

THE
BOOK OF PSALMS,
AN EPITOME
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE,
OPENED.

IN WHICH THE PLAN OF EACH PSALM IS GIVEN,
THE SUBJECT-MATTER EXPRESSLY STATED,
AND THE WHOLE
SET FORTH AS PROPHETIC OF CHRIST, AND HIS CHURCH.

They are considered as having a principal respect to the Person of Christ, God-Man, Mediator--As treating of his Love to his Church--Of his Covenant Engagements with his Divine Father before all Worlds :--Of his Incarnation in Time :--Of the Perfection of his Human Nature :--Of the Holiness of his Heart, the Graces of his Mind, the Purity of his Affections, the Immutability of his Will, the Perfection of his Righteousness :--Of his Sufferings, Sacrifice, and Death :--Of his Burial, Resurrection, Ascension, Glorification, Coronation, and perpetual Priesthood in Heaven :--Of his Second coming in his Kingdom, and Glory, with his passing the final Sentence upon all Flesh.

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The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Rev. xix. 10.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1817.

Benney and Son,
Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London.

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE authority of the *Book of Psalms*, together with the title, are confirmed by Christ himself, who after his resurrection from the dead, said unto his disciples, *These are the words which I spake unto you whilst I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.* Luke xxiv. 44. And Peter addressing the whole Church assembled at Jerusalem, says, *For it is written in the Book of Psalms.* So that the title—the *Psalms*, and—the *Book of Psalms*, are cited by Christ himself, and by his apostle Peter. It is said by a very diligent reader of the Scriptures of the New Testament, that the *Psalms* are quoted by Christ and his apostles not less than eighty times. They were collected as they now are in use among the Jews, and in our Bible, by Ezra that great scribe in the Law of God. They were written by divers persons. We generally say, the *Psalms of David*, but they were not all written by him, and are variously ascribed by the Jews, who say they were originally divided into five books.

The first ends with the XL1st Psalm, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen.*

The second book begins with the XLIIId Psalm, and ends with these words of the LXXIIId, *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous works. And blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.*

The third book begins with the LXXIIId, and ends with these words of the LXXXIXth Psalm, *Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen and Amen.*

The fourth book begins with the XCth Psalm, and ends with these words of the CVIth Psalm, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the Lord.*

The fifth book begins with the CVIIth Psalm, and ends with these words of the CLth, *Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.*

Some of the Psalms have titles. Fifteen of them are entitled Songs of Degrees. The learned are not all agreed concerning what is to be understood by these. Others of the Psalms are without any title. These are the Ist, IId, Xth, XXXIIIId; all these are in the first book. The titles of the Psalms in the first book, and number of them are as follows:

PSALM III. *A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.*

PSALM IV. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth. A Psalm of David.* By *Neginoth*, is understood a musical instrument played on the hand, as harps and cymbals were.

PSALM V. *To the Chief Musician upon Nehiloth. A Psalm of David.* By *Nehiloth*, some understand wind instruments, such as have an hollowness in them to blow in.

PSALM VI. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith. A Psalm of David.* As *Neginoth* is considered as a musical instrument, so it being upon *Sheminith* is considered upon the eighth; or upon an instrument with eight strings, or in a base tune. See 1 Chron. xxv. 21.

PSALM VII. *Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.* Various interpretations are given of the word *Shiggaion*, or *Shiginoth*, as you have it in the first verse of the third chapter of *Habakkuk*. Some considered it an instrument of music; others, that it was an air, or tune to which this Psalm was sung; others translate it *the error of David*; others, *the secret of David*; others, *the delight of David*; and others, *the disquiet of David*. Calmet thinks it ought to be translated, *a song of trouble*, or, *a song of consolation*.

PSALM VIII. *To the Chief Musician upon Gittith. A Psalm of David.* It is conceived that *Gittith* was some instrument brought from *Gath*, or that was used by the sons of *Obededom*, the *Gittite*.

PSALM IX. *To the Chief Musician upon Muth-labben. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XI. *To the Chief Musician, of David.*

PSALM XII. *To the Chief Musician upon Sheminith. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XIII. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XIV. *To the Chief Musician, of David.*

PSALM XV. *A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XVI. *Michtam of David.*

PSALM XVII. *A Prayer of David.*

PSALM XVIII. *To the Chief Musician, 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: and he said, I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

PSALM XIX. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XX. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XXI. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XXII. *To the Chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XXIII. *A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XXIV. *A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XXV. *Of David.*

PSALM XXVI. *Of David.*

PSALM XXVII. *Of David.*

PSALM XXVIII. *Of David.*

PSALM XXIX. *Of David.*

PSALM XXX. *A Psalm Song, the Dedication of the House of David.*

PSALM XXXI. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XXXII. *Of David, Maschil.*

PSALM XXXIV. *Of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech: who drove him away, and he departed.*

PSALM XXXV. *Of David.*

PSALM XXXVI. *To the Chief Musician, of David, the servant of the Lord.*

PSALM XXXVII. *Of David.*

PSALM XXXVIII. *A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.*

PSALM XXXIX. *To the Chief Musician, to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XL. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM XLI. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

As I have left out the supplementary words, it will be very easy to observe the difference of the title of a *Psalm of David*, and *of David*. An account will be given of the titles, and they will be opened after the subject-matter of each psalm is given, and the plan of it set down. And I shall seek to obtain light from the learned in these particulars. In this first book there are but four psalms without a title.

In the second book there are but two without a title, and those are the XLIIIrd and LXXIst. The rest I will give an account of.

PSALM XLII. This begins the second book.

The title of this Psalm is, To the Chief Musician, Maschil, for the Sons of Korah.

PSALM XLIII.

PSALM XLIV. *To the Chief Musician for the Sons of Korah, Maschil.*

PSALM XLV. *To the Chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the Sons of Korah, Maschil. A Song of Loves.*

PSALM XLVI. *To the Chief Musician for the Sons of Korah. A Song upon Alamoth.* Some conceive that the word *Alamoth* signifies an instrument, or instruments of music styled virginals.

PSALM XLVII. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.*

PSALM XLVIII. *A Song Psalm for the Sons of Korah.*

PSALM XLIX. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.*

PSALM L. *A Psalm of Asaph.*

PSALM LI. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the Prophet came unto him, after he had gone into Bathsheba.*

PSALM LII. *To the Chief Musician, Maschil of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Abimelech.*

PSALM LIII. *To the Chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil of David.* It is by some conceived that *Mahalath* was a wind instrument.

PSALM LIV. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil of David, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?*

PSALM LV. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil of David.*

PSALM LVI. *To the Chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath.*

PSALM LVII. *To the Chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave.*

PSALM LVIII. *To the Chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David.*

PSALM LIX. *To the Chief Musician, Michtam of David, when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.*

PSALM LX. *To the Chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, Michtam of David, to teach, when he strove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of Salt, twelve thousand.*

PSALM LXI. *To the Chief Musician upon Neginah, of David.* Of the same sort of musical instrument with *Neginoth*.

PSALM LXII. *To the Chief Musician, to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM LXIII. *A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.*

PSALM LXIV. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM LXV. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm Song of David.*

PSALM LXVI. *To the Chief Musician. A Song Psalm.*

PSALM LXVII. *To the Chief Musician, on Neginoth. A Psalm Song.*

PSALM LXVIII. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm Song of David.*

PSALM LXIX. *To the Chief Musician upon Shoshannim, of David.*

PSALM LXX. *To the Chief Musician, of David, to bring to remembrance.*

PSALM LXXI.

PSALM LXXII. *For Solomon.*

When all is fulfilled concerning Christ, the antitypical Solomon, which is written in this Psalm, regarding his kingdom and government, then the Prayers of David the son of Jesse will be completed.

Thus ends the second Book of Psalms.

The third begins with the LXXIII^d Psalm, which is entitled, *A Psalm of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXIV. *Maschil of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXV. *To the Chief Musician, Al-taschith. A Psalm Song of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXVI. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth. A Psalm Song of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXVII. *To the Chief Musician, to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXVIII. *Maschil of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXIX. *A Psalm of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXX. *To the Chief Musician upon Shoshannim-eduth. A Psalm of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXXI. *To the Chief Musician upon Gittith, of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXXII. *A Psalm of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXXIII. *A Song Psalm of Asaph.*

PSALM LXXXIV. *To the Chief Musician upon Gittith. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.*

PSALM LXXXV. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.*

PSALM LXXXVI. *A Prayer of David.*

PSALM LXXXVII. *A Psalm Song for the Sons of Korah.*

PSALM LXXXVIII. *A Song Psalm for the Sons of Korah, to the Chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.*

PSALM LXXXIX. *Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.*

And thus ends the third Book of Psalms ; in which there is not one Psalm without a title.

The fourth Book begins with the XCth Psalm, which is thus entitled, *A Prayer of Moses the Man of God.*

PSALM XCI.

PSALM XCII. *A Psalm Song for the Sabbath Day.*

PSALM XCIII.

PSALM XCIV.

PSALM XCV.

PSALM XCVI.

PSALM XCVII.

PSALM XCVIII. *A Psalm.*

PSALM XCIX.

PSALM C. *A Psalm of Praise.*

PSALM CI. *A Psalm of David.*

PSALM CII. *A Prayer of the Afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.*

PSALM CIII. *Of David.*

PSALM CIV.

PSALM CV.

PSALM CVI.

This closes the fourth book, in which are ten Psalms without a title.

The fifth book begins with the CVIth Psalm, which is without a title.

PSALM CVIII. *A Song Psalm of David.*

PSALM CIX. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM CX. *A Psalm of David.*

PSALM CXI.

PSALM CXII.

PSALM CXIII.

PSALM CXIV.

PSALM CXV.

PSALM CXVI.

PSALM CXVII.

PSALM CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

The 111th to the 118th, were called by the Jews the Hallel, or Song of Praise, which the Jews sung on the night

of the Passover. We commonly call the 111th, 112th, and 113th Psalms the *Hallelujah* Psalms, because they begin with the word *Hallelujah*, which signifies *Praise ye Jah, Praise ye Jehovah, Praise ye the Lord*.

The next fifteen following, are entitled Songs of Degrees.

PSALM CXX. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXI. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXII. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXIII. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXIV. *A Song of Degrees of David.*

PSALM CXXV. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXVI. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXVII. *A Song of Degrees for Solomon.*

PSALM CXXVIII. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXIX. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXX. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXXI. *A Song of Degrees of David.*

PSALM CXXXII. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXXIII. *A Song of Degrees of David.*

PSALM CXXXIV. *A Song of Degrees.*

PSALM CXXXV.

PSALM CXXXVI.

PSALM CXXXVII.

PSALM CXXXVIII. *Of David.*

PSALM CXXXIX. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM CXL. *To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.*

PSALM CXLI. *A Psalm of David.*

PSALM CXLII. *Maschil of David. A Prayer when he was in the cave.*

PSALM CXLIII. *A Psalm of David.*

PSALM CXLIV. *Of David.*

PSALM CXLV. *David of Praise.*

PSALM CXLVI.

PSALM CXLVII.

PSALM CXLVIII.

PSALM CXLIX.

PSALM CL.

viz:—106th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 135th, 146th, 148th, 149th, 150th.

There are nine Psalms which are styled *Hallelujah* ones, In this last Book of Psalms are eighteen Psalms without a title. The Jews generally attribute all the Psalms which are without a title to *David*, as the writer of them. So that taking the whole collection, the following Psalms are without a title, viz:—the 1st, 2^d, 10th, 33^d, 43^d, 71st, 91st, 93^d,

94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 99th, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, 150th. In all thirty-four.

As it respects the subject-matter of the Psalms: some of them are prophecies concerning Christ: others are historical, containing sacred accounts of the Lord's dealings with his Church, in various periods, and under various dispensations: some are thanksgivings for a variety of blessings bestowed by the Lord upon his people, in which they express their gratitude unto him for the same; and others are like the doxologies in the New Testament, full of the highest admiration at the greatness, majesty, glory, and worth of the holy and immaculate Lamb of God. In some of them, the grace of the Holy Spirit in the minds of Saints is expressed in the fullest manner, and to the utmost degree: and in others, the most fervent outgoings of the spiritual mind, in its acts and exercises towards the Lord for his grace and blessings made known and bestowed on his Church, are most expressly mentioned.

As the Psalms contain the whole subject of grace as revealed and made known, so is there every great act of the Lord recorded and taken notice of, in, and throughout them. All, therefore, contained in the sacred Books of Scripture, from the creation down to the end of the Old Testament, is more or less noticed, and referred to.

