

their wealth. Their earthly sayings are repeated, as though no wisdom were to be compared with it. Yet abundance of this is but self-flattery. The prophet sets a note to this, wishing it might be attended to. *Selah*. Mark this well; think it over. You cannot save your souls. You cannot save yourselves from death. What you leave behind is all of an earthy nature. There is nothing durable in it; no, there is not.

V. 14. *Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.*

These are very mortifying and self-debasing subjects. Death is the last act upon us, and this fits us for the grave, which is the pit of corruption, where the body is to remain, and be reduced to its first principles. The enemies of Christ among the Jews, the man of wealth, of riches, the wise man, the strong man, the foolish man, the brutish man, all died: they have all been laid in the grave. Such as conceived their houses would have continued for ever—that their dwelling-places would have remained to all generations, are swept off by death; so will all their successors. They are laid in the grave. Death feeds on them. The grave is an habitation to every one of them. There they are to remain for a long season, and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning of the resurrection; for the dead in Christ shall rise first. Whilst the bodies of these persons spoken of are in their graves, their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling, and the place which once knew them shall know them again no more for ever.

V. 15. *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.*

These words are of vast importance. They are spoken by our most glorious Lord and Saviour, who had at the 5th verse said, *Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of mine heels shall compass me about?* He it is who here says, *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me.* He who had been declaring, from verse 6 to verse 14 inclusive, the impossibility of man, of any man's redemption, by any thing he was possessed of, or by any thing he could do or perform—He who have expressed and spoke out all which the sons of men boast of or value themselves upon—He who had viewed them in their graves, laid there as so many rotten carcasses, and expressed how their beauty, their decays, their names are blotted out, and that even at the resurrection morn the saints of God will have dominion; as these sons of God will be the children of the resurrection—He it is, who before his incarna-

tion, and having expressed himself in this prophecy on his own atonement, here expresses his faith concerning the resurrection of his own body from the grave and power of death. *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave* : he will raise me up ; I shall live in his sight. He will hereby prove the virtue of my blood, the efficacy of my death, his full and everlasting acceptance of it. He will receive me ; he will raise me up, and I shall live in his sight. To this the word *Selah* is added, by way of confirmation of this most important verity. It is somewhat like these words, pronounced by our Lord to his beloved John : *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death.* Rev. i. 18. This laid a blessed foundation for the saints who lived when this Psalm was first wrote and pronounced, for their renewed faith on this great fundamental truth of the everlasting gospel, in the revelation of it which they were favoured with, the resurrection of the Messiah from death to life immortal.

V. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased.*

As the Lord's beloved ones are to build their hopes on Christ alone, he being the object thereof, and his resurrection from the dead, and his living in heaven, in our nature, as our Lord, Head, and Saviour ; so the following verses, with which the Psalm concludes, are so many motives to endure to this. Worldly power is not to be confided in ; worldly prosperity is fleeting, and will pass away ; there is none of it, nor any thing in it, worth enjoying out of Christ ; it is only as Christ is enjoyed in it, we can be a whit the better for it. Why may not these words, in the first place, be considered as very suited to the apostles and first ministers of Christ, who left all for their Lord and Master's sake, to preach his unsearchable riches to poor gentile sinners ? I can see nothing against this : they most assuredly contain in them a lesson of instruction worthy of Christ to give, and of his people's practice throughout all generations. It might possibly be designed by Christ to lift off the hearts of his people, and raise them up above and beyond all the power they had in the course of their ministry to contend with. Let it be viewed by saints as it may, it suggests this, that all the riches and glory the enemies of Christ may appear to be possessed of are but momentary. It is not worth looking at, neither ought the Lord's people be afraid it will be to their injury. It will soon be over with such.

V. 17. *For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away : his glory shall not descend after him.*

No : all ends, as to his enjoyment of his riches and glory,

with his breath. Therefore cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of? It is too much the case, many cannot live comfortable if they are not well thought of. Surely this is a vanity, and a sore evil. Some, who, one would conceive, must have some knowledge and communion with Christ, and should be making up all their present heaven in what they know of him, from the revelation made of him in the everlasting gospel, yet are too much taken with the outward splendour of the riches and glory of others. Hence what is contained in this part of the Psalm is very necessary for them to consider.

V. 18. *Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.*

The great difference between saint and sinner lieth in what he sets his heart upon, and blesseth himself in. The natural man knoweth of no good, beyond what his senses and appetites can enjoy; therefore health, wealth, riches, long life, is the joy and rejoicing of his mind. If these are increased, he blesseth himself in them. He knows no good beyond them. His whole soul delighteth in them. His words prove it. A saint hath Christ for his portion—his unsearchable riches for his treasure—his person for his heaven—his salvation for his enjoyment, and he blesseth himself in Jesus as the God of truth. He wants no more; he has all he shall ever need, or can in time or eternity possibly desire, in Christ; and when he lives a life of faith, he gives full proof of it.

