. Evil speaking and calumny are the first weapons of persecutors.

3. They *forged* these lies; they invented them. There was none *ready* to their hand, so they framed some to serve their purpose.

4. The psalmist opposes them with *humility* and *truth*: "I will keep thy precepts."

5. He shows more particularly their *moral character*: "Their heart was as fat as grease;" they were *stupid*, *brutish*, *hoggish*. Their *god* was their *belly*. 1. Because they abounded in *wealth*, they were *proud*. 2. Because they *pampered* themselves, they were *stupid*, and incapable of *moral feeling*. The *fat* is the least *sensible* part of the animal system.

V. He shows the *condition* of the godly.

1. They see God's hand in their afflictions.

2. They learn his statutes.

3. They prefer his word to all earthly treasures; and,

4. They persevere in this heavenly disposition, because they continue to depend on God.

LETTER *y* YOD.— *Tenth Division*

Verse 73. Thy hands have made me] Thou hast formed the *mass* out of which I was made; and *fashioned me*—thou hast given me that particular *form* that distinguishes me from all thy other creatures.

Give me understanding] As thou hast raised me above the beasts that perish in my *form* and *mode of life*, *teach me* that I may live for a higher and nobler end, in loving, serving, and enjoying thee for ever. Show me that I was made for *heaven*, not for *earth*.

Verse 74. They that fear thee] They who are truly religious *will be glad*-will rejoice, at this farther proof of the saving power of God.

Verse 75. I know-that thy judgments are right] All the dispensations of thy providence are laid in *wisdom*, and executed in *mercy*: let me see that it is through this wisdom and mercy that I have been afflicted.

Verse 76. Thy merciful kindness] Let me derive my comfort and happiness from a diffusion of thy love and mercy, **Ēdsj chasdecha**, thy exuberant goodness, through my soul.

Verse 77. Let thy tender mercies] **Ēymj r rachameycha**, thy fatherly and affectionate feelings.

Verse 78. Let the proud be ashamed] To reduce a *proud man* to *shame*, is to humble him indeed. Let them be *confounded*. *Without cause*-without any colourable pretext, have they persecuted me.

Verse 79. Let those that fear thee] The truly pious.

Turn unto me] Seeing thy work upon me, they shall acknowledge me as a *brand plucked from the burning*.

Verse 80. Let my heart be sound in thy statutes] Let it be *perfect*-all given up to thee, and all possessed by thee.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER YOD.— Tenth Division

I. In the first place the psalmist prays for understanding, *comfort*, and *mercy*; and uses this argument, I am thy creature: “Thy hands have fashioned me.”

II. He prays for *understanding*: Give me *heavenly light* and *influence*.

III. He prays for this that he may *learn God’s commandments*. This was his *end*.

1. He endeavours to persuade God to this by the *benefit* that others would receive from seeing his *conversion*: “They—that fear thee will be glad,” &c.

2. He acknowledges that, if he was at any time *deserted*, it was because he was unfaithful, and that it was in very faithfulness that God had corrected him; therefore God’s judgments were right.

3. He prays that God's *merciful kindness* may be extended to him. But this prayer he would not presume to have offered, had he not been authorized and encouraged by God's word: "According to thy word." When God gives a *promise*, he *binds* himself to *fulfil* it.

4. He desires to be treated as a *child* in the *heavenly family*; and therefore prays for God's *fatherly mercies*—his *bowels of compassion*.

5. And he prays for them for this *end*, "that he may live." And here also he adds a reason why he should be heard: "Thy law is my delight."

6. He puts up another petition for his enemies, if they will take timely warning: "Let the proud be ashamed;" let them see their unprincipled conduct and *blush* that they have been persecuting and calumniating innocent people.

7. He next expresses his own resolution: "I will meditate on thy statutes." Howsoever they deal with me, I will cleave unto my God.

8. He prays that he may be acknowledged by the *godly*: "Let them that fear thee turn unto me." God's Church is a communion of saints, and to them has God so distributed his graces that one stands in need of another. Where one *doubts*, the light of another may *solve his difficulty*. One *grieves*; another may *comfort* him. One is *tempted*; another may uphold and restore him. This company the psalmist would have joined to him for these ends.

9. He prays that he may be *sound in the faith*, for without this he could not be *steady* in his *obedience*. Though an *orthodox creed* does not constitute true religion, yet it is the basis of it, and it is a great blessing to have it; and *soundness of mind* is a strong help to the retention of a sound creed.

Finally, he shows the *end* for which he desires this blessing, that "he may not be ashamed." That he may continue sincere and upright, have dominion over all sin, give no place to secret iniquities, and that he may never be put to the blush before God or man. Reader, beg of God to enable *thee* to lay these things profitably to heart.

LETTER K CAPH.— *Eleventh Division*

Verse 81. **My soul fainteth for thy salvation]** I have longed so incessantly after *thy salvation*—the complete purification and restoration of my soul, that my very spirits are exhausted.

*“My heartstrings groan with deep complaint;
My soul lies panting, Lord, for thee;
And every limb and every joint
Stretches for perfect purity.”*

Verse 82. Mine eyes fail] With *looking up* for the fulfilment of thy promise, as my heart fails in longing after thy presence.

Verse 83. Like a bottle in the smoke] In the eastern countries their *bottles* are made of *skins*; one of these hung in the smoke must soon be *parched* and *shrivelled up*. This represents the exhausted state of his body and mind by long bodily affliction and mental distress.

Verse 84. How many are the days of thy servants] Dost thou not know that I have few to live, and they are full of trouble?

When wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?] Shall not the pride of the Chaldeans be brought down, the arm of their strength broken, and thy people delivered? In this verse there is none of the *ten* words used in reference to God's law.

Verse 85. The proud have digged pits] The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, translate this verse thus: “They have recited to me unholy fables, which are not according to thy law.” They wish us to receive their *system of idolatry*, and the *tales* concerning their *gods*; but these *are not according to thy law*. The *Anglo-Saxon* is the same: [A.S.]: *They quothed me the unrightwise spells; but no so so law thine*.

Verse 87. They had almost consumed me] Had it not been for thy mercy, we had all been destroyed under this oppressive captivity.

Verse 88. Quicken me] Make and keep me *alive*.

So shall I keep] Without the spiritual *life* there is no *obedience*; we must therefore rise from the *dead*, and be *quicken*ed by the Spirit of Christ.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER CAPH.— Eleventh Division

- I. In this section the psalmist laments his being grieved with some inward anguish.
- II. Complains of his enemies.
- III. Expresses his hope and constancy; and,
- IV. Prays to God for comfort and grace.

I. 1. He begins with a sad complaint: “My soul fainteth.” As the body will fail if it want natural food, so will the soul if it get not the bread of life.

2. His eyes also failed with *looking up*. The blessing was long delayed.

3. Yet *he hoped in God’s word*. He knew that it would not fail.

4. He made complaint: “When wilt thou comfort me?”

5. His state was most deplorable; his body *dried and shrivelled up* through long *fasting and affliction*, so that it resembled a leathern bottle hung up in the smoke.

6. Yet still he continued faithful: “I do not forget thy statutes.”

II. He complains against his enemies.

1. How long he should be obliged to suffer them.

2. He inquires “when the Lord will execute judgments.”

He describes these enemies from their *qualities*:—

1. They were *proud*. They would not bow down to nor acknowledge God.

2. They were *treacherous*. They *digged pits for him*—used every kind of means in order to destroy him; cruel, treacherous, and cowardly.

3. They were *impious*. In heart and conduct they were not “according to God’s law.”

4. They acted without a *shadow of justice*; *wrongfully* against *law* and *justice*.

III. He prays for *succour*: “Help thou me.” Here are three things of especial note: 1. O Thou, who art infinite.. 2. *Help*; for thou hast all power in heaven and in earth. 3. *Me*, who cannot stand against my enemies; but “I trust in thee.”

IV. 1. He closes with a frequent petition: “Quicken thou me—make me alive.” All true religion consists in the *LIFE of God* in the *SOUL of man*.

2. The *manner* in which he wishes to be quickened: “After thy loving-kindness.” He wishes not to be raised from the *death of sin* by *God’s thunder*, but by the *loving voice* of a *tender Father*.

3. The *effect* it should have upon him: “So shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.” Whatever thou *speakest* I will *hear, receive, love, and obey*.

LETTER I LAMED.— *Twelfth Division*

Verse 89. For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.] Thy purposes are all settled above, and they shall all be fulfilled below.

Verse 90. Thy faithfulness] That which binds thee to accomplish the promise made. And this shall be, not for an age merely, but from generation to generation; for thy promises refer to the whole duration of time.

Thou hast established the earth] Thou hast given it its appointed place in the system, and there it abideth.

Verse 91. They continue this day] This verse should be thus read: *All are thy servants; therefore, they continue this day according to thy ordinances.* “All the celestial bodies are governed by thy power. Thou hast given an ordinance or appointment to each, and each fulfils thy will in the place thou hast assigned it.”

Verse 92. Unless thy law had been my delights] Had we not had the consolations of religion, we should long ago have died of a broken heart.

Verse 93. I will never forget thy precepts] How can I? It is by them I *live*.

Verse 94. I am thine, save me] He who can say this need fear no evil. In all trials, temptations, dangers, afflictions, persecutions, I am thine. Thy enemies wish to destroy me! Lord, look to thy servant; thy servant looks to thee. O how sovereign is such a word against all the evils of life! *I am THINE!* therefore *save thine OWN!*

Verse 96. I have seen an end of all perfection] Literally, “Of all consummations I have seen the end:” as if one should say, Every thing of human origin has its limits and end, howsoever extensive, noble, and excellent. All arts and sciences, languages, inventions, have their respective principles, have their limits and ends; as they came from man and relate to man, they shall end with man: but thy law, thy revelation, which is a picture of thy own mind, an external manifestation of thy own perfections, conceived in thy infinite ideas, in reference to eternal objects, is exceeding broad; transcends the limits of creation; and extends illimitably into

eternity! This has been explained as if it meant: All the real or pretended perfection that men can arrive at in this life is nothing when compared with what the law of God requires. This saying is *false* in itself, and is no meaning of the text. Whatever God requires of man he can, by his grace, work in man.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER LAMED.— Twelfth Division

This section contains an *encomium* of the WORD of GOD; of its perfection and immutability; and of the *comfort* the psalmist received from it.

I. In the *three* first verses the psalmist shows that God's word is *immutable*, by an instance in the *creatures*.

1. In the HEAVENS. They *continue* to *this day* as he made them in the beginning.

2. In the EARTH. As it was *established* in the beginning, so it *abideth*.

3. So also of the other heavenly bodies. *They* also *abide* as they were created; and answer still, most exactly, the ends for which they were made.

4. The *reason* of which is, "All are God's servants," made to *obey* his will: and from obedience they never swerve.

II. He shows the *excellence* of this word by a *rare effect* it had on himself: "Unless thy law had been my delight, I should have perished." No such comfort in trouble as God's word and promise. This he remembers with gratitude.

1. "I will never forget thy precepts." Only those forget them who reap no good from them.

2. This word had *quicken*ed him, i.e., God speaking and working by that word.

3. He will therefore be the *Lord's servant* for ever: "I am thine."

4. He knows he cannot continue so, but by *Divine help*: "Save me!"

5. He shows his love to God's word: "He seeks his precepts," that he may obey them.

III. He needed the help of God, because he had *inveterate enemies*. These he describes:

1. By their *diligence*: “The wicked have waited for me.”
2. By their *cruelty*: “They waited to destroy me.”
3. His *defence* against them. I will consider *^nbt a ethbonen*, I will set myself to consider. I will use all proper means to enable me to understand them.

IV. Having shown the perfection of God’s word,—

1. In *establishing* and *upholding* the *frame of the world*.
2. In bringing comfort to the soul. In the close,
3. He compares it to all other things which we esteem as *excellent* and *perfect*,—*riches, honours, crowns, sceptres, kingdoms, &c.*, over which the word of God has still the pre-eminence; they perish, but it endures for ever: “I have seen an end of all perfection.” Jonah’s *gourd* was smitten by a *worm*; the *golden head* had *feet of clay*; the most *beautiful form* shall dissolve into *dust*; *Babylon*, the wonder of the world, has *perished* from the face of the earth; the fairest day is succeeded by *midnight*; and so of other things: “but the commandment is exceeding broad:” all the principles of justice are contained in it; no just notion of God without it; all the rules of a holy life, and all the promises of life eternal, are found in it. It is the word of God, and it endureth for ever. When the heavens and the earth are no more, this word shall stand up and flourish.

LETTER *m* MEM.— *Thirteenth Division*

Verse 97. O how love I thy law] This is one of the strongest marks of a gracious and pious heart, cast in the mould of obedience. Such love the precepts of Christ: in his commandments they delight; and this delight is shown by their making them frequent subjects of their *meditation*.

Verse 98. Wiser than mine enemies] Some have thought that this Psalm was composed by *Daniel*, and that he speaks of himself in these verses. Being instructed by God, he was found to have more *knowledge* than any of the Chaldeans, magicians, soothsayers, &c., &c.; and his wisdom soon appeared to the whole nation vastly superior to theirs.

Verse 99. I have more understanding than all my teachers] As he had entered into the spiritual nature of the law of God, and saw into the

exceeding breadth of the commandment, he soon became wiser than any of the *priests* or even *prophets* who instructed him.

Verse 100. I understand more than the ancients] God had revealed to him more of that *hidden wisdom* which was in his law than he had done to any of his predecessors. And this was most literally true of *David*, who spoke more fully about *Christ* than any who had gone before him; or, indeed, followed after him. His compositions are, I had almost said, a *sublime Gospel*.

Verse 101. I have refrained my feet] By avoiding all sin, the spirit of wisdom still continues to rest upon me.

Verse 103. Sweeter than honey to my mouth!] What deep communion must this man have had with his Maker! These expressions show a soul filled with God. O Christians, how vastly *superior* are our privileges! and alas! how vastly *inferior* in general, are our consolations, our communion with God, and our heavenly-mindedness!

Verse 104. Through thy precepts I get understanding] Spiritual knowledge increases while we tread in the path of *obedience*. Obedience is the grand means of *growth* and *instruction*. Obedience trades with the talent of grace, and thus grace becomes multiplied.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER MEM.— Thirteenth Division

In this division we see,—

- I. The affection of the psalmist to the law of God.
- II. The great benefits he derived from it.

I. 1. “O how I love thy law.” God alone knows how great that love is which I feel.

2. As true love always seeks opportunities of conversing with the beloved object, the psalmist shows his in *meditation* on God’s law by day and night.

He gives us several *encomiums* on God’s word:—

1. The *wisdom* he derived from it. It made him *wiser than his enemies*. It taught him how to conduct himself towards them, so as to disappoint many of their plans, and always insure his own peace.

2. It made him *wiser than his teachers*. Many, even of the *Jewish teachers*, took upon them to *teach* that to others which they had *never learned* themselves. He must have been wiser than these. Many in the present day take upon themselves the character of *ministers of Jesus Christ*, who have never felt his Gospel to be the power of God to their salvation. A simple woman, who is converted to God, and feels the *witness of his Spirit* that she is his child, has *a thousand* times more true wisdom than such persons, though they may have learned many languages and many sciences.

3. It made him *wiser than the ancients*—than any of the *Jewish elders*, who had not made that word the subject of their deep study and meditation.

A second encomium. God's word gives power over sin: "I have refrained:" and the psalmist was no *speculist*; he was in every respect a *practical* man.

A third encomium is, the more a man resists evil forbidden by that law, and practices righteousness commanded by it, the stronger he grows. The psalmist *refrained from every evil way*, that he might *keep God's word*.

Lest any one should think that he pretends to have acquired all these excellencies by his own *study* and *industry*, he asserts that he had nothing but what he had received: "I have not departed," &c.; "for THOU hast taught me."

A fourth encomium is, that God's law gives indescribable *happiness* to them who love and obey it: "How sweet are thy words," &c.

II. In the last verse he proves all that he said by the blessed effects of God's word upon himself.

1. He got *understanding* by it. He became learned, wise, and prudent.

2. He was enabled to *hate every false way*-false religion, lying vanities, empty pleasures; and every thing that did not tend to and prepare for an eternity of blessedness.

LETTER n NUN.— *Fourteenth Division*

Verse 105. **Thy word is a lamp]** This is illustrated thus by *Solomon*, ^{<1023>}**Proverbs 6:23:** "The *commandment* is a *lamp*; and the *law* is *light*; and *reproofs of instruction* are the *way of life*." God's word is a *candle* which

may be held in the hand to give us light in every *dark place* and *chamber*; and it is a *general light* shining upon all *his works*, and upon all *our ways*.

Verse 106. I have sworn] Perhaps this means no more than that he had renewed his covenant with God; he had *bound* himself to love and serve him only.

Verse 107. I am afflicted very much] *dam d[ad meod*, “to extremity, excessively.” We are in the most oppressive captivity.

Quicken me] Deliver us from our bondage.

Verse 108. The freewill-offerings of my mouth] *yp twbdn nidboth pi*, the *voluntary offerings which I have promised*. Or, As we are in *captivity*, and cannot sacrifice to thee, but *would* if we *could*; accept the *praises* of our *mouth*, and the *purposes* of our *hearts*, instead of the sacrifices and offerings which we *would* bring to thy altar, but *cannot*.

Verse 109. My soul is continually in my hand] *γυρη naphshi*, *my life*; that is, it is in *constant danger*, every hour I am on the confines of death. The expression signifies to be in *continual danger*. So Xenarchus in Athenæus, lib. xiii., c. 4: *Εν τη χειρι την ψυχην εχοντα*, “having the life in the hand;” which signifies continual danger and jeopardy. There is some thing like this in the speech of *Achilles* to *Ulysses*, HOM. II. ix., ver. 322:—

*Αιει εμην ψυχην παραβαλλομενος πολεμιζειν,
“Always presenting my life to the dangers of the fight.”*

My soul is in thy hand, is the reading of the *Syriac*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*; but this is a *conjectural* and *useless* emendation.

Verse 110. The wicked have laid a snare] Thus their lives were continually exposed to danger.

Verse 111. As a heritage] In ¹⁹³⁵⁷**Psalm 119:57** he says, *God is my portion*, *yql j chelki*. In this he says, *Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage*, *l j n nachal*. To these he was *heir*; he had *inherited* them from his fathers, and he was determined to leave them to his *family* for ever. If a man can leave nothing to his child but a *Bible*, in that he bequeaths him the greatest treasure in the universe.

Verse 112. I have inclined mine heart] I used the power God gave me, and turned to his testimonies with all mine heart. When we *work with God*, we can *do all things*.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER NUN .— Fourteenth Division

In this division the psalmist points out farther excellencies of God's word, in the use of it. 1. God's word was a *lamp to his feet* to guide him through every dark place. 2. It was a *light to his path*, ever showing him generally the way in which he should walk.

1. He therefore resolves to keep it, and binds himself to fulfil his resolution. As the lamp was going before, and the light was shining, it was necessary that he should walk while the light shone. He therefore, 1. Binds himself by an *oath* or vow: "I have sworn." 2. He will be *faithful* to his oath: "I will perform it." 3. Not merely to admire, but to *keep* God's word. 4. Not its *promises* merely, but its *righteous judgments*.

2. And this he will do in all circumstances, even in *extreme affliction*. Then he requests *two* things from the Lord. 1. That he would "accept the freewill-offerings of his mouth." All his praises, thanksgivings, and vows. 2. That he would "teach him his judgments," that he might perform what he had vowed.

3. He shows the difficulties he was in: 1. "My soul is continually in my hand." I am in continual danger. He had got the *sword of the Spirit*, and his life depended on the use he made of it: if the soldier, whose life depends on his *drawn sword*, does not use it well, his enemy kills him. 2. Hence he says, "I do not forget thy law." I am making-a proper use of my sword. 3. And that I have need of it is evident for "the wicked have laid a snare for me." 4. This did not intimidate him: he did not leave the path of duty for fear of a snare being in that path: "I erred not from thy precepts." I did not *go about* to seek a *safer* way.

4. He keeps his resolution, and vows still. 1. He preferred God's testimonies even to the land of Canaan, to riches and crowns: "I have taken them for my heritage." 2. He delighted in them: "They are the rejoicing of my heart."

5. In this work he was determined to *continue*: 1. "I have inclined my heart." The counsel of the soul is like a balance; and the mind, which hath the commanding power over the affections, inclines the balance to that

which it judges best. 2. It was to *perform it*, that he thus *inclined his heart*. 3. And this, not for a *time*, or on some *particular occasion*, but *always*, and unto *the end*. Then the *end of life* would be the *beginning of glory*.

LETTER S SAMECH.— *Fifteenth Division*

Verse 113. I hate vain thoughts] I have hated מַרְפָּ [S *seaphim*, “tumultuous, violent men.” I abominate all *mobs* and *insurrections*, and troublers of the public peace.

Verse 114. My hiding place] My asylum.

And my shield] There is a time in which I may be called to *suffer in secret*; then thou *hidest me*. There may be a time in which thou callest me to *fight*; then thou art my *Shield* and *Protector*.

Verse 115. Depart from me] *Odi profanum vulgus, etarceo*, I abominate the profane, and will have no communion with them. I drive them away from my presence.

Verse 116. Uphold me] יִנְקָמֶס *sammecheni*, prop me up; give me thyself to *lean upon*.

Verse 117. Hold thou me up] I shall grow weary and faint in the way, if not strengthened and *supported* by thee.

And I shall be safe] No soul can be *safe*, unless upheld by thee.

Verse 118. Thou hast trodden down] All thy enemies will be finally trodden down under thy feet.

Their deceit is falsehood.] Their elevation is a *lie*. The wicked often become *rich* and *great*, and affect to be *happy*, but it is all *false*; they have neither a *clean* nor *approving conscience*. Nor can they have *thy* approbation; and, consequently, no true *blessedness*.

Verse 119. Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross] There is no *true metal* in them: when they are tried by the *refining fire*, they are burnt up; they fly off in fumes, and come to no amount. There is probably an allusion here to the *scum* or *scoriae* at the *surface of melting metals*, which is swept oft previously to casting the metal into the mould.

Therefore I love thy testimonies.] Thy *testimonies* will stand; and thy *people* will stand; because thou who didst give the one, and who upholdest the other, art *pure, immovable, and eternal*.

Verse 120. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee] I know thou art a just and holy God: I know thou requirest truth in the inner parts. I know that thou art a Spirit, and that they who worship thee must worship thee in spirit and in truth; and I am often *alarmed* lest I *fall short*. It is only an assurance of my interest in thy mercy that can save me from *distressing fears and harassing doubts*. It is our privilege to know we are in God's favour; and it is not less so to maintain a continual filial fear of offending him. A true conception of God's justice and mercy begets reverence.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER SAMECH.— Fifteenth Division

In this section the psalmist—

- I. Declares his hatred to wickedness, and his detestation of wicked men.
- II. Expresses his love to God's law.
- III. Prays for grace to sustain him in the observance of it.
- IV. Foretells the destruction of the wicked.

I. "I hate vain thoughts;" not only *evil* itself, but the *thought* that leads to it.

II. 1. "Thy law do I love:" I strive to keep every *affection* exercised on its *proper object*.

2. This is my privilege: for thou art, 1. "My hiding-place," that public evils may not reach me; and 2. "My shield," to ward off the fiery darts of the wicked one.

3. To God, therefore, and his word, he would adhere in all extremities; and would have no communion with the wicked. 1. These he would *drive away* as the pests of piety: "Depart from me." 2. Because he would "*keep* the commandments of God," while the others were bent on *breaking* them.

III. He prays for the grace of God to sustain him.

1. "Uphold me:" if thou do not, I *fall*.

2. "Hold thou me up:" for I am *falling*. One part of this prayer is against the *occurrence* of evil; the other, against evil as *actually taking place*.

IV. He foretells the destruction of wicked men.

1. "Thou hast trodden down:" they who *tread thy commandments under their feet* shall be *trodden down* under *thy feet*. The *first* treading shall bring on the *second*.
2. They *deceive* themselves in supposing thou wilt not resent this. This is a *deception*, and a dangerous one too, for it is against the most positive declarations of thy *truth*, therefore it is *falsehood*.
3. This is most certain, for "thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross;" they are utterly vile, and of no account in thy sight.
4. "Therefore I love thy testimonies." And for this, among others reasons, that I may avoid their *judgments*.
5. Foreseeing the *judgments* to fall on the wicked, it was necessary that he should be filled with a salutary *fear*. 1. "My flesh trembleth." Happy is he who by other men's harms learns to be wise. 2. We should work out our salvation with fear and trembling. God is *holy* and *just* as well as *merciful*; therefore we should fear before him. 3. Because he saw those judgments coming on the wicked, he desired to be *established in God's holy fear*. In all cases the old proverb is true: "Too much familiarity breeds contempt."

LETTER [AIN.— *Sixteenth Division*

Verse 121. I have done judgment and justice] I have given the best *decision* possible on every case that came before me; and I have endeavoured to *render* to all their *due*.

Verse 122. Be surety for thy servant] *br* [*arob*, give a pledge or token that thou wilt help me in times of necessity. Or, *Be bail for thy servant*. What a word is this! Pledge thyself for me, that thou wilt produce me *safely* at the judgment of the great day. Then sustain and keep me blameless till the coming of Christ. Neither of these two verses has any of the *ten words* in reference to God's *law* or *attributes*. The *judgment* and the *justice* refer to the psalmist's own conduct in ^{<989121>}**Psalm 119:121**. The *hundred and twenty-second* has no word of the kind.

Verse 123. Mine eyes fail] See on ^{<98982>}**Psalm 119:82**.

Verse 125. I am thy servant] See on ^{<98994>}**Psalm 119:94**.

Verse 126. It is **time for thee, Lord, to work]** The *time* is fulfilled in which thou hast promised deliverance to thy people. *They*-the Babylonians, **Have made void thy law.]** They have filled up the measure of their iniquities.

Verse 127. Therefore I love thy commandments] I see thou wilt do all things well. I will trust in thee.

Above gold] *bhzm mizzahab*, more than *resplendent gold*; gold without any stain or rust.

Yea, above fine gold.] *zpmw umippaz*, *above solid gold*; gold separated from the dross, perfectly *refined*.

Verse 128. All thy precepts concerning all things to be right] There are too many *supplied* words here to leave the text unsuspected. All the ancient versions, except the *Chaldee*, seem to have omitted the second **l k col**, ALL and read the text thus: “Therefore I have walked straight in all thy precepts.” I go straight on in all thy precepts, hating every false way. I neither turn to the right hand nor to the left; the *false ways* are *crooked*; *thy way* is *straight*. I am going to heaven, and that way lies *straight before me*. To walk in the way of *falsity* I cannot, because I *hate* it; and I hate such ways because God hates them.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER AIN.— Sixteenth Division

In this part the psalmist,—

- I. Makes a profession of his integrity.
- II. Prays for protection against his enemies.
- III. Resolves to walk in the right way.

I. He makes a profession of his integrity:—

1. “I have done judgment and justice.”
2. Though he had done so, yet he was not free from calumny and oppression. He commends, therefore, his righteous cause to God: “Leave me not to mine oppressors.”
3. “Be surety for thy servant:” give me an assurance that thou wilt stand by me.

4. "Let not the proud oppress me." For miserable are the destitute when they fall into such hands.

II. He shows us how he had prayed against his enemies, and for God's salvation.

"Mine eyes fail." My faith is almost gone, and the eye of my mind become dim.

2. It was the *salvation* of God he had in view: "For thy salvation."

3. The ground on which he prayed was *the word of God's righteousness*.

He proceeds in his prayer; and begs God to deal with him as a needy *servant*, and also an *ignorant scholar*.

1. "Deal with thy servant." I am ready to do thy will; but treat me in thy *mercy*.

2. "Teach me thy statutes." I wish to learn what thy will is; and when I know it, faithfully to do it.

He urges the same request, with nearly the same reasons for it: "I am thy servant." I am no *stranger* to thee. I have frequently come to thee to get grace to enable me to serve thee. I am one of thy domestics, a member of thy Church.

He comes now with his complaint.

1. "It is time for thee to work." Thy *enemies* are *strong*, and thy *people* *weak*.

2. "They have made void thy law." They have entirely trampled it under foot.

III. The zeal of the psalmist increased as the love of many waxed cold.

1. "Therefore," because they despise thy word, ordinances, and people.

2. "I love thy commandments." As they hate, so I love. When we love God's commandments, it is a sign that we have not received the grace of God in vain.

3. To show the greatness of his love, he says, I love thy commandments "above gold; yea, above fine gold." My love is greater to thy *law*, than that of the miser is to his bags.

4. He received all God's precepts to be right; and he takes not some, but the whole of them.

5. Whatever gain *idolatry* and *time-serving* might hold out to him, he abominated it, because he *hated every false way*. His love of God, his law, and holiness, was greater than his love of life.

LETTER **p** **PE** .— *Seventeenth Division*

Verse 129. Thy testimonies are wonderful] There is a height, length, depth, and breadth in thy word and testimonies that are truly astonishing; and on this account my soul loves them, and I deeply study them. The more I study, the more light and salvation I obtain.

Verse 130. The entrance of thy words giveth light] **j tp** *pethach*, the *opening* of it: when I open my Bible to read, light springs up in my mind. Every sermon, every prayer, every act of faith, is an *opening* by which light is let into the seeking soul.

Verse 131. I opened my mouth, and panted] A metaphor taken from an animal exhausted in the chase. He runs, open-mouthed, to take in the cooling air; the heart beating high, and the muscular force nearly expended through fatigue. The psalmist sought for salvation, as he would run from a ferocious beast for his life. Nothing can show his earnestness in a stronger point of view.

Verse 132. As thou usest to do] Treat me as thy mercy has induced thee to treat others in my circumstances. Deal with me as thou dealest with thy *friends*.

Verse 133. Order my steps] **kh** *hachen*, make them *firm*; let me not walk with a halting or unsteady step.

Have dominion over me.] **ybi** *bi*, IN *me*. Let me have no governor but God; let the throne of my heart be filled by him, and none other.

Verse 135. Make thy face to shine] Give me a sense of thy approbation. Let me know, by the testimony of thy Spirit in my conscience, that thou art reconciled to me. The godly in all ages derived their happiness from a consciousness of the Divine favour. The witness of God's spirit in the souls of believers was an essential principle in religion from the foundation of the world.

Verse 136. Rivers of waters run down mine eyes] How much had this blessed man the honour of God and the salvation of souls at heart! O for more of that spirit which mourns for the transgressions of the land! But we are not properly convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER PE .— Seventeenth Division

In this division the psalmist—

- I. Praises God's word.
- II. Shows his affection to it.
- III. Prays for grace to keep it.
- IV. Mourns for those who do not.

1. The eulogy he gives to God's word here is from a *new quality* not mentioned before. "Thy testimonies are wonderful;" wondrous mysteries are contained in the Divine oracles.

1. The *ceremonial* law is wonderful, because the mystery of our redemption by the blood of Christ is pointed out in it.

2. The *prophecies* are wonderful, as predicting things, humanly speaking, so uncertain, and at such great distance of time, with so much accuracy.

3. The *decalogue* is wonderful, as containing in a very few words all the principles of justice and charity.

4. Were we to go to the *New Testament*, here wonders rise on wonders! All is astonishing; but the psalmist could not have had this in view.

The second eulogy is, that God's law is *the dispenser of light*.

1. The entrance of it, the first chapter of Genesis; what light does that pour on the mind of man! What knowledge of the most important things, which we should never have known without it!

2. *It gives light to the simple*—to those who are not *double*; who have but *one end* in view, and *one aim* to that end.

3. Of those *simple ones* or *babes* our Lord speaks, ^{<40125>}**Matthew 11:25**, and St. Paul, ^{<40125>}**1 Corinthians 1:25, 26, &c.**

II. The psalmist shows that he was one of those *simple* ones.

1. "He opened his mouth" by prayer, and sought the spirit of light and piety.

2. He *panted* after it as men do that want breath, and are longing to get fresh air.

3. And this he did because "he longed for God's commandments;" had a vehement desire to know and keep them.

III. He now betakes himself to prayer, and acquaints us with the petitions he had offered.

1. He said, "Look upon me." Consider thy poor, dependent, helpless creature.

2. "Have mercy upon me." Look, not with the indignation which I deserve, but with the mercy which thou knowest I need.

3. "As thou usest to do." Act by me as thou dost by them that love thee.

4. "Order my steps." Give me grace to be obedient. Many look for *mercy to pardon their sin*, but do not look for *grace* to enable them to be *obedient*.

5. "Let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Let me be saved from all my spiritual captivity.

6. "Deliver me from the oppression of men." Let neither wicked men nor wicked spirits rule over me.

7. "Make thy face to shine upon me!" Let me have thy light, thy peace, and thy *approbation*.

8. "And teach me thy statutes." Keep me at thy feet, under continual instruction.

IV. He concludes by telling how he grieved for the wickedness of others and the dishonour of God. If we grieve not for others, their sin may become ours. See ~~2098~~ **Ezekiel 9:8**; ~~4182~~ **1 Corinthians 5:2**.

LETTER X TSADDI.— *Eighteenth Division*

Verse 137. Righteous art thou] Thou art infinitely holy in thy nature; and therefore thou art *upright in thy judgments*—all thy dispensations to men.

Verse 138. Thy testimonies] Every thing that proceeds from thee partakes of the perfections of thy nature.

Verse 139. My zeal hath consumed me] My earnest desire to promote thy glory, and the pain I feel at seeing transgressions multiplied, have worn down both my flesh and spirits.

Verse 140. Thy word is very pure] **hpwr** *tseruphah*, it is *purification*. It is not a *purified thing*, but a *thing* that *purifies*. “Now ye are *clean*,” said Christ, “by the *word* I have spoken unto you.” God’s word is a *fire* to *purify* as well as a *hammer* to *break*.

Verse 141. I am small and despised] And on these accounts have every thing to *fear*. Being *small*, I cannot *resist*; being *despised*, I am in *danger*; but even all this does not induce me to start aside, or through the fear of man to be unfaithful to thee.

Verse 142. Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness] The word **qdx** *tsedek* is a word of very extensive meaning in the Bible. It signifies, not only God’s inherent righteousness and perfection of nature, but also his method of treating others; his plan of redemption; *his method of saving others*. And the word **δικαιοσυνη**, which answers to it, in the *Septuagint* and in the *New Testament*, is used with the same latitude of meaning, and in the same sense; particularly in that remarkable passage, **Romans 3:25, 26**, where see the notes. Thy merciful method of dealing with sinners and justifying the ungodly will last as long as the earth lasts; and thy *law* that witnesses this, in all its pages, is *the truth*.

Verse 143. Trouble and anguish] I am exercised with various trials from men and devils.

Have taken hold on me] But still I cleave to my God, and am *delighted* with his law.

Verse 144. The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting] Thy *moral law* was not made for *one people*, or for one *particular time*; it is as imperishable as thy *nature*, and of *endless obligation*. It is that law by which all the children of Adam shall be judged.

Give me understanding] To know and practise it.

And I shall live.] Shall glorify thee, and live eternally; not for the *merit* of having done it, but because thou didst fulfil the work of the law in my heart, having saved me from condemnation by it.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER TSADDI.- Eighteenth Division

In this division the psalmist—

I. Commends the law of God, from its Author, its equity, its purity, and its perpetuity.

II. A consideration of which led him to love and delight in it, though opposed by many enemies.

I. 1. “Righteous art thou.” Thou *alterest* not with *times*, thou *changest* not with *persons*, thou art *ever the same*.