Moses begins his Book of Genesis with an account of the creation. This great and stupendous act of wisdom, power, and goodness, is again and again hinted at; and Jehovah is admired and praised for it in several parts of the Book of Psalms. The agents of light, fire, and air, by which the whole visible system is supported and influenced, are expressed, and that in such a way as to give glory to the Divine and Sacred Trinity.

The purity of man in his formation, and when first created, with his fall therefrom, are understood, and here and there most fully expressed.

The covenant of the three in Jehovah, and the undertakings of the Lord Jesus Christ on the behalf of the elect, are a grand subject in this sublime part of the Book of Inspiration.

The universal deluge—the Church of Christ, in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their posterity—their exercises in the land of Egypt—the Lord's appearances to them, and his raising up those deliverers for them, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron—his bringing them out of Egypt—dividing the waters

of the Red Sea, stretching out a cloud to be a covering—giving them manna in the wilderness—opening a rock of stone, and giving them water—leading them into the land of Canaan, and settling them in it, together with a display and exercise of the Lord's wrath upon the unbelievers and murmurers, are very particularly expressed. The giving the law on Mount Sinai, with all its tremendous apparatus, are frequently hinted at, and so applied as to lead the mind to Christ, as the God of Israel, the God of Glory, the God of his Church, and the Saviour thereof.

All the ordinances of divine worship and the worldly sanctuary, in which the Lord was worshipped during the dispensation of Moses, David, and Solomon, are taken notice of: so that many expressions used in these hymns cannot be understood, if those are not. It therefore appears to me necessary that those should be clearly known, in order that the expressions which refer to them may shine forth in their glory. I will then just barely recite them, and express something respecting their symbolical meaning; or rather I will mention the following things as referred to, namely, the ark, mercy-seat, and cherubim of glory; the golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod which budded: all these were in the Holy of Holies, which place was a figure of Christ the Most Holy, and of the heaven in which he dwells. As the ark represented his person, who is the King of Glory, the Lord of Glory, the Brightness of Glory, the Glory Jehovah, before whom the Seraphim veiled their faces, when he shone forth in a visionary manner and worshipped him with a thrice Holy; *Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts*; as you may see recorded in the sixth chapter of Isaiah. The ark was covered over within and without with solid gold: the two tables of the covenant were in it; on it was the mercy-seat, or propitiatory oracle, or speaking-place. So called because the Lord spake from the mercy-seat, and from it gave forth his royal commands. The cherubim of glory overshadowed the mercy-seat, and between the two wings of the cherubim was a bright cloud, called by the Jews the *Shekinah*, a symbol of the Divine Majesty as dwelling between the cherubim; and many references are made to it in these sacred Hymns, Psalms, and Songs before us. As Christ was the whole substance of the ark, the mercy-seat, the cherubim of glory, the holy of holies, so this being understood by the sacred penmen, it could not be otherwise but that they must bring in Christ as the antitype of all these. So also the candlestick, the table of shew-bread, the tabernacle, the worship performed in it, the sacrifices, and perpetual incense

burnt in the worship of God, are hinted at; and they are so referred unto, that many passages of the Psalms must be lost except this be taken into view. In short it may be said, that all contained in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, is included in the Book of Psalms; which like a notary, or register, recites all the great acts which the Lord hath done, in creation and providence as the leader and conductor of his people, with his vast ends and designs upon them. He is pleased to give us in them, a full revelation of Christ, who in his headship and mediatorial glories, shines forth most glorious in this memorial and record of him. I conceive this may be considered as a just statement of the subject, viz.:—That the salvation of God, the whole gospel of the ever-blessed God, was set before Adam in Paradise in the instituted sacrifice, which gave a clear view of the way by which sin was to be abolished, and the curse removed. An innocent animal was slain, and substituted for sin to be laid on it. The fire came down from heaven upon it and consumed it: thereby sin was done away. The sinner was saved upon the footing of it. And all was a figure of Christ: who was to substitute his person in the room and stead of his Church and people. Their sins were to be transferred to him. He was to bear them in his own body on the tree. The curse of God due unto them, comparable to fire, was to come down on him. He was to be made a curse for them. And thereby he was to redeem them from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for them. This was thus fully expressed to Adam and his wife immediately upon their having sinned. This made known all that Christ was to be, and to do, and to suffer. And as Christ the anointed one, must become man, to the end he might put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, hence a variety of persons, Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Melchizedek, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Samson, David, Solomon, and others, were given to the Old Testament Church, as types and shadows of the Messiah. Some of them in their names, some in their persons, some in their actions, and some of them in their offices being partial types of him, and in some particulars. He the substance of them existed, as God-man, Messiah the prince, the head of the elect world, the serpent bruiser, the true sacrifice for sin, as Jehovah the righteousness of his Church, as the promised seed, the true Shiloh; and he was pleased to shine on his saints, and reflect on their minds some blessed knowledge, views, and apprehensions of himself, by means of these instituted types. So that hereby his Church was led

on gradually into a more clear, full, and comprehensive knowledge of him. Then as the sacrificial worship, together with the services performed in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple, were one grand and solemn exhibition of him, so those who saw into all this, and were in an essential manner called by the Holy Ghost to it, wrote under his most sacred and prophetic influence concerning the glories of Immanuel—the love of his heart, the visit he would make his Church by his open and visible incarnation, the complete obedience he would pay to the law by his life of conformity unto it, and the eternal redemption he would obtain for his whole Church by the sacrifice of his body and soul. On these subjects the psalmists dwell with inexpressible pleasure and delight. They extol him who is *God over all, blessed for ever, Amen*, for his becoming man. They dwell on the love of his heart, all which he manifested in the days of his flesh. They go over all his work, his victories, triumphs, and glorious conquests, and give him glorious praise for the whole of them. They collect all written and set forth in the Books of Moses, and exhibit the same in its full splendour and glory, so that in these Songs it shines forth with rays of light and majesty to an inexpressible degree.

The Lord Jesus Christ says to the Jews, *Before Abraham was I Am*. The psalmist in an address to him, says, *Thy years are throughout all generations*. The ever-blessed God-man, Jehovah-Jesus, existed in the self-subsisting essence, as coequal, coeternal, and coessential with the Father and the Spirit, from everlasting. He also by the will of the incomprehensible Three, as God-man, as the first-born of all God's thoughts, ways, works, counsels, purposes and designs, existed before the world was. He was then what he is now—the image of the invisible God, the first-born, the Lord, the proprietor of every creature. *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist*. See Colossians, chapter i. verses 15, 16, 17.

He was not incarnate before time, but he was God-man, by predestination before all time. He was set up in the will, counsels, and decree of the eternal Three in his whole person, God-man. He had the glory due unto him as such, with the Father before the world was. He was the head of his body the Church—their everlasting Father—their shepherd—their husband—their surety—their Saviour—their

friend—their brother. He was the Lord their righteousness. He was their true propitiation. He was their prophet, their priest, and king, before time; or he would not have been all this in time. It would cast a lustre, and stamp an inconceivable majesty on the Scriptures, were we to apprehend the glories of Christ before his incarnation. I mean the glories of his person as God-man, as the image of the invisible God, as the fellow of the Lord of hosts: as he who was possessed by Jehovah in the beginning of his way, before his works of old: who was set up from everlasting: who was brought forth as God-man, in the divine counsels and thoughts of God: who was by him as one brought up with him, who was daily his delight rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and his delights were with the sons of men. I do not mean, that either the human soul or body of Christ existed from everlasting; but I mean this, that the Son of the living God, who is of the same essence, eternity, power, glory, majesty, and essential blessedness with the Father, and the Spirit, in the same one incomprehensible Godhead, was set up to be God-man, in his whole person. And that he existed, and lived the life of God-man, enjoyed the glory and blessedness of being God-man, and was so in the view and repute of all the persons in Jehovah. As such he was the head of his body the Church. The foundation and corner-stone of the whole creation. The centre and circumference of the whole universe. The alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending. His name is *Amen*—*The faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.* His existence as God-man might be proved from his various appearances from the beginning of the world, before his incarnation—to Adam and the Antediluvian Patriarchs—to Abraham, and succeeding ones—to Moses, Aaron, and seventy of the elders of Israel—to Joshua, Gideon, Manoah, Samuel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. As also from his own words, who says, *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* See John xvii. verse 5. And were light and knowledge given, it would be of no small advantage to the elect Church of God, in Christ, if all the various visions and appearances of Christ, recorded in the Old Testament, were opened, as so many proofs of Christ's existing as God-man prior to these manifestations, and as so many preludes to his open appearance in the fulness of time by his incarnation. He was God-man spiritually, before he was God-man corporeally. He was in the form of God, and

thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Many expressions uttered by our Lord, recorded in John's Gospel, cannot be properly understood but upon the consideration of Christ's being God-man, before his incarnation. For instance, he says, *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.* John iii. 13. And Daniel says, *I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like unto the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all nations and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* Chap. vii. verses 13, 14. Whilst these truths concern the deep things of God, yet they are revealed, and shine forth as clear as the sun. They do so in an essential manner in the Psalms. And what Christ was in the holiest, with the view the Holy Trinity had and took of Christ, is so opened, as to render the subject most inestimably precious and sublime. The learned Mr. Hutchinson says, "the Psalms contain all the circumstances of our Lord's private employment, on which the Evangelists are silent. His meditation on the law day and night. His firm trust in Jehovah. His fervent prayers, and mournful ejaculations. They refer to all the emblematical institutions, typical sacrifices, deliverances, and persons, and apply them to the gospel state with as much assurance, and with the present tense, as if certainly and already transacted. The several agents are so introduced, that their very speeches may serve to distinguish each. The Psalms are a poem, an heroic tragedy, wherein the redemption of man is the plot; the hero, Christ; the scene of action the whole world, the whole created system, time, from before the creation to the consummation of all things. But the largest part of this mysterious drama is laid upon earth, and refers to the person of *the Irradiator with us*; as his joyful birth,—circumcision—wisdom, faith, sanctity when young, baptism, evidence of the Holy Spirit—temptations, and conquests over them—preaching, prayers, praises—resolutions to fulfil the law, and perform all righteousness—appointment of apostles—predictions, miracles—healing diseases—opposition from men, being scoffed, reproached, condemned, crucified—agonies under his Father's wrath—death—sacrifice—atonement—separation of the humanity from the

essence—embalment, burial, resurrection, ascension, and investiture as king, destruction to enemies.

“The use made of the irrational parts of nature there introduced requires particular regard. The action of the *names* on our bodies, and those of brutes, upon earth, and waters, to enliven and cherish us, are expressive emblems of what the holy names, light and spirit, were to do jointly, to procure and communicate spiritual life. Thus they make the barren *Adamah* fertile, impregnate it with vigorous heat, and supply it with radical moisture, whereby abundant crops are produced for bread, wine, oil, to strengthen, nourish, and refresh the human race; so leading flocks to verdant pastures, and fountains of pure water, and shewing by the instincts of, and for self-preservation in brutes, building on trees, harbouring on rocks, &c., that men should take refuge in Christ. There too the whole mute creation is called upon to give emblematical evidence that *irradiation* belongs to Jah the essence. So the burden of the song is ascribed to the Essence, his supernatural power of communicating lustre and strength, universally, and for ever; ascribe to him the springing forth like light, to execute the great design of man’s redemption; ascribe to him his incommunicable property of ruling and acting at the immensest distance; let the people exhibit this species of praise by irradiation in miniature, the emission of joyful sounds, vocal and instrumental, dancing in circles, dispersing revelation all around, or sending it down to the latest posterity by emblems or writing.”

I will give a few quotations from him, concerning the titles of some of the Psalms, as it will lead to the grand subject of them, and this by way of specimen of what may follow hereafter.

The first Psalm he entitles thus: A Description of Christ.

The second. All the Combinations of the Heathen against Jchovah, and his Christ, were gloriously frustrated by his resurrection, and unction, as King, Son, Intercessor.

PSALM III. To the Beloved. To cut off. To prune branches from a luxuriant vine. *What is the vine tree more than any tree? Is not that branch cut off which was among the trees of the forest?* So here is the chief branch cut off. This pruning was the means of making the vine, Christ, grow up to glory.

PSALM IV. To the Conqueror. The top shoot continually pressing upwards.

PSALM VIII. To the Conqueror over the trodden wine-press, wrath. Thou shalt crown him with glory and honor,

PSALM IX. To the conqueror over Death. To the Son. To the Beloved. I will sing the Branch cut off, thy name, O Most High. Sing the Branch cut off to Jehovah.

PSALM XVIII. To the Conqueror, to the servant Jehovah, to the Beloved, who spake to Jehovah the very words of this song, in the day Jehovah delivered his substance from the hands of all his enemies, and from the hand of the grave. A sublime description of the death, and victory, and resurrection of Christ, and of the destruction of his enemies.