V. 19. *He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.*

The worldly wise man, the man out of Christ, notwithstanding his name in this present evil world, his wealth, his riches, the glory of his house, though he blessed himself in his riches, was spoken well of by his posterity, and praised for his great sagacity by men of the same spirit with himself; yet *he shall go to the generation of his fathers*, who all died out of Christ before him, and he by death is gathered unto them: neither he nor they shall ever see light; they will for ever remain under the curse of God.

V. 20. *Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.*

To live and die without the saving knowledge of Christ, is damnation. An unregenerate man in his death is most miserable. The most contemptible animal in its death is before him. He has no subject in his mind, which can keep up his understanding and memory in another world. No; therefore such an one in the article of death finds he cannot live, yet is he afraid to die. The believer, or man in Christ, hath a subject formed in his spiritual intellectual mind,

which will exercise and keep up in full vigour, his will, affections, and memory, to all eternity, and that with infinite delight and satisfaction. May the Lord bless his truth. Amen.

PSALM THE FIFTIETH.

A Psalm of Asaph. This is its title.

Some think it was thus entitled, because Asaph was the author of it. Several learned divines think it was so called because it was committed to him and his posterity to be the singers thereof, (see 2 Chron. xxv. 2.) Some say the word *Asaph* signifies *Gatherer*, and so consider it *A Psalm of Christ the Gatherer*. It is a very important and magnificent one. The subject and substance of it is, a solemn appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in his church, by his incarnation and visible presence. Then his coming in power, majesty, and glory, to avenge himself on his Jewish people. The equity of his procedure with them is such, that he calls to the heavens and earth to bear testimony to it. He then gives a command for the gathering of his saints to him. He then, by way of open appeal, declares that the legal institutions which were memorials of him—of his incarnation, life and offering, were now completely done away, he being the substance of them all; and the knowledge of him, faith in him, thanksgivings to him, and obedience to him, proceeding from a spiritual knowledge of him, were now far more acceptable than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. A charge is brought by Christ against the unbelieving Jews, for their hypocrisy, slander, and contempt of the gospel, and such of their own nation as professed it. Then a warning is delivered to them in the most tremendous words it can be uttered. And the Psalm closes with most blessed encouragement to such of the Jews in Judea as were believers in Christ.

V. 1. *A Psalm of Asaph. The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.*

This Psalm contains a prophecy. It was delivered by Christ. It concerned the Jewish church, and their state and nation. This does not set aside the use, benefit, and instruction it is calculated to convey to us; any more than that because Christ was promised to the Jews, came of them, and was a Jew, he should not therefore belong to us: we should however keep every subject in its proper place, on which account I have delivered myself thus. Our Lord Jesus Christ is here the speaker. He is *The mighty God*. He is *Jehovah*. *The mighty*

God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the world, or earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. The person of Christ, the glory of Christ, the majesty of Christ, exceed all our thoughts. He hath displayed his eternal power and godhead, in speaking all things out of nothing into being. He gave being and existence to the earth—He sustains it—He is Jehovah the most high over all the earth—He hath spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof, to wait on him—to attend him; and not an element throughout the whole system of nature but hath obeyed his voice. The words here seem to imply an impannelling a jury to hear what he hath to say concerning himself, and to his people, and of his enemies.

V. 2. *Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.*

Mount Zion is the joy of all the earth. The church is the perfection of beauty: it was so called in ancient times. Hence the question, *Is this the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?* Lamentations ii. 15. It is so in the eye of Christ himself. He was given to her; he was promised to her; he became incarnate, and was born for her; he hath shone upon her; he hath shone with her, and in her, as his habitation, he hath shined. *Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.* He did so by his incarnation, and whilst he tabernacled in our world, as *God manifest in the flesh.* He shone forth in the wilderness of Arabia, when his church was marching through it several times. Moses gives one general account of it, saying, *God came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of his saints.* Deut. xxxiii. 2. The church receives all her glory, beauty, and perfection from Christ. The church, as favoured with the visible appearance of Christ, expresses herself thus. The words are hers. This appears from the next words.