2. Thy *judgments*, in giving rewards and dispensing punishments, are upright.

3. Thy *testimonies*, that declare this, are *righteous* and *faithful*.

He consequently felt an ardent *zeal* for God’s glory.

1. This “zeal consumed him,” and he expresses the cause.

2. Men “forgot God’s words.” He pined away for grief on this account. He turns to another *character* of God’s law.

“Thy word is very pure.”

1. It is *pure* in itself, and the *purifier* of the heart.

2. On this account he *loved* it; and we know that “love is the fulfilling of the law.”

A *third* effect was a careful remembrance of it, though tried by his enemies.

1. “I am small.” Of no weight nor authority; have no secular power.

2. “Despised.” Have no credit nor respect.

3. “Yet do I not forget thy precepts.” Nothing can move me while upheld by thee; and thou wilt uphold me while I cleave unto thee.

A *fourth* commendation of God’s law is its *immutability*.

1. It is immutable, and can never be dispensed with. It is a *righteousness* that is everlasting.

2. It is *the truth*: 1. It has priority of all laws; 2. Contains no falsehood.

3. Its promises and threatenings shall all be punctually fulfilled.

II. He *loved* and *delighted* in it, notwithstanding he had *trouble* and *anguish*.

1. *Trouble* and *anguish*. The righteous are often under the cross.

2. Yet “thy commandments are my delights.” While faithful to thee, all my afflictions are sanctified to me, so that I can *rejoice* while I suffer.

He speaks again about the *immutability* of God’s word.

1. “The righteousness of thy testimonies,” Thy word is like thyself, for it comes from thee.

2. “Give me understanding.” I always stand in need of *teaching*.

3. “And I shall live.” All is *death* without thee. Live in *me*, that I may live by thee.

LETTER q KOPH.— *Nineteenth Division*

Verse 145. I cried with my whole heart] The whole soul of the psalmist was engaged in this good work. He whose *whole heart* cries to God will never rise from the throne of grace without a blessing.

Verse 147. I prevented the dawning] *ytmdq kiddamti*, “I went before the dawn or twilight.”

Verse 148. Mine eyes prevent] *wmdq kiddemu*, “go before the watches.” Before the watchman proclaims the hour, I am awake, meditating on thy words. The Jews divided the night into three watches, which began at what we call six o’clock in the evening, and consisted each of four hours. The Romans taught them afterwards to divide it into four watches of three hours each; and to divide the day and night into twelve hours each; wherein different guards of soldiers were appointed to watch. At the proclaiming of each watch the psalmist appears to have risen and performed some act of devotion. For a remarkable custom of our Saxon ancestors, see **Clarke’s note on “~~199164~~ Psalm 119:164”**.

Verse 150. They draw nigh] They are just at hand who seek to destroy me.

They are far from thy law.] They are *near* to all *evil*, but *far* from *thee*.

Verse 151. Thou art near] As they are *near* to destroy, so art thou *near* to *save*. When the enemy comes in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him.

Verse 152. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old] yt [dy
 ןדק *kedem yedati*, “Long ago I have known concerning thy testimonies.”
 Thou hast designed that thy testimonies should bear reference to, and evidence of, those glorious things which thou hast provided for the salvation of men; and that this should be an everlasting testimony. They continue, and Christ is come.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER KOPH.— Nineteenth Division

- I. The psalmist is earnest in his prayers for deliverance.
- II. He shows the *end* for which he desires it.
- III. The *necessity* of its being speedy, as his enemies were at hand.

- I. 1. His prayer was *earnest*; it was a *cry*, rather than a *petition*.
- 2. It was *sincere*: “I cried with my whole heart.” There was no hypocrisy in it.
- 3. It was *in season*: “I prevented the dawning of the morning.”
- 4. It was *out of season*: “Mine eyes prevent the night-watches.”

What he prayed for,—

- 1. *Audience*: “Hear me, O Lord.”
- 2. *Deliverance*: “Save me.”
- 3. *Increase of grace*: “Quicken me.”

II. The *end* for which he prayed.

- 1. That he might *keep God's statutes*.
- 2. That he might keep *his testimonies*. See the explanation of these words at the beginning of this Psalm.

3. That he might *meditate* on God's word.
4. That he might *increase* in the *life* of God.

The *arguments* he uses:—

1. His *faith* and *hope*. I cried, because I *waited* and *hoped* in thy word.
2. *God's mercy*. According to thy loving-kindness.
3. The *danger* he was in from his *pursuing enemies*.—1. *They draw nigh*.
2. They are *mischievously* bent. 3. They are most *impious* men. *Far from the law of God*; they despised and hated it.

III. Near as they may be to *destroy*, thou art nearer to *save*.

1. "Thou art near:" They cannot come where thou art not.
2. "All thy commandments are truth:" And thou hast commanded us to *trust in thee*; and therefore we shall not fear evil. Thou wilt *support* thy *servants*, and *destroy* thine *enemies*.

He concludes with an *acclamation*:—

1. "Concerning thy testimonies:" Thy *will*, which thou hast testified in thy word.
2. "I have known of old:" Ever since I looked into them, began to study and practice them.
3. "That thou hast founded them for ever:" They are of eternal truth, immutable and indispensable. And this is the anchor of our souls, that we may not be carried away by trials and temptations. Not one tittle of God's truth has ever failed any of his sincere followers. No one promise of his that has been sought by faith in Christ has ever been unfulfilled. Blessed be God!

LETTER **r** **KOPH**.— *Twentieth Division*

Verse 153. Consider mine affliction] *See mine affliction* or *humiliation*: but the *eye of the Lord affects his heart*; and therefore he never *sees* the distresses of his followers without *considering* their situation, and *affording* them help.

Verse 154. Plead my cause] *ybyr hbyr ribah ribi*. “Be my Advocate in my suit.” Contend for us against the Babylonians, and bring us out of our bondage.

According to thy word.] Spoken by thy prophets for our comfort and encouragement.

Verse 155. Salvation is far from the wicked] There is no hope of their conversion.

For they seek not thy statutes.] And they who *do not seek, shall not find*.

Verse 156. Great are thy tender mercies] They are *uybr rabbim, multitudes*. They extend to *all the wretchednesses of all men*.

Verse 158. I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved] Literally, *I was affected with anguish*.

Verse 160. Thy word is true from the beginning] *var rosh*, the *head* or *beginning* of thy word, is *true*. Does he refer to the *first word* in the Book of *Genesis*, *tyvarb bereshith*, “in the beginning?” The learned reader knows that *var rash*, or *raash*, is the *root* in that word. Every word thou hast spoken from the first in *Bereshith* (*Genesis*) to the end of the law and prophets, and all thou wilt yet speak, as flowing from the *fountain of truth*, must be true; and all shall have in due time, their fulfillment. And all these, thy words endure *for ever*. They are *true*, and *ever will be true*.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER RESH.— Twentieth Division

- I. 1. The psalmist begins with a petition: “Consider my affliction.”
2. Begg that God would help him: “Deliver me.”
3. The reason for both: “I do not forget thy law.”
4. He begs God to be his Advocate: 1. “Plead my cause.” At the bar of men a just cause often miscarries for want of an able advocate, and is borne down by an unjust judge. Be *thou* my Advocate, and I shall not fail. 2. “Quicken me:” Revive my hopes, give *new life* to my soul.

II. He believes he shall be heard, because—

1. “Salvation is far from the wicked:” But he does not *forget God’s law*.

2. “They seek not God’s statutes:” But he *meditates* in God’s law *day* and *night*.

III. If he ever miscarries, or comes short, he flees to God for mercy.

1. On God’s mercies he bestows two epithets: 1. They are *great* or *many*, and they *endure for ever*. 2. They are *tender*; they are *miseri cordiæ*, q.d., *miseria cordis*, feelings which occasion *pain* and *distress* to the *heart*.

רַחֲמִים *rachamim*, such as *affect* and flow from the *tender yearnings of the bowels*. The word signifies what a *mother* feels for the *infant* that lay in her *womb*, and hangs on her *breast*.

2. He prays to be *quicken ed*. Let me not *die*, but *live*.

IV. He complains of his adversaries:—

1. They are *many*: Many *devils*, many *men*; many *visible*, more *invisible*.

2. Yet he continued steadfast: “I do not decline,” &c.

3. They were “transgressors:” Not simple *sinner s*, but *worker s of iniquity*.

4. He was greatly distressed on their account: “I beheld them, and was grieved.”

V. He brings this as a proof of his attachment to God.

1. “Consider how I love:” No man dare say to God, “Look upon *me*,” but he who is persuaded that when God looks upon him *he will like him*. This was a sure proof of the psalmist’s sincerity.

2. He loves not merely the *blessings* he receives from God, but he loves God’s *law*; and none will love this, who does not delight in *obedience*. And how few are there of this character, even in the Church of God!

3. And because he loves he prays to be *quicken ed*. The soul only which is spiritually *alive*, can *obey*.

VI. He concludes with a commendation of God’s word.

1. “Thy word is true,” in its *principle* and in all its details, from Adam to Moses; from Moses to Christ, from Christ to the present time; and from the present time to the end of the world.

2. For it “endures for ever:” All other things wear out or decay; lose their *testimony*, and become *obsolete*. But God will ever bear testimony to his own *word*, and continue to support its veracity by fulfilling it to all successive generations.

LETTER V SCHIN.— *Twenty-first Division*

Verse 161. Princes have persecuted me] This may refer to what was done by *prime ministers*, and the rulers of provinces, to sour the king against the *unfortunate Jews*, in order still to detain them in bondage. In reference to *David*, the plotting against him in Saul’s court, and the dangers he ran in consequence of the jealousies of the Philistine lords while he sojourned among them, are well known.

My heart standeth in awe] They had probably offers made them of enlargement or melioration of condition, providing they submitted to some idolatrous conditions; but they knew they had to do with a jealous God; their hearts *stood in awe*, and they were thereby kept from sin.

Verse 162. As one that findeth great spoil.] *br l l v shalal rab*. This appears to refer to such *spoil* as is acquired by *stripping the dead* in a field of battle, taking the rich garments of the slain chiefs; or it may refer to *plunder* in general. As God *opened his eyes* he *beheld wonders in his law*; and each discovery of this kind was like finding a prize.

Verse 163. I—abhor lying] Perhaps they might have made the confessions which the Chaldeans required, and by mental reservation have kept an inward firm adherence to their creed; but this, in the sight of the God of truth, must have been *lying*; and at such a sacrifice they would not purchase their enlargement, even from their captivity.

Verse 164. Seven times a day do I praise thee] We have often seen that *seven* was a number expressing *perfection, completion, &c.*, among the Hebrews; and that it is often used to signify *many*, or an *indefinite number*, see ¹⁰¹¹⁶ **Proverbs 24:16**; ¹⁰¹³⁸ **Leviticus 26:28**. And here it may mean no more than that his soul was filled with the spirit of gratitude and praise, and that he very frequently expressed his joyous and grateful feelings in this way. But *Rabbi Solomon* says this is to be understood literally, for they praised God *twice* in the morning before reading the decalogue, and *once* after; *twice* in the evening before the same reading, and *twice* after; making

in the whole *seven* times. The Roman Church has prescribed a similar service.

In a manuscript Saxon Homily, Domin. 3, in Quadrag, A.D. 971, I find the following singular directions:—

- [Anglo-Saxon]
 1. [Anglo-Saxon]
 2. [Anglo-Saxon]
 3. [Anglo-Saxon]
 4. [Anglo-Saxon]
 5. [Anglo-Saxon]
 6. [Anglo-Saxon]
 7. [Anglo-Saxon]

Every Christian man is commanded that he always his body seven times bless with the sign of Christ's cross.

1. First, at day-break.
2. Second time at undern tide, (nine o'clock in the morning.)
3. The third time at midday.
4. The fourth time at noon-tide. (3 o'clock P.M.)
5. The fifth time in the evening.
6. The sixth time at night ere he go to rest.
7. The seventh time at midnight. A good man would do so if he awoke.

It seems that the *sign of the cross* was thought sufficient, even without prayer.

Verse 165. Great peace have they] They have peace in their conscience, and joy in the Holy Spirit; and

Nothing shall offend] Stumble, or put them out of the way.

Verse 166. Lord, I have hoped] Thou hast *promised deliverance*, and I have *expected* it on the *ground* of that *promise*.

Verse 167. My soul hath kept] I have not attended to the *latter* merely, but my spirit has entered into the spirit and design of thy testimonies.

Verse 168. For all my ways are before thee.] Thou knowest that I do not lie; thy eye has been upon my heart and my conduct, and thou knowest that I have endeavoured to walk before thee with a perfect heart.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER SCHIN.— Twenty-first Division

In this section the psalmist shows:—

I His love to God; and

II. The ardour and perfection of that love.

I. The *first* sign of his love was, that it stood in the midst of persecution.

1. “Princes have persecuted.”

2. But “without a cause,” though they pretended many.

3. “But my heart standeth in awe.” My love and confidence have due respect to thy infinite justice and immaculate purity.

The *second sign* of his love is the *joy* and *delight* he took in *God’s law*; it was greater than a conqueror could feel at the fortunate issue of a battle, and the spoils of the vanquished, howsoever rich or immense.

The *third sign* was his *hatred to all iniquity*: “I hate and abhor lying.”

The *fourth sign* was his fervour and earnestness in-devotion: “Seven times,” &c.

The *fifth sign* was the satisfaction he took in the *welfare of others*.

1. “Great peace have they which love thy law.”

2. “Nothing shall offend them.” They go on their way rejoicing; and they that love God *rejoice with them that do rejoice*.

II. He shows the *perfection* of his love,—

1. By his *hope* and *confidence*: “Lord, I have hoped,” &c.

2. By his *obedience*: “And done thy commandments.”

3. By *keeping God’s testimonies* with all *his soul*.

And this he repeats.

1. “I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies.”

2. I have *done* this through the *purest motives*, as thou knowest: “For all my ways are before thee.” Whatever he did he did in God’s sight; for he well knew that the eye of the Lord was constantly upon him.

For other particulars see the preceding notes.

LETTER † TAU.— *Twenty-second Division*

Verse 169. Let my cry come near before thee] This is really a fine image; it is of frequent occurrence, and is little heeded. Here the psalmists cry for deliverance is *personified*; made an intelligent being, and sent up to the throne of grace to negotiate in his behalf. He pursues this *prosopopœia* in the next verse, and sends his *supplication* in the same way. I have already had occasion to refer to a similar figure in *Homer*, where prayers are represented as the *daughters of Jupiter*. See on ^{<1881>}**Psalm 88:2**.

Verse 171. My lips shall utter praise] *hl ht tehillah*, a song of praise.

Verse 172. My tongue shall speak of thy word] There is a curious *distinction* here. In the preceding verse he says, “My lips shall utter;” here no reference is made to *articulate sounds*, except as affixed to musical notes. In *this verse* he says, “My tongue shall speak;” here *articulate* and *intelligible* words are intended. He first utters sounds connected with words expressive of his grateful feelings; in the second he speaks words, principally those which God himself had spoken, containing promises of support, purposes relative to the redemption of his people, and denunciations against their enemies.

Verse 173. Let thine hand help me] Exert thy *power* in my defence.

Verse 175. Let my soul live] Let my *life* be *preserved*, and my *soul quickened*!

Verse 176. I have gone astray like a lost sheep] A sheep, when it has once lost the flock, strays in such a manner as to render the prospect of its own return utterly hopeless. I have seen them bleating when they have lost the flock, and when answered by the others, instead of turning to the *sound*, have gone on in the same direction in which they were straying, their bleatings answered by the rest of the flock, till they were out of hearing! This fact shows the propriety of the next clause.

Seek thy servant] I shall never find *thee*; come to the wilderness, take *me* up, and carry me to the flock. See the notes on the parable of *the lost sheep*, ^{<1504>}**Luke 15:4**, &c. The psalmist began with “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord;” and he concludes with “I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant.” And thus, conscious of the blessedness of those who are in the way or righteousness, he desires to be brought into it, that he may walk in newness of life. Ver. 1: “It is a good way, and they are blessed that walk in it.” Verse the *last*, “Bring me into this way, that I may be blessed.” And thus the Psalm, in sentiment, returns into itself; and the *latter* verse is so connected with the *former*, as to make the whole a perfect *circle*, like the serpent biting its own tail.

There is one extraordinary perfection in this Psalm: *begin* where you will, you seem to be at the commencement of the piece; *end* where you will, you seem to close with a complete *sense*. And yet it is not like the Book of *Proverbs*, a tissue of detached sentences; it is a *whole* composed of many parts, and all apparently as necessary to the perfection of the Psalm, as the different *alphabetical letters* under which it is arranged are to the formation of a complete alphabet. Though there be a continual recurrence of the *same words*, which would of itself prevent it from having a pleasing effect upon the ear, yet these words are so connected with a vast *variety* of others, which show their force and meaning in still new and impressive points of light, that *attention* is still excited, and *devotion* kept alive, during the whole reading. It is constructed with admirable art, and every where breathes the justest and highest encomiums on the revelation of God; shows the glories of the God who gave it, the necessities and dependence of his intelligent creatures, the bounty of the Creator, and the praise and obedience which are his due. It is elegant throughout; it is full of beauties, and I have endeavoured in the preceding notes to mark some of them; but the number might have been greatly multiplied. To no Psalm can its own words be better applied, ^{<1508>}**Psalm 119:18**: “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

ANALYSIS OF LETTER TAU.— Twenty-Second Division

In this last section the psalmist seems to sum up all his preceding exercises.

- I. He prays.
- II. Gives thanks.
- III. Confesses his errors.

- IV. Craves mercy; and,
- V. Promises obedience.

I. In the first two verses he *prays for his prayers*, begging God to accept them.

1. "Let my cry come near before thee!"
2. "Let my supplication come before thee!" This repetition shows his earnestness, fervency, importunity, and perseverance. See [◀2110▶ Luke 11:1](#), &c.

That for which he prays is, 1. *Understanding*; 2. *Deliverance*.

1. "Give me understanding." I want more light.
2. Give me this "according to thy word." In the measure which thou hast promised.
3. And give it to me for this *end*, that I may know thy law, be obedient to its precepts, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life.
4. "Deliver me according to thy word." I want *salvation*, and that *measure* of it which thy word promises.

II. He gives thanks.

1. "My lips shall utter praise." I will celebrate thy praises with songs.
2. "My tongue shall speak." I shall set forth thy wondrous deeds.
3. Shall show that all thy commandments are righteousness; just, holy, impartial.
4. But these things I cannot do till "thou hast taught me thy statutes."

III. He proceeds to other parts of prayer:—

1. "Let thy hand help me." My own *strength* will avail little.
2. "I have chosen thy statutes:" and without thy help I cannot obey them.
3. "I have longed for thy salvation." Thou knowest my heart is right with thee.
4. "And thy law is my delight." A man naturally *longs* for that which he delights to possess.

Here he notes *three* things:—

1. I have “chosen thy precepts.”
2. I have “longed for thy salvation.”
3. “Delighted in thy law;” therefore “let thy hand be with me.”

He prays for,—

1. *Life*: “Let my soul live.”
2. “And it shall praise thee.” When the soul is dead to God, there is neither *gratitude* nor *obedience*.
3. “Let thy judgments help me.” Cause the *merciful dispensations of thy providence* ever to work in my behalf. In this sense the word *judgments* is frequently taken in this Psalm.

IV. He confesses his errors.

1. “I have gone astray,” departed from thee, my Shepherd.
2. “And like a lost sheep too.” See the note.
3. My errors, however, have not been *wilful* and *obstinate*. I did not sufficiently watch and pray, and my *sheep—like simplicity* was practised upon by my arch enemy.
4. The consequence, however, has been, I am *lost*—far from thy fold. But thou didst come to seek and save that which was lost.
5. Therefore, O Lord, *seek me*. I am in the *wilderness*; leave the *ninety and nine* that do not need thee as I do, and seek me; for, by thy grace, I seek thee.

V. I look for thee in the spirit of *obedience*.

1. Seek thy *servant*. I am ready to do thy will, though I erred from thy ways.
2. “I do not forget thy commandments,” though I have often come short of my duty.

These words may be very suitable to a person who has *backslidden*, and who is returning to God with a penitent and believing heart.

1. Though he had *fallen*, the light of God continued to shine into his conscience.

2. He had not *forgotten God's way*, nor lost sight of his own state. The word of the Lord, applied by his Spirit, 1. When he was slumbering, *awakened* him. 2. When he was dead, *quicken*ed him. 3. When he was in danger, *preserved* him. 4. When he was wounded, *cured* him. 5. When he was assailed by his foes, *armed* and *defended* him. 6. And by this word he was *nourished* and *supported*. It was ever well with the psalmist, and it is ever well with all the followers of God, when *they do not forget God's word*.

It may be just necessary to note here, that if this Psalm be considered as belonging to the *times of the Babylonish captivity*, which it most probably does, the psalmist, though speaking in his own person, is ever to be considered as speaking *in the persons of all the captives in Babylon*.

PSALMS

PSALM 120

The psalmist, in great distress, calls on the Lord for deliverance from calumny and defamation, 1, 2; shows the punishment that awaits his persecutor, 3, 4; deplores the necessity of his residence with the ungodly, 5-7.

NOTES ON PSALM 120

This Psalm, and all the rest that follow it, to the end of Psalm 134., *fifteen* in number, are called Psalms of Degrees; for thus the Hebrew title **twl [mh hammaaloth** is generally translated, as coming from the root **hl [alah**, to ascend or mount upwards. Hence **twl [m maaloth**, steps or stairs for ascending, ^{<11019>}**1 Kings 10:19, 20**; ^{<12913>}**2 Kings 9:13**. But as the word may be applied to *elevation* in general, hence some have thought that it may here signify the *elevation of voice*; “these Psalms being sung with the *highest elevations of voice and music*.” Others have thought the word expresses rather the *matter* of these Psalms, as being of peculiar *excellence*: and hence Junius and Tremellius prefix to each *Canticum excellentissimum*, “A most excellent ode.”

R. D. Kimchi says, “There were *fifteen steps* by which the priests ascended into the temple, on each of which they sang one of these *fifteen Psalms*.” This opinion I find referred to in the Apocryphal Gospel of *the birth of Mary*: “Her parents brought her to the temple, and set her upon one of the steps. Now there are *fifteen steps* about the temple, by which they go up to it, according to the *fifteen Psalms of Degrees*.” But the existence of such *steps* and *practices* cannot be proved.

Aben Ezra supposes that the word means some kind of *tune* sung to these Psalms. It is more likely, if the *title* be really *ancient*, that it was affixed to them on account of their being sung on the *return from the Babylonish captivity*, as the people were *going up* to Jerusalem; for though some of them are attributed to *David*, yet it is very probable that they were all made long after his time, and probably during the captivity, or about the end of it. The author of these *fifteen Psalms* is not known; and most probably they were not the work of one person. They have been attributed to *David*, to *Solomon*, to *Ezra*, to *Haggai*, to *Zechariah*, and to *Malachi*, without any positive evidence. They are, however, excellent in their kind, and written

with much elegance; containing strong and nervous sentiments of the most exalted piety, expressed with great felicity of language in a few words.

Verse 1. In my distress] Through the causes afterwards mentioned.

I cried unto the Lord] Made strong supplication for help.

And he heard one.] Answered my prayer by comforting my soul.

It appears to be a prayer of the *captives* in Babylon for complete liberty; or perhaps he recites the prayer the Israelites had made previously to their restoration.

Verse 2. Lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.] From a people without faith, without truth, without religion; who sought by lies and calumnies to destroy them.

Verse 3. What shall be given unto thee?] Thou art worthy of the heaviest punishments.

Verse 4. Sharp arrows] The *Chaldee* has, “The strong, sharp arrows are like lightning from above, with coals of *juniper* kindled in hell beneath.” On the *juniper*, see **Clarke’s note** on “^{<4830>}**Job 30:4**”, where this passage is explained. *Fiery arrows, or arrows wrapped about with inflamed combustibles*, were formerly used in sieges to set the places on fire. See **Clarke’s notes** on “**Eph 6:16**”.

Verse 5. That I sojourn in Mesech] The *Chaldee* has it, “Wo is me that I am a stranger with the Asiatics, (*yaswa useey*,) and that I dwell in the tents of the Arabs.” *Calmet*, who understands the Psalm as speaking of the state of the captives in *Babylon* and its *provinces*, says, “Meshec was apparently the father of the Mosquians, who dwelt in the mountains that separate Iberia from Armenia, and both from Colchis. These provinces were subjugated by Nebuchadnezzar; and it is evident from ^{<2172>}**2 Kings 17:23, 24; 18:11; 19:12, 13**, that many of the Jews were held in captivity in those countries. As to *Kedar*, it extended into *Arabia Petraea*, and towards the Euphrates; and is the country afterwards known as the country of the *Saracens*.”

Verse 6. My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.] A restless, barbarous, warlike, and marauding people.

Verse 7. I am for peace] We love to be quiet and peaceable; but they are continually engaged in excursions of rapine and plunder. It is evident that the psalmist refers to a people like the *Scenitæ* or *wandering Arabs*, who live constantly in *tents*, and subsist by robbery; plundering and carrying away all that they can seize. The poor captives wished them to cultivate the arts of peace, and live quietly; but they would hear of nothing but their old manner of life.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTIETH PSALM

The psalmist in distress—

- I. Flees to God by prayer.
- II. Sets forth the miseries of a foul and deceitful tongue.
- III. Complains of his banishment.

I. 1. He is in distress, and *cries* to the Lord; the surest and best way.

2. He tells us of the *success* of his prayer: “God heard him.”

3. Of the matter of it: “Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul! “ 1. “From lying lips.” Detractions, calumnies, and defamations. 2. From “a deceitful tongue,” which, under the colour of friendship, covers deceit. A *detractor* does his mischief *openly*, a *flatterer* secretly; so that when a *deceitful tongue* is joined with *lying lips*, the mischief is intolerable.

II. He sets forth the evil that shall fall on such deceivers and slanderers.

1. *Arrows*—which wound afar off, suddenly and invisibly.

2. *Sharp arrows, well-headed and keen*, that can pierce deeply.

3. “Sharp arrows of the mighty,” shot by a *strong hand*, and so much the more dangerous.

4. “With coals—inflamed arrows,” such as set all things on *fire*.

5. “With coals of juniper,” which of all coals are the *hottest*, and *keep fire the longest*.

III. The psalmist complains of his *banishment*.

1. He laments his situation on account of the wickedness of the people among whom he sojourned.

2. They were barbarous and inhuman, enemies to piety and civility.

3. His state was the more intolerable, as it had been of *long duration*: “My soul hath long dwelt,” &c.

His *disposition* was quite contrary to theirs.

1. “I am for peace.” I wish to live in peace, and cultivate it.

2. But when I *speak of peace*, they are *for war*; They are fierce and inhuman. It was said of the Macedonians in Philip’s time, *Illis pacem esse bellum et bellum pacem*. “To them peace was war, and war was peace.” Such were the people of the provinces, among whom many of the Israelites were in captivity.

PSALMS

PSALM 121

The resolution of a godly man, 1, 2. The safety and prosperity of such, as they and theirs shall be under the continual protection of God, 3-8.

NOTES ON PSALM 121

This appears to be a prayer of the Jews in their captivity, who are solicitous for their restoration. It is in the form of a *dialogue*.

Ver. 1, 2. The person who worships God speaks the *two* first verses, “I will lift up mine eyes—my help cometh,”—**Psalm 121:1, 2.**

Ver. 3. The ministering priest answers him, “He will not suffer thy foot to be moved.” “He that keepeth thee will not slumber,” **Psalm 121:3.**

To which the worshipper answers, that he knows that “he who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep,” **Psalm 121:4;** but he seems to express a *doubt* whether *he* shall be an object of the Divine attention.

Ver. 5, &c. The priest resumes; and, to the conclusion of the Psalm, gives him the most positive assurances of God’s favour and protection.

Verse 1. Unto the hills] Jerusalem was built upon a mountain; and Judea was a mountainous country; and the Jews, in their several dispersions, *turned towards* Jerusalem when they offered up their prayers to God.

Verse 2. My help cometh from the Lord] There is no help for me but in my God; and I expect it from no other quarter.

Verse 3. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved] The foundation, God’s infinite power and goodness, on which thou standest, cannot be moved; and whilst thou standest on this basis, thy foot cannot be moved.

Verse 4. He that keepeth Israel] The Divine Being represents himself as a *watchman*, who takes care of the city and its inhabitants during the

night-watches; and who is never overtaken with slumbering or sleepiness. There is a thought in the *Antigone* of *Sophocles*, that seems the counterpart of this of the psalmist,—

Ταν σαν, Ζευ, δυναμιν τις ανδρων
 Ὑπερβασια κατασχοι,
 Ταν ουθ υπνος αι---
 Πει ποθ ο παντογηρως,
 Ακαματοι τε θεων
 Μηνες

Antig. ver. 613, Edit. *Johnson*.

*Shall men below control great Jove above,
 Whose eyes by all-subduing sleep
 Are never closed, as feeble mortals' are;
 But still their watchful vigil keep
 Through the long circle of th' eternal year?
 FRANKLIN.*

Verse 6. The sun shall not smite thee by day] Thus expressed by the *Chaldee*: “The morning spectres shall not smite thee by day, during the government of the sun; nor the nocturnal spectres by night, during the government of the moon.” I believe the psalmist simply means, they shall not be injured by *heat* nor *cold*; by a *sun-stroke* by day, nor a *frost-bite* by night.

Verse 7. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil] Spiritual and corporeal, *natural* and *moral*.

He shall preserve thy soul.] Take care of thy *life*, and take care of thy soul.

Verse 8. Thy going out and thy coming in] Night and day—in all thy business and undertakings; and this through the whole course of thy life: *for evermore*.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIRST PSALM

The scope of this Psalm is to show that God alone is the refuge of the distressed.

I. While some are looking for earthly comfort and support, “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,” &c.

II. Faith sees God, the only helper; and says, “My help is the Lord.”

And the *first reason* for this is given: God’s omnipotence and sufficiency. “The Lord that made heaven and earth,” and is consequently the author and dispenser of all spiritual and temporal blessings.

And the *second reason* is, his *grace* and *goodness*; “he will not suffer thy foot to be moved.”

A *third reason* is, his watchful care: “He that keepeth thee will not slumber.”

III. The *end* which God proposes in his watching,—to *keep them*.

1. He is the “Keeper of Israel.” He guards his Church; he is as a wall of fire about it.

2. He is a *shade*. This certainly refers to that kind of *umbraculum*, or *parasol*, which was in very ancient use in the eastern countries. The sense of the passage is, Neither the day of prosperity nor the night of adversity shall hurt thee; nor the heat of persecution, nor the coldness of friends or relatives: all these shall work for thy good.

3. “He shall preserve thee from all evil;”—and,

4. Especially from every thing that might hurt thy *soul*: “He shall preserve thy soul.”

The psalmist concludes with this encouraging assurance.

1. “The Lord shall preserve thy going out.” We are always beginning or ending some action, going abroad or returning home; and we need the protecting care of God in all.

2. “From this time forth.” Now that thou hast put thy whole trust and confidence in God, he will be thy continual portion and defence in all places, in all times, in all actions; in life, in prosperity, in adversity, in death, in time, and in eternity.

PSALMS

PSALM 122

*The satisfaction of a gracious soul in the use of God's ordinances, 1, 2.
Description of the internal government of Jerusalem, 3-5. Prayers for its peace
and prosperity, 6-9.*

NOTES ON PSALM 122

In the preceding Psalms we find the poor captives crying to God for deliverance; here they are returning thanks that they find they are permitted to return to their own land and to the ordinances of their God.

Verse 1. I was glad when they said] When Cyrus published an edict for their return, the very first object of their thanksgiving was the kindness of God in permitting them to return to his ordinances.

Verse 2. Our feet shall stand] For *seventy* years we have been exiled from our own land; our *heart* was in Jerusalem, but our *feet* were in Chaldea. Now God has turned our captivity, and our feet shall shortly stand *within the gates of Jerusalem*. What a transition from misery to happiness! and what a subject for rejoicing!

Verse 3. Jerusalem-compact together.] It is now well rebuilt, every part contributing to the strength of the whole. It is also a state of great political and spiritual union. It is the *centre* of union to all the tribes, for each tribe has an equal interest in that God who is worshipped there.

Verse 4. The testimony of Israel] There is the *ark*, where the presence of God is manifested; there is the holy of holies; and there all the tribes assembled to worship Jehovah. He no doubt alludes to the assembling of the tribes *annually* at each of the *three* grand national festivals.

Verse 5. There are set thrones of judgment] There were the *public courts*, and thither the people went to obtain justice; and while the *thrones of the house of David* were there, they had justice.

Verse 6. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem] **שלווה** *v shalom* signifies both *peace* and *prosperity*. Let her *unanimity* never be *disturbed*; let her *prosperity* ever be on the *increase*!

They shall prosper that love thee.] In the peace and prosperity of the city, they shall find their peace and their prosperity; and even on this ground they should *love* the city, and labour to promote its best interests. There is a remarkable *alliteration* in this verse, the letter **v** *shin* frequently recurring.

Ëybha wyl vy µl vwry µwl v wl av

Shaalu shelom yerushalam yishlayu ohabeycha.

“Ask ye the prosperity of Jerusalem; they shall be quiet that love thee.”

There are remarkable specimens of similar *alliteration* to be found in *all poets*, ancient and modern. This formed the chief feature of our *ancient poetry*. Thus in *Peter the ploughman*:—

*“In a somers seysoun whan sete was the sonne
I schoop me in a shrowde as I a sheep were.”*

And the same manner often appears, even in Milton himself. See the *Il Penseroso*:—

*“Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar.”*

Verse 7. Peace be within thy walls] This is the *form of prayer* that they are to use: “May *prosperity* ever reside within thy walls, on all the people that dwell there; and tranquillity within thy palaces or high places, among the *rulers* and *governors* of the people.”

Verse 8. For any brethren and companions’ sakes] Because this city is the abode of my kinsfolk and countrymen, I will wish it prosperity. I will promote its peace and tranquillity by all means in my power. I will affectionately say, *May peace be within thee!*

Verse 9. Because of the house of the Lord our God] Particularly will I wish thee well, because thou art the *seat of religion*, the place where our merciful God has condescended to dwell.

To the captives in Babylon the Prophet *Jeremiah* had given this charge, ²⁴²⁰⁷**Jeremiah 29:7**: “And seek **µwl v** *shalom*, the *prosperity* of the city,

whither I have caused you to be carried captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the *prosperity* thereof ye shall have *prosperity*.”

Was this a *duty* for the *captives*? *Yes*. And is it the duty of every man for his *own country*? God, nature, common sense, and self-interest say, *YES*! And what must we think of the wretches who not only do not thus pray, but labour to destroy the public peace, to subvert the government of their country, to raise seditions, and to destroy all its civil and religious institutions? *Think* of them! Why, that *hemp* would be *disgraced* by hanging them.

There is a fine picture given us here of the state of Jerusalem after the restoration of the Jews. The *walls* were finished, the *city* rebuilt, beautiful, strong, and regular, the temple and its worship were restored, the *courts of justice* were re-established, the *constituted authorities* in *Church* and *state* were doing their duty; and God was pouring out his blessing upon all. Who could see this without praying, May God increase thy peace, and establish thy prosperity for ever!