PSALM LXXIV. The giver of knowledge to Asaph, (the gatherer of the strayed sheep, here said to be purchased of old.)

PSALM CII. A Prayer for the afflicted one, made responsible for iniquity.

From these quotations, I conceive, great light is cast on the Book of Psalms, as it respects the subjects on which they treat; to which I would subjoin a few thoughts of my own concerning them. They are a delineation of Christ. Of what he was in the Father's view and esteem. Of what he was in the sight of the eternal Spirit. Of what he was as God-man. Of what he was as the head, surety and Saviour of his Church. Of what he was in his relative glories. Of what he was in his mediatorial glories. Of all he was in his heart and affection to his people, whom he was to redeem by his most precious blood from all their sins, and out of the hands of all their enemies. The Psalms are a copy draught of him, and express what he would be found to be in his incarnate state. They describe him in his person and incarnate state, as the true Immanuel. They set forth the perfection of his person. The purity of his nature. The holiness of his mind. The immutability of his will. The integrity of his heart. The affections of his soul. The rule by which he walked. His delight in obeying the divine law. How he willingly suffered, the just for the unjust. How he bore the pains and curse due to the sins of his people. How he died—was buried—rose again from the dead—ascended up on high—was received into glory—and lives for ever, after the power of an endless life, to bestow all the blessings of his mediation on his Church and people. This is my general view of this invaluable portion of the word of God, entitled the Book of Psalms. And under these views I shall proceed with a particular explanation of them. Not as though this had not been done before; or as though I had more light into it than others before me; God forbid!

No. But I am yet in the body; I must be employed; and cannot live without it. I am an old man, and cannot keep up conversation long at one time: not through want of subject, but of strength. I find I can more easily commit my thoughts concerning Christ Jesus the Lord, to paper, than I can express the same in words. This is with me the real case. And I find myself necessitated that if I cannot do the one, I must the other. Yet I must confess it seems a very bold undertaking, for a man at the very close of life, to undertake to open a book which contains the whole epitome of the Bible. In which all the ordinances of the Old Testament worship must and cannot but be glanced at, and the feasts and festivals in the Jewish Church set forth. It may therefore be necessary to convey to such as may read my book, the idea which first led my mind to be thus engaged. It was this. Being present at family worship, where the reader requested of the senior present, what portion of the Lord's word he would have read? he replied, Read a Psalm. Upon which the reader began the book; and as I perceived it was to be read through, I thought I would write on each of them. This was the original cause, and what gave rise to my design. May the Lord the Holy Ghost bless me in the attempt! He only can. May he be my guide through the whole of it, and keep me from giving any wrong interpretation. I would not conceal any light I have received into the subjects contained in this most invaluable treasure of Scripture; nor would I censure any saint, who does not see with me. I am for receiving the whole revelation, testimony, and record, which God hath given of his Son, in any part of the divine volume of inspiration. I conceive Christ does not, neither can he exceed what he is revealed to be in the sacred word. Not that his full glories as set forth therein can ever be fully conceived, and comprehended; no, no more than we can take in the full light of the sun by the eye. If the sun were to shine to eternity, there would never be a greater fulness of light in it; yet the eye might be elevated to take in more of it, and hereby the sun would be more glorious to the view and apprehension of the eye thus elevated. So the raising up the mind of the regenerated, to the state of glory, where they will see and apprehend more of the glories of Christ than they can possibly do in a time state, is not any addition to the fulness and perfection of Christ's glory, but it is admitting them into that state in which they can better apprehend, and receive into their thoughts, conceptions of Christ's glory, than they can possibly in this

present state. It would be blessed, if real saints were set upon taking in all they possibly can, of Christ, in a time state. The whole of him is set before them in the word. They can only take the same in by the medium of faith. What they take in of Christ, from the word, under the unction of the Holy Ghost, by faith, will abide in their minds to all eternity; it will never be obliterated: neither sin, nor death, will ever obliterate it. There is as great a reality in it, as there is in seeing Christ face to face in heaven. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* In the present age, the Lord's people fall very short of what belongs to their high birth-right and privilege. They are too much for what they style Experience, more than they are for a real revelation of Christ, made to their minds, from the word, and by the Holy Spirit. Yet it is only the revelation of Christ made to us, can produce those fruits which are unto life everlasting. The apostle says the same in the following words: *But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

Nothing now remains, but to fix the subject and plan of each Psalm; and, where a title is prefixed; to explain the same with the best assistance I may be able to obtain from the learned; and then giving an explanation of each verse I shall perform all proposed.

May the Lord the Spirit be my guide! None teacheth like him. May he help me so to open this most sacred cabinet, in which Christ the pearl of great price is hidden and contained, as may be and prove a real blessing to his Church and people! And the glory shall be wholly given and ascribed to the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, the incomprehensible Three in the one incomprehensible Essence, to whom be praise, worship, blessing, and glory everlasting. Amen.

SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE

Brixton, October 8th, 1812.

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THE
BOOK OF PSALMS
AN
EPITOME
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE,
OPENED.

THE FIRST BOOK OF PSALMS.

THE FIRST PSALM.

THE subject-matter and plan of this Psalm are as follows.

It is a preface, or introduction to all the rest. It describes the blessedness of the man Christ Jesus, as consisting in his abstaining from all sin, and in his meditation and delight in the law of the Lord, which produced in him a continual growth in the exercises of all his spiritual graces, which is represented by an outward image from nature. The opposite state of the wicked and ungodly is taken notice of. And the issue of saints and sinners, as to their final state, is determined.

V. 1. *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

The Second Person in the incomprehensible Essence, had been set up by the coequal Three, from everlasting, to be God-man. He was covenanted for to become incarnate. He was revealed and published to be the seed of the woman—the seed of Abraham. He had been seen in the form of a man by Jacob and others, to whom he had been pleased to make visionary appearances. It was well known to his saints, that he would one day become true and very man; who as such would be the perfection of holiness, purity, righteousness, and integrity. The prophet, therefore, under the light and teaching of the Holy Ghost, here speaks of

him as blessed. So Christ most truly was as man; as the man who was secretly in God before all worlds, he being, in the will, counsel, and purposes of the Most High, taken up into personal union with the Son of the living God. Who was, by his mysterious incarnation in the fulness of time, to be made like unto his brethren in all things, sin only excepted. Whose person was holiness itself. Whose heart was purity itself. Whose will was in the utmost perfection, commensurate to the law of God. Whose life was an exact copy of it. He was without all spot of sin. He walked not in the counsel of the ungodly. He stood not in the way of sinners. He sat not in the seat of the scornful. He is the blessed man. The man of blessedness. He might well be set forth before his Church as such. It was a very suitable manner to introduce what was to be said of him, throughout these Sacred Hymns, to describe his blessedness, as one who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners. He was the Surety of his Church. He was the holiness, purity, righteousness and perfection of his people. To look at him as such, could not but afford them relief, and lift them off themselves, and carry off their thoughts from themselves unto him. This was the design of the Holy Ghost in this sacred revelation and testimony of his concerning the man Jesus. That from hence they might be led to admire him, and we might see also, what perfections of holiness, graces, righteousness, and perseverance, were found in our most blessed Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, who became true and very man for our sakes. Who is here set forth in his man nature. Who is *the man whose name is the Branch. The man who is Jehovah's fellow.* Of whom Isaiah says, *And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of waters in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.* As Christ, was revealed as the woman's seed, and the seed of Abraham, and the faith of the Old Testament Church was immediately concerned with his person, and incarnation, so from hence we may see the divine propriety of the Holy Ghost in setting him forth in the perfections of his man nature, in the very first Psalm, and describing in it his blessedness, as introductory to all further accounts which were to be given of him.

V. 2. *But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

As Christ was man, made of a woman, made under the law, and was as a surety of his people to fulfil it, so here is a description of his delight in obeying it. As man he had a

reasonable soul and human flesh, subsisting and constituting him man, which was taken up into personality with the only-begotten Son of God. The faculties of Christ's mind consisted of understanding, will, affections, and memory: all which were so perfect and complete in him, and so correctly exercised by him, as to constitute all his dispositions to such regularity as can not by us be conceived of. His understanding comprehended all the mind and will of God, revealed and declared in the holy law. His will was in perfect and exact harmony with his understanding; so that the glory of God, and the enjoyment of him for ever, were his supreme end and aim. His affections were all regularly set, and drawn forth suitably to all this. His memory was equal to his knowledge. He did in every sense delight in the law of Jehovah. He was the man after God's own heart, who was to fulfil all his will. He was admitted as the man in personal union with the Son of God, into all the counsel of the Divine will. He had a delight, and did most fully manifest it, to do the will of him that sent him. Whilst in his incarnate state it was his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him. The Scriptures were his study. He meditated on what was contained in them. He knew from them in his incarnate state, what he was to be, and to do, and to suffer. What he should be exercised in, and what must befall him. His whole heart was engaged in the law of the Lord. In observing it. In fulfilling it. In magnifying it, and making it everlastingly honourable. Day and night, without ceasing, was his whole mind engaged in meditations on it. And accordingly that so it was with him, the fruits of this appeared and were made evident.

V. S. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not fade, nor wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

He was the tree of life. He was ever verdant. He was full of grace, and always bringing forth the fruits of it, which is here expressed by this outward image or resemblance. *He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters*, which is made fruitful by the same. So Christ, the blessed man, and man of blessedness, he having all fulness in himself, as the glorious mediator, in whom it pleased the Father that the whole of dispensary fulness should dwell, was always green, always fruitful, always bringing forth fruit to the glory and praise of God. His leaf never faded. His profession always answered his possession.

He brought forth every fruit of grace in every holy thought, word, and work. He exercised every grace; and this exactly agreeable to every circumstance he was in; to every state he passed through. All grace was in him. And every grace was exercised by him. And that correspondent to the exercises of his holy mind in his incarnate state. He was as a tree of fixedness. He had the Spirit in him without measure. He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. He was replenished continually with the unction of the Holy Ghost. Whatsoever he did or said prospered. It answered the end for which he performed it, and spoke it. He was successful in the work of salvation. In obtaining eternal redemption. In completing an everlasting righteousness. In making an end of sins by his sacrifice. In conquering his, and all the enemies of his people by his own most glorious power and arm. What a most glorious portrait was here given of him to his Church and people! Sufficient to fix their affections on him. To satisfy their understandings. To enlarge their hearts towards him, and confirm their faith in him, so as for them to trust wholly and simply in him for everlasting life and salvation! When we view his person as the glory of heaven, his love as the miracle of eternity, his salvation as the song of heaven, and him as our wisdom, and our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption, we have then a key to open the account of the blessedness of Christ given us in this Psalm, and may then read it to our spiritual satisfaction.

V. 4. *The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*

All unbelievers and rejecters of the Messiah, either before his coming in the flesh, or such as lived when he was in the days of his flesh, or such as are now, they are ungodly. They are as chaff before the wind. They are easily driven away. They have no long continuance in this present time state. They are not like a tree planted by the rivers of waters. They are without fruit. They wither, fade, decay, and perish. It cannot be otherwise.

V. 5. *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*

They are out of Christ. They are without Christ. They are in their sins. They cannot but perish everlastingly. They are not found in the congregation of the righteous. The ungodly are not: such as are of and in the counsel of the ungodly; such as stand in the way of sinners; such as sit in the seat of the scornful: these are not in the congregation of the righteous. They do not belong to the

righteous Branch—to him who is Jehovah the righteousness of his Church and people. They are not of the number of those to whom he says, Your righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. So that there will be a very lasting discrimination made in the Lord's time, between the righteous and the wicked, between them that serve God, and them which serve him not. So it follows in the next words:

V. 6. *But the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish.*

There are none righteous in the Lord's sight, but such as are made so by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto them. They are pronounced righteous by the Lord himself. They are justified from all things. Their iniquities are all blotted out by the most precious blood of Christ. He is their way of access to the Father. Their way to all the blessings of grace. Their way of holiness. Their way to glory. Their persons are all known to the Lord. Their names all written in the Lamb's book of life. Their every out-going of heart towards him is all before, and well known unto him. It is all registered in his book of remembrance. The ungodly shall perish. When they stand before him in judgment, they having no part nor portion in Christ, and being found in their natural state, just as the fall of Adam left them, and with all their actual transgressions, sentence will be pronounced upon them accordingly. Thus the Lord in very faithfulness will most solemnly evidence that he knoweth the righteous, and the wicked. To the one he will say, *Come, ye blessed*; to the other, *Go, ye cursed*.