V. 3. *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.*

He who had been styled the Mighty God, Jehovah, who called all things out of nothing into being, who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; who had issued out his royal command for all to attend his majesty, and hear what he had to say—who had shone out of Zion the perfection of beauty, as Immanuel, God-man in the person of one Christ, is styled by the prophet, in the name of the whole church, *our God.* He says, *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence.* It contains a prophecy concern-

ing the wrath which would come on the people of the Jews for their contemptuous neglect of him, and his Messiahship and sacrifice. This is set forth in very bold and expressive imagery, borrowed from his past appearance on mount Sinai. *A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.* When the Lord came down to deliver the law, it was attended with storm and whirlwind, the cloud of glory and fire. A hurricane is the most violent impetuous motion in nature, and it is the wind, or spirit, that drives the lightning with that rapidity, which may be said to ride on the wings of the wind. This is here made use of, to point out the majesty and terror Christ would shine forth in, and express in exercising his wrath upon his enemies; and it is taken from what was displayed on the occasion of giving the law. This is often referred unto in the Psalms, and other parts of the Sacred Word, it being one of the most solemn and awful appearances of the divine Majesty recorded.

V. 4. *He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.*

This is expressive of the equity of the divine procedure against his enemies, the unbelieving Jews. He would, as it were, appeal to the heavens and the earth, to the material and immaterial creation, to saints on earth, to saints in heaven, to the writings of the great lawgiver of their nation, *Moses* the man of God—to *Elijah*, the restorer of it—to the writings of the prophets, in his present controversy with them:—he would appeal to such of his apostles, disciples, and followers in Judea, concerning his present dealings with them. So that in his judging, and in his judgments on them, his holiness and justice might most clearly be manifested, when wrath should come upon them to the uttermost.

V. 5. *Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.*

These words are Christ's. They are an address to his saints; to such as were sanctified by the will of God through the offering up of the body of Christ once; to those who were perfected by that one offering for ever: all their sins being thereby removed from their persons, as far as the east is from the west, and their sins freely and fully forgiven, and their whole persons, bodies and souls, washed in the blood of the Lamb. The offering of Christ's soul for sin, was the one grand article of the everlasting covenant. On the footing of it, he was to see his seed, the travail of his soul, and the pleasure of the Lord was to prosper in his hand. As Christ hath fulfilled his covenant engagements to his divine Father, and is the covenant itself, and given for a covenant to the

people; so when he is made known unto them, and revealed in them, from the Word, and by the Spirit, they then enjoy the blessings of the everlasting covenant. They being brought nigh by his blood, are brought to know the everlasting covenant which obtained between God and the Lamb on their behalf, and feed many a time on the sacred memorials, emblems, and symbols of it, in the use and observance of the Lord's Supper. The foundation of all the Old Testament worship, was laid in the instituted sacrifices. In them Christ was set before them; they were led into an acquaintance with God's covenant by them; they were said to enter into God's covenant in observing them. Thus the words before us are expressed as most proper for that œconomy of the covenant.

V. 6. *And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.*

This is a positive assertion that heaven and earth, saints in both worlds, yea all, from the rising to the setting sun, must confess the righteousness of Christ, in his dealings with the apostate Jews. It could not be otherwise, for God is judge himself, and he judgeth righteously. *He is the rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment. A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.* Saints could not but applaud his just wrath executed on his enemies; seeing, says the apostle, *it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.* The words are spoken by the mighty God, the Lord. He is the judge of all men; he was judge himself here; he would have this noticed; he therefore sets his own seal to this most important truth, *Selah*, which is *Amen*. We may well say it is so here. What hath been uttered is as true as God himself the judge is true.

Thus ends the first part of this solemn Psalm. The second begins at verse 7, and reaches to verse 12 inclusive. It contains an open appeal and declaration that the legal institutions, which had been memorials of him, were so done away, as that they would cease for ever; he being the substance of them.

V. 7. *Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: for I am God, even thy God.*

Thus Christ addresses his people, both real and nominal, in Judea, on the subject of the abolition of the ceremonial sacrifices and services, by means of his most perfect obedience and passion. He expresses himself most affectionately. He calls for their attention. He acknowledges them in the relation they stood in to him. They were his people.

Hear, O my people, and I will speak. He expresses his disapprobation of the continuation of legal ceremonies. *O Israel, I will testify against thee.* It is not acceptable in my sight, thou shouldest oppose the perfection of my sacrifice, by continuing such as were but shadows thereof. *I am God, even thy God;* therefore it is with me to command and enforce my authority upon thee.

V. 8. *I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.*

This is no part of my controversy with thee. I am the substance of all the sacrifices and burnt offerings. The sacrifice of my person, God-man, is the consummation of them: I am well pleased that temple service, priests, Levites, sacrifices, and the whole ritual of worship, should cease and give way for the observances of my present institutions. I am satisfied with my own selected followers, that they see clear these shadows are fled from before me, and will entirely cease. My controversy with thee, O Israel, as my professing people, is, that thou art disposed to keep these up, in direct opposition and defiance of me, and in so doing art renouncing me as the true and only Messiah. Hear me therefore further on this subject.

