

PSALM 105

Some of the psalms of praise are very short, others very long, to teach us that, in our devotions, we should be more observant how our hearts work than how the time passes and neither overstretch ourselves by coveting to be long nor over-stint ourselves by coveting to be short, but either the one or the other as we find in our hearts to pray. This is a long psalm; the general scope is the same with most of the psalms, to set forth the glory of God, but the subject-matter is particular. Every time we come to the throne of grace we may, if we please, furnish ourselves out of the word of God (out of the history of the New Testament, as this out of the history of the Old) with new songs, with fresh thoughts — so copious, so various, so inexhaustible is the subject. In the foregoing psalm we are taught to praise God for his wondrous works of common providence with reference to the world in general. In this we are directed to praise him for his special favours to his church. We find the first eleven verses of this psalm in the beginning of that psalm which David delivered to Asaph to be used (as it should seem) in the daily service of the sanctuary when the ark was fixed in the place he had prepared for it, by which it appears both who penned it and when and upon what occasion it was penned, ~~1~~ 1 Chronicles 16:7, etc. David by it designed to instruct his people in the obligations they lay under to adhere faithfully to their holy religion. Here is the preface (v. 1-7) and the history itself in several articles.

- I.** God's covenant with the patriarchs (v. 8-11).
- II.** His care of them while they were strangers (v. 12-15).
- III.** His raising up Joseph to be the shepherd and stone of Israel (v. 16-22).
- IV.** The increase of Israel in Egypt and their deliverance out of Egypt (v. 23-38).
- V.** The care he took of them in the wilderness and their settlement in Canaan (v. 39-45). In singing this we must give to God the glory of his wisdom and power, his goodness and faithfulness, must look upon ourselves as concerned in the affairs of the Old-Testament church, both because to it were

committed the oracles of God, which are our treasure, and because out of it Christ arose, and these things happened to it for ensamples.

~~141~~ PSALM 105:1-7

AN INVITATION TO PRAISE

Our devotion is here warmly excited; and we are stirred up, that we may stir up ourselves to praise God. Observe,

I. The duties to which we are here called, and they are many, but the tendency of them all is to give unto God the glory due unto his name.

1. We must *give thanks to him*, as one who has always been our bountiful benefactor and requires only that we give him thanks for his favours — poor returns for rich receivings.

2. *Call upon his name*, as one whom you depend upon for further favours. Praying for further mercies is accepted as an acknowledgment of former mercies. *Because he has inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him.*

3. *Make known his deeds* (v. 1), that others may join with you in praising him. *Talk of all his wondrous works* (v. 2), as we talk of things that we are full of, and much affected with, and desire to fill others with. God's wondrous works ought to be the subject of our familiar discourses with our families and friends, and we should talk of them *as we sit in the house and as we go by the way* (~~142~~ Deuteronomy 6:7), not merely for entertainment, but for the exciting of devotion and the encouraging of our own and others' faith and hope in God. Even sacred things may be the matter of common talk, provided it be with due reverence.

4. *Sing psalms* to God's honour, as those that rejoice in him, and desire to testify that joy for the encouragement of others and to transmit it to posterity, as memorable things anciently were handed down by songs, when writing was scarce.

5. *Glory in his holy name*; let those that are disposed to glory not boast of their own accomplishments and achievements, but of their acquaintance with God and their relation to him, ~~143~~ Jeremiah 9:23, 24. *Praise you his*

holy name, so some; but it comes all to one, for in glorying in him we give glory to him.

6. *Seek him*; place your happiness in him, and then pursue that happiness in all the ways that he has appointed. *Seek the Lord and his strength*, that is, the *ark of his strength*; seek him in the sanctuary, in the way wherein he has appointed us to seek him. *Seek his strength*, that is, his grace, the strength of his Spirit to work in you that which is good, which we cannot do but by strength derived from him, for which he will be enquired of. *Seek the Lord and be strengthened*; so divers ancient versions read it. Those that would be *strengthened in the inward man* must fetch in strength from God by faith and prayer. *Seek his strength*, and then *seek his face*; for by his strength, we hope to prevail with him for his favour, as Jacob did, ³⁰¹⁸Hosea 12:3. “*Seek his face evermore*; seek to have his favour to eternity, and therefore continue seeking it to the end of the time of your probation. Seek it while you live in this world, and you shall have it while you live in the other world, and even there shall be for ever seeking it in an infinite progression, and yet be for ever satisfied in it.”