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND PSALM

The psalmist, in the person of the people,—

I. Expresses his joy that he might join with the Church in God’s service,
^{<19C20>}**Psalm 122:1, 2.**

II. Commends the Church, under the name of Jerusalem, for her unity,
^{<19C21>}**Psalm 122:3**; religious worship, ^{<19C24>}**Psalm 122:4**; civil and ecclesiastical policy, ^{<19C25>}**Psalm 122:5.**

III. Exhorts all to pray for its peace and prosperity, ^{<19C26>}**Psalm 122:6**; and puts the form of prayer into their mouths, ^{<19C27>}**Psalm 122:7.**

IV. Shows his own readiness to do this, and offers up his supplications,
^{<19C28>}**Psalm 122:8, 9.**

I. The psalmist congratulates himself and the people on the restoration of God’s worship:—

1. He expresses his own joy: “I was glad.”

2. To hear of the unanimity of the people mutually exhorting each other to it: “When they said unto me.”

3. "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Let us *all* go, hear his word, give him thanks, and make prayers and supplications to him.

II. He commends Jerusalem *three* ways:—

1. For its *unity*: it was compact together; it was united in itself; and united, both in *politics* and *religion*, in its *inhabitants*.

2. For its being the *place of God's worship*: 1. For "thither the tribes go up" thrice in the year, as was ordained, ⁽¹²³¹⁴⁾ **Exodus 23:14**, to celebrate their deliverance from Egypt, in keeping the *passover*. 2. The giving of the law, in the feast of *pentecost*. 3. Their preservation in the wilderness, in the feast of *tabernacles*.

These tribes are "the tribes of the Lord." A very honourable title.

"Unto the testimony of Israel." To the ark of the covenant, the pledge of the covenant between God and the people.

The *end* for which they went up: "To give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

3. He commends Jerusalem for its civil and ecclesiastical policy: 1. "For there are set thrones of judgment." The tribunals and courts of justice are there. 2. "The thrones of the house of David." The court and throne of a legitimate sovereign.

III. He exhorts the tribes to *pray for* a continuance of its present happy state.

1. "Pray for the peace," &c. It is our duty to pray for the *prosperity* of the *nation* and of the *Church of God*.

2. "They shall prosper that love thee." Those who love both are *blessed*, those who do not are *cursed*.

3. And that we may know the prayer that God will hear, he puts one in our mouth, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." It is well to join *peace* and *prosperity* together. *Peace* without *prosperity* is but a secure possession of *misery*; and *prosperity* without *peace* is but a dubious and uncertain *felicity*.

1. "Peace be within thy walls." Not only thy *fortifications, civil and religious institutions*, but also among all thy *officers, soldiers, and inhabitants*, for they constitute the strength and safety of the kingdom.

2. "And prosperity within thy palaces." In the king's house, his family, his ministers; if there be dissensions there, ruin will soon follow.

IV. The psalmist shows his own readiness to do this.

1. "I will now say, Peace be within thee." So should all the ministers of religion pray.

2. "I will seek thy good." So should the king and every officer of state resolve. All should be united in so good a work. They should not seek *their own good*, but the *good*, not the *goods*, of *the people*.

For this the psalmist gives *these* reasons:—

1. "For my brethren and companions' sakes." We are not only subjects of one king, citizens of the same city, but we have all one God and Father.

2. "Because of the house of the Lord." For the maintenance of true religion. If *religion* fail, the *kingdom* will fail; prosperity will be at an end; the nation will be divided, distracted, destroyed. Religion, the true religion in a country, is the *consolation* of the *good*, and the *bridle* that holds in the jaws of the *wicked*. Let us all pray for the prosperity of pure and undefiled religion, and the prosperity of the state!

PSALMS

PSALM 123

The prayer and faith of the godly, 1, 2. They desire to be delivered from contempt, 3, 4.

NOTES ON PSALM 123

This Psalm is probably a complaint of the captives in Babylon relative to the contempt and cruel usage they received. The author is uncertain.

Verse 1. Unto thee lift I up mine eyes] We have no hope but in thee; our eyes look upward; we have expectation from thy *mercy* alone.

Verse 2. As the eyes of servants] We now wait for thy commands, feeling the utmost readiness to obey them when made known to us. The words may be understood as the language of dependence also. As slaves expect their *support* from their masters and mistresses; so do we ours from thee, O Lord! Or, As servants look to their masters and mistresses, to *see how they do their work*, that they may do it in the same way; so do we, O Lord, that we may learn of thee, and do thy work in thy own Spirit, and after thy own method. Some think that there is a reference here to the *chastisement of slaves* by their masters, who, during the time they are receiving it, keep their eyes fixed on the hand that is inflicting punishment upon them, professing deep sorrow, and entreating for mercy. And this sense seems to be countenanced by the following words:—

Verse 3. Have mercy upon us, O Lord] Chastise us no more; we will no more revolt against thee.

We are exceedingly filled with contempt.] We not only suffer grievously from our captivity, but are treated in the most contemptuous manner by our masters.

Verse 4. Those that are at ease] The Babylonians, who, having subdued all the people of the neighbouring nations, lived *at ease*, had none to contend with them, and now became luxurious, *indolent*, and *insolent*: they were contemptuous and proud.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

The oppressed followers of God make application to him for mercy. In this application they express *three* things:—

- I. Their confidence in God.
- II. Prayer for mercy.
- III. An account of their oppressors.

I. Their trust in God.

1. “Unto thee lift I up mine eyes.” We trust in thee alone.
2. “O thou that dwellest in the heavens.” Infinitely raised above us; but affected with our miserable condition, and always ready to help us.

This he shows by a double similitude:—

1. “As the eyes of servants,” i.e., *men-servants*, “look unto the hand of their masters.”
2. “As the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress:” both might be beaten; and here both beg to be saved from farther stripes.
3. “So our eyes,” &c. God’s children are always looking up to him.
4. “Until that he have mercy;” abate his stripes, and take off his hand.

II. Their prayer for mercy.

1. Before they *lifted their eyes* to God, but now they *cry* for mercy.

For this *crying*, they give the following reasons:—

1. “We are exceedingly filled with contempt.” To *suffer contempt* is *much*; to be *filled* with it is *more*; and to be *exceedingly filled* with it is *worst* of all.
2. We are *scorned*: they join *words* and *actions* to show how much they despise us.

III. They give the *character* of those by whom they suffer.

1. They are *at ease*-loaded with wealth, and sunk in indolence.
2. They are *proud*-puffed up with a sense of their own importance; and this leads them to despise others. Proud men are for the most part empty,

shallow-pated men: and contempt and scorn from such wounds deeply; especially if they rise, as they often do, from the *dunghill*. The sick *lion* in the fable found it extremely galling to be kicked by the *foot* of an *ass*.

PSALMS

PSALM 124

A thanksgiving of the godly for extraordinary deliverances, 1-4. The great danger they were in, 7. Their confidence in God, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 124

In our present Hebrew copies this Psalm is attributed to *David*, dwdl *ledavid*; but this inscription is wanting in *three of Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS.*, as also in the *Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Ethiopic, and Arabic*; and in most of the ancient *fathers*, Greek and Latin, who found no other inscription in their copies of the text than *A Psalm of degrees*. It was composed long after David's days; and appears to be either a thanksgiving for their deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, or for a remarkable deliverance from some potent and insidious enemy after their return to Judea. Or, what appears to be more likely, it is a thanksgiving of the Jews for their escape from the general massacre intended by Haman, prime minister of Ahasuerus, king of Persia. See the whole Book of *Esther*.

Verse 1. If it had not been the Lord] If God had not, in a very especial manner, supported and defended us, we had all been swallowed up alive, and destroyed by a sudden destruction, so that not one would have been left. This might refer to the plot against the whole nation of the Jews by Haman, in the days of Mordecai and Esther; when by his treacherous schemes the Jews, wheresoever dispersed in the provinces of Babylon, were all to have been put to death in one day. This may here be represented under the figure of an earthquake, when a chasm is formed, and a whole city and its inhabitants are in a moment swallowed up alive.

Verse 5. Then the proud waters] The proud *Haman* had nearly brought the flood of desolation over our lives.

Verse 7. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare] This is a fine image; and at once shows the *weakness* of the Jews, and the *cunning* of their adversaries. Haman had laid the snare completely for them; humanly speaking there was no prospect of their escape: but the *Lord was on their side*; and the providence that induced Ahasuerus to call for the book of the records of the kingdom to be read to him, as well indeed as the once very

improbable advancement of Esther to the throne of Persia, was the means used by the Lord for the preservation of the whole Jewish people from extermination. God thus *broke the snare*, and the *bird escaped*; while the poacher was caught in his own trap, and executed. See the Book of Esther, which is probably the best comment on this Psalm.

Verse 8. Our help is in the name of the Lord] *yyd armym μwvb beshum meywra depai*, Chaldee, “In the name of the WORD of the LORD.” So in the second verse, “Unless the WORD of the LORD had been our Helper:” *the substantial WORD*; not a *word spoken*, or a *prophecy* delivered, but the person who was afterwards termed **Ο Λογος του Θεου**, the WORD OF GOD. This deliverance of the Jews appears to me the most natural interpretation of this Psalm: and probably *Mordecai* was the author.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOURTH PSALM

The people of God, newly escaped from some great danger, acknowledge it, and celebrate God as their Deliverer.

I. The psalmist begins abruptly, as is usual in pathetic expressions.

1. “If it had not been the Lord:” and so deeply was he affected with a sense of God’s goodness, and the narrowness of the escape, that he repeats it: “Unless the Lord,” &c. Nothing else could have saved us.

2. “Now may Israel say;” the whole body of the Jewish people may well acknowledge this.

3. “When men rose up:” when they were all leagued against us as one man to destroy us; and, humanly speaking, our escape was impossible.

II. This danger and escape the psalmist illustrates by *two metaphors*:—

1. The *first* is taken from *beasts of prey*: “They had swallowed us up quick.” They would have rushed upon us, torn us in pieces, and swallowed us down, while life was quivering in our limbs.

This they would have done in their *fury*. The plot was laid with great *circumspection* and *caution*; but it would have been executed with a *resistless fury*.

2. The *second* similitude is taken from *waters* which had broken through dikes, and at once submerged the whole country: “The stream had gone

over our soul;” the *proud waters*, resistless now the dikes were broken, would have *gone over our soul*—destroyed our life.

III. He next acknowledges the *deliverance*.

1. “We are not given a prey to their teeth.”

2. It is the blessed God who has preserved us: “Blessed be God,” &c.

As this deliverance was *beyond expectation*, he illustrates it by *another metaphor*, a *bird* taken in, but escaping from, a *snare*.

1. We were in “the snare of the fowler.”

2. But “our soul is escaped.”

3. And the fowler disappointed of his prey. The disappointment of Haman was, in all its circumstances, one of the most mortifying that ever occurred to man.

IV. He concludes with a grateful acclamation. 1. “Our help is in the name of the Lord.” In open assaults, and in *insidious attacks*, we have no helper but God; and from him our deliverance must come.

2. This help is sufficient; for he made the *heaven* and *earth*; has both under his government; and can employ both in the support, or for the *deliverance*, of his followers.

Or, take the following as a plainer analysis:—

I. 1. The *subtlety* of the adversaries of the Church in laying snares to entrap it, as fowlers do birds, ^{<19C40>}**Psalm 124:7**.

2. Their *cruelty* in seeking to tear it to pieces, as some ravenous beasts of prey do; or, as mighty inundations that overthrow all in their way, ^{<19C40>}**Psalm 124:3-6**.

II. The cause of this subtlety and cruelty: wrath and displeasure, ^{<19C40>}**Psalm 124:3**.

III. The delivery of the Church from both, by the power and goodness of God, ^{<19C40>}**Psalm 124:1, 2, 6, 7**.

IV. The duty performed for this deliverance; praises to God, ^{<19C40>}**Psalm 124:6**.

PSALMS

PSALM 125

The safety of those who trust in God, 1, 2. God's protecting providence in behalf of his followers, 3. A prayer for the godly, 4. The evil lot of the wicked, 5.

NOTES ON PSALM 125

This Psalm is without a *title*: it belongs most probably to the times after the captivity; and has been applied, with apparent propriety, to the opposition which *Sanballat* the Horonite, *Geshem* the Arabian, and *Tobiah* the Ammonite, gave to the Jews while employed in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and restoring the temple.

Verse 1. They that trust in the Lord] Every faithful Jew who confides in Jehovah shall stand, in those *open* and *secret attacks* of the enemies of God and truth, as *unshaken* as *Mount Zion*; and shall not be moved by the power of any adversary.

Verse 2. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem] Jerusalem, according to *Sandys*, was situated on a rocky mountain every way to be ascended, except a little on the north, with steep ascents and deep valleys, naturally fortified. It is surrounded with other *mountains*, at no great distance, as if placed in the midst of an amphitheatre; for on the *east* is *Mount Olivet*, separated from the city by the *valley of Jehoshaphat*, which also encompasses a part of the *north*; on the *south*, the mountain of *Offiner* interposed with the *valley of Gehinnom*; and on the *west* it was formerly fenced with the *valley of Gihon*, and the *mountains* adjoining. The situation was such as to be easily rendered impregnable.

The Lord is round about his people] He is *above*, *beneath*, *around* them; and *while they keep within it*, their fortress is impregnable, and they can suffer no evil.

Verse 3. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous] Rod, here. may be taken for *persecution*, or for *rule*; and then it may be thus interpreted: "The wicked shall not be permitted to *persecute always*, nor to have a *permanent rule*." In our *liturgic version* this clause is thus rendered: "The rod of the ungodly cometh not into the lot of the

righteous.” “This,” said one of our forefathers, “is neither *truth* nor *scripture*. *First*, it is not *truth*; for the rod of the wicked *doth come* into the inheritance of the righteous, and that *often*. *Secondly*, it is not *scripture*, for the text saith, ‘The rod of the wicked shall not rest there.’ It may *come*, and stay for a time; but it shall not be permitted to abide.”

This is only *one*, and not the *worst*, of the many sad blemishes which deform the Version in our national Prayer-book. In short, the Version of the Psalms in that book is wholly unworthy of regard; and should be thrown aside, and that in the *authorized Version* in the Bible substituted for it. The people of God are misled by it; and they are confounded with the *great* and *glaring differences* they find between it and what they find in their Bibles, where they have a version of a much better character, delivered to them by the authority of *Church* and *state*. Why do not our present excellent and learned prelates lay this to heart, and take away this sore stumbling-block out of the way of the people? I have referred to this subject in the *introduction to the Book of Psalms*. See Clarke “^{3900B} Psalm 1:1”.

Lest the righteous put forth] Were the wicked to *bear rule* in the Lord’s vineyard, religion would soon become extinct; for the great mass of the people would conform to their rulers. Fear not your enemies, while ye fear God. Neither *Sanballat*, nor *Tobiah*, nor *Geshem*, nor any of God’s foes, shall be able to set up their *rod*, their *power* and *authority*, here. While you are faithful, the Lord will laugh them to scorn.

Verse 4. Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good] Let the upright ever find thee his sure defence! Increase the goodness which thou hast already bestowed upon them; and let all who are *upright in heart* find thee to be their stay and their support!

Verse 5. As for such as turn aside] Who are not *faithful*; who *give way to sin*; who *backslide*, and walk in a *crooked way*, widely different from the *straight way* of the *upright*, **μῆρῶν** *yesharim*, the *straight in heart*; they shall be *led forth* to punishment *with the common workers of iniquity*. Thus thy Church will be purified, and thy *peace* rest upon thy true *Israel*. Let him that readeth understand.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH PSALM

It is the purpose of the psalmist to comfort the people of God,—

I. By an assurance of their perpetuity, both from God's presence and protection, ^{<19C50>}**Psalm 125:1, 2.**

II. That though he may permit them to be harassed by the wicked, yet he will not leave them under their rod. ^{<19C53>}**Psalm 125:3.**

III. He prays for the good; and,

IV. Sets down the portion of the wicked, ^{<19C50>}**Psalm 125:4, 5.**

I. A general promise of the perpetuity of the Church; that is, of them "that trust in God."

1. "They that trust in the Lord:" "The congregation of God's faithful people, who have the pure word of God preached, and the sacraments duly administered," Acts xix. {??}

2. "Shall be as Mount Zion," secure and immovable; immovable, because a *mountain*,—a *holy* mountain,—and particularly *dear* to God.

3. "Which abideth for ever:" So surely as *Mount Zion* shall never be *removed*, so surely shall the *Church of God* be *preserved*. Is it not strange that wicked and idolatrous powers have not joined together, dug down this mount, and carried it into the sea, that they might nullify a promise in which the people of God exult! Till ye can carry Mount Zion into the Mediterranean Sea, the Church of Christ shall grow and prevail. Hear this, ye murderous Mohammedans!

4. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem,"—to fortify it.

5. "So the Lord is round about his people"—to preserve them.

6. "From henceforth, even for ever:" Through both *time* and *eternity*.

II. 1. But the Church is often persecuted and harassed. Granted; for the "rod," the power and scourge, "of the wicked, may come into the heritage of the righteous."

2. But then may it not finally prevail? No: for though it *come*, it shall not *rest*.

3. And why? Because it might finally destroy the Church, pervert the good, and cause them to join issue with the ungodly. Therefore, "they shall not be tempted above that they are able."

III. Therefore the psalmist prays,—

1. “Do good to the good:” Give them *patience*, and keep them *faithful*.
2. And “to the upright in heart:” Let not the *weak* and the *sincere* be overcome by their enemies:

IV. He sets down the *lot of the ungodly*:—

1. “They turn aside.”
2. They get into *crooked paths*; they get into the *spirit of the world*, and are *warped* into its *crooked* and *winding* ways.
3. They shall be condemned, and *then led forth* to punishment. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; he shall have *writhing* in pain, for *crooked walking* in sin.
4. But while this is their portion, “peace,” prosperity, and blessedness, “shall be upon Israel.”

PSALMS

PSALM 126

The joy of the Israelites on their return from captivity, and the effect their deliverance had upon the heathen, 1-3. The prayer which they had offered up, 4. The inference they draw from the whole, 5, 6.

NOTES ON PSALM 126

This Psalm is not of David, has no title in the Hebrew or any of the Versions, and certainly belongs to the close of the captivity. It might have been composed by *Haggai* and *Zechariah*, as the *Syriac* supposes; or by *Ezra*, according to others. It is beautiful, and highly descriptive of the circumstances which it represents.

Verse 1. When the Lord turned again the captivity] When Cyrus published his decree in favour of the Jews, giving them liberty to return to their own land, and rebuild their city and temple.

We were like them that dream.] The news was so unexpected that we doubted for a time the truth of it. We believed it was too good news to be true, and thought ourselves in a dream or illusion. When the Romans had vanquished Philip, king of Macedon, they restored liberty to the Grecian cities by proclamation. It was done at the time of the Isthmian games, and by the crier, who went into the circus to proclaim them; none but the Roman general T. Quintius knowing what was to be done. Multitudes from all Greece were there assembled; and the tidings produced nearly the same effect upon them, according to Livy, that the publication of the decree of Cyrus did on the Jews, according to what is here related by the psalmist. I shall give the substance of this account from the Roman historian. When the Romans had sat down to behold the games, the herald with his trumpet went into the arena, according to custom, to proclaim the several games. Silence being obtained, he solemnly pronounced the following words:—

SENATUS ROMANUS ET T. QUINCIUS IMPERATOR, PHILIPPO REGE
MACEDONIBUSQUE DEVICTIS; LIBEROS, IMMUNES, SUIS LEGIBUS
ESSE JUBET CORINTHIOS, PHOCENSES, LOCRENSESQUE OMNES, ET
INSULAM EUBŒAM, ET MAGNETAS, THESSALOS, PERRHÆBOS,
ACHEOS, PHTHIOTAS.

“The Roman Senate, and T. Quintius the general, having vanquished king Philip and the Macedonians, do ordain that the Corinthians, Phocensians, all the Locrensiens, the island of Eubœa, the Magnesians, Thessalians, Perrhæbians, Acheans, and Phthiotians, shall be free, be delivered from all taxes, and live according to their own laws.”

The effect that this produced on the astonished Grecians who were present, is related by this able historian in a very natural and affecting manner; and some parts of it *nearly in the words of the psalmist*.

Audita voce præconis, majus gaudium fuit, quam quod universum homines caperent. Vix satis se credere se quisque audisse: alii alios intueri mirabundi velut *somnii vanam speciem: quod ad guemque pertineret, suarum aurium fidei minimum credentes, proximos interrogabant*. Revocatur præco, cum unusquisque non audire, sed videre libertatis suæ nuncium averit, iterum pronunciat eadem. Tum ab certo jam gaudio tantus cum clamore plausus est ortus, totiesque repetitus, ut facile appareret, nihil omnium bonorum multitudini gratius quam LIBERTATEM esse.

T. LIV. *Hist.*, lib. xxiii., c. 32.

This proclamation of the herald being heard, there was such joy, that the people in general could not comprehend it. Scarcely could any person believe what he had heard. They gazed on each other, wondering as if it had been *some illusion, similar to a dream*; and although all were interested in what was spoken, none could trust his own ears, but inquired each from him who stood next to him what it was that was proclaimed. The herald was again called, as each expressed the strongest desire not only to hear, but see the messenger of his own liberty: the herald, therefore, repeated the proclamation. When by this repetition the glad tidings were confirmed, there arose such a shout, accompanied with repeated clapping of hands, as plainly showed that *of all good things none is so dear to the multitude* as LIBERTY.

O that God may raise up some other deliverer to save *these same cities* with their *inhabitants*, from a worse yoke than ever was imposed upon them by the king of Macedon; and from a servitude which has now lasted three hundred years longer than the *captivity* of the Israelites in the empire of Babylon!

Constantinople was taken by the *Turks* in 1453; and since that time till the present, (October, 1822,) three hundred and sixty-nine years have elapsed. Why do the *Christian* powers of Europe stand by, and see the ark of their God in captivity; the holy name by which they are called despised and execrated; the vilest indignities offered to those who are called Christians, by barbarians the most cruel, ferocious, and abominable that ever disgraced the name of man? Great God, vindicate the cause of the distressed Greeks as *summarily*, as *effectually*, as *permanently*, as thou once didst that of thy oppressed people the Jews! Let the *crescent* never more *fill* its *horns* with a *victory*, nor with the spoils of any who are called by the sacred name of JESUS: but let it *wane* back into total darkness; and know no change for the better, till illuminated by the *orient splendour* of the *Sun of righteousness*! Amen! Amen!

How signally has this prayer been thus far answered! Three great Christian powers, the *British*, the *French*, and the *Russian*, have taken up the cause of the oppressed Greeks. The Turkish fleet has been attacked in the Bay of Navarino by the combined fleets of the above powers in October, 1827, under the command of the British Admiral, Sir Edward Codrington, and totally annihilated. After which, the Mohammedan troops were driven out of Greece and the Morea; so that the whole of Greece is cleared of its oppressors, and is now under its own government, protected by the above powers.—March, 1829.

Verse 2. Then was our mouth filled with laughter] The same effect as was produced on the poor liberated Grecians mentioned above.

Then said they among the heathen] The liberty now granted was brought about in so extraordinary a way, that the very *heathens* saw that the hand of the great Jehovah must have been in it.

Verse 3. The Lord hath done great things for us] We acknowledge the hand of our God. *Deus nobis haec otia fecit*, “God alone has given us this enlargement.”

We are glad.] This is a mere burst of ecstatic joy. O how happy are we!

Verse 4. Turn again our captivity] This is either a recital of the prayer they had used *before* their deliverance; or it is a prayer for those who *still remained* in the provinces beyond the Euphrates. The Jewish captives did

not all return at *once*; they came back at different times, and under different leaders, Ezra, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, &c.

As the streams in the south.] Probably the *Nile* is meant. It is now pretty well known that the Nile has its origin in the kingdom of *Damot*; and runs from *south* to *north* through different countries, till, passing through Egypt, it empties itself into the Mediterranean Sea. It is possible, however, that they might have had in view some *rapid rivers* that either rose in the south, or had a *southern* direction; and they desired that their return might be as rapid and as *abundant* as the waters of those rivers. But we know that the Nile proceeds from the south, divides itself into several *streams* as it passes through Egypt, and falls by *seven mouths* into the Mediterranean.

Verse 5. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.] This is either a *maxim* which they gather from their own history, or it is a *fact* which they are now witnessing. We see the benefit of humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God; we have now a sweet return for our bitter tears. Or, We *have* sown in tears; now we reap in joy. We are restored after a long and afflicting captivity to our own country, to peace, and to happiness.

Verse 6. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed] The metaphor seems to be this: A poor farmer has had a very bad harvest: a very scanty portion of grain and food has been gathered from the earth. The *seed time* is now come, and is very unpromising. Out of the famine a little seed has been saved to be sown, in hopes of another crop; but the badness of the present season almost precludes the entertainment of hope. But he must sow, or else despair and perish. He carries his all, his *precious seed*, with him in his *seed basket*; and with a sorrowful heart commits it to the furrow, watering it in effect with his tears, and earnestly imploring the blessing of God upon it. God hears; the season becomes mild; he beholds successively the *blade*, the *ear*, and the *full corn* in the ear. The appointed weeks of harvest come, and the grain is very productive. He fills his arms, his carriages, with the sheaves and shocks; and returns to his large expecting family in triumph, praising God for the wonders he has wrought. So shall it be with this handful of *returning Israelites*. They also are to be *sown*—scattered all over the land; the blessing of God shall be upon them, and their faith and numbers shall be abundantly increased. The return here referred to, *Isaiah* describes in very natural language: “And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the Lord out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my

holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord," ^{<2<6d>} **Isaiah 66:20.**

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH PSALM

The parts of this Psalm are *three*:—

- I. An expression of joy for their strange deliverance from captivity.
- II. A prayer for the return of the remaining part.
- III. A moral collected by the psalmist from it.

1. The psalmist celebrates their return, and amplifies it *three* ways:—

1. From the cause, *Jehovah*. Cyrus gave a commission for it; but it was the Lord who disposed his heart so to do: "When the Lord turned," &c.
2. From the *manner* of it. It was strange and wonderful; they could scarcely believe it.
3. From the *joy* at it, inward and external. 1. Their "mouths were filled with laughter." 2. Their "tongue with singing." A thankful tongue expressed the feelings of a thankful heart.

That God did this for them he proves by two evidences:—

1. The *heathen*: "Then said they among the heathen." They saw that they were permitted to return by virtue of a royal edict; that the very king who gave the commission was named by a prophet; that they had rich gifts given them, the vessels of gold and silver restored, &c. Who could do all these things but GOD?
 2. The *Jews*. It is true, said the Jews, what you acknowledge. 1. "The Lord hath done great things for us." Beyond our merit, beyond our hope. 2. "Whereof we are glad," for we are freed from a galling yoke.
- II. But there were some Jews left behind, for whom they pray.
1. "Turn their captivity also." Put it in their hearts to join their brethren. Several, no doubt, stayed behind, because they *had married strange wives*, &c.
 2. "Turn it as the streams in the south." Or, as some read it, *streams of water on a parched land*. Judea has been lying waste; we need many hands to cultivate it. When all join together in this work the land will become

fruitful, like the parched ground when powerful rivulets are sent through it in all directions.

III. The benefit of this will be great; for although it may cost us much *hard labour* and *distress* in the beginning, yet the maxim will hold good—"They who sow in tears shall reap in joy." Which the psalmist amplifies in the next verse.

1. "He that goeth forth and weepeth." The poor husbandman, for the reasons given above and in the notes, *bearing precious seed*—seed bought with a high price, which augments his grief, being so poor.

2. "He shall doubtless come again"—in harvest *with joy*, having a plentiful crop; for every grain sown at least one full-fed ear of corn, with at the lowest *thirty-fold*. Some maxims are to be gathered from the whole: Penitential sorrow shall be followed by the joy of pardoning mercy; he that bears the cross shall wear the crown; and, trials and difficulties shall be followed by peace and prosperity.

PSALMS

PSALM 127

The necessity of God's blessing on every undertaking, without which no prosperity can be expected, 1, 2. Children are a heritage from the Lord, 3, 4. A fruitful wife is a blessing to her husband, 5.

NOTES ON PSALM 127

The *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, and *Vulgate* attribute this Psalm to Solomon. The *Syriac* says it is "A Psalm of David concerning Solomon; and that it was spoken also concerning Haggai and Zechariah, who forwarded the building of the temple." The *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon* have no title, but simply "A Psalm of Degrees." It was most likely composed for the building of the second temple, under Nehemiah, and by some prophet of that time.

Verse 1. Except the Lord build the house] To build a house is taken in *three* different senses in the sacred writings. 1. To build the temple of the Lord, which was called **tybh** *habbeith, the house*, by way of eminence. 2. To build any ordinary house, or place of dwelling. 3. To have a numerous offspring. In this sense it is supposed to be spoken concerning the Egyptian midwives; that because they feared the Lord, therefore he built them houses. See the note on ^{<M12>}**Exodus 1:21**. But, however, the above passage may be interpreted, it is a fact that **ˆb** *ben, a son*, and **tb** *bath, a daughter*, and **tyb** *beith, a house*, come from the same root **hnb** *banah, to build*; because sons and daughters build up a household, or constitute a *family*, as much and as really as stones and timber constitute a *building*. Now it is true that unless the good hand of God be upon us we cannot prosperously build a place of worship for his name. Unless we have his blessing, a dwelling-house cannot be comfortably erected. And if his blessing be not on our children, the house (the family) may be built up, but instead of its being the house of God, it will be the synagogue of Satan. All marriages that are not under God's blessing will be a private and public curse. This we see every day.

Except the Lord keep the city] When the returned Jews began to restore the walls of Jerusalem, and rebuild the city, Sanballat, Tobiah, and others formed plots to prevent it. Nehemiah, being informed of this, set up proper

watches and guards. The enemy, finding this, gathered themselves together, and determined to fall upon them at once, and cut them all off. Nehemiah, having gained intelligence of this also, armed his people, and placed them behind the wall. Sanballat and his company, finding that the Jews were prepared for resistance, abandoned their project; and Nehemiah, to prevent surprises of this kind, kept one-half of the people always under arms, while the other half was employed in the work. To this the psalmist alludes; and in effect says, Though you should watch constantly, guard every place, and keep on your armour ready to repel every attack, yet remember the success of all depends upon the presence and blessing of God. While, therefore, ye are not slothful in business, be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; for there is no success either in spiritual or secular undertakings but in consequence of the benediction of the Almighty.

Verse 2. It is **vain for you to rise up early]** There seems to be here an allusion to the daily and nightly watches which Nehemiah instituted. The people are worn out with constant labour and watching; he therefore divided them in such a manner, that they who had worked in the day should rest by night, and that they who worked by night should rest in the day; and thus *his beloved*, a title of the Jews, *the beloved of God*, got sleep, due refreshment, and rest. As for Nehemiah and his servants, they never put off their clothes day or night but for washing.

Verse 3. **Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord]** That is, To many God gives children in place of temporal good. To many others he gives houses, lands, and thousands of gold and silver, and with them the womb that beareth not; and these are their inheritance. The poor man has from God a number of children, without lands or money; these are his inheritance; and God shows himself their father, feeding and supporting them by a chain of miraculous providences. Where is the *poor man* who would give up his *six children*, with the prospect of having *more*, for the *thousands* or *millions* of him who is the *centre* of his *own existence*, and has neither *root* nor *branch* but his forlorn solitary self upon the face of the earth? Let the fruitful family, however poor, lay this to heart; “Children are a heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” And he who gave them will feed them; for it is a fact, and the *maxim* formed on it has never failed, “Wherever God sends mouths, he sends meat.” “Murmur not,” said an Arab to his friend, “because thy family is large; know that it is for *their sakes* that God feeds *thee*.”

Verse 4. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man] Each child will, in the process of time, be a *defence* and *support* to the family, as arrows in the quiver of a skilful and strong archer; the more he has, the more enemies he may slay, and consequently the more redoubted shall he be.

Children of the youth.] The children of *young people* are always more strong and vigorous, more healthy, and generally longer lived than those of *elderly*, or comparatively *elderly persons*. *Youth* is the time for marriage; I do not mean *infancy* or a comparative *childhood*, in which several fools join in marriage who are scarcely fit to leave the *nursery* or *school*. Such couples generally disagree; they cannot bear the *boyish* and *girlish* petulancies and caprices of each other; their own growth is hindered, and their offspring, (if any,) have never much better than an *embryo* existence. On the other hand *age* produces only a *dwarfish* or *rickety* offspring, that seldom live to procreate; and when they do, it is only to perpetuate deformity and disease. It would be easy to assign reasons for all this; but the interpretation of Scripture will seldom admit of *physiological details*. It is enough that God has said, *Children of the youth* are strong and active, *like arrows in the hands of the mighty*.

Verse 5. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them] This is generally supposed to mean *his house full of children*, as his *quiver* if full of *arrows*; but I submit whether it be not more congenial to the metaphors in the text to consider it as applying to the *wife*: “Happy is the man who has a breeding or fruitful wife;” this is the *gravida sagittis pharetra* “the quiver pregnant with arrows.” But it may be thought the metaphor is not natural. I think otherwise: and I know it to be in the *Jewish style*, and the style of the times of the captivity, when this Psalm was written, and we find the *pudendum muliebre*, or human *matrix*, thus denominated, **Ecclus 26:12**: *Κατεναντι παντος πασσαλου καθησεται, και εναντι βελου ανοιξει φαρετραν*. The reader may consult the place in the *Apocrypha*, where he will find the verse well enough translated.

With the enemies in the gate.] “When he shall contend with his adversaries in the gate of the house of judgment.”—*Targum*. The reference is either to *courts of justice*, which were held at the *gates* of *cities*, or to *robbers* who endeavour to force their way into a *house* to spoil the inhabitants of their goods. In the *first case* a man falsely accused, who has a numerous family, has as many witnesses in his behalf as he has children. And in the *second case* he is not afraid of *marauders*, because his house is

well defended by his active and vigorous sons. It is, I believe, to this last that the psalmist refers.

This Psalm may be entitled, “The Soliloquy of the happy Householder:—The poor man with a large loving family, and in annual expectation of an increase, because his wife, under the Divine blessing, is fruitful.” All are blessed of the Lord, and his hand is invariably upon them for good.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH PSALM

The Jews were at this time very busy in rebuilding their temple, and the houses and walls of their city; and the prophet teaches them that without the assistance of God, nothing will be blessed or preserved, and that their children are his especial blessing also. This the prophet shows by these words repeated, *nisi, nisi, frustra, frustra*, and proves it by an induction.

I. In civil affairs, whether in house or city.

1. “Except the Lord build the house,” &c. God must be the chief builder in the family; his blessing and help must be prayed for, for the nourishment of wife, children, servants, cattle, &c.
2. “Except the Lord keep the city,” &c. And so it is in kingdoms and commonwealths. The Jews had now a trowel in one hand, and a sword in the other, for fear of their enemies: but the prophet tells them that the Lord must be their protector and keeper, else their watch, magistrates, judges, &c., would be of little value.

And this he illustrates by an elegant *hypothesis* of an industrious man who strives to be rich, but looks not to God.

1. “He riseth early.” He is up with the rising of the sun.
2. “He sits up late.” Takes little rest.
3. “He eats the bread of sorrow.” Defrauds himself of necessary food. His mind is full of anxiety and fear: but all this without God’s blessing is vain: “It is vain for you to rise up early,” &c. On the contrary, he who loves and fears God has God’s blessing: “For so he gives his beloved sleep,” in the place of fear and distraction.

II. The prophet then sets down the blessing a man possesses in his children. In reference to their birth,

1. "Lo, children are a heritage," &c. They are alone the Lord's gift.
2. As regarding their education: being brought up in the fear of the Lord, they become generous spirits: "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man," &c. enabled to do great actions, and to defend themselves and others.

And the benefit will redound to the father in his old age.