May the Lord the Spirit give us those blessed views of Christ, by this Psalm, as he intended in it, and to his name shall be the praise. Amen.

PSALM THE SECOND.

The subject matter and plan of this Psalm are as follows:

It is evident this Psalm belongs to Christ, the true Messiah, the King of Zion, the Messiah, Prince of the kings of the earth, and Priest of the most High God, from the application of the same to him in the New Testament. Not one only testifies, but the whole Apostolic Church unite in its being written of Christ. Look into the fourth chapter of the Acts of the apostles, in it you have an account of Peter and John, who having healed the man who was lame from his mother's womb, and were seized by the Jewish rulers, and put into prison for it, being dismissed the morrow after, with threatening that they should speak no more in

the name of Jesus; *They went to their own company and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together.* Verses 24—27. They could not be mistaken in their application, because they saw the realization of it. It was penned by David under the direction of the Holy Ghost. It seems to have been when he was seated on the throne of Israel. He had met with great opposition, first by the house of Saul, and secondly, by the Philistines and other nations, who feared his power, lest he should carry and turn his victorious arms against them. He was not only a type of Christ in his throne, kingdom, and office, but his case at times, and the circumstances he was brought into, served also to write of the Lord Jesus Christ in a very expressive manner, beyond what any other prophet ever did. This Psalm might have been styled, his Inauguration one. The learned tell us, that the Jewish Rabbies have confessed that it belongs to Christ. The opposition raised, both by Jews and Gentiles, against the kingdom of Jesus Christ, with his victory over them, and their confusion, are here declared. Also how that after his resurrection from the grave and power of death, he preaches the gospel, and calls on the kings of the earth to attend unto it, and he denounces his most just and severe judgments on those who reject it; pronouncing a blessing on those who receive it. This is the plan, according to which will be the interpretation.

V. 1. *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?*

Christ is the speaker. He proposes what he has to say by way of question; which is a method calculated to gain the attention, and makes way for receiving instruction. As a prophecy it was fulfilled in the opposition made by the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles against Christ, and was tremendously verified when the Jews and Romans awfully conspired, and united all their force and power to put him to death. To keep his dead body in the Sepulchre. To trample on his heavenly doctrine. To put a stop to the

spread of his name and fame, by the preaching of the everlasting gospel. These persons raged against him even unto blasphemy. Yet their rage was ineffectual. For there is no power, wisdom, counsel, or device, but the Lord will overthrow, which is levelled at him in the person of Messiah. The rage of the heathen, and the imagination of the people of the Jews, were a vain thing to set aside Christ. So as it respects the Church of the living God, Christ is the head of it. He is its defence. He is the Lord and king thereof. Every attempt against it will be in vain. As Christ is almighty, so he will maintain his Church, his gospel, his kingdom in the world, and the gates of hell shall never finally prevail.

V. 2. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed.

Christ is the Holy One, the Anointed One. He is the Messiah, which signifies anointed. He was set up in the everlasting counsel and covenant of the Three in Jehovah, to be the glorious mediator of his Church. He was shadowed forth by Aaron the first high priest of the Jewish nation, who was anointed with holy oil. He was the Lord's anointed. David was his type; his kingdom, throne, sceptre, were symbols of Christ, as the king over the people of God, over the Lord's spiritual and beloved people. His kingdom was of Jehovah the Father's appointment. His throne was fixed and set up by him. All opposition to him, all persecutions raised against him, were high treason against the God of heaven, who had given him a kingdom, and dominion, and glory, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. This began more openly to be discovered in the person, reign, and government of David, and broke forth in Christ very gloriously on his resurrection from the dead. At which time public opposition to him and it, began. Then, on his being declared to be both Lord and Christ, by his pouring down the Holy Ghost on his apostles and Church at Jerusalem, and sending his gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth, the kings of the earth set themselves to oppose him. The rulers of the earth took counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed. They will not have him rule and reign over them. No. That they will not. The heathen and unbelieving rejecters of Messiah the Prince, aided and assisted by their kings and rulers, persecuted the Church of Christ, and withstood the

preaching of the gospel with might and main. Yet it was a vain thing in them so to do. For the counsel of the Lord that shall stand. The gospel must continue until day and night come to an end. The salvation of Christ is immutable, and the salvation of his Church and people irreversible. Therefore the words which follow are spoken in vain.

V. 3. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

These words are expressed as spoken by the enemies of Christ. By the heathen and people, by the kings and rulers of the earth, who had set themselves against the Lord and against his anointed. Christ's kingdom is contrary to the rebellious nature of man. The gospel is opposite to all the schemes and maxims of unregenerate men. Our corrupt affections are the most inveterate enemies of Christ. Whilst this Psalm, considered as a prophecy, must have been very instructive to the people of God in the first ages after the ascension of Christ, it is of undoubted use now, and will be to the end of time, it being very descriptive of the natural opposition of all men, left to themselves, against Christ and his truth. Nature in every man suspects Christ. Nature cannot, will not submit to him. Let us have nothing to do with him. Let us oppose with all our might the doctrine concerning him. Let us by laws and public acts of our own, break the bands of the Lord and his Anointed asunder, and cast away their cords whereby they would bind us to obedience and submission to them. Let us never submit. And that we must do with our utmost vigour, by prohibiting the gospel from being preached amongst us; which was the case both by the Jews and Gentiles at the time this Psalm refers unto. So far did the Jews proceed herein, that they not only killed the Just One, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them, but so far did their rage and malice against Christ, his gospel, and saints extend, that Paul speaking of them, says, *Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men. Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.* 1. Thes. ii. v. 15, 16. And the heathen persecutors, and persecutions, were for the spirit of them the same. Yet all the efforts against Christ, and his truth, are wholly ineffectual.

V. 4. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

The expressions shew how detestable and insignificant all

the measures, counsels, designs, and schemes of the heathen, and the rulers, both among Jews and Gentiles, against Christ, were. The Most High God will bring down every proud look. He will cast contempt upon the schemes of all worldly politicians, let them dig as deep to hide their counsels against the Lord, and against his Anointed, as they may. He, sitting on his throne in the heavens, seeth under them, and beholdeth all the inhabitants of the earth. He surveys at one glance, whatever men are doing, or contriving to do upon the earth. He laughs to scorn all the devices and decrees of men against his will, Son, and gospel. This is most fitly expressed here, as the reason had been asked why such and such were so engaged? Why they had imagined a vain thing? For it was the weakest thought which could ever enter the human mind, to think to overthrow the counsels of the Almighty. The words by which they had expressed themselves, and the way in which they proposed, to and amongst themselves, the carrying their designs into execution having been by the prophet set forth, these words now before us are most justly suited with all the foregoing, as they express how the Lord had looked on, heard all they wickedly and maliciously uttered, and gives his Church to know that no weapon formed against her shall prosper, and that every tongue which riseth in judgment against her shall be condemned. This is done too in very strong and noble language, conveying ideas to the mind of the exceeding contempt God casts on all their rage, schemes, and purposes. And the next words express how he would visit the heathen and Jew for the same.

V. 5. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

This prophecy hath been most solemnly fulfilled. Jehovah the Father hath poured out his indignation upon the enemies and adversaries of Christ; as he formerly did on those of David. In his history and in the account given of him, soon after his accession to his throne, the Philistines came up against him. The sacred writer says, *But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David, and David heard of it, and went down to the hold. The Philistines also came, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. And David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? Wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the Lord said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand. And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, The*

Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place, Baal-perazim," (i. e. the plain of breaches). *And there they left their images, and David and his men burnt them.* Now this opposition made by the heathen against David, when he came to the throne, may serve to cast light on the occasion of his writing this Psalm, and on several expressions in it. For this reason I have quoted the fore-cited verses from the second Book of Samuel, chapter v. verses 17—21. What the Lord wrought for David at this time was so remarkable, that he refers to it when speaking by Isaiah some ages after to the people of Judah, he says, *For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.* I conceive that the Lord's work, his strange work, and his bringing to pass his act, his strange act, was his bringing up the Assyrian army into the land of Judah in the reign of Hezekiah, and destroying the same in the valley of Tophet; which would be another such display of his power as he made for Israel, when he stopt the light of the sun, and it and the moon stood still in their habitation in the days of Joshua, and like what he did for David at Mount Perazim, when he wrought deliverance for him. The wrath of the Lord hath been most awfully executed on the Jewish rejecters and contemners of Christ. So it hath been on heathen persecutors; and so it will be on all who finally persist in their unbelief and rejection of Christ. He will speak to all such in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. As a prophecy, it must have been of admirable use and service to keep up and maintain the faith of the apostles and the Churches of Christ in the three first centuries after Christ, in the full persuasion that his gospel would prevail in the world, and his enemies would fall before him and it, like as Dagon did before the ark of the Lord; and it may be of this use to us. It may assure our faith, that the Father being well pleased with his Anointed, he will manifest himself displeased with all enemies and powers which opposed him, and will finally bring down their strength to the earth. And in so doing, he will execute his wrath upon them, and manifest his sore displeasure against them. All which are most holy and righteous acts, expressive of his hatred against sin, and exercised according to the proper nature and demerit of it.

V. 6. *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

Notwithstanding all the rage and malice of Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, yet the Father set Christ upon his throne. He raised him up from the dead by the glory of his power. He declared him to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. He set him as his king whom he had chosen, upon his holy hill of Zion. It is called his holy hill, because on it the temple stood, which was the seat of worship, in which were all the sacred memorials, symbols, and figures of Christ, as in the sacrifices, ordinances, services, priests, high priests, and rituals of it, the whole of his person and salvation was expressed. From hence it was called the Holy Mountain, or Mountain of Delights, or Holiness, or the Glorious Holy Mountain. Now like as the Lord once set David the son of Jesse, king in Jerusalem, out of the reach of his enemies and implacable foes, which were numerous; so under this, as the figure and similitude of it, he speaks of raising up from the dead, and exalting the head of the Church, the appointed Messiah, and setting him as the victorious king of his Church and people on his mediatory throne; and this in defiance of all the opposition made unto, and against him. The Jews thought they had effectually done the business in crucifying him. As they caused his body to be guarded in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea by a guard of Roman soldiers, they conceived he could not possibly rise from thence; yet God raised him from the dead. And he here says, *yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.* Jesus was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. His resurrection was the first step of his exaltation. He was crowned king of earth and heaven on his resurrection morn. All power in heaven and earth was then invested in him. Now open honour was done him, before elect angels, and some elect men. He had now a name above every name. A throne above every throne. He hath by inheritance a more excellent name than all the angels in heaven, even that of the only begotten Son of God. He wields an universal and uncontrollable sceptre, as King-mediator over his Church, over the world, over all things visible and invisible. He is, says Jehovah the Father, *My king.* *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.* Christ, as it respected his human nature, came into our world through a descent of two and forty generations from Abraham, and twenty more from Adam, in all threescore and two. Yet his goings forth were from everlasting. All done at Christ's resurrection, was what was covenanted for from

eternity. He was the everlasting Father of his people. He was their eternal head. The covenant man. The man of the unction. The man in God. The husband, shepherd, surety, brother, friend, prophet, priest, king, and Saviour of his Church before all time, by the transactions of the sacred Three within the veil; and all of this was made known, and revealed in time by the word of inspiration, and by the incarnation, life, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus. The truth of this is fully evidenced in the next words.

V. 7. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Christ himself here speaks. Paul applies these words to our Lord's resurrection. In his sermon preached at Antioch, in Pisidia, as recorded in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts, he says, verses 32, 33, *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* As Christ was raised from the dead, so he was to ascend from earth to heaven. He was to be inaugurated into an eternal kingdom. He was to be seated on an immutable throne. He was to be invested with an unchangeable priesthood. He was to be the true Melchizedek. The king of righteousness. The king of peace. The prince of life. He was to be his Father's king. His Church's king. The king of nations. The king of saints. The prince of the kings of the earth. He was to have an enlargement of his spiritual kingdom. His mediatory kingdom was to be very extensive. Let him but ask, seeing he was now upon his throne, and it shall be granted him, agreeable with, and according to covenant transactions. So it follows in the next verse. Christ's resurrection morn was a declaration of him by the Father, that he was his mediatorial Son. That he had now a name more excellent than the angels. *For unto which of the angels said Jehovah at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* Yet these words were spoken by him, and this was his address to Christ upon his resurrection from the dead. This day of Christ's resurrection was the day of his exaltation, and open reign in the human nature above angels. The secret glory of Christ now began openly to shine forth. We have here the first words the Father spoke to Christ upon his resurrection from the dead. They are expressive of his infinite delight in his beloved Son. In the work which he

had performed. In his humiliation and laying in the grave. All which might be improved into an argument for the strengthening and encouraging our faith in his person, and in all his mediatory acts.