7. *Let the hearts of those rejoice that do seek him* (v. 3); for they have chosen well, are well fixed, and well employed, and they may be sure that their labour will not be in vain, for he will not only be found, but he will be found the *rewarder of those that diligently seek him*. If those have reason to rejoice that *seek the Lord*, much more those that have *found him*.

II. Some arguments to quicken us to these duties.

1. “Consider both what he has said and what he has done to engage us for ever to him. You will see yourselves under all possible obligations to give thanks to him, and call upon his name, if you remember the wonders which should make deep and durable impressions upon you, — the wonders of his providence which he has *wrought for you* and those who are gone before you, the *marvellous works that he has done*, which will be had in everlasting remembrance with the thoughtful and with the grateful, — the wonders of his law, which he has written to you, and entrusted you with, *the judgments of his mouth*, as well as the judgments of his hand,” v. 5.

2. “Consider the relation you stand in to him (v. 6): *You are the seed of Abraham his servant*; you are born in his house, and being thereby entitled to the privilege of his servants, protection and provision, you are also

bound to do the duty of servants, to attend your Master, consult his honour, obey his commands, and do what you can to advance his interests. You are *the children of Jacob his chosen*, and are *chosen* and *beloved* for the fathers' sake, and therefore ought to tread in the steps of those whose honours you inherit. You are the children of godly parents; do no degenerate. You are God's church upon earth, and, if you do not praise him, who should?"

3. Consider your interest in him: *He is the Lord our God*, v. 7. We depend upon him, are devoted to him, and from him our expectation is. *Should not a people seek unto their God* (~~2889~~ Isaiah 8:19) and praise their God? ~~2884~~ Daniel 5:4. He is *Jehovah our God*. He that is our God is self-existent and self-sufficient, has an irresistible power and incontestable sovereignty: *His judgments are in all the earth*; he governs the whole world in wisdom, and gives law to all nations, even to those that know him not. The earth is full of the proofs of his power.

~~2885~~ PSALM 105:8-24

PROVIDENCES CONCERNING THE PATRIARCHS

We are here taught, in praising God, to look a great way back, and to give him the glory of what he did for his church in former ages, especially when it was in the founding and forming, which those in its latter ages enjoy the benefit of and therefore should give thanks for. Doubtless we may fetch as proper matter for praise from the histories of the gospels, and the acts of the apostles, which relate the birth of the Christian church, as the psalmist here does from the histories of Genesis and Exodus, which relate the birth of the Jewish church; and our histories greatly outshine theirs. Two things are here made the subject of praise: —

I. God's promise to the patriarchs, that great promise that he would give to their seed the land of Canaan for an inheritance, which was a type of the promise of eternal life made in Christ to all believers. In all the marvellous works which God did for Israel *he remembered his covenant* (v. 8) and he will remember it *for ever*; it is *the word which he commanded to a thousand generations*. See here the power of the promise; it is the word which he commanded and which will take effect. See the perpetuity of the promise; it is commanded *to a thousand generations*, and the entail of it

shall not be cut off. In the parallel place it is expressed as our duty (^{<1365>}1 Chronicles 16:15), *Be you mindful always of his covenant*. God will not forget it and therefore we must not. The promise is here called a *covenant*, because there was something required on man's part as the condition of the promise. Observe,