1. "Happy is the man that hath," &c. Of such good children.
2. "He shall not be ashamed," &c. He shall be able to defend himself, and keep out all injuries, being fortified by his children. And if it so happen that he has a cause pending in the gate, to be tried before the judges, he shall have the patronage of his children, and not suffer in his plea for want of advocates: his sons shall stand up in a just cause for him.

PSALMS

PSALM 128

The blessedness of the man that fears the Lord, 1. He is blessed in his labour, 2; in his wife and children, 3, 4; in the ordinances of God, 5; and in a long life and numerous posterity, 6.

NOTES ON PSALM 128

This Psalm has no *title*, either in the *Hebrew* or any of the *Versions*; though the *Syriac* supposes it to have been spoken of *Zerubbabel*, prince of Judah, who was earnestly engaged in building the temple of the Lord. It seems to be a continuation of the preceding Psalm, or rather the *second* part of it. The man who is stated to have a numerous offspring, in the *preceding Psalm*, is here represented as *sitting at table* with his large family. A person in the mean while coming in, sees his happy state, speaks of his comforts, and predicts to him and his all possible future good. And why? Because the man and his family “fear God, and walk in his ways.”

Verse 2. Those shalt eat the labour of thine hands] Thou shalt not be exempted from *labour*. Thou shalt *work*: But God will *bless* and *prosper* that work, and thou and thy family shall eat of it. Ye shall all live on the produce of your own labour, and the hand of violence shall not be permitted to deprive you of it. Thus,

Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.] Thou shalt have prosperity.

Verse 3. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine] Thy *children*, in every corner and apartment of thy house, shall be the evidences of the fruitfulness of thy wife, as *bunches of grapes* on every *bough* of the vine are the proofs of its being in a healthy thriving state. Being *about the house sides*, or *apartments*, is spoken of the *wife*, not the *vine*; being *around the table* is spoken of the *children*, not of the *olive-plants*. It does not appear that there were any *vines* planted *against the walls* of the houses in Jerusalem, nor any *olive-trees* in *pots* or *tubs* in the inside of their houses; as may be found in different parts of Europe.

Verse 4. Thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.] A *great price* for a small consideration. Fear God, and thou shalt have as much domestic good as may be useful to thee.

Verse 5. The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion] In all thy approaches to him in his house by prayer, by sacrifice, and by offering, thou shalt have his especial blessing. Thou shalt thrive every *where*, and in all *things*.

And thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem] Thou shalt see the cause of God flourish in thy lifetime, and his Church in great prosperity.

Verse 6. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children] Thou shalt not die till thou have seen thy family all settled in the world, and those of them who may be *married* blessed with children.

And **peace upon Israel.]** This is the same conclusion as in ^{<19C76>}**Psalm 125:5**; and should be translated, *Peace be upon Israel!* May God favour his own cause, and bless all his people!

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH PSALM

In this Psalm the prophet persuades men to fear God upon the several rewards that attend upon piety.

It is divided into *three* parts.

I. He describes the pious man, and pronounces him blessed,
^{<19C80>}**Psalm 128:1.**

II. He proposes the particulars of his blessing, ^{<19C82>}**Psalm 128:2-6.**

III. He gives his acclamation to it, ^{<19C84>}**Psalm 128:4.**

I. He describes the man who is to expect the blessing. Two qualities he must have:—

1. He must “fear the Lord.” Fear, and not decline from him.
2. He must “walk in his ways.” This is the true character of his fear.
3. This man shall be “blessed.” Whether rich or poor, high or low; all such shall experience the blessing of the Lord.

II. And the blessedness consists in three particulars.

1. He shall enjoy those goods he has honestly obtained with his hands: “For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands:” his happiness consists not in having much, but in enjoying what he has.

2. “Happy shalt thou be,” &c. Able to help others, and leave to thy children.

3. Happy he shall be in his marriage, if his choice be prudent, and in the Lord: 1. “His wife shall be,” &c. *Fetifera, non sterilis*. 2. Upon the walls of thy house. Staying at home and caring for the things of the house, while her husband is taking care abroad.

4. Happy in his children: 1. “Thy children like olive-plants.” Fresh, green, spreading, fruitful, and pledges of peace: not like sharp and prickly thorns.

2. “Round about thy table.” Sit, eat, and converse with thee.

III. The acclamation follows these temporal blessings: “Thus shall the man be blessed,” &c. In his goods, wife, and children.

But there is a blessing far beyond these, the sum of which is,—

1. God’s blessing: “The Lord shall bless thee,” &c. By a federal, a Church blessing.

2. “Thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem,” &c. The prosperity of the Church.

3. “Yea, thou shalt see thy children’s children.”

Et natos natorum, et qui nascuntur ab illis.

“Thy children’s children, and those born of them.”

4. “And peace upon Israel.” A flourishing commonwealth and kingdom: for by peace is understood all prosperity.

PSALMS

PSALM 129

The Jews give an account of the afflictions which they have passed through, 1-3. And thank God for their deliverance, 4. The judgments that shall fall on the workers of iniquity, 5-8.

NOTES ON PSALM 129

This Psalm was written *after* the captivity; and contains a reference to the many tribulations which the Jews passed through from their *youth*, i.e., the earliest part of their history, their bondage in Egypt. It has no *title* in any of the *Versions*, nor in the *Hebrew text*, except the general one of *A Psalm of Degrees*. The *author* is uncertain.

Verse 1. Many a time have they afflicted me] The Israelites had been generally in affliction or captivity from the earliest part of their history, here called *their youth*. So ^{<XXII>}**Hosea 2:15**: “She shall sing as in the *days of her youth*, when she came up out of *the land of Egypt*.” See ^{<XXII>}**Jeremiah 2:2**, and ^{<XXII>}**Ezekiel 16:4**, &c.

Verse 2. Yet they have not prevailed] They endeavoured to annihilate us as a people; but God still preserves us as his own nation.

Verse 3. The plowers plowed upon my back] It is possible that this mode of expression may signify that the people, during their captivity, were cruelly used by *scourging*, &c.; or it may be a sort of proverbial mode of expression for *the most cruel usage*. There really appears here to be a reference to a *yoke*, as if they had actually been *yoked to the plough*, or to *some kind of carriages*, and been obliged to draw like *beasts of burden*. In this way St. Jerome understood the passage; and this has the more likelihood, as in the next verse God is represented as *cutting them off* from these draughts.

Verse 4. The Lord-hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.] The words have been applied to the sufferings of Christ; but I know not on what authority. No such scourging could take place in his case, as would justify the expression,—

*“The ploughers made long furrows there,
Till all his body was one wound.”*

It is not likely that he received more than *thirty-nine* stripes. The last line is an unwarranted assertion.

Verse 5. Let them all be confounded] They shall be confounded. They who *hate Zion*, the Church of God, hate God himself; and all such must be dealt with as *enemies*, and be utterly *confounded*.

Verse 6. As the grass upon the housetops] As in the east the roofs of the houses were *flat*, seeds of various kinds falling upon them would naturally vegetate, though in an imperfect way; and, because of the want of proper nourishment, would necessarily *dry* and *wither* away. If *grass*, the *mower* cannot make *hay* of it; if *corn*, the *reaper* cannot make a *sheaf* of it. Let the Babylonians be like such herbage—good for nothing, and come to nothing.

Withereth afore it groweth up] Before **q| v** *shalak*, it is *unsheathed*; i.e., before it *ears*, or comes to *seed*.

Verse 8. Neither do they which go by say] There is a reference here to the *salutations* which were *given* and *returned* by the reapers in the time of the *harvest*. We find that it was customary, when the master came to them into the field, to say unto the reapers, *The Lord be with you!* and for them to answer, *The Lord bless thee!* ^{<RUB>}**Ruth 2:4.** Let their land become desolate, so that no harvest shall ever more appear in it. No interchange of benedictions between owners and reapers. This has literally taken place: Babylon is utterly destroyed; no harvests grow near the place where it stood.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH PSALM

The intent of the prophet in composing this Psalm is to comfort the Church in affliction, and to stir her up to glorify God for his providence over her, always for her good, and bringing her enemies to confusion, and a sudden ruin.

It is divided into *three* parts:—

- I. The indefatigable malice of the enemies of the Church, ^{<BCOB>}**Psalm 129:1, 3.**
- II. That their malice is vain. God saves them, ^{<BCOB>}**Psalm 129:2, 4.**
- III. God puts into the mouth of his people what they may say to their enemies, even when their malice is at the highest.

I. "Many a time have they afflicted me," &c. In which observe,—

1. That afflictions do attend those who will live righteously in Christ Jesus.
2. These afflictions are many: "Many a time," &c.
3. That they begin with the Church: "From my youth." Prophets, martyrs, &c.
4. This affliction was a heavy affliction: "The plowers plowed upon my back," &c. They dealt unmercifully with me, as a husbandman does with his ground.

II. But all their malice is to no purpose.

1. "Yet they have not prevailed against me." To extinguish the Church.
2. The reason is, "The Lord is righteous." And therefore he protects all those who are under his tuition, and punishes their adversaries.
3. "The Lord is righteous," &c. Cut asunder the ropes and chains with which they made their furrows: "He hath delivered Israel," &c.

III. In the following verses, to the end, the prophet, by way of prediction, declares the vengeance God would bring upon his enemies which has *three* degrees:—

1. "Let them all be confounded," &c. Fail in their hopes against us.
2. "Let them be as the grass," &c. That they quickly perish. Grass on the housetops is good for nothing: "Which withereth afore it groweth up," &c. Never is mowed, nor raked together.
3. "Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord," &c. No man says so much as, God speed him! as is usual to say to workmen in harvest: but even this the enemies of the Church, and of God's work, say not, for they wish it not.

PSALMS

PSALM 130

The prayer of a penitent to God, with confession of sin, 1-3. Confidence in God's mercy, and waiting upon him, 4-6. Israel is encouraged to hope in the Lord, because of his willingness to save, 7, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 130

This Psalm has no title nor author's name, either in the Hebrew, or in any of the Versions; though the Syriac says it was spoken of Nehemiah the priest. It was most probably composed during the captivity; and contains the complaint of the afflicted Jews, with their hopes of the remission of those sins which were the cause of their sufferings, and their restoration from captivity to their own land. This is one of those called *penitential Psalms*.

Verse 1. Out of the depths] The captives in Babylon represent their condition like those who are in a prison-an abyss or deep ditch, ready to be swallowed up.

Verse 2. Lord, hear my voice] They could have no helper but God, and to him they earnestly seek for relief.

Verse 3. If thou-shouldest mark iniquities] If thou shouldst set down every deviation in thought, word, and deed from thy holy law; and if thou shouldst call us into judgment for all our infidelities, both of heart and life; O Lord, who could stand? Who could stand such a trial, and who could stand acquitted in the judgment? This is a most solemn saying; and if we had not the doctrine that is in the next verse, who could be saved?

Verse 4. But there is forgiveness with thee] Thou canst forgive; mercy belongs to thee, as well as judgment. The doctrine here is the doctrine of St. John: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world." "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken!" Jesus has died for our sins; therefore God *can be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus*.

Verse 5. I wait for the Lord] The word **hwq kavah**, which we translate *to wait*, properly signifies the *extension of a cord from one point to another*. This is a fine metaphor: God is one point, the *human heart* is the other; and the *extended cord* between both is the *earnest believing desire of the soul*. This *desire, strongly extended* from the *heart to God*, in every mean of grace, and when there is none, is the *active, energetic waiting* which God requires, and which will be successful.

Verse 6. More than they that watch for the morning.] I believe the original should be read differently from what it is here. The *Chaldee* has, “More than they who observe the morning watches, that they may offer the morning oblation.” This gives a good sense, and is, perhaps, the true meaning. Most of the Versions have “From the morning to the night watches.” Or the passage may be rendered, “My soul waiteth for the Lord from the morning watches to the morning watches.” That is, “I wait both day and night.”

Verse 7. Let Israel hope in the Lord] This, to hope for salvation, is their *duty* and their *interest*. But what reason is there for this *hope*? A twofold reason:—

1. **With the Lord there is mercy]** **dsj h hachesed**, THAT *mercy, the fund, the essence* of mercy.

2. **And with him is plenteous redemption.]** **twdp wm[hbrhw** *veharabbah immo peduth*; and *that abundant redemption*, that to which there is none like, the *Fountain of redemption, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world*. The article **h**, both in **hbrh** *harabbah* and **dsj h hachesed**, is very emphatic.

Verse 8. He shall redeem Israel] **Και αυτος λυτρωσει**, “He will make a ransom for Israel,” He will *provide a great price* for Israel, and by it will *take away all his iniquities*. I would not restrict this to Israel in Babylon. Every *believer* may take it to himself. God perfectly justifies and perfectly sanctifies all that come unto him through the Son of his love.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH PSALM

In this Psalm the Spirit of God proposes to us the case of a person oppressed with the wrath of God against sin, yet flying to him for comfort, remission, and purification.

I. Acknowledging his miserable condition, he prays to be heard,

~~<1900E>~~ **Psalm 130:1, 2.**

II. He desires remission of sin, ~~<1900B>~~ **Psalm 130:3, 4.**

III. He expresses his hope and confidence, ~~<1900B>~~ **Psalm 130:5, 6.**

IV. He exhorts God's people to trust in him, ~~<19007>~~ **Psalm 130:7, 8.**

I. The psalmist likens himself to a man in the bottom of a pit:—

1. “Out of the depths have I cried,” &c. A true penitent cries out of the depth of his misery, and from the depth of a heart sensible of it.

2. “Lord, hear my voice.” Although I be so low, thou canst hear me.

3. “Let thine ears be attentive,” &c. Or I cry in vain.

II. But there was a reason why God should not hear. He was a grievous sinner; but all men are the same; therefore,

1. “If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity.” And I have nothing of my own but it to bring before thee, yet execute not thy just anger on account of my transgressions; for,

2. “There is mercy with thee,” &c. True repentance requires two things, the recognition of our own misery and the persuasion of God's mercy. Both are needful; for if we know not the former, we shall not seek mercy; and if we despair of mercy, we shall never find it.

3. “That thou mayest be feared.” Not with a servile but a filial fear, which involves prayer, faith, hope, love, adoration, giving of thanks, &c. This fear leads to God's throne as a merciful and pardoning God.

III. The method of God's servants in their addresses to heaven is, that they believe, hope, pray, and expect. Thus did the psalmist.

1. “I expect the Lord.” In faith.

2. “My soul doth wait.” His expectation was active and real, and proceeded from fervency of heart.

3. His expectation was not presumptive, but grounded upon God's word and promise: “In his word is my hope.”

4. “My soul waiteth for the Lord.” Which he illustrates by the similitude of a watchman who longs for the morning.

5. “I wait for the Lord more than they,” &c. It was now night with him, darkness and misery were upon his soul; the morning he expected was the remission of his sins, which must come from God’s mercy. For this he eagerly waited.

IV. He proposes his own example to God’s people:—

1. “Let Israel hope in the Lord,” like me, and cry from the depths.
2. “For with the Lord there is mercy.” This is the reason and encouragement for the hope. Mercy flows from him.
3. “And with him is redemption.” Which we need, being all sold under sin; and this redemption was purchased for us by the death of his Son.
4. And this redemption is *plentiful*; for by it he has redeemed the whole world, ~~60102~~ **1 John 1:2.**
5. And this is to take effect upon Israel: “For he shall redeem Israel,” &c. It is not, as the Jews expected, a temporal redemption, but a spiritual, as the angel told Joseph: “His name shall be called Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.”

PSALMS

PSALM 131

The psalmist professes his humility, and the peaceableness of his disposition and conduct, 1, 2. Exhorts Israel to hope in God, 3.

NOTES ON PSALM 131

Some think that David composed this Psalm as a vindication of himself, when accused by Saul's courtiers that he affected the crown, and was laying schemes and plots to possess himself of it. Others think the Psalm was made during the captivity, and that it contains a fair account of the manner in which the captives behaved themselves, under the domination of their oppressors.

Verse 1. Lord, my heart is not haughty] The principle of *pride* has no place in my heart; and consequently the *high, lofty, and supercilious look* does not appear in my eyes. I neither *look up*, with desire to obtain, to the *state* of others, nor *look down* with contempt to the meanness or poverty of those below me. And the whole of my conduct proves this; for *I have not exercised myself-walked, in high matters*, nor associated myself with the higher ranks of the community, nor in *great matters*, **twal pn niphlaoth**, wonderful or sublime things; *too high for me*, **ynmm mimmeni**, alien from me, and that do not belong to a person in my sphere and situation in life.

Verse 2. I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child] On the contrary, I have been under the rod of others, and when chastised have not complained; and my *silence* under my affliction was the fullest proof that I neither *murmured* nor *repined*, but received all as coming from the hands of a just God.

My soul is even as a weaned child.] I felt I must forego many conveniences and comforts which I once enjoyed; and these I gave up without repining or demurring.

Verse 3. Let Israel hope in the Lord] Act all as I have done; trust in him who is the God of justice and compassion; and, after you have suffered awhile, he will make bare his arm and deliver you. Short as it is, this is a

most instructive Psalm. He who acts as the psalmist did, is never likely to come to mischief, or do any to others.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST PSALM

I. The psalmist, having been accused of proud and haughty conduct, protests his innocence, states his humble thoughts of himself, and the general meekness of his deportment.

II. That his confidence was in God; in him he trusted, and therefore was far from ambition.

III. And by his own example calls on Israel to trust in God as he did.

I. He protests his humility.

1. There was no *pride* in his heart; and he calls God to witness it: "Lord, my heart is not haughty."

2. There was no *arrogance* in his carriage: "Nor mine eyes lofty."

3. Nor in his undertakings: "Neither do I exercise myself in great matters." He kept himself within his own bounds and vocation, and meddled not with state affairs.

II. What preserved him from *pride* was *humility*. He brought down his desires, and wants, and views to his circumstances.

1. "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself." Have I not given every evidence of my mild and peaceable behaviour? and I certainly never permitted a high thought to rise within me.

2. I acted as the *child weaned* from his mother. When once deprived of my comforts, and brought into captivity, I submitted to the will of God, and brought down my mind to my circumstances.

III. He proposes his own example of humility and peaceableness for all Israel to follow.

I. "Let Israel hope." Never despair of God's mercy, nor of his gracious providence. The *storm* will be succeeded by *fair and fine weather*.

2. "Let Israel hope in the Lord." Never content yourselves with merely supposing that in the course of things these afflictions will wear out. No;

look to God, and depend on him, that *he* may bring them to a happy conclusion.

Remember that he is *Jehovah*.

1. Wise to plan.
2. Good to purpose.
3. Strong to execute, and will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.
4. Trust *from henceforth*. If you have not begun before, begin now.
5. And do not be weary; trust *for ever*. Your case can never be out of the reach of God's power and mercy.

PSALMS

PSALM 132

The psalmist prays that God would remember his promises to David, 1. His purpose to bring the ark of the Lord into a place of rest, 2-5. Where it was found, and the prayer in removing it, 6-9. The promises made to David and his posterity, 10-12. God's choice of Zion for a habitation, and his promises to the people, 13-17. All their enemies shall be confounded, 18.

NOTES ON PSALM 132

Some attribute this Psalm to *David*, but without sufficient ground; others, to *Solomon*, with more likelihood; and others, to some inspired author at the conclusion of the captivity, which is, perhaps, the most probable. It refers to the building of the second temple, and placing the ark of the covenant in it.

Verse 1. Lord, remember David] Consider the promises thou hast made to this thy eminent servant, that had respect, not only to *him* and to his *family*, but to all the *Israelitish people*.

Verse 2. How he sware unto the Lord] It is only in this place that we are informed of David's vow to the Lord, relative to the building of the temple; but we find he had fully purposed the thing.

Verse 3. Surely I will not come] This must refer to the *situation* of the temple; or, as we would express it, he would not pass another day till he had found out the *ground* on which to build the temple, and projected the *plan*, and devised *ways* and *means* to execute it. And we find that he would have acted in all things according to his oath and vow, had God permitted him. But even after the Lord told him that Solomon, not he, should build the house he still continued to show his good will by collecting treasure and materials for the building, all the rest of his life.

Verse 5. The mighty God of Jacob.] bq[y ryb[*abir yaacob*, the *Mighty One of Jacob*. We have this epithet of God for the first time, ◀014924 **Genesis 49:24**. Hence, perhaps, the *abirim* of the heathen, the stout ones, the *strong beings*.

Verse 6. Lo, we have heard of it at Ephratah] This may be considered as a continuation of David's vow, as if he had said: As I had determined to build a temple for the ark, and heard that it was at *Ephratah*, I went and found it in the *fields of Jaar*, ר [y;—not the wood, but Kirjath Jaar or Jearim, where the ark was then lodged;—and having found it, he entered the tabernacle, ^{<19237>}**Psalm 132:7**; and then, adoring that God whose presence was in it, he invited him to arise and come to the place which he had prepared for him.

Verse 8. Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength.] Using the same expressions which Solomon used when he dedicated the temple, ^{<1464>}**2 Chronicles 6:41, 42**. There are several difficulties in these passages. *Ephratah* may mean the *tribe of Ephraim*; and then we may understand the place thus: "I have learned that the ark had been in the tribe of Ephraim, and I have seen it at Kirjath-jearim, or *Field of the woods*; but this is not a proper place for it, for the Lord hath chosen Jerusalem." It is true that the ark did remain in that tribe from the days of Joshua to Samuel, during *three hundred and twenty-eight* years; and thence it was brought to Kirjath-jearim, where it continued *seventy* years, till the commencement of the reign of David over *all* Israel.

But if we take ^{<19216>}**Psalm 132:6-8**, *not* as the continuation of David's vow, but as the *words of the captives in Babylon*, the explanation will be more plain and easy: "We have heard, O Lord, from our fathers, that thy tabernacle was formerly a long time at Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim. And our history informs us that it has been also at Kirjath-jearim, the fields of the wood; and afterwards it was brought to Jerusalem, and there established: but Jerusalem is now ruined, the temple destroyed, and thy people in captivity. Arise, O Lord, and re-establish thy dwelling-place in thy holy city!" See *Calmet* and others on this place.

Verse 9. Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness] Let them be as remarkable for *inward holiness* as they are for the splendour of their *holy vestments*.

Verse 10. The face of thine anointed.] David. Remember thy promises to him, that he may be restored to thee and to thy worship.

Verse 11. The Lord hath sworn] As David sware to the Lord, so the Lord swears to David, that he will establish his throne, and place his posterity on it: and that he had respect to David's Antitype, we learn from

St. Peter, ^{<4123>}Acts 2:30, where see the note. This verse with the following refers to the spiritual David, and the Christian Church.

Verse 12. If thy children will keep my covenant] This was conditional with respect to the posterity of David. They have been driven from the throne, because they did not keep the Lord's covenant, but the true David is on the throne, and his posterity forms the genuine Israelites.

Verse 13. The Lord hath chosen Zion] Therefore neither *Shiloh* nor *Kirjath-jearim* is the place of his rest.

Verse 14. This is my rest for ever] Here the Christian Church is most indubitably meant. This is *God's place* for ever. After this there never will be another *dispensation*; Christianity closes and completes all communications from heaven to earth. God has nothing greater to give to mankind on this side heaven; nor does man need any thing better; nor is his nature capable of any thing more excellent.

Verse 15. I will abundantly bless her provision] There shall be an abundant provision of salvation made for mankind in the Christian Church. Our Lord's *multiplication of the loaves* was a *type* and *proof* of it.

Verse 16. I will also clothe her priests] All Christian ministers, *with salvation*; this shall appear in all their conduct. *Salvation—redemption from all sin* through the blood of the Lamb, shall be their great and universal message.

Verse 17. There will I make the horn of David to bud] *There*, in the *Christian Church*, the power and authority of the spiritual David shall appear.

I have ordained a lamp] I have taken care to secure a *posterity*, to which the promises shall be expressly fulfilled.

Verse 18. His enemies will I clothe with shame] Every opponent of the Christian cause shall be confounded.

But upon himself shall his crown flourish.] There shall be no end of the government of Christ's kingdom. From ^{<4921>}Psalm 132:11-18, the spiritual David and his posterity are the subjects of which the Psalm treats.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND PSALM

This Psalm is divided into *three* parts:—

I. A petition, before which is David's care and vow to settle the ark, and with what reverence they would settle it in the temple; and he sets down the solemn prayer then used, ^{<1901>}**Psalm 132:1-10.**

II. An explication of the promises made unto David for the continuance of his kingdom in his posterity, ^{<1901>}**Psalm 132:11, 12**, and God's love to his Church, ^{<1901>}**Psalm 132:13.**

III. A prophecy, spoken in the person of God, for the stability of Christ's Church; and the blessings upon the people, the priests, and the house of David, ^{<1901>}**Psalm 132:14-18.**

I. In all prayer a man must reflect upon God's promise; otherwise he cannot pray in faith.

1. "Lord, remember David." Thy promises made to him. First he prays for the king; then for the ecclesiastics, ^{<1901>}**Psalm 132:8, 9**; then for the people, ^{<1901>}**Psalm 132:8.**

2. "And all his afflictions:" Many he had before he was king; and one of the greatest was the settling of the ark.

Now this his ardent and sincere desire appears by his oath. And now,—

1. "How he sware unto the Lord," &c.

2. The substance of which was, "Surely I will not come," &c.

Now this is hyperbolic; for we must not conceive that he went not into his house or bed till he found out a place to build God's house. But see the note.

1. "I will not come into—my house:" So as to forget to build God's house.

2. "Nor go up into my bed:" Or let any thing make me forget the work.

3. "I will not give sleep," &c.: But make provision for building the temple.

And here the prophet inserts two verses by way of gratitude.

First, he exults for the news of the ark: "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah," &c.

By Ephratah some understand the land of *Ephraim*, in which the ark remained at Shiloh. Being afterwards sent home, it was found in the field of

Joshua; thence conveyed to the house of *Amminadab*, who dwelt in *Kirjath-jearim*, that signifies a *woody city*. Hence, David might well say, “And found it in the fields of the wood,” &c.

And the place for the ark being found, he calls on Israel, saying,

1. “We will go into his tabernacles.” Now the ark is rested in Mount Zion.
2. “And we will worship,” &c. Not make rash approaches to the ark, but come with reverence, and bow in his presence.

The ark being brought into the temple, he uses this solemn form:—

1. “Arise, O Lord,” &c. He prays and invites him to dwell in his temple.
2. “Into thy rest.” To pass no more from place to place.
3. “Thou, and the ark of thy strength.” Show thy power and strength, as thou didst at *Jordan*, &c.

Before the ark in the temple he prays,—

1. “Let thy priests be clothed,” &c. Inwardly, in heart and soul.
2. “Let thy saints shout,” &c. With a cheerful voice, for the ark rests.
3. “For thy servant David’s sake,” &c. 1. David is not here to be taken absolutely for his person only, as having the covenants and promises made to him, but for the promise’s sake. 2. “Turn not away,” &c. Suffer me not to depart from thy presence unheard.

II. The prophet now proceeds to count up the promises made to *David*, which God confirmed by oath, in which we are to observe, 1. The manner of the promise: “The Lord hath sworn in truth,” &c. It was merciful to promise; but more so to bind himself by oath. 2. The matter of his oath expressed ^{<19D21>}**Psalm 132:11-14.**

1. For the seed of David, as respects Christ, is categorical and absolute: “Of the fruit of thy body,” &c. Which word St. *Peter* refers to Christ, ^{<4123>}**Acts 2:30.** According to the flesh he was David’s seed; for by the *mother’s* side Christ was to be David’s seed, not by the father’s.
2. For the seed of David, as it relates to his posterity, the oath is hypothetical and conditional: “If thy children will keep,” &c.

As the external kingdom was by this oath annexed to one family, so the external worship was assigned by it to one place.

1. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion," &c.

2. "This is my rest for ever." Zion was the seat of the sanctuary till the coming of the Messiah. But Zion was but a type of Christ's Church, which he hath chosen to be his rest for ever.

III. The prophet represents God as promising good things to his Church.

1. Such abundance of temporal things that the poor shall not want: "I will abundantly bless her provision," &c.

2. That her "priests shall be clothed with salvation," &c.

3. "There will I make the horn of David to flourish," &c. That is, the kingdom of the Messiah.

4. The fourth benefit God promises is the confusion of their enemies, and the eternal authority in this kingdom: "His enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish."

PSALMS

PSALM 133

The comfort and benefit of the communion of saints, 1-3.

NOTES ON PSALM 133

There are different opinions concerning this Psalm; the most probable is, that it represents the priests and Levites returned from captivity, and united in the service of God in the sanctuary. This, the preceding, and the following, appear to make one subject. In the *one hundred and thirty-second*, the Lord is entreated to enter his temple, and pour out his benediction; in the *one hundred and thirty-third*, the beautiful order and harmony of the temple service is pointed out, and in the *one hundred and thirty-fourth*, all are exhorted to diligence and watchfulness in the performance of their duty. It is attributed to David by the Hebrew, the Syriac, and the Vulgate; but no name is prefixed in the Septuagint, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon.

Verse 1. Behold, how good and how pleasant] Unity is, according to this scripture, a *good* thing and a *pleasant*; and especially among *brethren*-members of the same family, of the same Christian community, and of the same nation. And why not among the great family of mankind? On the other hand, *disunion* is bad and hateful. The former is from heaven; the latter, from hell.

Verse 2. Like the precious ointment] The composition of this holy anointing oil may be seen, ^{<123123>}**Exodus 30:23**; *sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia lignea, and olive oil*. The odour of this must have been very agreeable, and serves here as a metaphor to point out the exquisite excellence of brotherly love.

Ran down upon the beard] The oil was poured upon the head of Aaron so profusely as to run down upon his garments. It is customary in the east to pour out the oil on the head so profusely as to reach every limb.

Verse 3. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion] This was not Mount Zion, [^]wyX *tsiyon*, in Jerusalem, but *Sion*, [^]ayc which is a part of Hermon, see

~~1648~~ **Deuteronomy 4:48**: “Mount Sion, which is Hermon.” On this mountain the dew is very copious. Mr. Maundrell says that “with this dew, even in dry weather, their tents were as wet as if it had rained the whole night.” This seems to show the strength of the comparison.

For there] Where this *unity* is.

The Lord commanded the blessing] That is, an *everlasting life*. There he pours out his blessings, and gives a long and happy life.

For other particulars, see the commentators *passim*, and the following *analysis*.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THIRD PSALM

In this Psalm the blessings of peace and unity are recommended and described, whether in the Church, family, or kingdom.

I. *It is*, says the prophet, *a good and pleasant thing*, &c.,

~~1900~~ **Psalm 133:1**.

II. He declares both by similitudes.

1. The pleasantness, by the *ointment* with which the high priest was anointed.

2. The goodness, by the *dew* which fell upon the mountains.

3. But in plainer terms, by the *blessing of God* upon the head of the peaceful.

I. The prophet begins with an encomium of peace, unity, and concord.

1. “Behold.” Take notice of it in its effects.

2. “How good and pleasant,” &c. He admires, but cannot express it.

3. The *encomium* itself is expressed by two epithets: 1. *It is good*, and brings much profit. 2. *It is pleasant*, and brings much content with it.

4. The concord itself is thus expressed: *Brethren*, either in a Church, family, or kingdom, should be of one soul, and intent on the common good.

II. The pleasantness is compared to “the precious ointment upon the head.”

1. All benefit from this concord; princes, nobles, and people. *The head, beard, and skirts.*
2. It sends forth a sweet and reviving savour.
3. It is as balsam poured into wounds.

The profit he compares to the dews: “As the dew of Hermon,” &c., gently descending, and fructifying and enriching the ground.

And this he sets down without any metaphor: “For there the Lord commanded the blessing,” &c.; which approbation he manifests by the abundance he pours where concord and unity are found.

1. He commands his blessing. Makes all creatures useful to them.
2. His blessing is prosperity, good success. To bless is to benefit.
3. This he calls life; for with troubles, griefs, &c., a man’s life is no life. A quiet life those shall have who live in peace, without dissensions respecting religion or in matters connected with the state.

PSALMS

PSALM 134

An exhortation to praise God in his sanctuary, 1-3.

NOTES ON PSALM 134

This is the last of the fifteen Psalms called *Psalms of degrees*. Who was the author is uncertain; it is attributed to *David* only by the *Syriac*; it is intimately connected with the two preceding Psalms, and is an exhortation to the priests and Levites who kept nightly watch in the temple, to the assiduous in praising the Lord. It seems to consist of *two* parts: 1. An exhortation, probably from the high priest, to those priests and Levites who kept watch in the temple by night, to spend their time profitably, and duly celebrate the praises of God, ^{<9040>}Psalm 134:1, 2. The *second* part, which is contained in the third verse, { ^{<9040>}Psalm 134:3 } is the prayer of the priests and Levites for the *high priest*, who seems now to be going to his rest.

Verse 1. Behold, bless ye the Lord] I believe **hnh** *hinneh* should be taken here in the sense of *take heed!* Be upon your guard; you serve a jealous God; provoke him not.

Which by night stand] Who minister during the night.

Verse 2. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary] **vdq** *kodesh*, “in holiness:” or, as the SYRIAC, [Syriac] *lekoudishe*, “to holiness;” *in sancta*, VULGATE; and **εἰς τὰ ἁγία**, SEPTUAGINT; “in holy things; or, as the ÆTHIOPIC, in the house of the sanctuary.” The expression seems very similar to that of St. Paul, ^{<5408>}1 Timothy 2:8: “Lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”

Bless the Lord.] That is, speak good of his name: tell the wonders he has wrought, and show that his name is exalted.

Verse 3. The Lord that made heaven and earth] Who governs and possesses all things; and who can give you every spiritual and earthly blessing.

Bless thee out of Zion.] As if they had said, “We will attend to your orders; go in peace, and may God shower down his blessings upon you!” The blessing pronounced by the priests was the following: “The Lord bless thee and keep thee! The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and he gracious unto thee! The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!” <04624> **Numbers 6:24-26.**

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FOURTH PSALM

In this Psalm the prophet—

- I. Exhorts the Levites and ministers of religion to attend the appointed hours of prayer.
- II. Then the ministers bless the people.

I. 1. “Behold, bless ye the Lord.”

2. Yet principally, “all ye servants of the Lord:” Choose out of the people to this service.

3. “Which by night stand in the house of the Lord,” &c.: In the temple ye ought not to be sleepy, or forget your duty.

4. Therefore, “lift up your hands,” &c., before the ark of the covenant which was the symbol of his presence.

5. “Bless the Lord,” &c.

II. The other part of your office is to bless the people; let not that be forgotten, but say,—

1. “The Lord bless thee:” Let them know from whom the blessing comes.

2. “Out of Zion:” So long as they remain in the unity of the Church; there was none to be expected out of *Zion*.

3. “The Lord that made:” &c. He that hath power to bless hath given, and must give, his blessing to all creatures, without which they will not be blessed to thee; therefore, bless him.

PSALMS

PSALM 135

An exhortation to praise God for his goodness and greatness, 1-5; for his wonders in nature, 6, 7; his wonders done in Egypt, 8, 9; in the wilderness, 10-12; for his goodness to his people, 13, 14. The vanity of idols, 15-18. Israel, with its priests and Levites, exhorted to praise the Lord, 19-21.

NOTES ON PSALM 135

This Psalm is intimately connected with the preceding. It is an exhortation addressed to the *priests* and *Levites*, and to all *Israel*, to publish the praises of the Lord. The conclusion of this Psalm is nearly the same with Psalm cxv.; and what is said about *idols*, and the effects of the power of God, seems to be taken from it and the tenth chapter of Jeremiah; and from these and other circumstances it appears the Psalm was written *after the captivity*; and might as *Calmet* conjectures, have been used at the dedication of the second temple.