V. 8. *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*

These words are a continuation of what the Father said unto his Son, upon his resurrection from the dead. As there had been a mutual stipulation between them from everlasting, and the Son had fulfilled his engagements as the surety of his people, in his incarnation, and by his obedience and sacrifice, death and burial; so the Father having acknowledged this by raising him from the dead, is willing to make good to him all covenant promises. And as the Jews were to be cast off for a season, for their sin in crucifying Christ, and rejecting him as the true Messiah, and the Gentiles were to be taken into the Church and become part of Christ's fold, so the Father here bids the Mediator to ask for an enlargement of his kingdom. *Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* Which shews the vast extent of Christ's mediatorial kingdom. It will one day be manifest, that it extends to the ends of the earth. That he ruleth over all. And it may most justly be concluded from hence, that Christ hath an elect seed in them, which is to be gathered out; and that towards the close of time the fulness of Jews and Gentiles will be brought to the knowledge and acknowledgment of him. He has this extent of dominion that he may exercise his universal power, of which he speaks in an address to his divine Father, saying, *Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.* Soon after our Lord's resurrection and ascension, his gospel was preached, and his Church planted in the Roman empire. From thence it was extended to the ends of the earth: so that herein we may see in part a fulfilment of this promise. And it doubtless extends itself to the subduing all nations to the obedience of faith, in the Lord's time and way.

The absolute and uncontrollable power of Messiah, as king-mediator, is next expressed.

V. 9. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

Christ was to exercise his omnipotent power, and subdue

them by force, so that they should be in one way or other subservient to his glory. He was to execute judgments on them, and thereby give them full proof they were at his own supreme disposal: so that were they to persecute his Church, it was quite easy for him to disinherit them, and cast them off their foundations, and unhinge them. He could easily dash them to pieces. They were as easily to be broken as a potter's vessel. Our Lord quotes these words, and inserts them in his Epistle to the Church of Thyatira, saying to it, *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. (And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to pieces:) even as I received of my Father.* See Rev. ii. 26, 27. Christ is the heir of all things. He is Lord of all. The nations are in subjection to him. He is head over all things to the Church, and for the benefit of it. As the land of Judea, where the gospel had been preached, where Christ was born, and lived, died, was buried, and rose again from the dead, became afterwards destitute of its inhabitants by reason of their crucifying the Lord of Glory, so the Gentile nations were given to Messiah to plant his gospel in them; and we may here see this part of the covenant transactions between the Father and the Son explained, as recorded by the Prophet Isaiah in the forty-ninth chapter of his Prophecy, verses 5, 6, 7. *And now, saith the Lord which formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel.* As all is thus given to Christ, and he is the universal Lord and king, so his power and justice displayed by him are next expressed.

V. 9. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

All must be brought to submit either to the sceptre of Christ's grace, or to his power; for he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

The enemies of Christ shall be broken, and in the end finally bruised. It is impossible for the enemies of our Lord to withstand his mighty power. They are in all their power, parade, and bustle, but as a potter's vessel, which must fly in pieces at the first stroke of his iron rod. The power of Christ will be manifested in the nations, people, and kingdoms of men. I conceive we may look on the state of Europe, as holding forth at this very present time, a striking comment on these words. The whole of it is confusion and convulsion. It seems to shake almost to its centre. The nations and kingdoms in it are dashing in pieces, and breaking one another. The hand of the Lord is in it. The majesty and power of Christ are manifested in it, although he is not acknowledged. We may make a profitable use of it, by considering, that he will be the destruction, either of sin, or sinners. Such as are broken in heart under views of sin, and turn unto him, with all their souls, under the influences of his Holy Spirit, shall be found vessels of honor fitted for his use. Whilst such as are in their sins, and continue in the hardness and stubbornness of their minds in direct opposition to his holy and revealed will, shall be broken and dashed in pieces by the stroke of his eternal vengeance.

V. 10. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

These words are spoken by the Father, who raised him from the dead, and made known to him his decree concerning him, to be the Lord and heir of all things; and he being entered into heaven, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, who by setting in bright and fiery forms on the apostles on the day of Pentecost, had declared and proved him to be the true Messiah. He sent forth his gospel with a commission that it should be preached in all the world. And Jehovah the Father having committed all judgment unto the Son, and an account having been given of the irresistible power of Christ, and his inflexible justice towards his enemies in the past verse, so here is an exhortation given to the kings of the earth, to admit Christ's gospel into their dominions. To learn true wisdom from it. To yield themselves up to the consideration of that salvation proposed by it. To bow to the sceptre of Christ's cross. To cast their crowns at his feet. It serves to remind us that our Lord conquers his enemies, and will at last conquer all nations and kingdoms by the preaching of his gospel. He is represented after his ascension into heaven as going forth to conquer the Roman Pagan empire thus. *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow;*

and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. Rev. vi. 2. Christ doth his greatest acts in the hearts of men, by his gospel. It is the rejection of it which brings misery and ruin on states. It is either open or secret contempt of it, or the errors and heresies which are connived at and admitted of into the various states and kingdoms where the gospel is, that are the causes of many of the national judgments which are inflicted on them. A free reception of the gospel into any nation, and the senators and sovereigns receiving the doctrine of it, are a real blessing unto them. And they are here invited to this. And this is further pressed on them to do.

V. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.*

This is an excitation of the kings and judges of the earth, to express themselves on their reception of the gospel into their kingdoms and states, as sensibly affected with the honor done them, and the blessing bestowed on them, by their admission of the preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ amongst them and their subjects. The gospel is the glory of the nation and kingdom of which we are a part. It would be well with us if the doctrine of it were more clearly maintained, more truly known, more cordially received. The grace part of it belongs only to the elect. The doctrine of it belongs to all to whom it is sent. And it is because this is not kept pure, and undefiled that the ordinances of it are corrupted; hence the regal office and government of Christ, as king in Zion, are neglected; and it is the cause of all errors both in judgment and practice. The exhortation before us is to this purpose—That Christ being omniscient and omnipresent, and his eyes as flames of fire, such as have, or may receive his gospel should consider this: let them serve the Lord with their whole hearts, by giving themselves wholly to his holy will and service; let them act as in his sight and presence, fearing to offend him in any way or manner. As it respects the general address to the nations of the earth, it is a far greater honor, and will yield more exalted pleasure to their minds to serve Christ, than to be at the head of victorious armies, and surrounded by applauding nations. Therefore let them open, and manifest their joy by exultation and outward expressions thereof. All this should be done to Christ. Agreeable to this the Prophet Jeremiah says, *The nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.* If the receiving the gospel in the doctrine and ordinances of it be such a blessing, that kings and judges cannot be sufficiently thankful to the Lord for it, how

much beyond all this, is it to receive Christ into our minds, and to have him dwell in our hearts! Such have indeed reason to serve the Lord with fear, with an holy, reverential esteem of him. It becomes them to rejoice before him with the highest exultation and gladness of heart, fearing in the least to offend him. The word *trembling* conveys an unpleasing idea to the mind. It cannot here be designed to create any dread; for that would be contrary to what the true knowledge of Christ, as set forth in the gospel, produces; which is expressed thus, *That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.* Luke ii. 74, 75. We have the word *trembling* made use of in the New Testament, by the apostle in two exhortations given by him; one to servants, the other to a particular Church of Saints. *Servants, be obedient to them which are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ.* Eph. v. 5. *Wherefore my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Philippians ii. 12. I conceive one of these passages explains the other. The *fear and trembling* in both, to which servants and saints are exhorted, seem to be a carefulness to act before Christ, as became them, under the consideration of the relation they stood in to him, and to be careful they did not offend him by any un-gospel carriage and behaviour. I conceive it ought to be so interpreted in the words of the Psalm before us.

V. 12. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

This is the way in which the kings and judges of the earth are to testify their obedience and submission unto Christ. We find in Scripture kissing was used as expressive of love and obedience. Thus Samuel kissed Saul, and said, *Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee captain over his inheritance?* It was used also in religious and divine worship. The Lord says to Elijah, *Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which have not kissed him.* 1 Kings xix. 18. It was said by the idolaters in Israel, *Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.* See Hosea xiii. 2. Job mentions it under the same idea, as giving worship or homage, xxxi. 27. Which is mentioned only to convey to the mind what is implied by the expression

here. It is to submit to Christ. To yield full and entire obedience unto him. To receive instruction from him. To acknowledge him to be what he is. The Father's Anointed. The Christ of God. The King-Mediator, upon his throne, almighty to save, he being Lord God omnipotent. Submit says Jehovah the Father unto him, I have put all worlds, beings, and things into his hand. It is my sovereign will that to him every knee should bow. It is my pleasure that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. Bow therefore unto him. Own him to be your Lord. Submit to his sceptre. Acknowledge him to be your lawful sovereign. Yield full and entire submission to his government. Confess and acknowledge him to be his Father's king, his Church's king, that he is king of nations, that he is king of saints. It will turn to your advantage so to do. Should he shew his anger, and display the same towards you, where are you, or where will you be then? The day of his anger and wrath will come, when nations, kingdoms, kings, emperors, and potentates who have not submitted themselves unto him, and received his gospel into their states and empires, shall perish for ever. Then it shall be evidenced, that blessed are all they that put their trust in him. As Christ is now upon his throne, the prince of the kings of the earth, the first begotten from the dead, the resurrection and the life, the first fruits of all that sleep in him, so it is true blessedness to trust wholly and alone in him. His person and work, his word and promise are our security. His Father's revelation and testimony of him, and the witness of the Spirit in the word, are all-sufficient for our ground and foundation of faith and confidence in him. May all who profess faith in the Son of God, and trust in him alone for life and salvation, enjoy all contained in these words—*blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Amen,

PSALM THE THIRD.

This Psalm has the following title,

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

This is the first Psalm that begins with a title; and the first in which the word *Selah* is used. The learned say, it signifies elevation, or lifting up of the mind, or of the voice. It likewise expresses a solemn belief of a thing so to be, or an admiration, and also an asseveration. Some say it is a *nota bene*, or *mark well*; others that it is the same with *Amen*: So it is—or, So it shall be—So may it

be. Others will have it to be a note in singing high, in lifting up the voice; and observe that it is only used in psalms and songs, and always at the end of verses, excepting in some few places, as Psalm lv. 19, Psalm lvii. 3, and Habakkuk iii. 2. The learned tell us there are three kinds of songs in this sacred collection—psalms, songs, psalm-songs, and odes or hymns: all which the apostle collects together, when he says, *Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.* Eph. v. 19. Mr. Romaine says, there are three Hebrew words often used in the titles of the psalms, which the Septuagint have translated psalms, hymns, and songs. The word rendered by them *hymns*, is *Thehilim*, which is the running title of this book, is expressive of the general design, and is an abridgment of the whole matter. It comes from a Hebrew word, that signifies the brisk motion of light, shining and putting its splendour upon any object, and which makes it bright and illustrious. Hence comes the propriety of the word, as it is used to praise, which is to set an object in the light; that the rays shining upon it may render it splendid and beautiful, and thereby glorious and praise-worthy. Such are the psalms. They are rays of light. Enlighteners (if I might use such a word, and it is the literal sense of the Hebrew hymns) intended to manifest the glory of the person, and to shew forth the work of God—Jesus: for light, in its various uses in nature, is the appointed emblem of the Lord Christ. He is distinguished by this name throughout the Old Testament, and he applied all the passages to himself in the New, when he declared—*I am the light of the world.*

As the title gives us an account of the state and circumstances David was in when he wrote it, and you may read the same in the second Book of the Prophet Samuel, the fifteenth chapter; so the substance of it is as follows:—David having corrupted Bathsheba, and killed her husband Uriah, God by the Prophet Nathan declared to him he would raise up evil out of his own house against him; which was executed in the rebellion of Absalom. Now this case in which David was, is the mean in the hand of the Lord the Spirit of leading him afresh to Christ, and whilst he speaks of himself, he as a prophet writes also in the person of Christ, and utters a prophecy concerning him. So that the subject and plan of the Psalm is for the substance of it as follows:

Here is the case of David's Messiah, persecuted by rebellious Israel. He complains in the anguish of his mind, of the reproaches of his enemies, who insulted him as one for-

here. It is to submit to Christ. To yield full and entire obedience unto him. To receive instruction from him. To acknowledge him to be what he is. The Father's Anointed. The Christ of God. The King-Mediator, upon his throne, almighty to save, he being Lord God omnipotent. Submit says Jehovah the Father unto him, I have put all worlds, beings, and things into his hand. It is my sovereign will that to him every knee should bow. It is my pleasure that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. Bow therefore unto him. Own him to be your Lord. Submit to his sceptre. Acknowledge him to be your lawful sovereign. Yield full and entire submission to his government. Confess and acknowledge him to be his Father's king, his Church's king, that he is king of nations, that he is king of saints. It will turn to your advantage so to do. Should he shew his anger, and display the same towards you, where are you, or where will you be then? The day of his anger and wrath will come, when nations, kingdoms, kings, emperors, and potentates who have not submitted themselves unto him, and received his gospel into their states and empires, shall perish for ever. Then it shall be evidenced, that blessed are all they that put their trust in him. As Christ is now upon his throne, the prince of the kings of the earth, the first begotten from the dead, the resurrection and the life, the first fruits of all that sleep in him, so it is true blessedness to trust wholly and alone in him. His person and work, his word and promise are our security. His Father's revelation and testimony of him, and the witness of the Spirit in the word, are all-sufficient for our ground and foundation of faith and confidence in him. May all who profess faith in the Son of God, and trust in him alone for life and salvation, enjoy all contained in these words—*blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Amen.