1. The persons with whom this covenant was made — with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, grandfather, father, and son, all eminent believers, ^{<818>}Hebrews 11:8, 9.
2. The ratifications of the covenant; it was made sure by all that is sacred. Is that sure which is sworn to? It is his oath to Isaac and to Abraham. See to whom God *swore by himself*, ^{<803>}Hebrews 6:13, 14. Is that sure which has passed *into a law*? He *confirmed the same for a law*, a law never to be repealed. Is that sure which is reduced to a mutual contract and stipulation? This is confirmed *for an everlasting covenant*, inviolable.
3. The covenant itself: *Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan*, v. 11. The patriarchs had a right to it, not by providence, but by promise; and their seed should be put in possession of it, not by the common ways of settling nations, but by miracles; God will give it to them himself, as it were with his own hand; it shall be given to them as their lot which God assigns them and measures out to them, as *the lot of their inheritance*, a sure title, by virtue of their birth; it shall come to them by descent, not by purchase, by the favour of God, and not any merit of their own. Heaven is the inheritance we have obtained, ^{<801>}Ephesians 1:11. And *this is the promise which God has promised us* (as Canaan was the promise he promised them), *even eternal life*, ^{<625>}1 John 2:25; ^{<800>}Titus 1:2.

II. His providences concerning the patriarchs while they were waiting for the accomplishment of this promise, which represent to us the care God takes of his people in this world, while they are yet on this side the heavenly Canaan; for these things *happened unto them for examples* and encouragements to all the heirs of promise, that life by faith as they did.

1. They were wonderfully protected and sheltered, and (as the Jewish masters express it) *gathered under the wings of the divine Majesty*. This is accounted for, v. 12-15. Here we may observe,

(1.) How they were exposed to injuries from men. To the three renowned patriarchs, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, God's promises were very rich;

again and again he told them he would be their God; but his performances in this world were so little proportionable that, if he had not *prepared for them a city* in the other world, he would have been *ashamed to be called their God* (see ^{<S116>}Hebrews 11:16), because he was always generous; and yet even in this world he was not wanting to them, but that he might appear, to do uncommon things for them, he exercised them with uncommon trials.

[1.] They were few, very few. Abraham was called alone (^{<S10>}Isaiah 51:2); he had but two sons, and one of them he cast out; Isaac had but two, and one of them was forced for many years to flee from his country; Jacob had more, but some of them, instead of being a defence to him, exposed him, when (as he himself pleads, ^{<S30>}Genesis 34:30) he was but few in number, and therefore might easily be destroyed by the natives, he and his house. God's chosen are but a little flock, few, very few, and yet upheld.

[2.] They were strangers, and therefore were the most likely to be abused and to meet with strange usage, and the less able to help themselves. Their religion made them to be looked upon as strangers (^{<S004>}1 Peter 4:4) and to be hooted at as *speckled birds*, ^{<S119>}Jeremiah 12:9. Though the whole land was theirs by promise, yet they were so far from producing and pleading their grant that they *confessed themselves strangers in it*, ^{<S113>}Hebrews 11:13.

[3.] They were unsettled (v. 13): *They went from one nation to another*, from one part of that land to another (for it was then in the holding and occupation of divers nations, ^{<S128>}Genesis 12:8; 13:3, 18); nay, *from one kingdom to another people*, from Canaan to Egypt, from Egypt to the land of the Philistines, which could not but weaken and expose them; yet they were forced to it by famine. Note, Though frequent removals are neither desirable nor commendable, yet sometimes there is a just and necessary occasion for them, and they may be the lot of some of the best men.

(2.) How they were guarded by the special providence of God, the wisdom and power of which were the more magnified by their being so many ways exposed, v. 14, 15. They were not able to help themselves and yet,

[1.] No men were suffered to wrong them, but even those that hated them, and would gladly have done them a mischief, had their hands tied, and could not do what they would. This may refer to ^{<S35>}Genesis 35:5, where we find that *the terror of God* (an unaccountable restraint) *was upon the*

cities that were round about them, so that, though provoked, they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