Verse 1. Praise ye the Lord] This may be considered as the *title*, for it has none other.

Praise ye the name of the Lord] Perhaps the original *hwby mv ta wl l h* *haleu eth shem Yehovah*, should be translated, *Praise ye the name Jehovah*; that is, Praise God in his infinite essence of being, holiness, goodness, and truth.

Verse 2. Ye that stand] Priests and Levites. For which he gives several reasons.

Verse 3. The Lord is good] Here is the *first reason* why he should be praised; and a *second* is subjoined:—

For it is pleasant.] It is becoming to acknowledge this infinite Being, and our dependence on him; and it is truly comfortable to an upright mind to be thus employed.

Verse 4. For the Lord hath chosen Jacob] This is a *third reason*. He has taken the Israelites for his peculiar people, *wtl gs segullatho*, his peculiar

treasure; and now has brought them home to himself from their captivity and wanderings.

Verse 5. The Lord is great] Unlimited in his power: *another* reason.

Is **above all gods.**] Every class of *being*, whether idolized or not; because he is the Fountain of existence. This is a *fifth* reason.

Verse 6. Whatsoever the Lord pleased] All that he has done is *right*, and therefore it is *pleasing* in his sight. He is the author of all existence. Angels, men, spirits, the heavens, the earth, and all their contents, were made by him, and are under his control.

Verse 7. He causeth the vapours to ascend] Dr. Shaw thinks that the account here refers to the *autumnal* rains in the east. Of them he speaks as follows: “Seldom a night passes without much *lightning* in the north-west quarter, but not attended with *thunder*; and when this *lightning* appears in the west or south-west points, it is a sure sign of the approaching *rain*, which is often followed by *thunder*. A squall of wind and clouds of dust are the sure forerunners of the first rain.” This account induces Mr. *Harmer* to believe that the word **uyacn** *nesiim*, should be translated *clouds*, not *vapours*. It shows that God—

Maketh lightnings for the rain] The squalls of wind bring on these *refreshing showers*, and are therefore *precious things* of the *treasuries of God*; and when he *thunders*, it is the *noise of waters in the heavens*. See ^{<24013>}**Jeremiah 10:13**, which contains almost the same words as those in this verse: “When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasuries.”

Verse 8. Who smote the first-born of Egypt] See the parallel passages.

Verse 14. The Lord will judge his people] He will do them justice against their enemies.

Verse 15. The idols of the heathen] This verse and the following, to the end of the 18th, {^{<190515>}**Psalm 135:15-18**} are almost word for word the same as verses 4-8 of Psalm 115., where see the notes. {^{<19874>}**Psalm 115:4-8**}

Verse 17. To this verse one of *Kennicott's* MSS. adds the 6th and 7th verses of Psalm cxv. {^{<1856>} **Psalm 115:6, 7**}

Verse 19. Bless the Lord. O house, &c.] See similar verses, ^{<1850>} **Psalm 115:9-13**, and the notes there.

Verse 21. Blessed be the Lord out of Zion] Who has once more restored our temple and city, and now condescends to *dwell with us in Jerusalem.*

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH PSALM

In this Psalm the prophet invites the servants of God, and especially his ministers, to praise God, ^{<1920>} **Psalm 135:1, 2**, from arguments drawn,

I. From his goodness, particularly in choosing Israel, ^{<1928>} **Psalm 135:3, 4.**

II. From the greatness and power showed in his works, ^{<1925>} **Psalm 135:5-8.**

III. From his justice showed to the enemies of Israel, ^{<1920>} **Psalm 135:1-13.**

IV. From his loving-kindness extended and promised still to his servants, ^{<1923>} **Psalm 135:13, 14.**

V. Having derided the vanity of idols, ^{<1925>} **Psalm 135:15-19**, he returns to his exhortation calling upon them to bless God, ^{<1929>} **Psalm 135:19-21.**

I. He calls upon the ministers of religion especially to attend the recitation of Divine praises:—

1. "Praise ye the Lord," &c.
2. "Ye that stand."

And now, repeating his words again, he produces his reason of inducement:—

1. Because the Lord is worthy of praise: "For he is good," &c. Not comparatively, but absolutely good.
2. "Sing praises unto his name," &c. Because it is no painful duty, but pleasant.
3. Praise him for his love to Israel; for this you owe him gratitude: "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob," &c. 2. "And Israel for his peculiar treasure."

II. The next argument he uses is drawn from his greatness.

1. From his empire and universal dominion in heaven and earth: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased," &c. Nothing is impossible to him: but he does all from his free will, not from any necessity.
2. "He doth all things," &c. In all places; heaven, earth, seas, and hell.

And these last words the prophet amplifies,—

1. In the earth. Causing the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, from all parts, which are endued with several qualities.
2. In the air. "He maketh lightning for rain."
3. In the water. "For he bringeth the winds out of his treasures." Nothing is more obscure than the generation of the winds.

III. The fourth argument the prophet uses to persuade men to praise God, is from the vengeance he executes on the enemies of his people.

1. Upon the Egyptians. "Who smote the firstborn of Egypt," &c.
2. "Who sent tokens and wonders," &c. "And he smote great nations," &c.

IV. To the commemoration of the justice God exercised upon their *enemies*, the prophet exhorts them to extol God.

1. "Thy name, O Lord," &c.
2. "And thy memorial," &c.

And the reason is drawn from his mercy.

1. "For the Lord will judge his people." Judge their cause, and deliver them.
2. "And he will repent himself," &c. If they repent, and turn to him.

The prophet, having proved that God is great in himself, now proves that he is above all gods, which are but vanity.

1. From their composition: "Silver and gold."
2. From their makers: "The work of men's hands."
3. From their impotency: "They have mouths," &c.
4. From the nature of their worshippers: "They that make them," &c.

Lastly, he invites all true worshippers of God to praise him, because they are lively images of the living God, from whom all their faculties have proceeded. To this he invites—

1. All *Israel*: “Bless the Lord, O house of Israel.”
2. The priests: “Bless the Lord, O house of Aaron.”
3. The Levites: “Bless the Lord, O house of Levi.”
4. Lastly, all the laity: “Ye that fear the Lord bless the Lord.”

To which he adds his own note, concluding—

1. “Blessed be the Lord out of Zion.” Where he shows his presence by the ark.
2. “Which dwelleth at Jerusalem.” Who, though in essence he is every where, yet more especially manifests his presence in his Church by his indwelling Spirit.

Therefore, let all the people bless the Lord for his great mercy: but let the citizens of *Zion* and *Jerusalem* never cease to praise him.

PSALMS

PSALM 136

An exhortation to give thanks to God for various mercies granted to all men, 1-9; particularly to the Israelites in Egypt, 10-12; at the Red Sea, 13-15; in the wilderness, 16-20; and in the promised land, 21, 22; for the redemption of the captives from Babylon, 23, 24; and for his providential mercies to all, 25, 26.

NOTES ON PSALM 136

This Psalm is little else than a repetition of the preceding, with the burden, **wdsj μl w[l yk ki leolam chasdo**, “because his mercy endureth for ever,” at the end of every verse. See below. It seems to have been a *responsive song*: the first part of the verse sung by the *Levites*, the burden by the *people*. It has no title in the Hebrew, nor in any of the Versions. It was doubtless written after the captivity. The *author* is unknown.

Verse 1. O give thanks unto the Lord: for he is good] This sentiment often occurs: the *goodness* of the Divine nature, both as a *ground of confidence* and of *thanksgiving*.

For his mercy endureth for ever] These words, which are the *burden* of every verse, **wdsj μl w[l yk ki leolam chasdo**, might be translated: “For his tender mercy is to the coming age:” meaning, probably, if the Psalm be *prophetic*, that peculiar display of his compassion, the redemption of the world by the Lord Jesus. These very words were prescribed by *David* as an acknowledgment, to be used continually in the Divine worship, see ^{<3164>}**1 Chronicles 16:41**: also by *Solomon*, ^{<4008>}**2 Chronicles 7:3, 6**, and observed by *Jehoshaphat*, ^{<4421>}**2 Chronicles 20:21**; all acknowledging that, however rich in mercy God was to them, the most extensive displays of his goodness were reserved for the *age to come*; see ^{<0010>}**1 Peter 1:10-12**: “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you,—unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that preached the Gospel unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,” &c.

Verse 2. The God of gods] **μyndah yndal ladonai haadonim**. As *adonai* signifies *director*, &c., it may apply here, not to *idols*, for God is

not their god; but to the priests and spiritual rulers; as *Lord of lords* may apply to *kings* and *magistrates*, &c. He is God and ruler over all the rulers of the earth, whether in things *sacred* or *civil*.

Verse 4. Who alone doeth great wonders] MIRACLES. No power but that which is *almighty* can work miracles, *twal pn niphlaoth*, the *inversion*, or *suspension*, or *destruction* of the laws of nature.

Verse 5. By wisdom made the heavens] In the contrivance of the celestial bodies, in their relations, connexions, influences on each other, revolutions, &c., the wisdom of God particularly appears.

Verse 6. Stretched out the earth above the waters] Or, *upon the waters*. This seems to refer to a *central abyss of waters*, the existence of which has not been yet disproved.

Verse 7. Great lights] See the notes on the parallel passages in *Genesis*, &c.

Verse 10. Smote Egypt in their first-born] This was one of the heaviest of strokes: a great part of the rising generation was cut off; few but old persons and children left remaining.

Verse 13. Divided the Red Sea into parts] Some of the Jews have imagined that God made *twelve paths* through the Red Sea, that each tribe might have a distinct passage. Many of the *fathers* were of the same opinion; but is this very likely?

Verse 16. Which led his people through the wilderness] It was an astonishing miracle of God to support so many hundreds of thousands of people in a wilderness totally deprived of all necessaries for the life of man, and that for the space of *forty* years.

Verse 23. Who remembered us in our low estate] He has done much for our *forefathers*; and he has done much for us, in delivering us, when we had no helper, from our long captivity in Babylon.

Verse 25. Giveth food to all flesh] By whose *universal providence* every intellectual and animal being is supported and preserved. The appointing every *living thing food*, and that sort of food which is suited to its nature, (and the nature and habits of animals are endlessly diversified,) is an overwhelming proof of the wondrous providence, wisdom, and goodness of God.

The Vulgate, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon, add a twenty-seventh verse, by repeating here ^{<1906B>}**Psalm 136:3** very unnecessarily.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH PSALM

This Psalm has the same argument with the preceding. It is divided into *three* parts:—

- I. A general exhortation to praise God for his goodness and majesty, ^{<1906B>}**Psalm 136:1-3**.
- II. A declaration of that goodness and majesty in their effects, ^{<1906B>}**Psalm 136:4-10**.
- III. A conclusion fit for the exordium, ^{<1906B>}**Psalm 136:26**.

1. Of his creation, ^{<1906B>}**Psalm 136:4-10**.
2. Of his providence in preserving the Church, and punishing her enemies, **Psalm 136:10-25**.
3. That his providence extends to all his creatures, ^{<1906B>}**Psalm 136:25**.

I. In the *three* first verses the prophet invites us to praise God for his mercy and goodness. And in these *three* verses expositors find the Trinity:—

1. *Jehovah*. God the Father, who is the Fountain of being.
2. *God the Son*. Who is God of gods, and over all.
3. *The Holy Ghost*. Who is Lord of lords.

The psalmist's reasons for calling upon us thus to praise him are, "for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."

The prophet now begins to praise God for his wonderful works, and which he alone was able to do.

1. "Who hath done wonderful things." Such as the work of creation.
2. "For his mercy endureth for ever." In sustaining and preserving all things.

"To him give thanks" for the wisdom manifested in the heavens; for, contemplate them as we may, they appear full of beauty, order, and splendour.

Praise him for the formation of the earth, as the mansion of man.

Give thanks “to him that stretched out,” &c. Naturally this could not be, because the earth is heavier than water: but God hath made furrows for the waters to flow into, that man and beast might live on the earth.

“For his mercy endureth for ever.” In this there was a threefold mercy:—

1. In reference to the *earth*. To make it something of nothing.
2. As respects the *water*. To prepare for it a settled place.
3. In regard to *man*. To whom he gave the earth uncovered from water, and yet plentifully supplied with rivers and fruits.

The third instance is the two great luminaries and the stars, in the three following verses. These do astonishingly adorn the heaven, and profit the earth. The sun and moon illuminate the earth, and comfort us. Perhaps the prophet instances these because they are alike blessings bestowed upon and shared by all the world.

II. From the wonderful works of the creation the prophet descends to those of his providence, in the preservation of the Church; and instances it in the redemption of his people *Israel* from the land of *Egypt*, &c., dwelling at large upon it, <191K10>**Psalm 136:10-22**.

In these verses the prophet records how God performed to *Israel* all the offices of a good Captain, Guide, Leader, and even Father; for he fed them with bread from heaven, gave them water out of the rock, caused that their clothes wore not out, cured their sick, defended them from their enemies, &c.

All this God did for them before they entered *Canaan*. And then the prophet reminds them how they rebelled against God, and he humbled them by bringing the *Philistines* and the *Babylonian* kings against them, who conquered and subjected them: but when they cried to him, he turned their captivity; for “he remembered us when we were in our low estate,” &c.; “and hath redeemed us from our enemies,” &c.

Lastly, that his goodness is not only extended over his people, but his *creatures*; to all *flesh*, which word signifies every thing that hath life.

III. He concludes as he began, “O give thanks unto the God of heaven,” &c. The prophet calls him the *God of heaven*, because he alone made the heavens, and has his throne there, having the whole world under him; and

by his wisdom and providence he preserves, moderates, and governs all things.

PSALMS

PSALM 137

The desolate and afflicted state of the captives in Babylon, 1, 2. How they were insulted by their enemies, 3, 4. Their attachment to their country, 5, 6. Judgments denounced against their enemies, 7-9.

NOTES ON PSALM 137

The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, say, ridiculously enough, a *Psalm of David for Jeremiah*. Anachronisms with those who wrote the *titles* to the Psalms were matters of no importance. *Jeremiah* never was at Babylon; and therefore could have no part in a Psalm that was sung on the banks of its rivers by the Israelitish captives. Neither the *Hebrew* nor *Chaldee* has any *title*; the *Syriac* attributes it to *David*. Some think it was sung when they returned from Babylon; others, while they were there. It is a matter of little importance. It was evidently composed *during* or at the *close* of the *captivity*.

Verse 1. By the rivers of Babylon] These might have been the *Tigris* and *Euphrates*, or their *branches*, or *streams* that flowed into them. In their captivity and dispersion, it was customary for the Jews to hold their religious meetings on the banks of rivers. Mention is made of this ^{<41613>}**Acts 16:13**, where we find the Jews of Philippi resorting to a *river side*, where prayer was wont to be made. And sometimes they built their synagogues here, when they were expelled from the cities.

Verse 2. We hanged our harps upon the willows] The *pybr* [*arabim* or *willows* were very plentiful in Babylon. The great quantity of them that were on the banks of the *Euphrates* caused Isaiah, ^{<23157>}**Isaiah 15:7**, to call it *the brook* or *river of willows*. This is a most affecting picture. Perhaps resting themselves after toil, and wishing to spend their time religiously, they took their harps, and were about to sing one of the songs of Zion; but, reflecting on their own country, they became so filled with distress, that they unstrung their harps with one consent, and hung them on the willow bushes, and gave a general loose to their grief. Some of the Babylonians, who probably attended such meetings for the sake of the music, being present at the time here specified, desired them to *sing one of Zion's songs*: this is affectingly told.

Verse 3. They that carried us away captive required of us a song] This was as *unreasonable* as it was *insulting*. How could they who had reduced us to slavery, and dragged us in chains from our own beautiful land and privileges, expect us to sing a sacred ode to please them, who were enemies both to us and to our God? And how could those *who wasted us* expect *mirth* from people in captivity, deprived of all their possessions, and in the most abject state of poverty and oppression?

Verse 4. How shall we sing the Lord's song] *ryvn Ĕya eich! nashir; O, we sing!* Who does not hear the *deep sigh* in the strongly guttural sound of the original *Ĕya eich!* wrung, as it were, from the bottom of the heart? *Can WE, in this state of slavery,—WE, exiles, from our country,—WE, stripped of all our property,—WE, reduced to contempt by our strong enemy,—WE, deprived of our religious privileges,—WE, insulted by our oppressors,—WE, in the land of heathens,—WE sing, or be mirthful in these circumstances?* No: God does not expect it; man should not wish it; and it is base in our enemies to require it.

Verse 5. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem] Such conduct would be, in effect, a renunciation of our land a tacit acknowledgment that we were reconciled to our bondage; a concession that we were pleased with our captivity, and could profane holy ordinances by using them as means of *sport* or *pastime* to the heathen. No: *Jerusalem!* we remember thee and thy Divine ordinances: and especially thy *King* and our *God*, whose indignation we must bear, because we have sinned against him.

Let my right hand forget] Let me forget the use of my right hand. Let me forget that which is dearest and most profitable to me; and let me lose my skill in the management of my harp, if I ever prostitute it to please the ungodly multitude or the enemies of my Creator!

Verse 6. Let my tongue cleave] Let me lose my *voice*, and all its powers of *melody*; my *tongue*, and all its *faculty* of *speech*; my *ear*, and its *discernment* of *sounds*; if I do not prefer my *country*, my *people*, and the *ordinances of my God*, beyond all these, and whatever may constitute the *chiefest joy* I can possess in aught else beside. This is truly *patriotic*, truly noble and dignified. Such sentiments can only be found in the hearts and mouths of those slaves whom the grace of God has made *free*.

Verse 7. Remember-the children of Edom] It appears from ^{<4126>}Jeremiah 12:6; 25:14; ^{<5021>}Lamentations 4:21, 22; ^{<6512>}Ezekiel 25:12;

^{<1011>}**Obadiah 1:11-14**; that the *Idumeans* joined the army of Nebuchadnezzar against their brethren the Jews; and that they were main instruments in rasing the walls of Jerusalem even to the ground.

Verse 8. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed] Or, *O thou daughter of Babylon the destroyer, or, who art to be ruined.* In being reduced under the empire of the Persians, Babylon was already greatly humbled and brought low from what it was in the days of Nebuchadnezzar; but it was afterwards so totally ruined that not a vestige of it remains. After its capture by Cyrus, A.M. 3468, it could never be considered a capital city; but it appeared to follow the fortunes of its various conquerors till it was, as a city, finally destroyed.

Rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.] This was Cyrus, who was chosen of God to do this work, and is therefore called *happy*, as being God's agent in its destruction. Greater desolations were afterwards brought upon it by *Darius Hystaspes*, who took this city after it had revolted, and slaughtered the inhabitants, men and women, in a barbarous manner. Herod. lib. iii.

Verse 9. Happy—that taketh and dasheth thy little ones] That is, So oppressive hast thou been to all under thy domination, as to become universally hated and detested; so that those who may have the last hand in thy destruction, and the total extermination of thy inhabitants, shall be reputed *happy*—shall be *celebrated* and *extolled* as those who have rid the world of a curse so grievous. These prophetic declarations contain no excitement to any person or persons to commit acts of cruelty and barbarity; but are simply *declarative* of what would take place in the order of the retributive providence and justice of God, and the general opinion that should in consequence be expressed on the subject; therefore *praying for the destruction of our enemies* is totally out of the question. It should not be omitted that the Chaldee considers this Psalm a *dialogue*, which it thus divides:—The *three* first verses are supposed to have been spoken by the *psalmist*, *By the rivers, &c.* The Levites answer from the porch of the temple, in ^{<1970>}**Psalm 137:4**, *How shall we sing, &c.* The voice of the *Holy Spirit* responds in ^{<1975>}**Psalm 137:5, 6**, *If I forget thee, &c. Michael, the prince of Jerusalem,* answers in ^{<1977>}**Psalm 137:7**, *Remember, O Lord, &c. Gabriel, the prince of Zion,* then addresses *the destroyer of the Babylonish nation*, in ^{<1978>}**Psalm 137:8, 9**, *Happy shall be he that rewardeth thee, &c.* To slay all when a city was sacked, both male and female, old and young,

was a common practice in ancient times. Homer describes this in words almost similar to those of the psalmist:—

Υιασ ἔ ολλυμενους, ελκυθεισας τε θυγατρας,
 Και θαλαμους κεραιζομενους, και νηπια τεκνα
 Βαλλομενα προτι γαιη εν αινη δηιοτητι,
 Ἐλκομενας τε νυους ολοης υπο χερσιν Αχαιων.

Il. lib. xxii., ver. 62.

*My heroes slain, my bridal bed o'erturned;
 My daughters ravished, and my city burned:
 My bleeding infants dashed against the floor;
 These I have yet to see; perhaps yet more.*

POPE.

These excesses were common in all barbarous nations, and are only prophetically declared here. He shall be reputed *happy, prosperous, and highly commendable*, who shall destroy Babylon.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH PSALM

When this Psalm was composed, the *Jews* were in captivity in *Babylon*, far from their own country, the temple, and the public exercises of religion; and the scoff and scorn of their enemies; and they contrast what they were with what they are. This Psalm has *two* parts:—

I. The complaint of *Israel*. Because of the insults of the *Babylonians*, they deplore their sad condition, long for the temple, and their return to *Jerusalem*, ^{<9570>}**Psalm 137:1-7.**

II. An imprecation or prayer for vengeance, on their persecutors, ^{<9570>}**Psalm 137:7-9.**

I. Their complaint arises from their captivity, and it is aggravated.—

1. From the place, *Babylon*: “By the rivers of Babylon.” A place far from their country; who were aliens from the covenant made by God with *Abraham*, scorners of their religion, had laid waste their city and forced them to base and servile labour.

2. From the continuance of their captivity and misery: “There we sat down,” &c. Took up the seats allotted to us, and that for *seventy* years.

3. From the effects it produced: “Yea, we wept,” &c.

4. From the cause which drew these tears. The remembrance of what they had enjoyed, (now lost,) the services of religion: “We wept when we remembered Zion,” &c.

5. From the intenseness of their grief, which was so great that they could not even tune their harps: “We hung our harps,” &c.

That which increased their grief was the joy their enemies manifested at it.

1. THERE, in a strange land, the place of our captivity.

2. “THEY that carried us away captive.”

3. “They required of us a song.” They quired of us mirth, saying,

4. O thou *Jew* or captive, come now, “sing us one of the songs of Zion.”

To this sarcasm the captive Jews return a double answer.

“How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?” You are aliens, and this is a strange land; we cannot sing God’s service there, which is destined to his honour, to you, or in this place without offending our God.

They reply by a protestation of their hope and constancy in religion, and accurse themselves if they do not continue in it.

1. “If I forget thee,” &c. Forget the worship and feasts I kept there.

2. “If I do not remember thee,” &c. If I do not prefer and make mention of Jerusalem, then “let my tongue cleave,” &c. Let me no more have the use of that excellent organ of God’s glory. It would be unworthy of my religion, and a dishonour to my God to sing the songs of Zion thus circumstanced, and to scoffers and aliens.

II. This seems to be the sense of the first part of the Psalm. The second part has reference to the imprecations poured out against *Edom* and *Babylon*, both persecutors of God’s people. The Babylonians carried them away captive, and the *Edomites* persecuted their brethren with the sword,
<00101> **Amos 1:12.**

1. Against Edom.

(1) “Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom,” &c. How they carried themselves towards thy people on that day when thy anger smote against them, and the Babylonians carried us away.

(2) *Remember* how they added to our affliction, saying, “Rase it,” &c.

2. Against *Babylon*. To her he turns his speech by an apostrophe; but at the same time foretells her ruin: “O daughter of Babylon,” &c. Thou seemest to thyself to be most happy; but thy ruin approaches. Shortly after, the *Medes*, led by *Cyrus* destroyed them.

(1) “Happy shall he be that rewardeth,” &c. [See the notes.]

(2) “Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones,” &c. [See the notes.]

PSALMS

PSALM 138

The psalmist praises the Lord for his mercies to himself, 1-3. He foretells that the kings of the earth shall worship him, 4, 5. God's condescension to the humble, 6. The psalmist's confidence, 7, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM 138

The *Hebrew* and all the *Versions* attribute this Psalm to *David*, and it is supposed to have been made by him when, delivered from all his enemies, he was firmly seated on the throne of Israel. As the *Septuagint* and *Arabic* prefix also the names of *Haggai* and *Zechariah*, it is probable that it was used by the Jews as a *form of thanksgiving* for their deliverance from all their enemies, and their ultimate settlement in their own land, after *Ahasuerus*, supposed by *Calmet* to be *Darius Hystaspes*, had married *Esther*, before which time they were not peaceably *settled* in their own country.

Verse 1. I will praise thee with my whole heart] I have received the highest favours from thee, and my whole soul should acknowledge my obligation to thy mercy. The *Versions* and several *MSS.* add *hwby Yehovah*, "I will praise thee, O LORD," &c.

Before the gods will I sing] *pyhl a dgn neged Elohim*, "in the presence of Elohim;" most probably meaning before the ark, where were the sacred symbols of the Supreme Being. The *Chaldee* has, *before the judges*. The *Vulgate*, *before the angels*. So the *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*. The *Syriac*, *Before kings will I sing unto thee*. This place has been alleged by the Roman Catholics as a proof that the holy angels, who are present in the assemblies of God's people, take their prayers and praises, and present them before God. There is nothing like this in the *text*; for supposing, which is not granted, that the word *elohim* here signifies *angels*, the praises are not *presented to them*, nor are *they requested to present them before God*; it is simply said, *Before elohim will I sing praise unto THEE*. Nor could there be need of any intermediate agents, when it was well known that God himself was present in the sanctuary, sitting between the cherubim. Therefore this opinion is wholly without support from this place.

Verse 2. For thy loving-kindness] Thy *tender mercy* shown to me; and for the fulfilment of thy *truth*-the promises thou hast made.

Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.] All the *Versions* read this sentence thus: “For thou hast magnified above all the name of thy holiness,” or, “thy holy name.” Thou hast proved that thou hast all *power* in heaven and in earth, and that thou art *true* in all thy words. And by giving the word of *prophecy*, and fulfilling those words, thou hast *magnified thy holy name above all things*-thou hast proved thyself to be *ineffably great*. The original is the following: **Ĕtrma Ĕmv I k I [t I dgh yk ki higdalta al col shimcha, imrathecha,** which I think might be thus translated: “For thou hast magnified thy name and thy word over all,” or, “on every occasion.” *Kennicott* reads, “He preferred *faithfulness to his promise* to the attribute of his *power*.” I believe my own translation to be nearest the truth. There may be some corruption in this clause.

Verse 3. With strength in my soul.] Thou hast endued my soul with many graces, blessings, and heavenly qualities.

Verse 4. All the kings of the earth] Of the land: all the neighbouring nations, seeing what is done for us, and looking in vain to find that any human agency was employed in the work, will immediately see that it was *thy hand*; and consequently, by *confessing* that it was *thou*, will give praise to thy name.

Verse 5. They shall sing in the ways of the Lord] They shall admire thy *conduct*, and the *wondrous workings* of thy providence, if they should not even unite with thy people.

Verse 6. Though the Lord be high] Infinitely *great* as God is, he regards even the lowest and most inconsiderable part of his creation; but the *humble* and *afflicted* man attracts his notice particularly.

But the proud he knoweth afar off.] He beholds them at a distance, and has them in utter derision.

Verse 7. Though I walk in the midst of trouble] I have had such experience of thy mercy, that let me fall into whatsoever trouble I may, yet I will trust in thee. Thou wilt *quicken* me, though I were *ready to die*; and thou wilt deliver me from the *wrath of my enemies*.

Verse 8. The Lord will perfect] Whatever is farther necessary to be done, he will do it.

Forsake not the works of thine own hands.] My body-my soul; thy work *begun in my soul*; thy work in *behalf of Israel*; thy work in the evangelization of the world; thy work in the salvation of mankind. Thou wilt not forsake these.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHTH PSALM

I. In the three first verses of this Psalm David promises a grateful heart, and to sing the praises of God, because he had heard his cries, and sent him comfort and deliverance.

II. In the three next he shows what future kings would do, when the works and truth of God should be made known to them.

III. In the two last verses he professes his confidence in God; shows what he hopes for from him; and, in assurance that God will perfect his works, prays him not to desert or forsake him.

I. The prophet shows his thankfulness, which he illustrates and amplifies.

1. "I will praise thee with my whole heart." Sincerely, cordially.

2. "Before the gods," &c. Publicly, before potentates, whether angels or kings.

3. "I will worship toward," &c. It is true God ruleth as King in his palace: there will I bow; it is the symbol of his presence.

4. "And praise thy name," &c. From a feeling sense of thy goodness. 1. "For thy lovingkindness," &c. In calling me to the kingdom from the sheepfold. 2. "And for thy truth." In performing thy promise. By which,

5. "Thou hast magnified," &c. This clause is differently read. "Thou hast magnified thy name in thy word; *by performing thy word above all things.*" Or, "Thou hast magnified thy name and thy word above all things." See the notes.

6. "In the day when I cried," &c. Finite creatures as we are, we must sometimes faint in our temptations and afflictions, if not strengthened by God.

II. The prophet, having set down what God had in mercy done for him in calling him *from following the ewes, &c.*, and *making him king*, and performing *his promises to him*; seeing all this, the prophet judges it impossible but that the neighbouring and future kings should acknowledge the miracle and praise God. This appears the literal sense: but it may have reference to the conversion of kings in future ages to the faith.

1. "All the kings of the earth," &c. Or the future kings of Israel.
2. "Yea, they shall sing in the ways," &c. His mercy, truth, clemency, &c.: "For great is the glory of the Lord." Righteous and glorious in all his works, of which this is one. "Though the Lord be high," &c. Of which David was an instance. "But the proud," &c., he removes far from him. Saul and others are examples of this.

III. Because *God who is high, &c.* And David, being conscious of his own humility of mind, confidently expects help from God.

1. "Though I walk," &c. Exposed on all sides to trouble.
2. "Thou wilt revive me." Preserve me safe and untouched.
3. "Thou shalt stretch forth thy hand," &c. Restrain the power of my enemies.
4. "And thy right hand," &c. Thy power; thy *Christ*, who, in ^{<2530>}Isaiah 53:1 is called *the arm of the Lord*.

The last verse depends on the former. Because the prophet knew that many troubles and afflictions remained yet to be undergone; therefore he was confident that the same God would still deliver and make his work perfect.

1. "The Lord will perfect," &c. Not for my merits, but his mercy.
2. Of which he gives the reason: "Thy mercy, O Lord," &c. It does not exist only for a moment, but it is eternal.
3. And he concludes with a prayer for God to perfect his work: "Forsake not the work," &c. Thou who hast begun this work, increase and perfect it; because it is thy work alone, not mine. If we desire that God should perfect any work in us, we must be sure that it is his work, and look to him continually.

PSALMS

PSALM 139

A fine account of the omniscience of God, 1-6; of his omnipresence, 7-12; of his power and providence, 13-16. The excellence of his purposes, 17, 18. His opposition to the wicked, 19, 20; with whom the godly can have no fellowship, 21, 22.

NOTES ON PSALM 139

The *title* of this Psalm in the *Hebrew* is, *To the chief Musician, or, To the Conqueror, A Psalm of David*. The *Versions* in general follow the *Hebrew*. And yet, notwithstanding these testimonies, there appears internal evidence that the Psalm was not written by *David*, but *during* or *after the time of the captivity*, as there are several *Chaldaisms* in it. See ^{<1901>} **Psalm 139:2, 3, 7, 9, 19, 20**, collated with ^{<202>} **Daniel 2:29, 30; 4:16; 7:28**; some of these shall be noticed in their proper places.

As to the *author*, he is unknown; for it does not appear to have been the work of *David*. The composition is worthy of him, but the language appears to be *lower* than his time.

Concerning the *occasion*, there are many conjectures which I need not repeat, because I believe them unfounded. It is most probable that it was written on *no particular occasion*, but is a moral lesson on the wisdom, presence, providence, and justice of God, without any reference to any circumstance in the *life of David*, or in the *history of the Jews*.

The Psalm is very sublime; the sentiments are grand, the style in general highly elevated, and the images various and impressive. The first part especially, that contains so fine a description of the wisdom and knowledge of God, is inimitable.

Bishop *Horsley's* account of this Psalm is as follows:—

“In the first twelve verses of this Psalm the author celebrates God’s perfect knowledge of man’s thoughts and actions; and the reason of this wonderful knowledge, viz., that God is the Maker of man. Hence the psalmist proceeds, in the four following verses, ^{<1901>} **Psalm 139:13-16**, to magnify God as ordaining and superintending the formation of his body in the womb. In the 17th

and 18th {^{<19D917>} **Psalm 139:17, 18**} he acknowledges God's providential care of him in every moment of his life; and in the remainder of the Psalm implores God's aid against impious and cruel enemies, professing his own attachment to God's service, that is, to the true religion, and appealing to the Searcher of hearts himself for the truth of his professions.

The composition, for the purity and justness of *religious sentiment*, and for the force and beauty of the images, is certainly in the very first and best style. And yet the frequent *Chaldaisms* of the diction argue *no very high antiquity*.

Verse 1. O Lord, thou hast searched me] **yntraqj** *chakartani*; thou hast investigated me; *thou hast thoroughly acquainted thyself* with my whole soul and conduct.

Verse 2. My downsitting and mine uprising] Even these inconsiderable and casual things are under thy continual notice. I cannot so much as *take a seat*, or *leave it*, without being marked by thee.

Thou understandest my thought] **y[ri** *lerei*, "my cogitation." This word is *Chaldee*, see ^{<21229>} **Daniel 2:29, 30.**

Afar off.] While the figment is forming that shall produce them.

Verse 3. Thou compassest my path] **tyrz** *zeritha* thou dost winnow, ventilate, or *sift* my path; and my lying down, **y[br** *ribi*, my *lair*, my *bed*.

And art acquainted] *Thou treasurest up*. This is the import of **ks** *sachan*. Thou hast the *whole number* of my ways, and the steps I took in them.

Verse 4. There is not a word in my tongue] Although (**yk** *ki*) *there be not a word in my tongue*, *behold O Jehovah, thou knowest the whole of it*, that is, thou knowest all my words before they are uttered, as thou knowest all my thoughts while as yet they are unformed.

Verse 5. Thou hast beset me behind and before] **yntrx** **udqw** **rwj** **a** *achor vekodam tsartani*, "The hereafter and the past, thou hast formed me." I think Bishop Horsley's emendation here is just, uniting the two verses together. "Behold thou, O Jehovah, knowest the whole, the hereafter and the past. Thou hast formed me, and laid thy hand upon me."

Verse 6. Such knowledge is too wonderful] I think, with *Kennicott*, that t [d hyal p pelaiiah daath should be read t [dh yal p peli haddaath, “THIS knowledge,” *ynmm mimmeni*, “is beyond or above me.” This change is made by taking the h *he* from the end of *hyal p pelaiiah*, which is really *no word*, and joining it with t [d daath; which, by giving it an *article*, makes it demonstrative, t [dh haddaath, “THIS knowledge.” *This kind of knowledge*, God’s knowledge, that takes in all things, and their reasons, essences, tendencies, and issues, is far beyond me.

Verse 7. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?] Surely j wr ruach in this sense must be taken *personally*, it certainly cannot mean either *breath* or *wind*; to render it so would make the passage ridiculous.

From thy presence?] Ēynpm mippanycha, “from thy faces.” Why do we meet with this word so frequently in the *plural* number, when applied to God? And why have we his *Spirit*, and his *appearances* or *faces*, both here? A *Trinitarian* would at once say, “The plurality of persons in the Godhead is intended;” and who can *prove* that he is mistaken?