PSALM THE THIRD.

This Psalm has the following title,

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

This is the first Psalm that begins with a title; and the first in which the word *Selah* is used. The learned say, it signifies elevation, or lifting up of the mind, or of the voice. It likewise expresses a solemn belief of a thing so to be, or an admiration, and also an asseveration. Some say it is a *nota bene*, or *mark well*; others that it is the same with *Amen*: So it is—or, So it shall be—So may it

be. Others will have it to be a note in singing high, in lifting up the voice; and observe that it is only used in psalms and songs, and always at the end of verses, excepting in some few places, as Psalm lv. 19, Psalm lvii. 3, and Habakkuk iii. 2. The learned tell us there are three kinds of songs in this sacred collection—psalms, songs, psalm-songs, and odes or hymns: all which the apostle collects together, when he says, *Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.* Eph. v. 19. Mr. Romaine says, there are three Hebrew words often used in the titles of the psalms, which the Septuagint have translated psalms, hymns, and songs. The word rendered by them *hymns*, is *Thehilim*, which is the running title of this book, is expressive of the general design, and is an abridgment of the whole matter. It comes from a Hebrew word, that signifies the brisk motion of light, shining and putting its splendour upon any object, and which makes it bright and illustrious. Hence comes the propriety of the word, as it is used to praise, which is to set an object in the light; that the rays shining upon it may render it splendid and beautiful, and thereby glorious and praise-worthy. Such are the psalms. They are rays of light. Enlighteners (if I might use such a word, and it is the literal sense of the Hebrew hymns) intended to manifest the glory of the person, and to shew forth the work of God-Jesus: for light, in its various uses in nature, is the appointed emblem of the Lord Christ. He is distinguished by this name throughout the Old Testament, and he applied all the passages to himself in the New, when he declared—*I am the light of the world.*

As the title gives us an account of the state and circumstances David was in when he wrote it, and you may read the same in the second Book of the Prophet Samuel, the fifteenth chapter; so the substance of it is as follows:—David having corrupted Bathsheba, and killed her husband Uriah, God by the Prophet Nathan declared to him he would raise up evil out of his own house against him; which was executed in the rebellion of Absalom. Now this case in which David was, is the mean in the hand of the Lord the Spirit of leading him afresh to Christ, and whilst he speaks of himself, he as a prophet writes also in the person of Christ, and utters a prophecy concerning him. So that the subject and plan of the Psalm is for the substance of it as follows:

Here is the case of David's Messiah, persecuted by rebellious Israel. He complains in the anguish of his mind, of the reproaches of his enemies, who insulted him as one for-

saken of God. His foes are spoken of as numerous. He expresses his trust in the divine promises. He relates and gives an account of the issue of his prayers. He triumphs over the impotent malice of his enemies. He ascribes salvation to Jehovah. As this is the grand subject of the Psalm, so it may also be applicable by way of a spiritual accommodation to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ Jesus, who through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. As David's case led him to think and write of Jesus his Lord and ours; so the various experiences of saints in this present evil world, lead them, through the teachings of the Lord the Spirit, to the exercise of their faith on Christ Jesus. As the title is the first verse of the Psalm, and should be always read as such, so I shall join it with what is marked as the first verse of it, and unite it thus.

V. 1. *A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.*

Lord, how are they increased that trouble me? Many are they which rise against me.

As David when he fled from Jerusalem for fear of his son Absalom, went with a heavy heart, and passed over the brook Kidron, and as he went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, he wept as he went up; so our Lord Jesus Christ, that very night in which he was betrayed, went over the same brook, with a heavy heart. For he said to his disciples, *All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.* And when he was entered into the garden of Gethsemane, he said, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* And near Mount Olivet, he was in an agony, and sweat his bloody-sweat. Also at this time all hell was let loose against him. The unbelieving Jews, influenced by Satan, gathered together against him. At the instance of the grand senate of the Jewish nation, a band of Roman soldiers were furnished with lanterns, and torches, and weapons for to seize on him and secure him, that he might be put to death. Our Lord said unto them, *This is your hour, and the power of darkness.* As it was to be thus with Christ, so David's case at the time he penned this Psalm being what it was, it made way for him as the personator of Christ to write of him as he here doth. And as it was with Christ the Head, so it is sometimes with his members in their present militant state. Their temporal, and spiritual enemies increase in number and malice against them. Many sins, corruptions, temptations, sorrows and miseries increase upon them, which cause them to cry out unto the Lord; and they sometimes put questions to the Lord, just as their cases call for and require.

V. 2. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

This is the first time the word *Selah* occurs. It signifies, *mark this.*

These words most expressly describe the case and state of our Lord Jesus Christ. When our Lord was as the surety of his people, in his suffering state, this was the very spirit of his enemies. They cast the uttermost contempt on him. They despised his person. They derided him as the Messiah. They mocked him for his faith in God. They insulted him for his profession of faith. They rejoiced in concluding that he was an impostor. When our Lord hung on the cross his enemies said, *He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him, for he said, I am the Son of God.* Yet he hangs on the tree. He neither delivers himself nor does the Lord deliver him. There is no help for him in his God. He is forsaken of him. Such were the mockeries of Christ's enemies, and their thoughts, and words of, and concerning him when he was in his passion, and nailed to the tree. It was no small part of Christ's sorrows, and afflictions, thus to be addressed. It is sometimes a sore affliction to the Church and people of Christ, to be thus treated and despised, when they are under peculiar temptation, desertion, affliction, and persecution. It is a cutting word, sometimes used by their adversaries against them. It was the case with David, it was of the antitypical David, and is more or less the case of the Church of Christ, and of individual believers under sore and grievous distress; and it is to be remembered. Therefore, the word *Selah* is subjoined. Yet faith is supported under all this: it breaks forth; yea, it triumphs over all afflictions and distress, saying,

V. 3. But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head.

The glory of Christ was not seen by his enemies, when he was in his humiliation, and suffering state. Nor did the royalty of David appear when he went weeping and barefoot up to Mount Olivet. Nor does the glory of Christ's Church and saints appear, when they are oppressed by their spiritual and temporal enemies. Yet Jehovah the Father was the glory of Christ. He was the shield of Christ. He was the defence of Christ. He was the lifter up of his head. All Christ engaged in, undertook for, became incarnate to perform, and submitted unto, was predetermined by the Father in the everlasting covenant. The end was the manifestative praise and glory of Jehovah. The promises given in the transactions between the Father and Christ, were the founda-

tion of his faith, and the expectation of his mind. He therefore endured the contradiction of sinners against himself; and found all he wanted in the fulfilment of divine promises to him. The Lord was his shield—His protector—His defence. So he is of all the chosen ones—Of all the elect people of God—Of the whole Church of Christ, and of each individual saint. It was matter for Christ to triumph in. So it is for us. The faith of Christ is set before us, and his great triumphs also, for our encouragement, and example. And it is no small part of our life of faith on the Son of God, to be looking on him—the various acts and exercises of his mind—and the way in which he overcame sin, Satan, miseries, sorrows, and enemies of every sort and from every quarter. It being all by faith in Jehovah his covenant God: who was the lifter up of his head: who gave him victory, honor, and triumph over all his enemies. Believers in Christ, it would be of use to you to consider this. We too often fail, and are too often foiled by our enemies both temporal and spiritual. And that by too much looking at, and attending to what they have to say unto and of us. I shall ever remember at times, what one of the oldest friends I have in the spiritual world, once said to me in conversation. He put it by way of question. “How did Christ overcome the world? Not by looking at it, but by looking wholly off it.” And we overcome no one single corruption, let it be of what sort it may, nor any temptation, sorrow, or misery, by looking at it. If we look wholly off the same, and look simply to Christ, we are safe, and are kept from evil that it doth not hurt us. Now this being the case with Christ himself, it therefore deserved the word *Selah* to be put to the former verse, which shews it should be noticed by us, in all places, and cases, and throughout all generations. When any say, there is no help for us in God; that we are hypocrites; that we are so and so. Look to the Lord: confess to his praise that he is your shield, your glory, your protector, and the lifter up of your head. Follow Christ as your example herein. This is one blessed way in which you may glorify him.

V. 4. *I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.*

The exercise of faith on the Lord, makes way for prayer, for all true faith is more or less expressed in prayer. It is so here. The prophet had taken refuge in God. He had reposed his confidence in Jehovah. He had triumphed in him. Then he called upon him. He had real audience with him. He was heard; and he was answered. This was the

case with David—This was the case with Christ. And this is the case of all the Lord's people, in a greater or less degree. On the occasion of penning this Psalm, it was precisely so with David. He, hearing his prime minister was among the conspirators, prayed thus: *O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.*" 2 Sam. xv. 31. A very short prayer; yet it entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; and was answered by making use of Hushai the Archite, who came with God save the king, God save the king, to David, when he fled from Absalom, and whom he sent back to defeat the counsel which Ahithophel might give. And so he did; for Absalom and all the men of Israel said, *The counsel of Hushai the Archite, is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.* All this was of the Lord. It was in answer to David's prayer. It was therefore expressly declared, *The Lord had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom.* 2 Sam. xvii. 14. So when the Jews and Romans, with Judas at their head, as their leader and guide, were in open rebellion, and opposition against Christ, he cried unto the Lord: and cast the whole Roman band flat on their backs on the ground by a single word; *I Am.* Also in the garden and on the cross, when encompassed with all the sins and sorrows of his people, and loaded with the curses of the law due to their every transgression, he cried unto the Lord, and poured out his soul in strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. He was born up. He was carried through that great conflict of soul which he had, when he said, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* He was heard. An angel from heaven was sent to comfort him. He was heard, when he cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* By the Father's shining on his mind, giving him to know his soul sorrows were equivalent to all the demands of justice; which made way for our Lord's bowing his head on the cross, and saying, *It is finished.* Thus the Mediator was heard out of God's holy hill. And so are all who belong to Christ, when they pray in faith and in the Holy Ghost, offering up their requests in the name and person of the all glorious and prevailing Mediator. The word *Selah* is added to this; which if it signifies *Amen*, then here it means, *So it is.* If an asseveration, then it is here used to seal this as a truth. If it signifies a pause, then it suggests that this subject should be taken notice of. If it signifies a lifting up of

the voice, then it easily leads to confess, that nothing can lift up our hearts and voices to the Lord, more than the grace he shews us, in hearing and answering prayer. As this is the second time in this Psalm that it is used, I would here make this use of it: that as the words in their highest sense and meaning are pronounced in the person of Christ; so his being heard in the garden and on the cross, when he made his soul an offering for sin, should be remembered by us, in a very singular manner, as of the very uttermost importance.