[2.] Even crowned heads, that did offer to wrong them, were not only checked and chidden for it, but controlled and baffled: *He reprov'd kings for their sakes* in dreams and visions, saying, “*Touch not my anointed; it is at your peril if you do, nay, it shall not be in your power to do it; do my prophets no harm.*” Pharaoh king of Egypt was plagued (^{<0127>}Genesis 12:17) and Abimelech king of Gerar was sharply rebuked (^{<0116>}Genesis 20:6) for doing wrong to Abraham. Note, *First*, Even kings themselves are liable to God's rebukes if they do wrong. *Secondly*, God's prophets are his anointed, for they have the unction *of the Spirit*, that *oil of gladness*, ^{<0127>}1 John 2:27. *Thirdly*, Those that offer to touch God's prophets, with design to harm them, may expect to hear of it one way or other. God is jealous for his prophets; whoso *touches them touches the apple of his eye*. *Fourthly*, Even those that *touch the prophets*, nay that *kill the prophets* (as many did), cannot *do them any harm*, any real harm. *Lastly*, God's anointed prophets are dearer to him than anointed kings themselves. Jeroboam's hand was withered when it was stretched out against a prophet.

2. They were wonderfully provided for and supplied. And here also,

(1.) They were reduced to great extremity. Even in Canaan, the land of promise, *he called for a famine*, v. 16. Note, All judgments are at God's call, and no place is exempt from their visitation and jurisdiction when God sends them forth with commission. To try the faith of the patriarchs, God *broke the whole staff of bread*, even in that good land, that they might plainly see God designed them a better country than that was.

(2.) God graciously took care for their relief. It was in obedience to his precept, and in dependence upon his promise, that they were now sojourners in Canaan, and therefore he could not in honour suffer any evil to befall them or any good thing to be wanting to them. As he restrained one Pharaoh from doing them wrong, so he raised up another to do them a kindness, by preferring and entrusting Joseph, of whose story we have here an abstract. He was to be the shepherd and stone of Israel and to save that holy *seed alive*, ^{<0424>}Genesis 49:24; 50:20. In order to this,

[1.] He was humbled, greatly humbled (v. 17, 18): *God sent a man before them, even Joseph*. Many years before the famine began, he was sent before them, to nourish them in the famine; so vast are the foresights and

forecasts of Providence, and so long its reaches. But in what character did *he* go to Egypt who was to provide for the reception of the church there? He went not in quality of an ambassador, no, nor so much as a factor or commissary; but *he was sold thither for a servant*, a slave for term of life, without any prospect of being ever set at liberty. This was low enough, and, one would think, set him far enough from any probability of being great. And yet he was brought lower; he was made a prisoner (v. 18): *His feet they hurt with fetters*. Being unjustly charged with a crime no less heinous than a rape upon his mistress, *the iron entered into his soul*, that is, was very painful to him; and the false accusation which was the cause of his imprisonment did in a special manner grieve him, and went to his heart; yet all this was the way to his preferment.

[2.] He was exalted, highly exalted. He continued a prisoner, neither tried nor bailed, *until the time* appointed of God for his release (v. 19), when *his word came*, that is, his interpretations of the dreams came to pass, and the report thereof came to Pharaoh's ears by the chief butler. And then *the word of the Lord cleared him*; that is, the power God gave him to foretell things to come rolled away the reproach his mistress had loaded him with; for it could not be thought that God would give such a power to so bad a man as he was represented to be. *God's word tried him*, tried his faith and patience, and then it came in power to give command for his release. There is a time set when God's word will come for the comfort of all that trust in it, ^{<38B>}Habakkuk 2:3. *At the end it shall speak, and not lie*. God gave the word, and then *the king sent and loosed him*; for the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord. Pharaoh, finding him to be a favourite of Heaven, *First*, Discharged him from his imprisonment (v. 20): *He let him go free*. God has often, by wonderful turns of providence, pleaded the cause of oppressed innocency. *Secondly*, He advanced him to the highest posts of honour, v. 21, 22. He made him lord high chamberlain of his household (*he made him lord of his house*); nay, he put him into the office of lord-treasurer, *the ruler of all his substance*. He made him prime-minister of state, lord-president of his council, to *command his princes at his pleasure* and *teach them wisdom*, and general of his forces. *According to thy word shall all my people be ruled*, ^{<144>}Genesis 41:40, 43, 44. He made him lord chief justice, to judge even his senators and punish those that were disobedient. In all this Joseph was designed to be,