Verse 8. If I ascend] Thou art in *heaven*, in thy glory; in *hell*, in thy vindictive justice; and in all *parts of earth, water, space, place, or vacuity*, by thy *omnipresence*. Wherever I am, there art thou; and where I cannot be, thou art there. Thou fillest the heavens and the earth.

Verse 11. Surely the darkness shall cover me] Should I suppose that this would serve to screen me, immediately this *darkness* is turned into *light*.

Verse 12. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee] Darkness and light, ignorance and knowledge, are things that stand in relation to us; God sees equally in *darkness* as in *light*; and *knows* as perfectly, however man is enveloped in *ignorance*, as if all were *intellectual brightness*. What is to us *hidden* by *darkness*, or *unknown* through *ignorance*, is perfectly *seen* and *known* by God; because he is all sight, all hearing, all feeling, all soul, all spirit—all in ALL, and infinite in himself. He lends to every thing; receives nothing from any thing. Though his *essence* be *unimpartible*, yet his *influence* is *diffusible* through time and through eternity. Thus God makes himself known, seen, heard, felt; yet, in the infinity of his essence, neither angel, nor spirit, nor man can see him; nor can any creature comprehend him, or form any idea of the *mode* of his existence. And yet vain man would be wise, and ascertain his foreknowledge, eternal purposes, infinite

decrees, with all operations of infinite love and infinite hatred, and their *objects specifically* and *nominally*, from all eternity, as if himself had possessed a being and powers co-extensive with the Deity! O ye wise fools! Jehovah, the fountain of eternal perfection and love, is as unlike your *creeds*, as he is unlike *yourselves*, forgers of doctrines to prove that the source of infinite benevolence is a *streamlet of capricious love* to thousands, while he is an overflowing, eternal, and irresistible *tide of hatred* to millions of millions both of angels and men! The antiproof of such doctrines is this: he bears with such blasphemies, and does not consume their abettors. “But nobody holds these doctrines.” Then I have written against *nobody*; and have only to add the prayer, May no such doctrines ever disgrace the page of history; or farther dishonour, as they have done, the annals of the Church!

Verse 13. Thou hast possessed my reins] As the Hebrews believed that the *reins* were the first part of the human fetus that is formed, it may here mean, thou hast laid the foundation of my being.

Verse 14. I am fearfully and wonderfully made] The texture of the human body is the most complicated and curious that can be conceived. It is, indeed, *wonderfully made*; and it is withal so exquisitely *nice* and *delicate*, that the slightest accident may impair or destroy in a moment some of those parts essentially necessary to the continuance of life; therefore, we are *fearfully made*. And God has done so to show us our *frailty*, that we should walk with *death*, keeping *life* in view; and feel the necessity of *depending* on the all-wise and continual superintending care and providence of God.

Verse 15. My substance was not hid from thee] *ymx* [*atsmi*, my bones or skeleton.

Curiously wrought] *ytmqr* *rukkamti*, embroidered, *made of needlework*. These two words, says Bishop Horsley, describe the two principal parts of which the human body is composed; the *bony skeleton*, the *foundation* of the whole; and the *external covering* of muscular flesh, tendons, veins, arteries, nerves, and skin; a curious *web of fibres*. On this passage Bishop Lowth has some excellent observations: “In that most perfect hymn, where the immensity of the omnipresent Deity, and the admirable wisdom of the Divine Artificer in framing the human body, are celebrated, the poet uses a remarkable metaphor, drawn from the nicest tapestry work:—

*When I was formed in secret;
When I was wrought, as with a needle,
in the lowest parts of the earth.*

“He who remarks this, (but the man who consults *Versions* only will hardly remark it,) and at the same time reflects upon the wonderful composition of the human body, the various implication of veins, arteries, fibres, membranes, and the ‘inexplicable texture’ of the whole frame; will immediately understand the beauty and elegance of this most apt translation. But he will not attain the whole force and dignity, unless he also considers that the most artful embroidery with the needle was dedicated by the Hebrews to the *service of the sanctuary*; and that the proper and singular use of their work was, by the immediate prescript of the Divine law, applied in a certain part of the *high priest’s dress*, and in the *curtains of the tabernacle*, ⁽¹²³⁹⁾ **Exodus 28:39; 26:36; 27:16**; and compare ⁽²⁶¹⁰⁾ **Ezekiel 16:10; 13:18**. So that the psalmist may well be supposed to have compared the wisdom of the Divine Artificer particularly with that specimen of human art, whose dignity was through religion the highest, and whose elegance (⁽¹²⁵⁰⁾ **Exodus 35:30-35**) was so exquisite, that the sacred writer seems to attribute it to a Divine inspiration.”

In the lowest parts of the earth.] The womb of the mother, thus expressed by way of delicacy.

Verse 16. Thine eyes did see my substance] *yml g golmi*, my *embryo state*-my yet indistinct mass, when all was *wrapped up* together, before it was gradually unfolded into the lineaments of man. “Some think,” says Dr. Dodd, “that the allusion to *embroidery* is still carried on. As the embroiderer has still his work, pattern, or *carton*, before him, to which he always recurs; so, by a method as exact, revere all my members *in continuance fashioned*, i.e., from the rude embryo or mass they daily received some degree of figuration; as from the rude skeins of variously coloured silk or worsted, under the artificer’s hands, there at length arises an unexpected beauty, and an accurate harmony of colours and proportions.”

And in thy book all my members were written] “All those members lay open before God’s eyes; they were discerned by him as clearly as if the

plan of them had been *drawn in a book*, even to the least figuration of the body of the child in the womb.”

Verse 17. How precious also are thy thoughts] Ēy[r *reeycha*, thy cogitations; a *Chaldaism*, as before.

How great is the sum of them!] μhyvar wmx[hm *mah atsemu rasheyhem*; *How strongly rational are the heads or principal subjects of them!* But the word may apply to the *bones*, twmx[*atsamoth*, the structure and uses of which are most curious and important.

Verse 18. If I should count them] I should be glad to enumerate so many interesting particulars: but they are beyond calculation.

When I awake] Thou art my Governor and Protector night and day.

I am still with thee.] All my steps in life are ordered by thee: I cannot go out of thy presence; I am ever under the influence of thy Spirit.

The subject, from the 14th verse to the 16th { <19D14> **Psalm 139:14-16** } inclusive, might have been much more particularly illustrated, but we are taught, by the peculiar delicacy of expression in the Sacred Writings, to avoid, as in this case, the entering too minutely into *anatomical details*. I would, however, make an additional observation on the subject in the 15th and 16th verses. { <19D15> **Psalm 139:15-16** } I have already remarked the elegant allusion to *embroidery*, in the word ytmqr *rukkamti*, in the astonishing texture of the human body; all of which is said to be done *in secret*, rtsb *bassether*, in the *secret place*, viz., *the womb of the mother*, which, in the conclusion of the verse, is by a delicate choice of expression termed *the lower parts of the earth*.

The embryo state, μl g *golem*, has a more forcible meaning than our word *substance* amounts to. μl g *galam* signifies *to roll or wrap up together*; and expresses the state of the fetus before the constituent members were developed. The best system of modern philosophy allows that *ino semine masculino* all the members of the future animal are contained; and that these become slowly developed or *unfolded*, in the case of *fowls*, by *incubation*; and in the case of the more perfect *animals*, by gestation in the maternal matrix. It is no wonder that, in considering these, the psalmist should cry out, *How precious, or extraordinary, are thy thoughts! how great is the sum-heads or outlines, of them!* The particulars are, indeed,

beyond comprehension; even the *heads*—the *general* contents, of thy works; while I endeavour to form any tolerable notion of them, *prevail over me*—they confound my *understanding*, and are vastly too multitudinous for my *comprehension*.

Verse 19. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked] The remaining part of this Psalm has no visible connexion with the preceding. I rather think it a fragment, or a part of some other Psalm.

Ye bloody men.] *µymd yvna anshey damim, men of blood, men guilty of death.*

Verse 20. Thine enemies take thy name in vain.] Bishop *Horsley* translates the whole verse thus:—

“They have deserted me who are disobedient to thee;

“They who are sworn to a rash purpose—thy refractory adversaries.”

The *original* is obscure: but I cannot see these things in it. Some translate the Hebrew thus: “Those who oppose thee iniquitously seize unjustly upon thy cities;” and so almost all the *Versions*. The words, thus translated, may apply to *Sanballat, Tobiah*, and the other enemies of the returned Jews, who endeavoured to drive them from the land, that they might possess the cities of Judea.

Verse 21. Do not I hate them] I hold their conduct in abomination.

Verse 22. With perfect hatred] Their *conduct*, their *motives*, their *opposition to thee*, their *perfidy* and *idolatrour purposes*, I perfectly abhor. With them I have neither part, interest, nor affection.

Verse 23. Search me, O God] *Investigate* my conduct, *examine* my heart, put me to *the test*, and *examine* my thoughts.

Verse 24. If there be any wicked way] *bx[Ĕrd derech otseb: a way of idolatry, or of error. Any thing false in religious principle; any thing contrary to piety to thyself, and love and benevolence to man. And he needed to offer such prayer as this, while filled with indignation against the ways of the workers of iniquities; for he who hates, utterly hates, the practices of any man, is not far from hating the man himself. It is very difficult*

*“To hate the sin with all the heart,
And yet the sinner love.”*

Lead me in the way everlasting.] **μl w[** **Ërd** *b* *derech olam, in the old way*—the way in which our *fathers* walked, who worshipped thee, the infinitely pure Spirit, in *spirit* and in *truth*. Lead me, guide me, as thou didst them. We have **μl w[j ra** *orach olam, the old path,* ^{<18215>} **Job 22:15**. “The two words **Ërd** *derech* and **j ra** *orach*, differ,” says Bishop *Horsley*, “in their figurative senses: *derech* is the *right way*, in which a man *ought* to go; *orach* is the way, *right* or *wrong*, in which a man *actually goes by habit*.” The way that is right in a man’s own eyes is seldom the way to God.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM

David, having had aspersions laid upon him, calls upon God in this Psalm to witness his innocency. Now, that this his appeal be not thought unreasonable, he presents God in his two especial attributes, omniscience and omnipresence; then he shows he loved goodness, and hated wickedness.

This Psalm is divided into four parts:—

- I. A description of God’s omniscience, ^{<1901>} **Psalm 139:1-7**.
- II. A description of his omnipresence, ^{<1907>} **Psalm 139:7-18**.
- III. David’s hatred to evil and evil men, ^{<1919>} **Psalm 139:19-23**.
- IV. A protestation of his own innocency, which he offers to the trial of God, ^{<1923>} **Psalm 139:23, 24**.

I. He begins with God’s omniscience: “O Lord, thou hast searched me,” &c. Examined me with scrutiny.

He searches and knows our actions.

1. “Thou knowest,” &c. When and for what reasons I ever act.
2. “Thou understandest my thoughts,” &c. Thou knowest my counsels and thoughts.
3. “Thou compassest my path,” &c. The end I aim at.
4. “There is not a word,” &c. Every word and thought thou knowest.

And for this he gives this reason: God is our Maker: “Thou hast beset me,” &c. These *two* arguments prove that God knows all things.

1. God knows all the past and future: “Beset behind and before.”

2. He governs man: “Thou God madest man,” &c. The prophet concludes this Divine attribute, omniscience, with an acclamation: “Such knowledge,” &c. It is beyond my reach and capacity.

II. From God’s omnipresence the prophet argues that man cannot hide any thing from God, for he is every where present.

1. “Where shall I go,” &c. That I may be hid from thy knowledge.

2. “Or whither shall I flee,” &c. From thy face and eye.

There is no place that is not before thee.

1. “If I ascend up to heaven,” &c.

2. “If I make my bed in hell,” &c.

3. “If I take the wings of the morning,” &c.

And among many instances that might be brought forward to prove God’s omniscience and omnipresence, we may simply instance the formation of a child in the womb.

1. “Thou hast possessed my reins,” &c. Thou hast undertaken wholly to frame, and cherish me when formed.

2. “Thou hast covered me,” &c. Clothed me with flesh, skin, bones, &c.

Then the prophet breaks out in admiration of God’s works.

1. “I will praise thee,” &c.

2. “I am fearfully,” &c. His works are enough to strike all men with reverential fear.

3. “Marvellous are thy works.”

Then he proceeds with the formation of the infant embryo.

1. “My substance,” &c. My strength, my essence. “Is not hid,” &c.

2. "When I was made in secret," &c. In the secret cell of my mother's womb.
3. "And curiously wrought," &c. The word in the Hebrew signifies to interweave coloured threads. Man is a curious piece, and the variety of his faculties shows him such. [See the notes.]
4. "In the lowest parts of the earth," &c. In the womb, where it is as secret if God wrought it in *the lowest part of the earth*.
5. "Thine eyes did see my substance," &c. When in embryo, and without any distinct parts.
6. "And in thy book," &c. The idea of them was with thee, as the picture in the eye of the painter.
7. Which *in continuance*, &c.

The prophet closes this part with an exclamation.

1. "How precious also are thy thoughts," &c. In this and other respects.
2. "O how great is the sum of them." They are infinite.
3. And for this cause: "When I awake," &c., thy wisdom and providence are ever before my mind, and my admiration is full of them.

The prophet, having ended his discourse on the omniscience and omnipresence of God, justifies himself at God's tribunal.

1. "Surely thou wilt slay the wicked," &c. I dare not then associate with them.
2. "Depart, therefore, from me," &c. Keep at a distance.
3. "For they speak against thee wickedly," &c. Blaspheme my God.

So far from giving them the right hand of fellowship, he asks,—

1. "Do not I hate them, O Lord," &c. I hate them as sinners, but feel for and pity them as men.
2. Then he returns this answer to himself, "Yea, I hate them," &c. I count them my enemies, for they are thine.

IV. Lastly, it would appear that his heart was sincere and pure, or he would not abide such a trial.

1. "Search me, O God:" In the beginning of the Psalm he showed what God did; now he entreats him to do it.
2. "Try me," &c. Examine my heart and my ways.
3. "And see if there be any wicked way," &c. Presumptuous sins.
4. "And lead me in the way everlasting." This was the end proposed by his trial; that, if God saw any wickedness in him that might seduce him, he would withdraw him from it; and lead him to think, and devise, and do those things which would bring him to life eternal.

PSALMS

PSALM 140

The psalmist prays against his enemies, 1-6; returns thanks for help, 7; describes his enemies, and prays farther against them, 8-11. His confidence in God, 12, 13.

NOTES ON PSALM 140

The *Hebrew*, and all the *Versions*, attribute this Psalm to *David*; and it is supposed to contain his complaint when persecuted by Saul. The *Syriac* determines it to the time when Saul endeavoured to transfix David with his spear.

Verse 1. From the evil man] Saul, who was full of envy, jealousy, and cruelty against David, to whom both himself and his kingdom were under the highest obligations, endeavoured by every means to destroy him.

Verse 2. They gathered together] He and his courtiers form plots and cabals against my life.

Verse 3. They have sharpened their tongues] They employ their time in forging lies and calumnies against me; and those of the most virulent nature.

Verse 4. Preserve me from the violent man] Saul again; who was as headstrong and violent in all his measures, as he was cruel, and inflexibly bent on the destruction of David.

Verse 5. Have hid a snare for me] They hunted David as they would a dangerous wild beast: one while striving to *pierce* him with the spear; another to *entangle* him in their snares, so as to take and sacrifice him before the people, on pretense of his being an *enemy to the state*.

Selah] This is the truth.

Verse 7. Thou hast covered my head] Not only when I fought with the proud blaspheming Philistine; but in the various attempts made against my life by my sworn enemies.

Verse 8. Further not his wicked device] He knew his enemies still desired his death, and were plotting to accomplish it; and here he prays that

God may disappoint and confound them. The *Chaldee* understands this of *Doeg*.

Verse 10. Let burning coals] The *Chaldee* considers this as spoken against *Ahithophel*, who was head of a conspiracy against David; and translates this verse thus: “Let coals from heaven fall upon them, precipitate them into the fire of hell, and into miry pits, from which they shall not have a resurrection to eternal life.” This is a proof that the Jews did believe in a resurrection of the body, and an eternal life for that body, in the case of the righteous.

Verse 11. Let not an evil speaker be established] ^{^wvl} *vya ish lashon*, “a man of tongue.” There is much force in the rendering of this clause in the *Chaldee* *ytyl t ^vyl y[tvmd rbg* *gebar demishtai lishan telithai*, “The man of detraction, or *inflammation*, with the *three-forked tongue*.” He whose tongue is *set on fire from hell*; the tale-bearer, slanderer, and dealer in scandal: *with the three-forked tongue*; wounding *three* at once: his *neighbour* whom he slanders; the *person* who receives the slander; and *himself* who deals in it. What a just description of a character which God, angels, and good men must detest! Let not such a one be established in the land; let him be unmasked; let no person trust him; and let all join together to hoot him out of society. “He shall be hunted by the angel of death, and thrust into hell.”—CHALDEE.

Verse 12. The cause of the afflicted] Every person who is *persecuted* for righteousness’ sake has God for his *peculiar help* and *refuge*; and the *persecutor* has the same God for his *especial enemy*.

Verse 13. The righteous shall give thanks] For thou wilt support and deliver him.

The upright shall dwell in thy presence.] Shall be admitted to the most intimate intercourse with God.

The *persecuted* have ever been dear to God Almighty; and the *martyrs* were, in an especial manner, his delight; and in proportion as he loved *those*, so must he hate and detest *these*.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTIETH PSALM

David, being persecuted by Saul, *Doeg*, and the men of *Ziph*, prays to God against their evil tongues. But the fathers apply it more largely to the Church, in its persecution by wicked men and devils.

The Psalm is divided into *four* parts:—

I. A petition to be delivered from his enemies, whom he describes,
<9E01> **Psalm 140:1-6.**

II. A protestation of his confidence in God, <9E06> **Psalm 140:6, 7.**

III. A prayer against them, <9E08> **Psalm 140:8-11.**

IV. A manifestation of his hope, that God will maintain his just cause, <9E02> **Psalm 140:12, 13.**

I. He first summarily proposes his petition.

1. “Deliver me, O Lord,” &c. From Saul, *Doeg*, or the devil.

2. “Preserve me,” &c. From his violence and malice, and their effects. 1. Evil counsels, and wicked stratagems: “Which imagine mischief,” &c. 2. From their evil words, which were consonant with their thoughts.

“They have sharpened their tongues,” &c. With calumnies and frauds.

“Like a serpent,” &c. Their bitter words are as the poison of the *viper* and *adder*, or the *asp*, which, without pain, extinguishes life.

He repeats his petition: “Keep me, O Lord,” &c.

To move God, he shows their intentions.

1. “They have purposed,” &c.: To make me walk slowly, or not at all, in the ways of God; to turn me back.

2. The method they took to attain their purpose: “The proud have laid a snare,” &c.: as hunters do for birds and beasts. So the devil shows the bait, but hides the hook: under pleasure he hides the bitterness of its reward and consequences.

II. He implores aid from God against the evil and danger.

1. “I said unto the Lord,” &c. I do not cast away my confidence.

2. “Hear the voice,” &c.

Better to show the ground of his constancy, he declares,—

1. What esteem he had for his God: “Thou art the strength,” &c. My fortification against all my enemies.

2. What he had formerly done for him: “Thou hast covered my head,” &c.

III. The other part of his petition consists in praying against their plots.

1. “Grant not, O Lord,” &c. Let them not have their wishes.

2. “Further not his wicked device,” &c. Give them no prosperity in them.

3. “Lest they exalt themselves,” &c. Triumph in my being conquered by them.

After praying against them, predicts their punishment: “As for the head of those that compass me about,” &c.

1. “Let the mischief of their own lips,” &c.

2. Deal severely with them: “Let burning coals,” &c. Let them suffer extreme punishment: “Let them be cast into the fire,” &c.

3. “Let not an evil speaker,” &c.—a liar, flatterer, &c., “be established in the earth.”

4. “Evil shall hunt,” &c. Give no rest, but pursue the wicked man to his utter ruin; all those who persecute the church, who write their laws in her blood.

IV. To the infliction of punishment on the wicked, he subjoins, by an antithesis, the promise of God for the defence of the righteous, and so concludes.

1. “I know,” &c. Amos certainly persuaded by my own experience, and the example of my forefathers, whom thou hast delivered in their trials and temptations.

2. “That the Lord will maintain,” &c. He may defer his help and deliverance; but he will not take it from them.

And this he confirms and amplifies from the final cause, which is double.

1. That they praise him: "Surely the righteous shall give thanks," &c. Being delivered, they attribute the honour, not to themselves, or their innocency or merit, but give the glory of his grace and love to God alone.
2. That they remain before him in his Church militant and triumphant. That they may "dwell in thy presence," &c. Walk before his face here, dwell in his favour, and enjoy the beatific vision hereafter.

PSALMS

PSALM 141

The psalmist prays that his devotions may be accepted, 1, 2. That he may be enabled so to watch that he do not offend with his tongue; and that he may be preserved from wickedness, 3, 4. His willingness to receive reproof, 5. He complains of disasters, 6, 7. His trust in God, and prayer against his enemies, 8-10.

NOTES ON PSALM 141

This Psalm is generally attributed to *David*, and considered to have been composed during his persecution by Saul. Some suppose that he made it at the time that he formed the resolution to go to *Achish, king of Gath*; see ^{<02701>}**1 Samuel 27:1-3**. It is generally thought to be an *evening prayer*, and has long been used as such in the service of the Greek Church. It is in several places very obscure.

Verse 1. Lord, I cry unto thee] Many of David's Psalms begin with *complaints*; but they are not those of *habitual plaint* and *peevishness*. He was in frequent troubles and difficulties, and he always sought help in God. He ever appears in earnest; at no time is there any evidence that the devotion of David was *formal*. He *prayed, meditated, supplicated, groaned, cried*, and even *roared*, as he tells us, for the disquietude of his soul. He had speedy answers; for he had much *faith*, and was always in *earnest*.

Verse 2. As incense] Incense was offered every morning and evening before the Lord, on the golden altar, before the veil of the sanctuary. ^{<0239>}**Exodus 29:39**, and ^{<02804>}**Numbers 28:4**.

As **the evening sacrifice.**] This was a burnt-offering, accompanied with flour and salt. But it does not appear that David refers to any *sacrifice*, for he uses not **j bz** *zebach*, which is almost universally used for a *slaughtered animal*; but **hj nm** *minchah*, which is generally taken for a *gratitude-offering* or *unbloody sacrifice*. The literal translation of the passage is, "Let my prayer be established for incense before thy faces; and the lifting up of my hands for the evening oblation." The psalmist appears to have been at this time at a distance from the sanctuary, and therefore

could not perform the Divine worship in the way prescribed by the law. What could he do? Why, as he could not worship according to the *letter* of the law, he will worship God according to the *spirit*; then *prayer* is accepted in the place of *incense*; and the *lifting up of his hands, in gratitude and self-dedication* to God, is accepted in the place of the *evening minchah* or *oblation*. Who can deplore the necessity that obliged the psalmist to worship God in this way?

Verse 3. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth] While there are so many spies on my actions and words, I have need to be doubly guarded, that my enemies may have no advantage against me. Some think the prayer is against *impatience*; but if he were now going to Gath, it is more natural to suppose that he was praying to be preserved from *dishonouring the truth*, and from making *sinful concessions* in a heathen land; and at a court where, from his circumstances, it was natural to suppose he might be *tempted to apostasy* by the heathen party. The following verse seems to support this opinion.

Verse 4. Let me eat not of their dainties.] This may refer either to eating things *forbidden by the law*; or to the partaking in *banquets* or *feasts in honour of idols*.

Verse 5. Let the righteous smite me] This verse is extremely difficult in the original. The following translation, in which the *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* nearly agree, appears to me to be the best: “Let the righteous chastise me in mercy, and instruct me: but let not the oil of the wicked anoint my head. It shall not adorn (*yny yani*, from *hwn navah*) my head; for still my prayer shall be against their wicked works.”

The oil of the wicked may here mean his *smooth flattering speeches*; and the psalmist intimates that he would rather suffer the *cutting* reproof of the righteous than the *oily talk* of the flatterer. If this were the case, how few are there now-a-days of his mind! On referring to Bishop *Horsley*, I find his translation is something similar to my own:—

*Let the just one smite me, let the pious remove me.
Let not the ointment of the impious anoint my head.
But still I will intrude in their calamities.*

Verse 6. When their judges are overthrown in stony places] [I s ydyb biyedey sela, “In the hands of the rock.” Does this *rock* signify a *strong* or

fortified place; and its *hands* the *garrison* which have occupied it, by whom these judges were overthrown? If we knew the occasion on which this Psalm was made, we might be the better able to understand the *allusions* in the text.

They shall hear my words; for they are sweet.] Some think there is here an allusion to David's generous treatment of Saul in the cave of En-gedi, and afterwards at the hill of Hachilah, in this verse, which might be translated: "Their judges have been dismissed in the rocky places; and have heard my words, that they were sweet." Or perhaps there may be a reference to the *death of Saul* and his *sons*, and the very disastrous defeat of the Israelites at *Gilboa*. If so, the *seventh* verse will lose its chief difficulty, *Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth*; but if we take them as referring to the *slaughter of the priests at Nob*, then, in stead of translating **לִוַּאֵי יִפְּתִי** *lephi sheol, at the grave's mouth*, we may translate *at the command of Saul*; and then the verse will point out the *manner* in which those servants of the Lord were massacred; *Doeg cut them in pieces; hewed them down* as one cleaveth wood. Some understand all this of the *cruel usage* of the captives in Babylon. I could add other conjectures, and contend for my own; but they are all too vague to form a just ground for decided opinion.

Verse 8. But mine eyes are unto thee] In all times, in all places, on all occasions, I will cleave unto the Lord, and put my whole confidence in him.

Verse 10. Let the wicked fall into their own nets] This is generally the case; those who lay snares for others fall into them themselves. *Harm watch, harm catch*, says the old adage. How many cases have occurred where the spring guns that have been set for thieves have shot some of the family! I have known some dismal cases of this kind, where some of the most amiable lives have been sacrificed to this accursed machine.

Whilst—I withal escape.] They alone are guilty; they alone spread the nets and gins; I am innocent, and God will cause me to escape.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIRST PSALM

The contents and sum of the Psalm are the following:—

I. His prayer, ^{<BEB0>}Psalm 141:1, 2.

II. That God would restrain his tongue, and compose his mind, that through anger or impatience he offend not, ^{<9E108>}**Psalm 141:3, 4.**

III. He prays that if he must be reprov'd, it be by the just, not the unjust man, ^{<9E108>}**Psalm 141:5**; whose judgment he declares, ^{<9E108>}**Psalm 141:5, 6,** and will not have any society with him.

IV. He shows the malice of the wicked to good men, ^{<9E108>}**Psalm 141:6, 7.**

V. He puts his trust in God, and prays to be delivered from snares, ^{<9E108>}**Psalm 141:8-10.**

I. 1. "Lord, I cry unto thee," &c. Speedily hear my prayer, which is fervently and affectionately addressed to thee.

2. "Let my prayer be set forth before thee," &c. Which was offered with the sacrifice. Why does David pray that his prayer might be accepted as the evening rather than the morning sacrifice? Perhaps the evening sacrifice might be more noble, as a figure of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which was in the evening.

II. His second petition is, that God would restrain his tongue, that he might know when to speak and when to be silent. The metaphor is taken from the watch and gate of a city, which, to be safely kept, no one must be suffered to go in or out that ought not. The gate will not be sufficient without the watch; for it will be always shut, or ever open.

His third petition is for his heart, because it is deceitful above all things. Man is weak without the grace of God.

1. "Incline not my heart," &c. Suffer it not to be bent, or set on any evil thing.

2. "Incline not my heart to practices," &c. To do iniquity, being invited by their example.

3. "Let me not eat," &c. Partake with them in their feasts, doctrines, feigned sanctity, power, riches, or dignities.

III. His fourth petition is, that if reprov'd, it may be in the kindness of friendship, not revenge or bitterness.

1. "Let the righteous smite me," &c. Smite with a reproof.

2. "It shall be a kindness," &c. I shall account it an act of charity, and I will love him for it.

3. "And let him reprove me," &c. An excellent oil, to heal my wounds of sin.

IV. His next petition he prefaces thus: "Let my prayer," &c. "When their judges are overthrown," &c., refers to the judicature: the chief seats, authorities, &c., are swallowed up, as men are by the sea; as the ship is dashed against the rock, and broken to pieces.

And this sense the following verse will justify: "Our bones are scattered," &c. They beset me and my company so closely, that we despair of life; and our bones must be scattered here and there in the wilderness, except thou, O Lord, succour us.

V. Therefore he presents his last petition, which has two parts. 1. "But mine eyes are unto thee," &c. 2. "Leave not my soul destitute."

1. For his own safety: "Leave not my soul," &c. Let me not fall into their hands.

2. Which prayer is grounded on his confidence in God: "Mine eyes are unto thee," &c. I depend on and look to thee alone for deliverance.

3. "Keep me from the snares," &c. From their frauds and ambushes.

Lastly, he imprecates confusion on the heads of his enemies.

1. "Let the wicked fall," &c.

2. "Whilst that I withal escape." Pass by or through them unhurt.

PSALMS

PSALM 142

The psalmist, in great distress and difficulty, calls upon God, 1-7.

NOTES ON PSALM 142

The title says, “An Instruction of David,” or a Psalm of David giving instruction; “A Prayer when he was in the cave.”

David was *twice* in great peril in *caves*. 1. At the cave of *Adullam*, when he fled from Achish, king of Gath, ^{<0220>}**1 Samuel 22:1**. 2. When he was in the cave of *En-gedi*, where he had taken refuge from the pursuit of Saul; and the latter, without knowing that David was in it, had gone into it on some necessary occasion, ^{<0240>}**1 Samuel 24:1-3**. If the inscription can be depended on, the *cave of En-gedi* is the most likely of the two, for the scene laid here. But were there doubts concerning the legitimacy of the title, I should refer the Psalm to the state of the captives in Babylon, to which a great part of the Psalms refer. Bishop *Horsley* calls it “A Prayer of the Messiah taken and deserted.” It may be so: but where is the *evidence*, except in the conjectural system of *Origen*.

Verse 1. I cried unto the Lord] See on the *first* verse of the preceding Psalm.

Verse 3. Then thou knewest my path.] When Saul and his army were about the cave in which I was hidden, *thou knewest my path*-that I had then no way of escape but by *miracle*: but thou didst not permit them to *know* that I was wholly in their power.

Verse 4. There was no man, that would know me] This has been applied to the time in which our Lord was deserted by his disciples. As to the case of David in the cave of *En-gedi*, he had no refuge: for what were the handful of men that were with him to Saul and his army?

Verse 5. Thou art my refuge] Even in these most disastrous circumstances, I will put my trust in thee.

Verse 6. I am brought very low] Never was I so near total ruin before.

Deliver me from my persecutors] They are now in full possession of the only means of my escape.

They are stronger than 1.] What am I and my men against this well-appointed armed multitude, with their king at their head.

Verse 7. Bring my soul out of prison] Bring *yvpn naphshi*, my life, out of this *cave* in which it is now *imprisoned*; Saul and his men being in possession of the entrance.

The righteous shall compass me about] *wrtky yachtiru*, they shall crown me; perhaps meaning that the pious Jews, on the death of Saul, would cheerfully join together to make him king, being convinced that God, by his *bountiful dealings with him*, intended that it should be so. The *old Psalter*, which is imperfect from the *twenty-first* verse of Psalm cxix. to the end of Psalm cxli., concludes this Psalm thus: “Lede my saule oute of corruption of my body; that corrupcion is bodely pyne, in whilk my saule is anguyst; after that in Godes house, sal al be louyng (praising) of the.”

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SECOND PSALM

The substance of this Psalm is the earnest prayer of the psalmist that he might be delivered from the danger he was in.

The parts are,—

I. An exordium, in which he—

1. Shows what he did in his trouble; took himself to prayer, ^{<1927b>} **Psalm 142:1, 2.**

2. Then his consternation and anxiety of mind, which arose from the malice and craft of his enemies, and want of help from his friends, ^{<1927b>} **Psalm 142:3, 4.**

II. His address and petition to God, ^{<1927b>} **Psalm 142:5-7.** 1. The two first verses show the psalmist’s intention. “I cried unto the Lord,” &c. 2. “I poured out my supplication,” &c.

This he amplifies,—

1. From his vehemence: “I cried, I supplicated.”

2. From the object: “Unto the Lord.” I invoked him, and no other.

3. From the instrument: "With my voice."
4. From his humility in prayer. It was a *supplication*.
5. From his free and full confession: "I poured out," &c.
6. From his sincerity and confidence in God.

The reason was:—

1. This I did "when my spirit was overwhelmed," &c. There being no sufficiency in me, I betook myself to the all-sufficient God.
2. "For thou knowest my path," &c. My actions and intentions.

The craft and subtlety of his enemies, especially *Saul*.

1. "In the way wherein I walked," &c. My vocation.
2. "Have they privily laid," &c. Saul gave him his daughter *Michal* to be a snare to him; and a dowry he must have of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that David might fall by their hands.

His destitution in the time of trouble.

1. "I looked on my right hand," &c. But no friend was near: "There was no man," &c. The miserable have few friends.
2. "Refuge failed me," &c. I had no place of safety.
3. "No man cared," &c. Regarded my life, or cared if I perished.

II. The psalmist, having no human help, calls upon God.

1. "Thou art my refuge," &c. My hiding-place.
2. "Thou art my portion," &c. While I live in this world.

Then he sends up his prayer, fortified by a double argument.

1. From the lamentable condition he was brought into: "I was brought low," &c.
2. From the malice and power of his enemies: "Deliver me," &c.

Again he renews his prayer, and presses it from the final cause: "Bring my soul," &c.

Upon which follow two effects:—

1. His gratitude: “That I may praise thy name.”
2. That of others: “The righteous shall compass me,” &c. Come unto me.
3. The reason for this: “For thou shalt deal bountifully with me.” Bestow favours upon me, having delivered me from my former miseries; which men seeing, who are commonly the friends of prosperity, will magnify and resort to me.

PSALMS

PSALM 143

The psalmist prays for mercy, and deprecates judgment, 1, 2. His persecutions, 3. His earnest prayer for deliverance, 4-9. Prays for God's quickening Spirit, 10, 11. And for the total discomfiture of his adversaries, 12.

NOTES ON PSALM 143

The *Hebrew* and all the *Versions* attribute this Psalm to *David*; and the *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic* and *Arabic* state that it was composed on the rebellion of his son Absalom: nor is there any thing in the Psalm that positively disagrees with this inscription. This is the last of the seven Psalms styled *penitential*.

Verse 1. In thy faithfulness answer me] Thou hast promised to support me in my difficulties, and, though my children should forsake me, never to withdraw thy loving-kindness from me. See the present unnatural rebellion of my son. Lord, undertake for me!

Verse 2. Enter not into judgment] אַבְוֹתִי לֹא אֶלְטָבוֹ. Do not come into court, either as a *Witness* against me, or as a *Judge*, else I am ruined; for thou hast seen all my ways that they are evil, and thy justice requires thee to punish me. Nor can any soul that has ever lived be justified in the sight of thy justice and righteousness. Had I my desert from thee, I should have worse than even my unnatural son intends me. O what a relief is *Jesus crucified* to a soul in such circumstances!

Verse 3. He hath made me to dwell in darkness] Literally, *in dark places*. This may be understood of David's taking refuge in *caves* and *dens* of the earth, to escape from his persecuting son; yea, even to take refuge in the *tombs*, or *repositories* of the dead.

Verse 4. Therefore is my spirit] I am deeply depressed in spirit, and greatly afflicted in body.