V. 5. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.

The words are very expressive of the calmness and serenity of David's mind. He had called upon the Lord, and was answered. He had committed his all into the hands of God, and been fully persuaded the Lord had heard, and would answer him. He is now perfectly freed from all carking and distressing fears. Therefore he betakes himself to sleep, and lays down on his bed for that purpose. He slept sweetly in the arms of Jesus, he having laid them underneath him. He awaked from his sleep. He found it had been very refreshing and relieving to him. He awaked out of it altogether the better for it. And it was because the Lord sustained him. We have here a most delightful view of the composure of the Psalmist's mind, notwithstanding the circumstances he was in. Though his son and people are in arms against him, and he flies out of the royal city for fear of being overwhelmed with sorrows and sufferings, from a darling son, and subjects; yet having prayed to and committed the whole of his case to the Lord, and put himself under his divine care and protection, he sleeps safely, and without care and fear. Sleep is the nurse for tired nature. All know what it is to sleep, and to feel refreshment therefrom. Yet none can define what it is. Nor can we say when it seizes us. It is the emblem of death, which comes on the body just as sleep does. Persons may be long in the act of dying, yet death does its office instantaneously. Just like sleep, it seals up the senses. The spirit is dislodged. The body is asleep in the arms of death. Thus all respecting death is finished. This was precisely the case with our Lord. He laid down his life for his sheep. He slept the sleep of death. His soul departed from his body, and was admitted into Paradise. He slept the sleep of death. His body rested in the grave, as its proper bed, for a season. He awaked from the sleep of death by his resurrection out of it. He awaked, and seeing the fruits of his life, death, burial, and resurrection, was refreshed. All which was in victory and triumph over all his, and his

peoples enemies. None of his people need fear death, because he is the Lord and conqueror of it. Let us to avoid the fears of death and the grave, look on Christ, who composed himself on the cross, as on a bed of sorrows unto it, and committed his soul into his Father's hands, in full confidence of a joyful resurrection, according to the promise, at the time appointed, with, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. And having said thus, he gave up the ghost.* In these views we may learn how to sleep, and how to die. Sleep is a short death, and death is a longer sleep. And it would be a real blessing to fall asleep every night in the same faith of Jesus, and in the same rest and confidence in him, as we would desire when we shall fall asleep in his arms by death. Believers, it is the same Jesus who surrounds us, and is our protector on our beds, as will watch over our bodies when they are breathless, and will preserve them in the grave.

V. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people, that have set themselves against me round about.*

Thus David expresses himself as it respected his own case. He had received from the Lord refreshment both for body and mind. The Lord had heard and answered him. He was again raised up, and revived, and it was to live in his sight. He was raised up in every sense refreshed, and for further work and services—To live in the Lord's sight—To live to see more of the faithfulness of God respecting his own person, and to be brought out of his present case and circumstances—To obtain deliverances from his present enemies; and he here expresses his confidence of this. He is not afraid of the insurrection of the people: let them set themselves in battle array against him, he knows the Lord will work deliverance for him. So, as the words refer to Christ, he was too strong for all his enemies. He overcame them all by his resurrection from the dead: and he here expresses his undaunted courage and boldness over and above all. True faith in the resurrection of Christ, is all-sufficient to make the righteous, his beloved ones, as bold as a lion; even though all hell were collected into one grand legion against them. Let believers remember this, and act agreeably to their belief of it.

V. 7. *Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.*

By the resurrection of Messiah from the grave and power of death, all the power of Satan was broken, and his principalities and powers finally subdued. Our Lord hereby

plucked the spoil out of the hands of these beasts of prey . and this was also the act of the Father, who raised him by his glorious power, and wrought in Christ and by him this glorious salvation; so it is here ascribed to him. It expresses the mind of Christ, respecting the power which would be put forth on his behalf—His prayer to God for his own salvation, by his being raised up above, beyond, and out of the reach of all his enemies; and that they might all be smitten and broken. It is expressed as though done. In David's case, very soon after he wrote this, it was thus done for him, by the victory gained over the rebel Absalom and his army; and David speaks of it in faith as though it had been already accomplished, which shews the confidence he had of the Lord's being his shield and glory, his protector; victory, and defence.

V. 8. *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.*

Salvation of every sort is from the Lord; let it be temporal, spiritual, or eternal. David might well express himself thus, when the Lord delivered him from the rage of Absalom, and the rebellion of the people, his own subjects, against him. So might his antitype, Messiah the Christ of God, when he was delivered out of the hands of all his enemies by his resurrection from the grave and power of death, after he had slept the sleep of death. Salvation is a most important word as used in the sacred Scriptures. Next to the word grace, it is the most comprehensive. The first time we meet with it is in the forty-sixth chapter of Genesis, where Jacob on his death-bed cries out with holy rapture, saying, *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.* After this Moses the man of God takes it up, and the Israelites being in very great distress, having two inaccessible mountains on each side of them, the sea before them, and the Egyptians their enemies behind them, close at their heels, they cried out unto the Lord, upon which Moses said unto them, *Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.* In the close of the chapter it is said, *Thus the Lord saved Israel that day.* On account of which Moses in his song sung on that occasion says, *The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.* In after time Moses called *Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua*, which signifies *the Essence saveth.* Jesus is *Jehovah*; and he is *Jehovah the Saviour.* Thus he speaks,

I, even I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour. Hannah the mother of Samuel says, *My heart rejoiceth in the Lord: mine horn is exalted in the Lord: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies, because I rejoice in thy salvation.* It is said on the discomfiture of the Philistines, *So the Lord saved Israel that day.* 1 Sam. xiv. 23. And elsewhere, *the Lord wrought a great victory. And the Lord wrought a great salvation, and the people returned only to spoil.* Salvation is of the Lord. It was the contrivance of the Three in Jehovah. It was carried into execution in the fulness of time by the God-man, Christ Jesus. All the blessings of it are contained in his fulness. He communicates of them to his saints as their cases call for, and require. Salvation is of the Lord. Salvation is from the Lord. He works it for his people in a variety of instances as their circumstances and cases require—In delivering them out of the hands of their enemies, he giving them victory over their spiritual and temporal foes—In appearing for them when they are in imminent danger; and bestowing upon them the blessing of deliverance when they least expect it. All who believe in Christ, through the grace and energy of the Holy Spirit, may well be at all times engaged in ascribing their whole salvation to Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, and rejoice that the blessing of the eternal Three, as the fruit of everlasting love, resteth upon them. It is a great part of the believer's life of faith on the Son of God, to be thus engaged. It is most truly pleasing and very delightful work, to be ascribing the whole of our salvation, and giving the whole glory of it to the essential Three in the incomprehensible Jehovah, and saying, Let thy blessing, O Lord, be upon us, and upon all thy people. Amen. In the Lord's blessing all good is contained. When we enjoy real spiritual views of it, and have fellowship with the eternal Three in it, then we enjoy heaven and glory, in the first fruits, and foreviews of the same. May all believers, and the whole Church of the living God be thus favoured, for the Lord Messiah's sake, and to the real increase of his manifestative glory. Amen.

PSALM THE FOURTH.

The title of this Psalm is, *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth. A Psalm of David.*

Christ is the subject of this Psalm. He is the person who is the speaker in it. He here prayeth to God, in which his address, importunity, and devotion deserve particular notice.

Having offered up his request, he addresses his enemies in a very suitable and solemn manner: He asks them several questions. He gives them to know he is above them and all their malicious efforts against him. He would have them therefore stand in awe and not sin so tremendously as to go on rejecting him, the true Messiah. He would have them offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and trust in the Lord for salvation. He expressly declarerth unto them, that all true peace and comfort are to be found alone in God; and concludes in resting in the full assurance of faith, on the Lord for himself. This is the subject-matter and plan of the Psalm.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth, a Psalm of David.*

Hear me ^{me} when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged ^{me} when I was in distress, have mercy upon me, (or be gracious unto me; so it is in the margin), and hear my prayer.

A most suitable introduction to the subject contained in this Psalm. I will first aim to explain the title. Above fifty of the Psalms have this title, *To the Chief Musician*; and which has been supposed by many to signify—a chief musician, a chief singer, or precentor. So this title before us has been explained—to the chief musician to be sung to stringed instruments. The word *Neginoth* signifies, as some conceive, the musical instrument which was made use of in the temple service, which was played on by the hand, as harps and cymbals were. But the learned Mr. Fenwick has observed, it seems of no small prejudice to this opinion, that neither the Chaldee Paraphrase, the Seventy, nor any other of the ancient versions appears to have any knowledge of this chief musician. All these versions are said to render it in a different way, as thus: *To the end. To the victor, or giver of victory. For triumph, or for the triumpher.* And says the learned Mr. Parkhurst, in his Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 462, “Though we might suppose king David to direct his Psalms to the *Chief Musician* in the temple service, yet can the same supposition be made with regard to the Prophet Habakkuk? Would he direct his prayer, chapter the third, *to the chief musician on my stringed instruments?* as in our translation, verse 19? It would seem, therefore, to be a title of Jehovah in Christ, like unto this, *And also the Strength, the Victory, and Eternity of Israel, will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he should repent.* 1 Samuel, xv. 29. *The victory and eternity of Israel* seems to be the title of him, who not only in his own person overcame all temptations, and suffer-

ings, and even death itself, but also giveth his followers the victory, yea, maketh them more than conquerors. See Rev. iii. 21. Rom. viii. 37. 1 Cor. xv. 57. And who according to the Seventy, and Vulgate Version, is the end or scope of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, as Rom. x. 4. And this interpretation is both confirmed by, and will illustrate Habakkuk, iii. 19, *The Lord Jehovah (is) my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' (feet), and the giver of victory (celebrated) on my stringed instruments will make me to tread on my high places; or rather, the giver of victory will cause me to tread on my high places, with Psalms sung to stringed instruments.*

Having obtained from so learned a person so much light into the meaning of the title, I shall accordingly build on it; and consider this Psalm as offered up to the giver of victory, which will very well suit the explanation I shall give concerning it. As I view the Lord Jesus Christ here set before his people, in his incarnate state, in which he was humbled to the lowest. In which he was a man of sorrows. In which he had a variety of enemies, from whom he expected deliverance; which was to come from the giver of all victory, God himself. As man, he had God for his head, God for his father. He sought unto him at all times for help and succour. He poured out his heart before him, and that with strong crying and tears; and the Father heard him always. The person of Christ, the perfection of Christ, the mind of Christ, the immaculate holiness and purity of Christ's humanity, the life of Christ, the knowledge of Christ, the faith of Christ, the prayers of Christ, the obedience of Christ, are most minutely expressed and declared in this, and throughout the Psalms. It is well for us to look at him in every point of view, in which the Holy Ghost sets him before us, in every part of the testimony which he bears of him in, and throughout the word of inspiration. Christ as the surety of his people, came into the world, to fulfil all righteousness for them. He was righteous in his own person. He lived up to the very perfection of all required by the holy law of God. He had a personal righteousness which he could plead on his own behalf, as he had also a righteousness which he could plead on the behalf of all his Church and people. He had his accesses unto God in prayer. He was very important and importunate in his requests. He pleads here like himself. Like one in great affliction. He calls on God to be heard. He entitles him the God of his righteousness. It was in obedience to his will he became incarnate. He obeyed the law, and fulfilled all righteousness, in obedience to his Father's

will. It was because he had signified what his pleasure was respecting this in his everlasting covenant. Hence our Lord here addresses him as the God of his righteousness, and demands attention on account of it. He also acknowledges what had been done for him. God had enlarged him when he was in distress. This, therefore, he improves into an argument for present favour to be shewed to him. For present mercy to be granted him. For a present answer to be given unto his prayer. Christ's holy mind was in continual act and exercise. It had every thought in it properly, and most regularly engaged. He was always believing. Always praying. Always obeying. He was always engaged in the work of the Lord. He was all devotion. His prayers were always suited to his case. They were always for what he stood in need of. They were all founded on covenant engagements. They were quite equal to the promises given him as Mediator. They were always uttered and offered up on those pleas which could not but prevail. It would be well for us to consider all this. It is to the intent we may, that Christ is so set forth in the word. We in our being conformed to Christ, and by those ordinances of persecutions, and sufferings, which sometimes befall us for his name's-sake, can only be supported by views of our Lord's going before us, as our Saviour, and forerunner, looking to God as his covenant God, and calling on him in prayer for succour and relief, as we must look to him, and call on him for help in our every time of trouble. His person is the ground of our plea at the throne of grace. His personal righteousness is the plea we alone can make, and utter before his Father and our Father, and before his God and our God, for the hearing and answering our prayers. It is because our great and all-sufficient Mediator has prayed for us, that we are heard and answered. It would be very beneficial to our minds, if in reading the Psalms, we were led to consider them as opening the whole heart of Christ, and laying the same before us. As the Lord Christ had addressed his God in prayer, and been heard and answered, and was assured he should be a complete conqueror over all his enemies; so he addresses them in the next words.