1. A father to the church that then was, to save the house of Israel from perishing by the famine. He was made great, that he might *do good, especially in the household of faith.*

2. A figure of Christ that was to come, who, because he humbled himself and took upon him the form of a servant, was highly exalted, and has all judgment committed to him. Joseph being thus sent before, and put into a capacity of maintaining all his father's house, *Israel also came into Egypt* (v. 23), where he and all his were very honourably and comfortably provided for many years. Thus the New-Testament church has a place provided for her even in the wilderness, where *she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time,* ^{<624>}Revelation 12:14. Verily she shall be fed.

3. They were wonderfully multiplied, according to the promise made to Abraham that his seed should be as the sand of the sea for multitude, v. 24. In Egypt *he increased his people greatly; they multiplied like fishes, so that in a little time they became stronger than their enemies* and formidable to them. Pharaoh took notice of it. ^{<619>}Exodus 1:9, *The children of Israel are more and mightier than we.* When God pleases *a little one shall become a thousand;* and God's promises, though they work slowly, work surely.

^{<625>}PSALM 105:25-45

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE OUT OF EGYPT

After the history of the patriarchs follows here the history of the people of Israel, when they grew into a nation.

I. Their affliction in Egypt (v. 25): *He turned the heart* of the Egyptians, who had protected them, *to hate* them and *deal subtilely* with them. God's goodness to his people exasperated the Egyptians against them; and, though their old antipathy to the Hebrews (which we read of ^{<623>}Genesis 43:32; 46:34) was laid asleep for a while, yet now it revived with more violence than ever: formerly they hated them because they despised them, now because they feared them. They *dealt subtilely* with them, set all their politics on work to find out ways and means to weaken them, and waste them, and prevent their growth; they made their burdens heavy and their

lives bitter, and slew their male children as soon as they were born. Malice is crafty to destroy: Satan has the serpent's subtlety, with his venom. It was God that turned the hearts of the Egyptians against them; for every creature is that to us that he makes it to be, a friend or an enemy. Though God is not the author of the sins of men, yet he serves his own purposes by them.

II. Their deliverance out of Egypt, that work of wonder, which, that it might never be forgotten, is put into the preface to the ten commandments. Observe,

1. The instruments employed in that deliverance (v. 26): *He sent Moses his servant* on this errand and joined Aaron in commission with him. Moses was designed to be their lawgiver and chief magistrate, Aaron to be their chief priest; and therefore, that they might respect them the more and submit to them the more cheerfully, God made use of them as their deliverers.

2. The means of accomplishing that deliverance; these were the plagues of Egypt. Moses and Aaron observed their orders, in summoning them just as God appointed them, and *they rebelled not against his word* (v. 28) as Jonah did, who, when he was sent to denounce God's judgments against Nineveh, went to Tarshish. Moses and Aaron were not moved, either with a foolish fear of Pharaoh's wrath or a foolish pity of Egypt's misery, to relax or retard any of the plagues which God ordered them to inflict on the Egyptians, but stretched forth their hand to inflict them as God appointed. Those that are instructed to execute judgment will find their remissness construed as a rebellion against God's word. The plagues of Egypt are here called God's *signs, and his wonders* (v. 27); they were not only proofs of his power, but tokens of his wrath, and to be looked upon with admiration and holy awe. *They showed the words of his signs* (so it is in the original), for every plague had an exposition going along with it; they were not, as the common works of creation and providence, silent signs, but speaking ones, and they spoke aloud. They are all or most of them here specified, though not in the order in which they were inflicted.