My heart within me is desolate.] It has no companion of its sorrows, no sympathetic friend. I am utterly destitute of comfort.

Verse 5. I remember the days of old] Thou hast often helped me, often delivered me. I will therefore trust in thee, for thy mercy is not clean gone from me.

Verse 6. I stretch forth my hands] This is a natural action. All in distress, or under the influence of *eager desire*, naturally extend their hands and arms, as if to catch at help and obtain succour.

As a thirsty land.] Parched and burned by the sun, longs for rain, so does my thirsty soul for the living God.

Verse 7. Hear me speedily] *rhm maher, make haste* to answer me. A few hours, and my state may be irretrievable. In a short time my unnatural son may put an end to my life.

Verse 8. Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning] This petition was probably offered in the *night-season*. David had despatched his messengers in all directions; and prays to God that he might by the morning get some good news.

Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk] Absalom and his partisans are in possession of all the country. I know not in what direction to go, that I may not fall in with them: point out by thy especial providence the path I should take.

Verse 9. I flee unto thee to hide me.] That I may not be *found* by my enemies, who seek my life to destroy it.

Verse 10. Teach me to do thy will] *Ēnwꝝr retsonecha, thy pleasure*. To be found doing the will of God is the only safe state for man.

Thy Spirit is good] The Author of every *good desire* and *holy purpose*.

Lead me] *Let it lead me* by its continued inspirations and counsels.

Into the land of uprightness.] “Into a right land,” CHALDEE. Into the place where I shall be safe. The old Psalter has, *Thi goste gude sal lede me into rygt lande*.

Verse 11. Quicken me] I am as a dead man, and my hopes are almost dead within me.

Verse 12. And of thy mercy] To *me* and the *kingdom*.

Cut off mine enemies] Who, if they succeed, will destroy the very *form of godliness*. The steps he has already taken show that even *morality* shall have no countenance, if Absalom reign.

I am thy servant.] Whoever is disloyal to me, I will love and serve thee.

For a full explanation of this Psalm, as applied to penitents, see the analysis.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THIRD PSALM

David, being driven from *Jerusalem* by his son *Absalom*, wisely calls to mind his sin, as being the cause of it.

This Psalm has four parts:—

- I. A prayer for remission of sin, grounded on God's promise, <9E30> **Psalm 143:1**; not on his own worthiness, <9E3D> **Psalm 143:2**.
- II. A narration of the sad state of his affairs, <9E3B> **Psalm 143:3, 4**.
- III. The comfort he received in his sad condition, and whence, <9E36> **Psalm 143:5, 6**.
- IV. His petition, containing many particulars and reasons, <9E37> **Psalm 143:7-12**.

I. He prays for audience: "Hear my prayer, O Lord," &c. He does not plainly express the matter he prayed for; but it may be gathered from the context that it was for remission of sin.

1. "In thy faithfulness," &c. Thou art a faithful God, and hast promised to pardon the penitent. I am a penitent; have mercy on me.
2. "And in thy righteousness," &c. Which here signifies mercy, loving-kindness.

This sense appears more plainly from the next verse.

1. "And enter not into judgment," &c. Call me not to a strict account at the bar of thy justice. This he deprecates; so that *Justitia* in the former verse could not be taken for that justice.

2. "For in thy sight," &c. Not I, nor any other man: pardon me, then, for the sake of thy mercy and promise, not my merits.

II. And now he enters upon the narration of his sad condition.

1. "For the enemy hath persecuted," &c. My son Absalom seeks my life: but it was Satan who enticed me to adultery and homicide.
2. "He hath smitten," &c. Humbled me; made me a lover of earth, vile in thy sight.
3. "He hath made me to dwell," &c. After Satan had entangled me with earthly pleasures, I was in spiritual darkness, and saw not the way of life, any more than those who have been long dead.

The effect this darkness produced was fear and consternation.

1. "Therefore is my spirit," &c. I suffered a kind of swoon in my soul; I was ready to faint when I considered thy holiness and my impurity.
2. "My heart within me," &c. Far from comfort in heavy trouble.

III. In this sadness of heart and mind,—

1. "I remember the days of old," &c. Thy past kindness to me and to others.
2. "I meditate," &c. I did not slightly run them over, but pondered on them.

And I derived great profit from my meditation; for,

1. "I stretch forth my hands," &c. I began earnestly to pray to thee.
2. "My soul thirsteth," &c. After thy righteousness, as the dry land wanting water. For as the earth without rain has no consistence, but is pulverized; so the soul not moistened with the grace of God falls on the right and left hand into temptation, and brings forth no fruit to God's glory.

IV. The sad case in which David was, upon a sense of God's indignation, makes him seek out a remedy.

1. "Hear me speedily," &c. And his reason for this is the sad condition in which he was till God was pacified for his sin.
2. "Hide not thy face," &c. Thy presence, thy favour.

His next petition resembles the former in substance.

1. "Cause me to hear," &c. Thy pardoning mercy out of thy word; it is thy Spirit which must work with it to save me.

2. “In the morning,” &c. Betimes, speedily, quickly, &c.

3. His reason: “For in thee do I trust,” &c. I did not let go my hold even in my extremity; but still hoped against hope.

His third petition is—

1. “Cause me to know,” &c. The psalmist, being truly penitent, fears to relapse into his pardoned sin, and prays to God for grace and direction.

2. His reason: “For I lift up my soul,” &c. My purpose, to serve thee.

His fourth petition is—

1. “Deliver me, O Lord,” &c. From the devil and all his temptations.

2. His reason: “I flee unto thee,” &c. From them.

His fifth petition resembles his third.

1. “Teach me to do thy will,” &c. Both by an active and passive obedience may I know thy will perfectly; in adversity, to submit to it; in prosperity, to do it without pride or presumption.

2. His reason: “For thou art my God.” Who hast promised me thy help; and from whom all my good proceeds, being and well-being.

His sixth petition: “Thy Spirit is good.” Not mine. Let then thy good Spirit instruct and lead me in the right way.

His seventh petition is—

1. “Quicken me, O Lord,” &c. Restore life; justify me fully.

2. “For thy name’s sake.” Not my merits, but thy mercy, and the glory that will accrue to thy name in pardoning a penitent soul.

3. He goes on: “For thy righteousness’ sake,” &c. Freedom he desires; but still at the hands of God’s infinite mercy.

His last petition is for the destruction of Satan’s kingdom.

1. “Of thy mercy cut off mine enemies,” &c.

2. His reason: “For I am thy servant,” &c. A follower; one under thy patronage and protection; one of thy family honoured with the dignity of

being thy servant, and well contented and pleased to perform my duty and service.

PSALMS

PSALM 144

The psalmist praises God for his goodness, 1, 2. Exclamations relative to the vanity of human life, 3, 4. He prays against his enemies, 5-8; and extols God's mercy for the temporal blessings enjoyed by his people, 9-15.

NOTES ON PSALM 144

The *Hebrew*, and all the *Versions*, attribute this Psalm to *David*. The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, term it, *A Psalm of David against Goliath*. The *Syriac* says, "A Psalm of David when he slew Asaph, the brother of Goliath." *Calmet* thinks, and with much probability, that it was composed by David after the death of Absalom, and the restoration of the kingdom to peace and tranquillity. From a collation of this with ^{<19180>}**Psalm 18:1-50**, of which it appears to be an *abridgment*, preserving the same ideas, and the same forms of expression, there can be no doubt of both having proceeded from the same pen, and that David was the author. There is scarcely an expression here of peculiar importance that is not found in the prototype; and for *explanation* I must refer generally to the above Psalm.

Verse 1. Teacheth my hands to war] To use *sword, battle-axe, or spear.*

And my fingers to fight] To use the *bow and arrows, and the sling.*

Verse 2. Who subdueth my people] Who has once more reduced the nation to a state of loyal obedience. This may refer to the peace after the rebellion of Absalom.

Verse 3. Lord, what is man] See *Clarke's notes* on "^{<19084>}**Psalm 8:4**"; "^{<19085>}**Psalm 8:5**". *What is Adam, that thou approvest of him? Can he do any thing worthy of thy notice? Or the son of feeble perishing man, that thou shouldest hold him in repute? What care, love, and attention, dost thou lavish upon him!*

Verse 4. Man is like to vanity] *hmd l bhl ꝑda Adam lahebel damah,* literally, *Adam is like to Abel*, exposed to the same miseries, accidents, and murderers; for in millions of cases the hands of brothers are lifted up to

shed the blood of brothers. What are wars but fratricide in the great human family?

His days are as a shadow] The life of *Abel* was promissory of much blessedness; but it afforded merely the *shadow* of *happiness*. He was pure and holy, beloved of his parents, and beloved of God; but, becoming the object of his brother's envy, his life became a sacrifice to his piety.

Verse 5. Bow thy heavens] See Clarke's note on "^{<1918D>}Psalm 18:9".

Verse 6. Cast forth lightning] See Clarke's note, "^{<1918I3>}Psalm 18:13"; "^{<1918I4>}Psalm 18:14".

Verse 7. Deliver me out of great waters] See Clarke's note, "^{<1918I6>}Psalm 18:16".

Verse 9. I will sing a new song] A song of peculiar excellence. I will pour forth all my gratitude, and all my *skill*, on its composition. See on ^{<1932>}Psalm 33:2, 3.

Verse 10. He that giveth salvation unto kings] *Monarchy*, in the principle, is from God: it is that *form of government* which, in the course of the Divine providence, has principally prevailed; and that which, on the whole, has been most beneficial to mankind. God, therefore, has it under his peculiar protection. It is by him that kings reign; and by his special providence they are protected.

Verse 12. That our sons may be as plants] God had promised to his people, being faithful, THREE *descriptions* of BLESSINGS, ^{<1520I>}Deuteronomy 28:4. 1. The *fruit of the body*—sons and daughters. 2. The *fruits of the ground*—grass and corn in sufficient plenty. 3. *Fruit of the cattle*—"the increase of kine, and flocks of sheep." These are the blessings to which the psalmist refers here, as those in which he might at present exult and triumph: blessings *actually enjoyed* by his people at large; proofs of his mild and paternal government, and of the especial blessing of the Almighty. The people who *were in such a state*, and revolted, had no excuse: they were doubly guilty, as ungrateful both to *God* and *man*.

Verse 13. That our garners, &c.] Our *garners are full*. These are not prayers put up by David *for such blessings*: but *assertions*, that such blessings were actually in possession. All these expressions should be understood in the *present tense*.

Ten thousands in our streets.] wnytxj b *bechutsotheynu* should be translated in our *pens* or *sheep-walks*; for *sheep bringing forth* in the *streets* of cities or towns is absurd.

Verse 14. Our oxen may be strong to labour] We have not only an abundance of cattle; but they are of the most strong and vigorous breed.

No breaking in] So well ordered is the *police* of the kingdom, that there are no depredations, no robbers, house-breakers, or marauding parties, in the land; no sudden incursions of neighbouring tribes or banditti breaking into fields or houses, carrying away property, and taking with them the people to sell them into captivity: there is no such *breaking in*, and no such *going out*, in the nation. My *enemies* are either become *friends*, and are united with me in political interests; or are, *through fear*, obliged to *stand aloof*.

Verse 15. Happy is that people] “O how happy are the people!” Such were his people; and they had not only all this secular happiness, but they had *Jehovah for their God*; and in him had a ceaseless fountain of strength, protection, earthly blessings, and eternal mercies! A people in such a case to rebel, must have the curse of God and man.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOURTH PSALM

This Psalm is divided into *three* parts:—

- I. A thanksgiving, ^{<1930>} **Psalm 144:1-5.**
- II. A petition, ^{<1930>} **Psalm 144:5-11.**
- III. A discussion on happiness, and in what it consists, ^{<1942>} **Psalm 144:12-15.**

I. The prophet gives thanks, and praises God.

1. “Blessed be the Lord:” &c. Who has taught me in a general way the art of war, in a particular way the use of the sling; giving me skill, &c.
2. “He is my strength,” &c. The strength I have is from him.
3. “My goodness,” &c. Benignity or mercy.
4. “My fortress,” &c. To him I fly as to a stronghold.
5. “And my Deliverer.” Therefore will I trust in him.

From the consideration of so many benefits, the psalmist exclaims, “Lord what is man,” &c.

To which question he replies,—

1. “Man is like to vanity.” If God be not his fulness and strength.
2. “His days,” &c. God is always the same; but man changes every moment.

II. He prays for God’s assistance: “Bow thy heavens,” &c. “Cast forth lightning,” &c. If men will not acknowledge thy mercy, let them see thy judgments. This first part of his petition against his enemies being ended, he prays,—

1. “Rid me, and deliver me:” &c. From dangers of men.
2. “From the hand of strange children:” &c. Moabites, Philistines, &c.

Upon whom he sets these two characters.

1. “Whose mouth speaketh vanity:” &c. Lies, insincere words.
2. “At their right hand:” &c. They use their power to oppress and deceive.

Then the psalmist exclaims, as in a short hymn—

1. “I will sing a new song,” &c. And this I will do because “thou hast given victory,” &c. “Thou hast delivered David,” &c., from Saul, Absalom, &c.
2. And then he repeats, and concludes his petition as before: “Rid me,” &c.

III. His petition being ended, he discourses on the nature of happiness, which is of two kinds, temporal and spiritual. The addition of temporal blessings is pleasant, and promised to the obedient: but godliness is the only safety in this, and especially in the life to come: “For godliness,” &c. God created temporal goods not merely for the wicked; they are often the rewards of piety. The psalmist therefore prays,—

1. “That our sons,” &c. They are the pillars of a house; let them be flourishing.
2. “That our daughters,” &c. Stones that join the building, beautiful as well as useful.
3. “That our garners may be full,” &c. That we may have abundance.

4. "That our sheep," &c. Our flocks' increase.
5. "That our oxen," &c. May be healthy and strong.
6. "That there be no breaking," &c. No plundering among us.
7. "That there be no complaining," &c. No want of bread, or any cause of tumult. David prays that, during his reign, the people may be happy, and enjoy the fruits of peace.

Then he concludes the Psalm with this acclamation:—

1. "Happy is that people," &c. Those he has described.
2. "Yea, happy," &c. That have the true God for their God; who know God to be their Father, and that he takes care of them, providing for their temporal necessities, and supplying all their spiritual wants. Others understand these words, not as prayers, but as a description of the state *David* and his people were then in. See the notes.

PSALMS

PSALM 145

God is praised for his unsearchable greatness, 1, 2; for his majesty and terrible acts, 3, 6; for his goodness and tender mercies to all, 7-9; for his power and kingdom, 10-13; for his kindness to the distressed, 14; for his providence, 15-17. He hears and answers prayer, 18-20. All should praise him, 21.

NOTES ON PSALM 145.

This Psalm is attributed to *David* by the *Hebrew* and all the *Versions*. It is the last of the *acrostic* Psalms; and should contain twenty-two verses, as answering to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; but the verse between the thirteenth and fourteenth, beginning with the letter *n nun*, is lost out of the present Hebrew copies; but a translation of it is found in the *Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon*. See below. It is an incomparable Psalm of praise; and the rabbins have it in such high estimation, that they assert, if a man with sincerity of heart repeat it three times a-day, he shall infallibly enjoy the blessings of the world to come. It does not appear on what particular occasion it was composed; or, indeed, whether there was any occasion but gratitude to God for his ineffable favours to mankind.

Verse 1. I will extol thee] I will raise thee on high, I will lift thee up.

I will bless thy name] *d[w μl w[l leolam vaed, for ever and onward*, in this and the coming world. This sort of expressions, which are very difficult to be translated, are on the whole well expressed by those words, in a hymn of Mr. Addison:—

*Through all eternity to thee
A joyful song I'll raise;
But O, eternity's too short
To utter all thy praise!*

This contains a strong *hyperbole*; but allowable in such cases.

Verse 3. His greatness is unsearchable.] Literally, *To his mightinesses there is no investigation*. All in God is *unlimited* and *eternal*.

Verse 4. One generation] Thy *creating* and *redeeming* acts are recorded in thy *word*; but thy *wondrous providential dealings* with mankind must be handed down by tradition, from generation to generation; for they are in continual occurrence, and consequently innumerable.

Verse 8. The Lord is gracious] His holy nature is ever *disposed* to show favour.

Full of compassion] Wherever he sees misery, his eye affects his heart.

Slow to anger] When there is even the *greatest provocation*.

Of great mercy.] Great in his *abundant mercy*. These *four* things give us a wonderful display of the goodness of the Divine nature.

Verse 9. The Lord is good to all] There is not a soul out of hell that is not continually under his *most merciful regards*; so far is he from *willing* or *decreeing before their creation* the damnation of any man.

His tender mercies] His *bowels of compassion* are over all his works; he feels for his intelligent offspring, as the most *affectionate mother* does for the child of her own bosom. And through this matchless mercy, these bowels of compassion, his son Jesus tasted death for every man. How far is all that is here spoken of the nature of God opposed to the Molochian doctrine of the eternal decree of reprobation!

*“His grace for every soul is free:
For his, who forged the dire decree;
For every reprobate and me.”*

Verse 10. All thy works shall praise thee] Whom? The God *who is good to all*.

Thy saints] Ĕydysj *chasideycha*, thy *compassionate ones*; those who are partakers of thy *great mercy*, ^{<1958>} **Psalm 145:8**. These shall *bless thee*, because they know, they *feel*, that thou wilt the salvation of all. The dark, the gloomy, the hard-hearted, the narrow-minded bigots, who never have had thy love shed abroad in their hearts, can unfeelingly deal in the damnation of their fellows.

Verse 12. To make known] They delight to recommend their God and Father to others.

Verse 13. Thy dominion endureth] There is neither age nor people in and over which God does not manifest his *benignly ruling* power. As the above verse begins with the letter **m mem**, the next in the order of the alphabet should begin with **n nun**: but that verse is totally wanting. To say it never was in, is false, because the alphabet is not complete without it; and it is an unanswerable argument to prove the careless manner in which the Jews have preserved the Divine records. Though the *Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon*, have a verse, not in the Hebrew text, that answers to the **n nun**, which is found in no printed copy of the Hebrew Bible; yet one MS., now in Trinity College, Dublin, has it thus, I suppose by correction, in the bottom of the page:—

wyc[m I kb dysj w wyrbd I kb hwhy ^man

Neeman Yehovah bechol debaraiv; vechasid bechol maasaiv.

“The Lord is faithful in all his words; and merciful in all his works.”

Πιστος Κυριος εν τοις λογοις αυτου, και οσιος εν πασι τιος
εργοις αυτου. —SEPTUAGINT.

*Fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis;
et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis.*

—VULGATE.

These two Versions, the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate*, are the same with the Hebrew given above. The *Anglo-Saxon* is the same:—

[Anglo-Saxon]. “True Lord in all words his, and holy in all works his.”

The *Latin* text in my old Psalter is the same with the present printed *Vulgate*: “Fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis, et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis.” Thus translated in the same MSS.: *Loorde true in all his words: and holy in al his workes.*

It is remarkable that the whole verse is wanting in the *Vulgate*, as published in the *Complutensian Polyglot*, as also the *Antwerp* and *Paris Polyglots*, which were taken from it. It is wanting also in the Polyglot Psalter of *Porus*, because he did not find it in the Hebrew text.

Verse 14. The Lord upholdeth all that fall] **μυλ ρη** *nophelim*, the *falling*, or those who are not able to keep their feet; the weak. He *shores*

them up; he is their *prop*. No man falls through his own weakness *merely*; if he rely on God, the strongest foe cannot shake him.

Verse 15. The eyes of all wait upon thee] What a fine figure! The *young* of all animals look up to *their parents for food*. God is here represented as the *universal Father*, providing food for every living creature.

In due season] The kind of food that is suited to every animal, and to all the *stages of life* in *each animal*. This is a wonderful mystery. It is a fact that all are thus provided for; but *how* is it done? All expect it from God, and not one is disappointed! For,

Verse 16. Thou openest thine hand] What a hand is this that holds in it all the food that meets the desires and necessities of the universe of creatures! A very large volume might be written upon this: The proper kinds of food for the various classes of animals.

Verse 17. The Lord is righteous] It was the similarity of *this* to the omitted verse, which should have been the *fourteenth*, that caused *it* to be omitted.

Verse 18. The Lord is nigh] Whoever calls upon God in truth, with a sincere and upright heart, one that *truly desires* his salvation, to that person *God is nigh*. The following verse shows he is not only *near* to praying people, but 1. He will *hear their cry*. 2. *Fulfil their desires*. 3. *Save them*. Reader, lift up thy soul in prayer to this merciful God.

Verse 20. The Lord preserveth] He is the keeper of all them that love him.

But all the wicked will he destroy.] They call not upon him; they fight against him, and he will confound and destroy them. There is something curious in the **rmv** *shomer*, the keeper or guardian of the pious; he is **dymv** *shamid*, the destroyer of the wicked. The first word implies he is continually keeping them; the second, that he *causes* the others to be *destroyed*.

Verse 21. Let all flesh bless his holy name] He is good to all, wants to save all, actually feeds and preserves all. And as near as **rmv** *shamar* is to **dmv** *shamad*, so near is he a *Saviour* to those who stand on the brink of *destruction*, if they will look to him.

For the application of all this Psalm to the Church of Christ, see the *analysis*.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIFTH PSALM

This hymn is most excellent, both as it regards matter and style. The matter is praise to God; the style, the Hebrew alphabet, the better to assist our memories in recording God's praise.

This Psalm contains,—

- I. A proem, or protestation to praise God, ^{<1950>}**Psalm 145:1, 2.**
- II. A celebration of Divine praises through the whole Psalm, from these arguments:—

I. From the greatness of God, ^{<1953>}**Psalm 145:3.**

II. From his wonderful works, ^{<1954>}**Psalm 145:4**, which he distinguishes under the following heads:—

1. They are glorious and beautiful, majestic and wonderful, ^{<1955>}**Psalm 145:5.**

2. Marvellous, and full of terror, ^{<1956>}**Psalm 145:6.**

3. Amiable, and full of goodness, ^{<1957>}**Psalm 145:7-9.** But all wonderful.

III. From his kingdom, and government of it, and in it, ^{<1958>}**Psalm 145:10-21.**

IV. A conclusion, ^{<1959>}**Psalm 145:21**, in which he performs his protestation of praising God.

I. In the two first verses the psalmist acquaints us what he will do with the whole.

1. "I will extol, I will bless, I will praise."

2. "Thee, my God, my King." I am thy servant, though an earthly king.

3. "Every day," &c. No day shall pass without my praising thee.

4. "For ever and ever." I shall now begin, and a succession of men will continue to hymn and praise thee till the consummation of all things.

II. The first thing he praises God for is his essence. *Great.*

I. “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.” Of course this follows:—

“And his greatness is unsearchable.” Past our weak capacity to comprehend; higher than the heavens, deeper than hell, having no end. Or if *great* here refer to him as King, then in respect to the extension of his empire over every living creature, he is *great*; he rules over the hearts of the children of men, over their thoughts and affections, and nothing is hidden from his sight.

II. From the essence of God the psalmist passes to his works and effects, which yet set forth his praise: “One generation shall praise,” &c. Each age is an eyewitness of thy mighty acts and mercy. From a general consideration of these works he then particularizes:—

1. “For the heavens declare,” &c. The sun, moon, and stars, in their splendour, magnitude, and perpetual motion, show forth God’s honour and majesty.

2. A second kind of works are the terrible acts of his justice, such as the deluge, the fire of Sodom, Pharaoh’s overthrow in the Red Sea, the earth opening to swallow up *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*.

Then there follow his acts of love and mercy, spoken of at large.

1. “Thy great works shall abundantly utter,” &c. Thy bounty shall make all generations eloquent in thy praise, *and shall sing of thy righteousness*, in exhibiting thy promised blessings, in bestowing temporal benefits; but above all, in the gifts of thy grace:—In the incarnation, passion, resurrection, ascension, the coming of the Holy Ghost, calling of the Gentiles, justification, sanctification, and eternal life; for all these, and each of them, men shall abundantly utter thy righteousness.

2. “The Lord is gracious,” &c.

3. “The Lord is good to all,” &c.

4. “His tender mercies are over,” &c. Even to the most wicked, God gives time and opportunity for repentance, before he cuts them off.

III. The prophet having sung of God’s great works in glory, terror, and mercy, now adds, “All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord.” And now he begins a new matter, the erection of his peculiar kingdom in his Church: “A peculiar people,” &c. His saints. These will continue to mark thy wonders,

and sing to thy glory: these, *thy saints, shall bless thee* for all and in all thy acts. “They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom,” &c. “To make known to the sons of men,” &c. “Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,” &c. Now the power and glory of Christ’s kingdom differ in a fourfold manner from that of the sons of men.

1. The kings on earth require obedience from their subjects; they exact subsidies, tributes, taxes, &c.
2. Earthly kings glory in their power, and rejoice in their dignity; but their crown is full of thorns, anxiety, care, &c.
3. Earthly kings reign but for a time, Christ for ever. 1. “They shall speak of the glory,” &c. Excelling all others. 2. “To make known,” &c. Thy acts far beyond theirs 3. “Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,” &c. Not so theirs.

The prophet having described Christ’s kingdom, begins to extol the qualities and virtues of a good king, which agrees with Christ.

I. His *veracity*.

II. His *probity*: “The Lord is faithful,” &c.

III. This is another quality of a good king, so to govern his subjects that they fall not, or to raise them if fallen. Christ sustains and upholds his people, or restores them if they fall from him and return by repentance to him; this was exemplified in *David, Peter, the prodigal, &c.* “The eyes of all,” &c. “Thou openest thine hand,” &c.

IV. Liberality and bounty are excellent qualities in a king who cares for his subjects, and may properly be applied to Christ, who provides for his Church in all things. And—

1. “The eyes of all wait upon thee.” In expectation.
2. “And thou givest,” &c. It is a gift, not a debt.
3. “Their meat.” Every thing fit for them.
4. “In due season.” When fit and necessary.
5. “Thou openest thine hand.” Givest bountifully.
6. “And satisfiest,” &c. The covetous always want; content is from God.

7. “The desire of every living thing,” &c. “The Lord is righteous,” &c.

V. This is another virtue of a good king, and refers to Christ. “The Lord is nigh unto all them,” &c.

VI. This is the sixth quality of a good king, to show himself ready of access to all who implore his aid.

1. *Faith*. For he that prays without it will not be answered.

2. *Hope and confidence*. He prays not seriously who hopes not to be heard.

3. *Love*. No man prays who hates God.

4. *Desire*. Nor that desires not to obtain.

5. *Attention and intention*, without which prayer is idle. “The Lord will fulfil,” &c.

VII. The seventh quality of a good king is to grant petitions.

1. “He will fulfil,” &c. But with limitation: “So they fear him.”

2. “He also will hear their cry.” When it is earnest and sincere.

3. “And will save them:” “The Lord preserveth all them,” &c.

VIII. The eighth quality of a good king is to spare the humble and destroy the proud. *Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos*.—VIRGIL. Which Christ will do; he preserves his martyrs in patience, and then receives them into glory.

IV. The conclusion is an acclamation, and answers to the beginning of the Psalm.

1. “My mouth shall speak,” &c. This will I do while I live.

2. “And let all flesh,” &c. And let all follow his example in giving due praise to this bountiful God.

PSALMS

PSALM 146

The psalmist, full of gratitude, purposes to praise God for ever, 1, 2; and exhorts not to trust in man, not even the most powerful; for which he gives his reasons, 3, 4. The great advantage of trusting in God, 5. The mercies which they who trust in God may expect, 6-9. The Divine government is everlasting, 10.

NOTES ON PSALM 146

This is the first of the Psalms called *Hallelujah* Psalms, of which there are *five*, and which conclude the book. No author's name is prefixed to this, either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*. But the *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, attribute it to *Haggai* and *Zechariah*. It was probably written after the captivity, and may refer to the time when Cyrus, prejudiced by the enemies of the Jews, withdrew his order for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, to which revocation of the royal edict the *third* verse may refer: *Put not your trust in princes, &c.*

Verse 2. While I live will I praise] The true feeling of a heart overpowered with a sense of God's goodness.

While I have any being.] ydw[b beodi, in my continuance, in my progression, my eternal existence. This is very expressive.

Verse 3. Put not your trust in princes] This may refer, as has been stated above, to Cyrus, who had revoked his edict for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Perhaps they had begun to suppose that they were about to owe their deliverance to the Persian king. God permitted this change in the disposition of the king, to teach them the *vanity of confidence in men*, and the necessity of *trusting in himself*.

Verse 4. His breath goeth forth] His existence depends merely, under God, on the *air* he breathes. When he ceases to *respire* he ceases to *live*; his body from that moment begins to claim its affinity to the earth; and all his thoughts, purposes, and projects, whether good or evil, come to nought and *perish*. He, then, who has no other dependence, must necessarily be *miserable*.

Verse 5. Happy is he **that hath the God of Jacob for his help**] While he that trusts in man is *miserable*, he that trusts in God is *happy*. *In the son of man, ׀da ׀b ben Adam, there is no help, h[wvt teshuah, no saving principle.* Every son of Adam naturally comes into the world without this, and must continue so till the *Lord open the eyes of the blind,* ^{<19318>} **Psalm 146:8**; but a measure of light is given from that true Light which *lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* This son of Adam returns to his earth, **wmdal leadmatho,** to the ground, from which he was taken; this refers directly to ^{<0037>} **Genesis 2:7; 3:19.** But he that has the God for his help who helped *Jacob* in his distress, and was with him, and sustained him in and through all adversities, can never be destitute; for this God *changes not*; he lives for ever, and his projects cannot perish. He has *purposed* that Israel shall be delivered from this captivity. *Cyrus may change, but God will not; trust therefore in HIM.* He has all power; he *made heaven and earth*; he has them under his government and at his disposal; and should earth itself fail, *heaven endures.* And he keeps his *truth for ever*; and therefore his promises must be fulfilled to them that trust in him. *Fear not.*

Verse 7. Which executeth judgment for the oppressed] For those who suffer by violence or *calumny*. This may refer to the Israelites, who suffered much by *oppression* from the *Babylonians*, and by *calumny* from the *Samaritans*, &c., who had prejudiced the king of Persia against them.

Giving food to the hungry.] No doubt he fed the poor captives by many displays of his peculiar providence.

The Lord looseth the prisoners] And as he has sustained you so long *under* your captivity, so will he bring you *out* of it.

Verse 8. Openeth the eyes of the blind] He brings us out of our prison-house, from the *shadow of death*, and *opens our eyes* that we may behold the *free light* of the day. And it is the Lord only that can open the eyes of any son of Adam, and give him to see his wretchedness, and where help and salvation may be found.

Raiseth them that are bowed down] Through a sense of their guilt and sinfulness.

The Lord loveth the righteous] These he makes partakers of a *Divine nature*; and he loves those who bear his own image.

Verse 9. Preserveth the strangers] He has *preserved you strangers* in a strange land, where you have been in captivity for *seventy* years; and though in an *enemy's country*, he has provided for the *widows* and *orphans* as amply as if he had been in the promised land.

The way of the wicked he turneth upside down.] He *subverts, turns aside*. They shall not do all the wickedness they wish; they shall not do all that is in their power. In their career he will either *stop* them, turn them *aside*, or *overturn* them.

Verse 10. The Lord shall reign for ever] Therefore he can never fail; and he is *thy God, O Zion*. Hitherto he has helped *you* and your *fathers*; and has extended that help from *generation to generation*. Therefore trust in him and bless the Lord.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH PSALM

The subject of this Psalm is the same with the former.

It is divided into *four* parts:—

- I. An exhortation to praise God, ^{<1980>}**Psalm 146:1**. Which the psalmist resolves to do, ^{<1981>}**Psalm 146:2**.
- II. A dehortation from confidence in man, ^{<1982>}**Psalm 146:3, 4**.
- III. He pronounces them happy who trust in God, ^{<1983>}**Psalm 146:5**.
- IV. And to persuade to this he uses every reason, ^{<1984>}**Psalm 146:6-10**.

I. He begins with a dialogism.

1. “He speaks to all: “Praise ye the Lord.”

2. Then by an apostrophe he turns to himself: “Praise the Lord, O my soul.”

3. And his soul answers: “While I live,” &c. While I am, while I shall be.

II. But the prophet, for fear men should trust too much in the great, and not rely wholly upon God, exhorts them: “Put not your trust in princes,” &c.

He gives his reasons for the warning:—

1. Because of their impotency: “There is no help in them,” &c.

2. Because of their mortality: “Their breath goeth forth,” &c.

III. If a man will be happy, the prophet shows him that he must rely upon God alone; for,

1. “Happy is he that hath,” &c. Him in whom *Jacob* trusted.

2. “And whose hope,” &c. Not in short-lived man.

And this he confirms by many reasons:—

I. From his omnipotence: “He is God the Creator,” &c.

II. From his veracity: “Who keeps truth for ever,” &c. His word is passed for our protection, and he can and will keep it.

III. From his justice: “He executeth judgment,” &c.

IV. From his mercy.

1. “He giveth food,” &c. Relieves men in their necessities.

2. “The Lord looseth the prisoner.” Another act of grace, again.

3. “The Lord openeth the eyes,” &c. Whether spiritually or corporeally.

4. “The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down,” &c. By sin or misery.

V. From his love: “The Lord loveth,” &c. Of which the effects are:—

1. “The Lord preserveth,” &c.

2. “He delivereth the fatherless,” &c.

3. But the ungodly find a far different effect: “But the way of the wicked,” &c. He makes their glory to perish utterly.

PSALMS

PSALM 147

The psalmist praises God for his goodness to Jerusalem, 1-3; shows his great mercy to them that trust in him, 4-6; he extols him for his mercies, and providential kindness, 7-11; for his defence of Jerusalem, 12-15; For his wonders in the seasons, 16-18; and his word unto Jacob, 19, 20.

NOTES ON PSALM 147

This Psalm, which is without *title* in the *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, and *Vulgate*, is attributed by the other *Versions* to *Haggai* and *Zechariah*. It was probably penned after the captivity, when the Jews were busily employed in *rebuilding Jerusalem*, as may be gathered from the *second* and *thirteenth* verses. It may be necessary to remark that all the *Versions*, except the *Chaldee*, divide this Psalm at the end of the *eleventh* verse, and begin a new Psalm at the *twelfth*. By this division the numbers of the Psalms agree in the *Versions* with the *Hebrew*; the former having been, till now, *one behind*.

Verse 1. Praise is comely.] It is decent, befitting, and proper that every intelligent creature should acknowledge the Supreme Being: and as he does nothing *but good* to the children of men, so they should *speak good of his name*.

Verse 2. The Lord doth build up] The psalmist appears to see the *walls* rising under his eye, because the *outcasts of Israel*, those who had been in *captivity*, are now *gathered together* to do the work.

Verse 3. He healeth the broken in heart] *yrwbv*, *the shivered* in heart. From the root *rbv shabar*, to *break in pieces*, we have our word *shiver*, to break into *splinters*, into *shivers*. The heart broken in pieces by a sense of God's displeasure.

Verse 4. He telleth the number of the stars] He whose knowledge is so exact as to tell every star in heaven, can be under no difficulty to find out and collect all the scattered exiles of Israel.

Verse 5. His understanding is infinite.] To his intelligence there is no number: though he numbers the stars, his understanding is without number. It is infinite; therefore, he can know, as he can do, all things.

Verse 6. The Lord lifteth up the meek] The humbled, the afflicted.

Verse 7. Sing unto the Lord] *wn* [*enu*, sing a responsive song, sing in parts, answer one another.