V. 2. *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? How long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.*

Christ laid aside the appearance of royal majesty in his state of humiliation; though he was the Lord of Glory, the heir of all things, the king of the Jews; he being the king Messiah, and appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh. He

was in the eyes of the Jewish people, without form and comeliness. They neglected him. They treated him with the utmost contempt. They were bitter enemies unto him: Notwithstanding all this, he here expostulates with them on this subject. He puts questions unto them. He gives them the title of *the sons of men*, to shew that the persons whom he here speaks to were *great men*; such as the elders of the people, and such as composed the great senate of the nation; and these were in an especial manner his enemies. They consulted to oppose his pretensions to Messiahship. They brought accusations against him, and treated him as a blasphemer, because he said he was the Son of God. They charged him with being in compact with the devil. They said his miracles were the fruit of it. Now all this may be considered as included here, as we consider the Psalm prophetic; containing what would be the case, and appear realized in our Lord Jesus Christ, and be the real treatment and malice of the Jews towards him. It was the glory of Christ, that he was the Son of the living God. That he was the true and very Messiah. That he was the king and sovereign of his people of Israel. That he was the Saviour and Glory of all who believed on him. It was his glory to speak as never man did. To work such works, perform such acts, effect such cures, and produce such miracles, as none but himself ever did. It was therefore an awful effect of their ignorance of him, of their contempt and wilful rejection of him, to confront him and deny him to be the Messiah of whom all the holy prophets had spoken since the foundation of the world. It was a merciful act in Christ to address them on this very interesting subject. To expostulate with them on it. To ask them how long they would go on, and thus proceed to act. To enquire of them how long they would love vanity, and please themselves with the expectations of a temporal Saviour, to the neglect of a Spiritual One. How long they would deny his eternal power and Godhead, and seek to maintain their rejection and unbelief of him, by seeking after leasing, or inventing all kinds of falsehood concerning him. In the gospels we have many sentences from Christ to the Jews, answerable and equal to this very interpretation of the passages before us. The Lord Christ adds these words to his expostulation.

V. 3. *But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.*

The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. I am sent by him. I am his holy one. I am godly. I am set apart for himself. I am the man in God. The man of his right hand.

I am the covenant man, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world. I am his chosen one, in whom his soul delighteth. I am set apart for his glory; in whom all his promises are yea and Amen. In whom all his manifestative glory is for ever to appear, and shine forth. Jehovah chose me for himself. Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was I am. You cannot neglect me and be saved even from destruction by the Romans. I pray and Jehovah heareth me. The Father heareth me always. Ye will not come to me that ye may have life; yet these things I say, that ye might be saved. Thus a clear account is given by the prophet in the Scriptures before us, both concerning Christ, and the state of the Jewish people in the day when the Son of man should be revealed; and comparing this with the New Testament, you see a very just agreement with the prophecy, and the event and accomplishment of the same. It should be kept in remembrance, that all that Christ really was in his incarnate state, with all the dealings of the Jews, together with their hatred and malice against him, are most exactly set forth in, and throughout these sacred Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs. I do not stop to quote the Evangelist, and compare them with what is now before me, taking it for granted, that there is no immediate necessity for it. Not that I conceive what is said on this Psalm before me, cannot be proved by them; but being as yet but as it were on the threshold of the work, I leave it for the reader to reflect on the propriety of what is delivered, as I conceive, will very easily appear. Our Lord's converses with the Jews, and before the senate of the nation, as recorded by John, are very similar to what is contained in the explanation of this former part of the Psalm. As the speaker who personifies the Messiah in this sacred Scripture before us, had declared himself to be set apart by Jehovah for immediate fellowship with himself, as the image of the invisible God, as the Wonderful One, in whom all the elect of God were to be united and gathered together in him; so he is pleased to give those persons with whom he had been expostulating the following wholesome advice.

V. 4. *Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.*

There is nothing like silent contemplation on the words of Christ; for want of it, even saints themselves are very great losers; so are those who are but external hearers of the gospel. Our Lord frequently addressed his auditors in the days of his flesh thus, *He that hath ears to ear, let him hear.* And since his ascension into the highest heavens,

he closes each of the seven epistles, which he commanded to be written, and sent to the seven Churches in Asia, with these words, *He that hath an ear to hear let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.* The Messiah calls on the Jews to stand in awe of the just judgments and displeasure of the Lord against them, for their neglect and disesteem of him whom he had sent. He would caution them not to sin by renouncing him as their Messiah whom all the prophets testify of. *Search (says he) the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.* This, if any thing can, will be a means of opening your eyes, and giving you to see that I am the same which I said unto you from the beginning. To sin against me is to wrong your own souls. All they that hate me love death. Enter into the subjects which I have delivered from time to time unto you. Compare the outward evidences I have given you of my mission and commission from my Father, with the prophecies concerning me. Compare the same one with the other. Set your hearts to this study. Converse with your own minds on these subjects. Let it be your employment in the night-season. When you are alone. On your bed in the silent watches of the night; and be still and diligent in your enquiries upon these momentous subjects. To shew the necessity of this most solemn advice, the word *Selah* is added. To shew the importance and necessity of it, and also to practise it. And surely it is well with such as know the Lord, to receive Christ's words into their minds. To lay them up in their hearts. To commit them to memory. To receive them into their understandings. To meditate on them secretly, and when they are secretly engaged in conversing with their Lord. It is well to be employed when on the bed to feed by spiritual meditations on the words of Christ's lips. It is the best preservative from sin. It is the best way to keep the mind stayed on the Lord. It is comfortable both for body and mind. It is health and cure to both. The knowledge of Christ, and communion with Christ yield heart-ease, and soul-content; and when this is enjoyed, the body feels more or less the benefit of it.

V. 5. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.

So speaks the Lord Jesus Christ to the Jews; who in so doing, would acknowledge him to be that great Prophet who should come into the world. He would then be very glorious in their view, as the Lord their Righteousness. As the holy and immaculate Lamb, who was figured out and

testified of, by all the legal oblations under the œconomy and ritual of Moses. In whom they were all realized. By whom they were all to be put down, and superseded by the one sacrifice of his body and soul in union with his person, which he came into the world to offer once for all. A true acknowledgement of him, and his work of salvation, completed by his obedience and sacrifice, would make way for them to offer the sacrifices of righteousness. They would be praising God in the highest for the gift of his only begotten Son. For his mission into our world. For the righteousness of Christ which is the perfection of all that believe in him. For the blood-shedding of Christ which is the atonement of the soul. For him as the altar by which all believers draw nigh unto God. All which would secure the heart, and fix it, and keep it fixed, trusting in the Lord; in Father, Son, and Spirit, for all the blessings of a free, full, perfect, complete, and finished salvation. We are very apt to overlook this. Yea, we who live when the gospel proclaims all this to our ears, and the Holy Spirit hath brought the same home to our hearts. Under the Old Testament, such as were true and spiritual believers, lived in the full expectation of the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, and in the belief that he would realize in his own person all represented of him, and every type and memorial which had been given concerning him, in his life and death, and thus fulfil all prophecies which had been given of him. When the Son of God was manifested in the flesh, and finished all foretold of him, and ascended up into heaven, and sat down on the right hand of God; his apostles and true disciples lived in the full belief of all which he had accomplished. The matter of fact, and the divine testimony which the Father and Spirit had given concerning Christ as the true Messiah which should come into the world. In our days we do not make so much of this matter of fact, that the Son of God is come, and hath finished the transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness; nor of the record of God concerning it, that he hath given us eternal life, and that this life is in his Son, as they did. We substitute what we style the work of the Spirit in our minds, in the room and stead of Christ and his finished work; so that we live a life of sense, in a view and apprehension of our inward graces, instead of living a life of faith on the Son of God. Yet we can only offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and put our *trust* in the Lord, as the righteousness and sacrifice of Christ are exalted in our understandings, minds, hearts, memory, and affections,

by the Spirit of the living God, agreeable with the revelation and testimony made and given of the same in the Scriptures of Truth. The words before us are a command from Christ. It is true blessedness to obey it. We are never more truly blessed in our own souls, cases, frames, and experience, than we are when employed in praising Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, for the righteousness and offering of Jesus Christ. We have true views of the Father's love and wisdom, in giving his only Son to be the covenant and purifier of his people, and view in the light of the Word and Spirit, the inestimable worth, dignity, perfection, and efficacy of Immanuel's life and death; receive the testimony of the Holy Ghost into our minds concerning it, and thereby rest well pleased with the will, counsel, covenant, and salvation of the essential Three; it is then we have communion with them in their acts of grace, and are refreshed with the life-giving efficacy of the Saviour's work, and trust in the coequal Three for the whole of our salvation, and every blessing thereof. This makes way for our praising the Lord, and giving him the glory of our whole and complete salvation.

V. 6. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.*

The former part of these words are very expressive of the language of the mind unacquainted with Christ. All who are left in their natural state, and to themselves, are in want of, and in search after good, and seek for it where it cannot be found. The mind of man is an empty faculty. It requires satisfaction. It is always on the search for it. Ever since the fall poor sinners are looking at such and such objects and subjects to make them happy, which can only render them more and more unhappy; because they do not find, nor will they ever find God in them. All out of Christ is sin, misery, death, and damnation. The world is under the curse in consequence of the fall. Every creature is insufficient to give true and substantial happiness to the rational mind. Whatsoever might be the case before the fall with Adam in Paradise; yet now it is so, and it hath been proved by one of the wisest of all the sons of men, that all creatures, and all the pleasures, and good they can possibly yield, is vanity and vexation of spirit. We have it in the form of an enquiry, but it may be considered as a desire. As expressive of a mind enlightened by the day-spring from on high, and longing to be satisfied with an enjoyment of Christ's presence. Hence these words, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*; may be considered as

a reply to the question, *Who will shew us any good?* All real and spiritual good consists in the favour of God. His love is the fountain and spring of it. When he is pleased to shine upon us in Christ, in a free and manifestative way, then our hearts are gladdened indeed. Then we enjoy all good. Christ when he was under the imputation of sin and guilt for us, was without the sensible enjoyment of the Divine favour. When he had put away sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness, and finished the work of obedience and sufferings, he might well say in his own person, and on the behalf of all his people, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* It is in consequence of his prayer, that the Father shone on him when he had finished the work, and shines on us, as one in him, and with him, and as interested in his work; and to enjoy the light of God's countenance, for the Father to shine upon us in the person of his anointed, is life everlasting. This gives us true content. In this we enjoy all good. As we are led into clear, scriptural, spiritual views of it, it yields divine satiety to our minds. It therefore well becomes us to be always putting up this request, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* It is a blessing to have the spirit of prayer; so it is to notice the returns to our prayers, in those gracious answers the Lord is pleased to make unto them. This must not be overlooked here; because as this verse contains a prayer, so the next contains the answer to it. Christ is the face of God. The presence of God. He is the angel of God's presence. The apostle says, *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* Our Lord, who is the angel of Jehovah's presence, says to Moses, *My presence shall go with thee.* Solomon says, *In the light of the King's face is light, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.* All which may most justly be applied to Christ.

V. 7. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and wine increased.*

Our Lord as Mediator, having offered up his prayer, for himself, and his whole Church, immediately received an answer, and enjoyed the blessing which he requested. This he here makes his acknowledgement of. He who was filled with the uttermost sense of all the evil contained in sin, was also filled with the very uttermost sense of all contained in his Father's love. He who in his incarnate state, had his mind enlightened to see, know, and apprehend the emptiness of creatures, and all creature good, had his heart filled

with gladness in the real enjoyment of the light of God's countenance lifted up upon him. He who was as the sin-bearing Saviour made a curse for us, was lifted up above and beyond it, by the light of his Father's countenance shining on him. This put gladness into his heart. It was an exuberancy of it; so as to exceed all the enjoyments of time, sense, and created good. It exceeded all the world could partake of. The joy with which men rejoice in time of harvest, or that of vintage, was not to be compared unto it; and so it is with the Church and people of the Most High God, when he puts gladness into their hearts, by giving them real spiritual and supernatural views of his love and goodness unto them in Christ Jesus, and sheds abroad a sense of his love in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them, then they actually partake of such gladness in their hearts, as all the world out of Christ, are strangers unto. It is heavenly and divine. It comes from heaven, and it leads up their minds thither. They have Christ the bread of God, the bread which came down from heaven to feed upon. They have his blood to drink, which surpasses the juice of the grape; and their joy and gladness in him are permanent and lasting.

V. 8. *I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.*

When our Lord had finished his work, and having called on his Divine Father had been heard and answered; he receiving full satisfaction that his personal obedience and sufferings were most highly satisfactory to law and justice, and having by the lifting up of the light of the Lord's countenance upon him, received testimony hereof, might well bow his head on the cross, and say it is finished: and then composing his soul to rest, and committing his body to the grave, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life, say, *I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.* After which he yielded up the ghost, crying with a loud voice at that very instant, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* It is a very great thought, to conceive our Lord Jesus Christ set forth, in every thought of his mind, in every affection of it, in every act of his faith, in all which passed in his understanding, in every part of his work performed by him in his state of humiliation in the Psalms. That he is thus revealed in them, each gives full evidence. We may here observe the propriety of the title prefixed to this before us: *To the Triumpher—To the Giver of Victory, &c.* For here is Christ's triumph over death and the grave. He closes