(1.) The plague of darkness, v. 28. This was one of the last, though here mentioned first. God *sent darkness*, and, coming with commission, it came with efficacy; his command *made it dark*. *And then they* (that is, the people of Israel) *rebelled not against God's word*, namely, a command

which some think was given them to circumcise all among them that had not been circumcised, in doing which the three days' darkness would be a protection to them. The old translation follows the Septuagint, and reads it, *They were not obedient to his word*, which may be applied to Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who, notwithstanding the terror of this plague, *would not let the people go*; but there is no ground for it in the Hebrew.

(2.) The turning of the river Nilus (which they idolized) *into blood*, and all their other waters, which *slew their fish* (v. 29), and so they were deprived, not only of their drink, but of the daintiest of their meat, ^{<4115>}Numbers 11:5.

(3.) The frogs, shoals of which their land brought forth, which poured in upon them, not only in such numbers, but with such fury, that they could not keep them out of the *chambers of their kings* and great men, whose hearts had been full of vermin, more nauseous and more noxious — contempt of, and enmity to, both God and his Israel.

(4.) Flies of divers sorts swarmed in their air, and lice in their clothes, v. 31; ^{<4187>}Exodus 8:17, 24. Note, God can make use of the meanest, and weakest, and most despicable animals, for the punishing and humbling of proud oppressors, to whom the impotency of the instrument cannot but be a great mortification, as well as an undeniable conviction of the divine omnipotence.

(5.) Hail-stones shattered their trees, even the strongest timber-trees in *their coasts*, and killed their vines, and their other fruit-trees, v. 32, 33. Instead of rain to cherish their trees, he gave them hail to crush them, and with it thunder and lightning, to such a degree that the *fire ran along upon the ground*, as if it had been a stream of kindled brimstone, ^{<4123>}Exodus 9:23.

(6.) *Locusts and caterpillars* destroyed *all the herbs* which were made for the service of man and ate the bread out of their mouths, v. 34, 35. See what variety of judgments God has, wherewith to plague proud oppressors, that will not let his people go. God did not bring the same plague twice, but, when there was occasion for another, it was still a new one; for he has many arrows in his quiver. Locusts and caterpillars are God's armies; and, how weak soever they are singly, he can raise such numbers of them as to make them formidable, ^{<2004>}Joel 1:4, 6.

(7.) Having mentioned all the plagues but those of the murrain and boils, he concludes with that which gave the conquering stroke, and that was the

death of *the first-born*, v. 36. In the dead of the night the joys and hopes of their families, *the chief of their strength* and flower of their land, were all struck dead by the destroying angel. They would not release God's first-born, and therefore God seized theirs by way of reprisal, and thereby forced them to dismiss his too, when it was too late to retrieve their own; for *when God judges he will overcome*, and those will certainly sit down losers at last that contend with him.

3. The mercies that accompanied this deliverance. In their bondage,

(1.) They had been impoverished, and yet they came out rich and wealthy. God not only brought them forth, but he *brought them forth with silver and gold*, v. 37. God empowered them to ask and collect the contributions of their neighbours (which were indeed but part of payment for the service they had done them) and inclined the Egyptians to furnish them with what they asked. Their wealth was his, and therefore he might, their hearts were in his hand, and therefore he could, give it to the Israelites.

(2.) Their lives had been made bitter to them, and their bodies and spirits broken by their bondage; and yet, when God brought them forth, *there was not one feeble person*, none sick, none so much as sickly, *among their tribes*. They went out that very night that the plague swept away all the first-born of Egypt, and yet they went out all in good health, and brought not with them any of the diseases of Egypt. Surely never was the like, that among so many thousands there was not one sick! So false was the representation which the enemies of the Jews, in after-ages, gave of this matter, that they were all sick of a leprosy, or some loathsome disease, and that therefore the Egyptians thrust them out of their land.

(3.) They had been trampled upon and insulted over; and yet they were brought out with honour (v. 38): *Egypt was glad when they departed*; for God had so wonderfully owned them, and pleaded their cause, that *the fear of Israel fell upon them*, and they owned themselves baffled and overcome. God can and will make his church *a burdensome stone* to all that *heave at it* and seek to displace it, so that those shall think themselves happy that get out of its way, ^{381B}Zechariah 12:3. *When God judges, he will overcome*.