Verse 8. Who covereth the heaven with clouds] Collects the vapours together, in order to cause it to rain upon the earth. Even the direction of the winds, the collection of the clouds, and the descent of the rain, are under the especial management of God. These things form a part of his providential management of the world.

Maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.] After this clause the Vulgate, the Septuagint, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon, add, and herb for the service of man. It appears that a hemistich, or half-line, has been lost from the Hebrew text; which, according to the above Versions, must have stood thus: *µdah tdb[I bc[w veeseb laabodath haadam*, as in ^{<19414>} Psalm 104:14: “And herbage for the service of mankind.”

Verse 10. He delighteth not] The horse, among all animals, is most delighted in by man for beauty, strength, and fleetness. And a man's legs, if well proportioned, are more admired than even the finest features of his face. Though God has made these, yet they are not his peculiar delight.

Verse 11. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him] That are truly religious.

In those that hope is his mercy.] Who are just beginning to seek the salvation of their souls. Even the cry of the penitent is pleasing in the ear of the Lord. With this verse the hundred and forty-sixth Psalm ends in all the Versions, except the Chaldee. And the hundred and forty-seventh commences with the 12th verse. I believe these to be two distinct Psalms. The subjects of them are not exactly the same, though something similar; and they plainly refer to different periods.

Verse 13. He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates] He has enabled thee to complete the walls of Jerusalem. From the former part of the Psalm it appears the walls were then in progress; from this part, they appear to be completed, and provisions to be brought into the city, to support its

inhabitants. The *gates* were set up and well secured by *bars*, so that the grain, &c., was in safety.

Verse 14. He maketh peace] They were now no longer troubled with the Samaritans, Moabites, &c.

Verse 15. He sendeth forth his commandment] His substantial word. It is here personified, *armym meymra*, Chaldee; and appears to be a very active agent running every where, and performing the purposes of his will.

Verse 16. He giveth snow like wool] Falling down in large flakes; and in this state nothing in nature has a nearer resemblance to fine white *wool*.

Scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.] Spreading it over the whole face of nature.

Verse 17. He casteth forth his ice] *wj r̄q korcho*, (probably *hailstones*,) like crumbs.

Who can stand before his cold?] At particular times the cold in the *east* is so very intense as to kill man and beast. *Jacobus de Vitriaco*, one of the writers in the *Gesta Dei per Francos*, says, that in an expedition in which he was engaged against Mount Tabor, on the 24th of December, the cold was so intense that many of the poor people, and the beasts of burden, died by it. And *Albertus Aquensis*, another of these writers, speaking of the cold in Judea, says, that *thirty* of the people who attended Baldwin I. in the mountainous districts near the Dead Sea, were killed by it; and that in that expedition they had to contend with horrible hail and ice, with unheard-of snow and rain. From this we find that the winters are often very severe in Judea; and in such cases as the above, we may well call out, “Who can stand against his cold!”

Verse 18. He sendeth out his word] He gives a command: the *south wind* blows; the *thaw* takes place; and the *ice* and *snow* being liquefied, the *waters flow*, where before they were bound up by the ice.

Verse 19. He showeth his word unto Jacob] To no nation of the world beside had God given a revelation of his will.

Verse 20. And as for his judgments] The wondrous ordinances of his law, no nation had known them; and consequently, did not know the glorious things in futurity to which they referred.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVENTH PSALM

The parts of this Psalm are *two*:—

I. An exhortation to praise God, ^{<19E70>}**Psalm 147:1**, which is repeated, ^{<19E70>}**Psalm 147:7, 12**.

II. The arguments to persuade to it: God's bounty, wisdom, power, providence, justice, and mercy, dwelt on through the whole Psalm.

I. The exhortation is briefly proposed, "Praise the Lord." Which the prophet, as the chanter of the choir, begins; and then more fully repeats, "Sing unto the Lord," &c. And again "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," &c., ^{<19E712>}**Psalm 147:12**, where the *Arabic*, *Greek*, and *Latin* translators begin a new Psalm: but in the *Hebrew* they are conjoined, and form but one hymn.

The prophet, having ended his exhortation, adds his reasons for it.

1. It is pleasant and becoming.

2. His bounty in building *Jerusalem*, and bringing back the dispersed, ^{<19E702>}**Psalm 147:2**. In comforting the distressed, ^{<19E703>}**Psalm 147:3**. For his wisdom, ^{<19E704>}**Psalm 147:4**. For his power, ^{<19E705>}**Psalm 147:5**. For his mercy and justice, ^{<19E706>}**Psalm 147:6**.

His first arguments are drawn from the thing itself.

I. Good: "For it is good," &c.

For many reasons this may be called *good*.

1. For it is God's command, and must not be neglected.

2. It elevates the heart from earth to heaven.

3. Good again, because we are bound to it by obligations.

II. "To praise God is pleasant."

1. Because it proceeds from love.

2. Because it is pleasant to perform our duty, and the end of our creation.

3. Because God is pleased with it: "He that offereth me praise, glorifieth me," &c.

4. Because God is pleased with the virtues of faith, hope, charity, humility, devotion, &c., of which praise is the effect.

III. "It is comely." There is no sin greater than that of ingratitude.

These are the first arguments the prophet uses, and they are drawn from the nature of the thing itself: they may apply to all ages of the Church.

He dwells upon the deliverance of *Israel* from captivity.

1. "The Lord doth build up" his Church, the seat of his sanctuary. He hath restored our policy and religion.

2. "He gathereth together," &c. The banished and scattered ones; the Gentiles.

3. "He healeth the broken in heart," &c. Oppressed by captivity or sin.

4. "And bindeth up," &c. Like a good surgeon.

The second argument is drawn from his *wisdom*.

1. "He telleth the number of the stars," &c. A thing to man impossible,

2. "He calleth them," &c. They are his army, and he knows them.

By the stars in this place some understand God's saints.

1. The stars are infinite in number. So are the saints.

2. Among them are planets. Saints have their circuits; and always revolve round him, the Sun of righteousness.

3. The stars shine clearest in the night. The saints in persecution.

4. One star differeth from another in glory. Some saints excel others in piety.

5. The stars are above. The saints' conversation is in heaven.

6. The stars are obscured by clouds. The Church is sometimes obscured by affliction and persecution.

His third argument is drawn from God's *power*: "Great is the Lord," &c.

His fourth argument is drawn from God's *justice* and *mercy*.

1. His mercy: “The Lord lifteth up the meek,” &c. Sustains and exalts them.

2. His justice: “He casteth the wicked down,” &c. They shall not always triumph.

But, before the prophet proceeds farther, he repeats:—

1. “Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving.” Do it in words.

2. “Sing praises upon the harp,” &c. Do it in works.

Then he proceeds to argue from God’s *providence*.

1. “Who covereth the heaven,” &c. Not to obscure, but fructify the earth.

2. “Who maketh grass to grow,” &c. By his blessing on the most barren places.

3. “He giveth to the beast,” &c. They gather it from his supplies.

4. “And to the young ravens,” &c. No bird suffers its young so soon to provide for themselves, but God hears and sends them food. *Christ* himself uses this argument to encourage us to rely on God’s providence,

Ⓜ **Matthew 6:26.**

Should the distrustful *Jew* argue, Alas, we have no strength, ammunition, horse, or armour, the prophet replies:—

1. “He delighteth not,” &c. When used as a warlike creature.

2. “He taketh not pleasure,” &c. In the nimbleness of man, when used for warlike preparations.

But he delights in his servants.

1. “The Lord taketh pleasure,” &c. In those who obey and love him.

2. “In those that hope,” &c. Have faith and confidence in him.

3. He again repeats his proposition, and calls upon the Church to perform it: “Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem,” &c. “Thy God, O Zion.” Should others be negligent, be not ye.

He then adds four reasons why *Zion* should praise him: 1. Security and defence. 2. Benediction. 3. Peace. 4. Substance.

1. Security: "For he hath strengthened," &c.
2. Benediction: "He hath blessed," &c. His officers with wisdom, &c.
3. Peace: "He maketh peace." *The vision of peace* is the literal interpretation of the word *Jerusalem*.
4. Provision: "Filleth thee with the finest of the wheat," &c.

That *God* has done this for Jerusalem, is evident from his general providence over the world. And this argument the prophet uses: "He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth," &c. For,

1. "He giveth snow like wool." Beautiful in appearance, and in order to preserve vegetables from the nipping but necessary frost, when long continued.
2. "He scattereth the hoar frost," &c. Thickening the air with it like ashes; freezing all the vapours that float in it.
3. "He casteth forth his ice," &c. Fragments of ice.
4. "Who can stand before his cold?" Endure it unprovided.

But having described all these powerful agents, the prophet next shows how easily they are governed by his *word*.

1. "He sendeth out his word, and melteth them."
2. "He causeth his wind to blow," &c. And the ice and snow return to water. All these are his, and on him we must depend for safety and comfort.

By these God teaches alike nations to acknowledge him.

But there are particular acts which refer to his people; for,

1. "He showeth his word," &c. By *Moses* and the prophets.
2. "He hath not dealt so," &c. None at that time, but since to his Church.
3. "As for his judgments," &c. His evangelical precepts. He is sending forth his word; the nations could not find out his precepts otherwise: therefore for this *praise ye the Lord*.

PSALMS

PSALM 148

The psalmist calls on all the creation to praise the Lord. The angels and visible heavens, 1-6; the earth and the sea, 7; the meteors, 8; mountains, hills, and trees, 9; beasts, reptiles, and fowls, 10; kings, princes, and mighty men, 11; men, women, and children, 12, 13; and especially all the people of Israel, 14.

NOTES ON PSALM 148

This Psalm has no title: but by the *Syriac* it is attributed to *Haggai* and *Zechariah*, and the *Septuagint* and the *Æthiopic* follow it. As a hymn of praise, this is the most sublime in the whole book.

Verse 1. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens] The *Chaldee* translates, “Praise the Lord, ye holy creatures from the heavens. Praise him, ye armies of supreme angels. Praise him, all ye angels who minister before him.”

μymvh ʾm min hashshamayim signifies whatever belongs to the heavens, all their inhabitants; as xrah ʾm min haarets, ^{<98765>}Psalm 148:7, signifies all that belongs to the earth, all its inhabitants and productions.

Verse 3. Praise ye him, sun and moon] The meaning of this address and all others to *inanimate nature*, is this: Every work of God’s hand partakes so much of his perfections, that it requires only to be studied and known, in order to show forth the manifold *wisdom, power, and goodness* of the Creator.

Stars of light] The brightest and most luminous stars: probably the planets may be especially intended.

Verse 4. Heavens of heavens] Heavens exceeding heavens. Systems of systems extending as far beyond the solar system, as it does beyond the lowest deeps. The endless systematic concatenation of worlds.

Ye waters that be above the heavens.] This refers to ^{<010107>}Genesis 1:7, where see the notes. Clouds, vapours, air, exhalations, rain, snow, and meteors of every kind.

Verse 5. He commanded, and they were created.] He spake the word expressive of the idea in his infinite mind; and they sprang into being according to that idea.

Verse 6. He hath also stablished them] He has determined their respective *revolutions*, and the *times* in which they are performed, so exactly to show his all-comprehensive wisdom and skill, that they have never passed the line marked out by his *decree*, nor intercepted each other in the vortex of space, through revolutions continued for nearly 6000 years.

Verse 7. Praise the Lord from the earth] As in the first address, he calls upon the heavens and all that *belong to them*; so here, in this second part, he calls upon the earth, and all *that belong to it*.

Ye dragons] 𐤀𐤃𐤍𐤏𐤏 *tanninim*, whales, porpoises, sharks, and sea-monsters of all kinds.

And all deeps] Whatsoever is contained in the sea, whirlpools, eddies, ground tides, with the astonishing flux and reflux of the ocean.

Every thing, in its *place* and *nature*, shows forth the perfections of its Creator.

Verse 8. Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours] All kinds of meteors, water, and fire, in all their forms and combinations. And *air*, whether in the gentle *breeze*, the *gale*, the *whirlwind*, the *tempest*, or the *tornado*; each accomplishing an especial purpose, and fulfilling a particular *will* of the Most High.

Verse 9. Mountains, and all hills] Whether *primitive*, *secondary*, or *alluvial*; of *ancient* or *recent formation*, with all their *contents*, quarries, mines, and minerals. But what a profusion of wisdom and skill is lavished on these! To instance only in the different metals, earths, and minerals; especially the precious stones.

Fruitful trees] 𐤀𐤓𐤏𐤏 𐤅𐤓𐤏 *ets peri*, fruit trees of all kinds.

And all cedars] Every kind of *forest tree*. The formation of the *fruits*, their infinitely varied *hues* and *savours*, proclaim the unsearchable wisdom and goodness of God: not less so, the *growth*, *structure*, and *various qualities* and *uses* of the *forest trees*.

Verse 10. Beasts] 𐤅𐤓𐤏 𐤁 *hachaiyah*, wild beasts of every kind.

All cattle] *hmhb* *behemah*, all *domestic animals*; those used for the service of the *house*, and those for *agricultural purposes*.

Creeping things] All the class of *reptiles*, from the *boa constrictor*, that can combat, kill, and swallow whole the *royal tiger*, to the *cobra de manille*, a poisonous reptile as small as a *fine needle*; with those still smaller animals that are found in water, and require the power of the microscope to bring them to view. In the production, preservation, habits, and properties of all these, there is a profusion of wisdom and economy that would require ages to exhibit.

Flying fowl] The structure of fowls is astonishing; and the exact *mathematical manner* in which *flying fowls swim* the air, and steer their course wheresoever they will; the feathers, and their *construction*, with the *muscles* which give them motion; strike the observer of nature with *astonishment* and *delight*.

Verse 11. Kings of the earth] As being representatives of the Most High; and *all people*-the nations governed by them. *Princes*, as governors of provinces, and *all judges* executing those laws that bind man to man, and regulate and preserve civil society; *praise God*, from whom ye have derived your *power* and *influence*: for *by him kings reign*. And let the *people* magnify God for *civil* and *social institutions*, and for the *laws* by which, under him, their *lives* and *properties* are preserved.

Verse 12. Both young men, and maidens] Who are in the bloom of youth, and in the height of health and vigour; know that God is your Father; and let the morning and energy of your days be devoted to *him*.

Old men, and children] Very appropriately united here, as the *beginning* and *conclusion* of *life* present nearly the same passions, appetites, caprices, and infirmities: yet in both the beneficence, all-sustaining power, and goodness of God are seen.

Verse 13. Let them] All already specified, *praise the name of Jehovah*, because he excels all beings: and *his glory*, as seen in creating, preserving, and governing all things, is **I** [*al, upon or over, the earth and heaven*. All *space* and *place*, as well as the beings found in them, show forth the manifold wisdom and goodness of God.

Verse 14. He also exalteth the horn] Raises to power and authority *his people*.

The praise] Jehovah is the subject of the praise of all his *saints*.

A people near unto him.] The only people who know him, and make their approaches unto him with the *sacrifices* and *offerings* which he has himself prescribed. Praise ye the Lord!

O what a hymn of praise is here! It is a *universal chorus!* All created nature have a share, and all perform their respective parts.

All *intelligent beings* are especially called to praise him who made them in his love, and sustains them by his beneficence. *Man* particularly, in all the stages of his being—*infancy, youth, manhood, and old age:* all human beings have their peculiar interest in the great Father of the spirits of all flesh.

He loves *man*, wheresoever found, of whatsoever colour, in whatever circumstances, and in all the stages of his pilgrimage from his *cradle* to his *grave*.

Let the *lisp* of the *infant*, the *shout* of the *adult*, and the *sigh* of the *aged*, ascend to the universal parent, as a gratitude-offering. He guards those who *hang upon the breast*; controls and directs the *headstrong* and *giddy*, and sustains *old age* in its infirmities; and sanctifies to it the sufferings that bring on the termination of life.

Reader, this is thy God! How great, how good, holy merciful, how compassionate! Breathe thy soul up to him; breathe it into him; and let it be preserved in his bosom till mortality be swallowed up of life, and all that is imperfect be done away.

Jesus is thy sacrificial offering; Jesus is thy Mediator. He has taken thy humanity, and placed it on the throne! He creates all things new; and faith in his blood will bring thee to his glory! Amen! hallelujah!

The beautiful morning hymn of Adam and Eve, (*Paradise Lost*, book v., line 153, &c.,)—

*“These are thy glorious works, Parent of good;
Almighty, thine this universal frame,” &c.*

has been universally admired. How many have spoken loud in its praises, who have never attempted to express their feelings in a stanza of the *hundred and forty-eighth* Psalm! But to the rapturous adorers of Milton’s poetry what is the song of David, or this grand music of the spheres! Know

this, O forgetful man, that *Milton's* morning hymn is a *paraphrase of this Psalm*, and is indebted to it for every excellency it possesses. It is little else that the psalmist speaking in English instead of Hebrew verse.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH PSALM

The psalmist calls upon the whole creation to be instrumental in praising God. By which he shows,—

I. His ardent desire that God be praised. As if creatures, endowed with reason, were too few, therefore he calls on inanimate things to join and be heralds of his wondrous works.

II. His intention; what he would and could have done.

III. That what could be done should be done.

IV. That all really do praise him in their kind and manner.

This Psalm is disposed into excellent distribution.

1. He calls upon celestial creatures in general; 2. In particular. 1. On angels: "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens," &c. Ye of celestial order. 2. "Praise him in the heights," &c. The heavens above. 3. "Praise him, all his hosts," &c. Which in St. Luke are called *the heavenly host*.

2. "Praise ye him, sun, moon, and stars." Though not with the voice, yet by your beauty, motion, light, efficacy, &c.

He mentions the whole body of the heavenly orbs.

1. "Praise him, ye heavens of heavens," &c. The highest state of bliss.

2. "And ye waters," &c. All the orbs above the air, in Scripture called *heavens*; and the *waters* that are above the firmament.

And in the two next verses he gives the reason.

1. "He commanded," &c. They are his creatures, therefore,—

2. "He hath established them," &c. They are incorruptible.

From the heavens he now descends to the earth, air, water, &c.: "Praise the Lord from the earth," &c. All ye elementary substances.

1. "Ye dragons." Whales, great fishes.

2. "All deeps." All kinds of waters.
3. "Fire and hail," &c. Meteors, &c.
4. "Mountains and hills," &c.
5. "Fruitful trees," &c. Trees fit to build with and fruit-trees.
6. "Beasts and all cattle." Both wild and tame.
7. "Creeping things," &c. Worms and serpents.
8. "And all flying fowls."

And, lastly, he cites all mankind to praise God.

1. "The highest kings," &c. They who command, and they who obey.
2. "Princes, and all judges," &c. All inferior magistrates.
3. "Both young men and maidens." Both sexes.
4. "Old men and children,"—all ages: "Let them praise the name of the Lord."

And for this reason:—

1. "For his name is excellent alone." No name is so sublime and worthy.
2. "His glory is above the earth and heaven." All good comes from him.

The prophet concludes this Psalm with God's goodness to the Church, which furnishes him with another reason:—

1. He also "exalts the horn," &c. The power and glory of his people.
2. "He is the praise," &c. The Guide of *Israel*.
3. "Even of the children of Israel," &c. A people consecrated to God. All which is to be understood not merely of *Israel* according to the flesh, but God's spiritual Church. Now those who are true Israelites, and those especially, he excites to sing,—

"Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!"

PSALMS

PSALM 149

All the congregation are invited to praise God for his mercies, 1-3. Their great privileges, 4, 5. Their victories, 6-9.

NOTES ON PSALM 149

This seems to be an *epinikion*, or *song of triumph*, after some glorious victory; probably in the time of the *Maccabees*. It has been also understood as predicting the success of the Gospel in the nations of the earth. According to the *Syriac*, it concerns the *new temple*, by which the *Christian Church* is meant. It has no *title* in the Hebrew, nor in any of the *Versions*, and no *author's* name.

Verse 1. Sing unto the Lord a new song] That is, as we have often had occasion to remark, an *excellent song*, the best we can possibly pronounce. So the word **vdj** *chadash* is often understood; and so the word *novus*, “new,” was often used among the Latin writers:—

*Pollio amat nostram, quamvis sit rustica, musam.
Pollio et ipse facit NOVA CARMINA.
VIRG. Ecl. iii., ver. 84.*

*Pollio loves my lines, although rude:
Pollio himself makes excellent odes.*

Tamely and inexpressively translated by Dryden:—

*“Pollio my rural verse vouchsafes to read.
My Pollio writes himself.”*

O what a falling off is here!

Servius, in his comment on *nova*, says, *magna, miranda*. *Nova* means *great, admirable*.

So on *novum nectar*, *Ecl. v., ver. 71*, he says, *id est, magna dulcedo*; “nectar of EXCELLENT flavour.”

Congregation of saints.] The *Israelites*, who were, by *profession* and by *injunction*, a *holy people*.

Verse 2. In him that made him] Let them remember in their exultations to give all glory to the Lord; for he is the Author of their *being* and their *blessings*. And let them know that he is their *King* also; that they should submit to his *authority*, and be guided and regulated in their hearts and conduct by his *laws*.

Verse 3. Let them praise his name in the dance] **l wj mb** *bemachol*, with the pipe, or some kind of wind music, classed here with **āt** *toph*, the tabor or drum, and **rwnk** *kinnor*, the harp. “**l wj m machol**,” says Parkhurst, “some fistular wind-instrument of music, with holes, as a flute, pipe, or fife, from **l j chal**, to make a hole or opening.” I know no place in the Bible where **l wj m machol** and **tl j m machalath** mean *dance* of any kind; they constantly signify some kind of pipe.

Verse 4. The Lord taketh pleasure in his people] The pleasure or good will of God is in his people: he loves them ardently, and will load them with his benefits, while they are humble and thankful; for,

He will beautify] **rapy** *yephaer*, he will make fair, the meek, **μywn** [*anavim*, the lowly, the humble with salvation, **h** [**wvyb** *bishuah*; which St. Jerome thus translates, *Et exaltabit mansuetos in Jesu*, “And he will exalt the meek in Jesus.” Whether this rendering be correct or not, there is no other way by which the *humble soul* can be exalted, but by JESUS, as the redeeming Saviour.

Verse 5. Let the saints be joyful in glory] Let them be gloriously joyful: seeing themselves so *honoured* and so *successful*, let them be joyful. God has put *glory* or *honour* upon them; let them give him the thanks due to his name.

Sing aloud upon their beds.] While they are reclining on their *couches*. At their festal banquets, let them shout the praises of the Lord. In imitation of this we often have at our public entertainments the following words sung, taken from the *Vulgate* of Psalm cxv. 1: NON NOBIS DOMINE NON NOBIS; sed NOMINI TUO da GLORIAM! super MISERICORDIA TUA et VERITATE TUA. “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth’s sake.” Let them mingle their feasting with Divine songs. This reclining on couches, while they take their food, is still practised in Asiatic countries.

Verse 6. Let the high praises of God] Let them sing songs the most sublime, with the loudest noise consistent with *harmony*.

And a two-edged sword in their hand] Perhaps there is an allusion here to the manner in which the Jews were obliged to labour in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem: “Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon,” ^{<16417>}**Nehemiah 4:17**.

The *two-edged* sword, in Hebrew, is *twypyp pipiyoth*, “mouth mouths.”

Verse 7. To execute vengeance upon the heathen] This may refer simply to their purpose of defending themselves to the uttermost, should their enemies attack them while building their wall: and they had every reason to believe that God would be with them; and that, if their enemies did attack them, they should be able to inflict the severest punishment upon them.

Punishments upon the people] The unfaithful and treacherous *Jews*; for we find that some, even of their *nobles*, had joined with *Sanballat* and *Tobiah*; (see ^{<16617>}**Nehemiah 6:17-19**;) and it appears also that many of them had formed alliances with those heathens, which were contrary to the law; see ^{<16135>}**Nehemiah 13:15-29**.

Verse 8. To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron] That is, if these kings, governors of provinces, and chiefs among the people, had attacked them, God would have enabled them to defeat them, take their generals prisoners, and lead them in triumph to Jerusalem. It is certain also that in the times of the *Maccabees* the Jews had many signal victories over the *Samaritans*, *Philistines*, and *Moabites*; and over *Antiochus*, king of *Syria*. See the Books of the *Maccabees*. To these the psalmist may here refer in a *hyperbolic* way, not unusual in poetry and in songs of triumph.

Verse 9. To execute upon them the judgment written] In ^{<18701>}**Deuteronomy 7:1**, &c., God promises his people complete victory over all their enemies, and over the heathen. God repeatedly promises such victories to his faithful people; and this is, properly speaking, the *judgment written*, i.e., foretold.

This honour have all his saints.] They shall all be supported, defended, and saved by the Lord. Israel had this honour, and such victories over their enemies, while they continued faithful to their God. When they relapsed into iniquity, their enemies prevailed against them; they were defeated,

their city taken, their temple burnt to the ground, more than a million of themselves slaughtered, and the rest led into captivity; and, scattered through the, world, they continue without king, or temple, or true worship, to the present day.

“But do not these last verses contain a promise that all the nations of the earth shall be brought under the dominion of the *Church of Christ*; that all *heathen and ungodly kings* shall be put down, and *pious men* put in their places?” I do not think so. I believe God never intended that his Church should have the civil government of the world. His *Church*, like its *Founder and Head*, will never be a *ruler and divider among men*. The men who under pretense of *superior sanctity*, affect this, are not of God; the truth of God is not in them; they are puffed up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil. *Wo unto the inhabitants of the earth*, when the *Church* takes the *civil government* of the world into its hand! Were it possible that God should trust *religious people* with civil government, *anarchy* would soon ensue; for every professed believer in Christ would consider himself on a par with any other and every other believer, the *right to rule* and the *necessity to obey* would be immediately lost, and every man would do what was right in his own eyes; for, where the grace of God makes *all equal*, who can presume to say, I have Divine authority to govern my fellow? The Church of Rome has claimed this right; and the pope, in consequence, became a secular prince; but the nations of the world have seen the vanity and iniquity of the claim, and refused allegiance. Those whom it did govern, with force and with cruelty did it rule them; and the odious yoke is now universally cast off. Certain *enthusiasts and hypocrites*, not of that Church, have also attempted to set up a *fifth monarchy*, a *civil government* by the SAINTS! and diabolic saints they were. To such pretenders God gives neither countenance nor support. The secular and spiritual government God will ever keep distinct; and the Church shall have no power but that of *doing good*; and this only in proportion to its holiness, heavenly-mindedness, and piety to God. That the verses above may be understood in a *spiritual sense*, as applicable to the influence of the *word of God preached*, may be seen in the following analysis.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINTH PSALM

In this Psalm the saints of God are excited to give due thanks.

I. For the grace and favour received from God, ^{<1930>}**Psalm 149:1-5.**

II. For the glory and privileges they shall receive, ^{<1935>}**Psalm 148:5-9.**

I. "Let Israel rejoice," &c. The saints. Which he amplifies:

1. The saints: "For praise is not comely in the mouth of sinners."
2. The quality of the song: "A new song." By renewed men.
3. From the place in which it must be done. The public congregation.
4. From the manner. With alacrity.
5. From the object. God, their Creator and King: "Let Israel rejoice," &c.

And this part he concludes with a strong reason:

1. "For the Lord taketh pleasure," &c. He loves those who most resemble him in holiness and purity.
2. "He will beautify the meek," &c. The people who trust him he will save.

II. And now he describes their future glory.

1. "Let the saints," &c. None others will he beautify.
2. "Let them rejoice," &c. The mansions prepared for them in heaven. There they rest from labour, but not from praise.

Their work is twofold: Present and future.

1. Present: "The high praises," &c. The highest that can be thought of.
2. For the future: "Let a two-edged sword," &c. When Christ shall come to judgment, the saints at the last shall be judges.

Then the exercise of this judiciary power shall be,

1. "To execute vengeance," &c. To judge them to punishment.
2. "To bind their kings with chains," &c. The phrase is metaphorical. "Bind him hand and foot," &c.; ^{<4213>}**Matthew 22:13.** Christ's iron sceptre shall bruise the head of his enemies.

3. “To execute upon them the judgment written,” &c. Against evil-doers.

He concludes with an acclamation. This glory of sitting with Christ and judging the world, is the glory of all saints. *Hallelujah.*

PSALMS

PSALM 150

A general exhortation to praise God, 1, 2. With the trumpet, psaltery, and harp, 3. With the timbrel and dance, stringed instruments and organs, 4. With the cymbals, 5. All living creatures are called upon to join in the exercise. 6.

NOTES ON PSALM 150.

This Psalm is without title and author in the *Hebrew*, and in all the ancient versions. It is properly the full chorus of all *voices* and *instruments* in the temple, at the conclusion of the grand *Hallelujah*, to which the five concluding Psalms belong.

Verse 1. Praise God in his sanctuary] In many places we have the compound word **hy-wl l h** *halelu-yah*, praise ye Jehovah; but this is the first place in which we find **l a-wl l h** *halelu-el*, praise God, or the strong God. Praise him who is Jehovah, the infinite and self-existent Being; and praise him who is God, *El* or *Elohim*, the great God in covenant with mankind, to bless and save them unto eternal life.

In his sanctuary—in the temple; in whatever place is dedicated to his service. Or, in *his holiness*—through his own holy influence in your hearts.

The firmament of his power.] Through the whole expanse, to the utmost limits of his power. As **[yqr** *rakia* is the firmament of vast expanse that surrounds the globe, and probably that in which all the celestial bodies of the solar system are included, it may have that meaning here. Praise him whose power and goodness extend through all worlds; and let the inhabitants of all those worlds share in the grand chorus, that it may be universal.

Verse 2. For his mighty acts] Whether manifested in creation, government, mercy or justice.

His excellent greatness.] **wl dg brk** *kerob gudlo*, according to the multitude of his magnitude, or of his majesty. [Anglo-Saxon]; After the manyfoldness of his mickleness.—Anglo-Saxon. After the mykelnes of his greathede.—Old Psalter. Let the praise be such as is becoming so great, so holy, and so glorious a Being.

Verse 3. The sound of the trumpet] רפּוּע *sophar*, from its noble, cheering, and majestic sound; for the original has this ideal meaning.

With the psaltery] לְבַנְיָה *nebel*; the nabla, a hollow stringed instrument; perhaps like the *guitar*, or the old *symphony*.

And harp.] רַנְנִיק *kinnor*, another *stringed* instrument, played on with the *hands* or *fingers*.

Verse 4. Praise him with the timbrel] אֶת־תּוֹפִי *toph*, *drum*, *tabret*, or *tomtom*, or *tympanum* of the ancients; a skin stretched over a broad hoop; perhaps something like the *tambarine*. Anglo-Saxon; [A.S.] the *glad pipe*. *Taburne*; Old Psalter.

And dance] לְוַיִּמְנוּחֵי *machol*, the *pipe*. The *croude* or *crowthe*: Old Psalter; a species of *violin*. It never means *dance*; see **Clarke's note on** “~~198B~~ **Psalm 149:3**”. *Crwth* signifies a *fiddle* in Welsh.

Stringed instruments] מִיְנַיִם *minnim*. This literally signifies *strings put in order*; perhaps a *triangular kind of hollow instrument* on which the strings were regularly placed, growing *shorter* and *shorter* till they came to a *point*. This would give a variety of sounds, from a deep bass to a high treble. In an ancient MS. Psalter before me, David is represented in two places, playing on such an instrument. It may be the sambuck, or psaltery, or some such instrument.

Organs.] בְּגָוִי *ugab*. Very likely the *syrinx* or *mouth organ*; *Pan's pipe*; both of the ancients and moderns. The *fistula*, *septem*, *disparibus nodis conjuncta*, made of seven pieces of cane or thick *straw*, of unequal lengths, applied to the lips, each blown into, according to the note intended to be expressed. This instrument is often met with in the ancient *bucolic* or *pastoral* writers.

Verse 5. Loud cymbals] מִיֵּי־כַסְפִּים *tseltselim*. Two hollow plates of brass, which, being struck together, produced a sharp clanging sound. This instrument is still in use. What the *high-sounding cymbals* meant I know not; unless those of a *larger make*, struck above the head, and consequently emitting a louder sound.

Verse 6. Let every thing that hath breath] Either to make a vocal noise, or a sound by blowing into *pipes*, *fifes*, *flutes*, *trumpets*, &c. Let all join

together, and put forth all your *strength* and all your *skill* in sounding the praises of Jehovah; and then let a *universal burst* with HALLELUJAH! close the grand ceremony. It is evident that this Psalm has no other meaning than merely the summoning up all the *voices*, and all the *instruments*, to complete the service in FULL CHORUS.

Of such peculiar importance did the *Book of Psalms* appear to our blessed Lord and his apostles, that they have quoted nearly fifty of them several times in the New Testament. There is scarcely a state in human life that is not distinctly marked in them; together with all the variety of experience which is found, not merely among *pious Jews*, but among *Christians*, the most deeply acquainted with the things of Christ.

The minister of God's word, who wishes to preach *experimentally*, should have frequent recourse to this sacred book; and by considering the various parts that refer to Jesus Christ and the Christian Church, he will be able to build up the people of God on their most holy faith; himself will grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God; and he will ever have an abundance of the most profitable matter for the edification of the Church of Christ.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH PSALM

This Psalm is the same with the former. In the *hundred and forty-eighth*, all creatures are invited to praise God; in the *hundred and forty-ninth*, men especially, and those who are in the Church; but in this, that they praise him with all kinds of instruments.

I. An invitation to praise God, which word he repeats thirteen times, according to the thirteen attributes of God, as the rabbins reckon them.

II. That this be done with all sorts of instruments, intimating that it is to be performed with all the care, zeal, and ardency of affection.

I. Throughout the Psalm he calls on men to praise God.

1. "Praise God in his sanctuary." Or in your hearts, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

2. "Praise him in the firmament," &c. His magnificence when he sits on his throne. Some understand the Church by it, in which his saints shine as stars in the firmament.

3. "Praise him for his mighty acts," &c. The works of his power.

4. "Praise him according," &c. Whereby he excels all things; he being absolutely great they only comparatively so.

II. The prophet desires that no way be omitted by which we may show our zeal and ardency in praising him.

1. "Praise him with the sound of the trumpet," &c. An instrument used in their solemn feasts.

2. "Praise him with the psaltery," &c. And with these they sing, so that there is also music with the voice.

3. "Praise him with the timbrel," &c. In the choir with many voices.

4. "Praise him with stringed instruments," &c. Lutes, viols, organs, &c.

5. "Praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals," &c. An instrument which yields a loud sound, as bells among us.

His conclusion is of universal reference "Let every thing," &c.

1. "Every thing that hath breath," &c. That hath faculty or power to do it.

2. "Every thing that hath life," &c. Whether spiritual, as angels; or animal, as man and beasts. Or, metaphorically, such as, though inanimate, may be said to praise God, because they obey his order and intention. Thus, all things praise God, because all things that have life or being derive it immediately from himself.

MASORETIC NOTES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Number of verses, two thousand five hundred and twenty-seven. Middle verse. ^{<197836>} **Psalm 78:36.** *Sections, nineteen.*

At the end of the *Syriac* we have this colophon:—

"The hundred and fifty Psalms are completed. There are *five* books, *fifteen* Psalms of *degrees*, and *sixty* of *praises*. The number of *verses* is *four thousand eight hundred and thirty-two*. There are some who have added *twelve* others; but we do not need them. And may God be praised for ever!"

At the end of the *Arabic* is the following:—

The end of the *five* books of Psalms. The *first* book ends with the *fortieth* Psalm; the *second*, with the *seventieth* Psalm; the *third*, with the *eightieth*

Psalm; the *fourth*, with the *hundred and fifteenth*; and the *fifth*, with the *last* Psalm, i.e., the *hundred and fiftieth*.