(4.) They had spent their days in sorrow and in sighing, by reason of their bondage; but now he brought them forth *with joy and gladness*, v. 43. When Egypt's cry for grief was loud, their first-born being all slain, Israel's shouts for joy were as loud, both when they looked back upon the land of

slavery out of which they were rescued and when they looked forward to the pleasant land to which they were hastening. God now put a new song into their mouth.

4. The special care God took of them in the wilderness.

(1.) For their shelter. Besides the canopy of heaven, he provided them another heavenly canopy: He *spread a cloud for a covering* (v. 39), which was to them not only a screen and umbrella, but a cloth of state. A cloud was often God's pavilion (~~Exod~~ Psalm 18:11) and now it was Israel's; for they also were his hidden ones.

(2.) For their guidance and refreshment in the dark. He appointed a pillar of *fire to give light in the night*, that they might never be at a loss. Note, God graciously provides against all the grievances of his people, and furnishes them with convenient succours for every condition, for day and night, till they come to heaven, where it will be all day to eternity.

(3.) He fed them both with necessaries and dainties. Sometimes he furnished their tables with wild fowl (v. 40): *The people asked, and he brought quails*; and, when they were not thus feasted, yet they were abundantly satisfied *with the bread of heaven*. Those are curious and covetous indeed who will not be so satisfied. Man did eat angels' food, and that constantly and on free-cost. And, as every bit they ate had miracle in it, so had every drop they drank: *He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out*, v. 41. Common providence fetches waters from heaven, and bread out of the earth; but for Israel the divine power brings bread from the clouds and water from the rocks: so far is the God of nature from being tied to the laws and courses of nature. The water did not only gush out once, but it ran *like a river*, plentifully and constantly, and attended their camp in all their removes; hence they are said to have the *rock follow them* (~~Exod~~ 1 Corinthians 10:4), and, which increased the miracle, this *river of God* (so it might be truly called) *ran in dry places*, and yet was not drunk in and lost, as one would have expected it to be, by the sands of the desert of Arabia. To this that promise alludes, *I will give rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen*, ~~Isaiah~~ Isaiah 43:19, 20.

5. Their entrance, at length, into Canaan (v. 44): *He gave them the lands of the heathen*, put them in possession of that which they had long been put in hopes of; and what the Canaanites had taken pains for God's Israel had the enjoyment of: *They inherited the labour of the people*; and the wealth

of the sinner is laid up for the just. The Egyptians had long inherited their labours, and now they inherited the labours of the Canaanites. Thus sometimes one enemy of the church is made to pay another's scores.

6. The reasons why God did all this for them.

(1.) Because he would himself perform the promises of the word, v. 42. They were unworthy and unthankful, yet he did those great things in their favour *because he remembered the word of his holiness* (that is, his covenant) *with Abraham his servant*, and he would not suffer one iota or tittle of that to fall to the ground. See ~~Gen~~ Deuteronomy 7:8.

(2.) Because he would have them to perform the precepts of the word, to bind them to which was the greatest kindness he could put upon them. He put them in possession of Canaan, not that they might live in plenty and pleasure, in ease and honour, and might make a figure among the nations, but *that they might observe his statutes and keep his laws*, — that, being formed into a people, they might be under God's immediate government, and revealed religion might be the basis of their national constitution, — that, having a good land given them, they might out of the profits of it bring sacrifices to God's altar, — and that, God having thus done them good, they might the more cheerfully receive his law, concluding that also designed for their good, and might be sensible of their obligations in gratitude to live in obedience to him. We are *therefore* made, maintained, and redeemed, that we may live in obedience to the will of God; and the hallelujah with which the psalm concludes may be taken both as a thankful acknowledgment of God's favours and as a cheerful concurrence with this great intention of them. Has God done so much for us, and yet does he expect so little from us? *Praise you the Lord.*