V. 9. *I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.*

No. My sacrifice is all-sufficient. My institutions, as commemorative of it, are now more plain and simple. Thou art delivered from so costly a worship; from such an intolerable burthen. I require neither bullock nor he-goat to be offered me: it is of no further use; it is by no means acceptable. I am the end of the law, both of the moral and ceremonial; it is done away in me; I have finished and completed both; I am the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

V. 10. *For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*

They are all mine. I have property in them. I only called for what I gave thee. I will now make no further demand on thee. Hearken, therefore, unto me, and attend unto my pleasure herein. It is not because I know not the multitude of beasts thou hast, but because it is my will to demand no more, nor further offerings of them. Be content, therefore, to submit to my most holy will herein. My saints, who have received me as their atonement, and feed on me as the very Paschal Lamb that was sacrificed for them, are content to do so.

V. 11. *I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.*

The whole world is before me. Every creature is in my view. I know the whole contained in every part of the globe. The bullocks and he-goats, every beast of the forest, the cattle upon a thousand hills, all the fowls upon the mountains, with the wild beasts of the field, what of them all? Can they add any thing to me? Were they all to be offered, they are not sufficient for a burnt-offering. They could not take away sin; they could not acquit the guilty conscience; they could not obtain peace with God; they could not make reconciliation for iniquity; they could not bring in everlasting righteousness. Cease therefore from them; it is my will you should. It is high treason against my majesty if you do not.

V. 12. *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.*

Thus Christ proclaims his omniscience, omnipotence, and sovereignty, over the creatures, and his absolute authority in his church, and over the whole world, and the fulness thereof; and it is all-sufficient to stop the mouth of his Jewish enemies. It proves, to a most clear demonstration, his rejection of the whole Jewish dispensation, sacrifices, and ceremonies altogether. It is a solemn item, that the continuation of the same was an affront to his majesty. It was a rejection of his sacrifice, of his gospel, of its ordinances. It also includes and implies they would be visited for this in most just wrath and severity.

The third part of this Psalm includes an account of what is acceptable unto him. The true knowledge and acknowledgment of him, faith in him, the offerings of praise to his divine Majesty, were now far more acceptable than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. This is expressed in the next four following verses.

V. 13. *Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?*

The question is put, to inform the Jews, who should live when the Son of man was revealed, that there would be nothing in these legal services to afford any satisfaction to him. Could they themselves, with the divine oracles in their hands and before them, conceive so grossly? Surely they must be egregiously foolish, or they must be apostates, if they conceived thus. There needed no more memorials of Messiah's coming, though it was necessary there should be memorials that Messiah was come. It will yield a repast to the mind of Christ in heaven, to the instant of his second coming to present to himself, as the one complete offering and righteousness of his people. Their feeding by faith on him, and at his holy table in remembrance of him, is most truly acceptable in his sight. He feeds the minds of his beloved, and

often feasts them in their calling him to remembrance in the ordinance of breaking bread. But he cannot, he will not, he doth not feed with the unbelieving Jews now, although they have no sacrifice. Nor could he, with those in the days of his flesh, and who also after his ascension into the highest heavens, and when he had poured out of his Spirit on his church on the day of Pentecost, rejected him and his sacrifice, and would maintain the continuation of the Levitical sacrifices, in opposition to him, as the one true and only Messiah. He here says to such, *Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?* Or, in other words, 'Think ye that I will admit of these sacrificial representations of me? No. I will not; I will it shall all come down. So it now is. It is done. How? By the burning the temple, by the dispersion of the Jews, by depopulating Judea. The Jews cannot perform these services out of their own land. This scripture was, as delivered before our Lord's incarnation, a solemn testimonial and warning from God against them; it was therefore delivered as a prophecy, which has had its accomplishment. It is expressive of the controversy betwixt Christ and the unbelieving Jews in his time, and of his coming forth in awful majesty and solemn vindictive wrath against them.

V. 14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most high.*

This is by far more acceptable than the continuation of the whole of the Jewish ritual. Messiah being come, the love of God in him, as manifested in giving and sending him, to fulfil all righteousness in his life—in his offering his body and soul in union with his person, as the sacrifice for sin, the true knowledge of this is the foundation for every act of spiritual worship. Immanuel's bringing in everlasting righteousness into heaven itself, appearing in the presence of God for us, to praise Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, for this, is the most acceptable worship which can be performed by saints either on earth or in heaven. This is far beyond all other acts of worship which can be performed by saints here below, to thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the gift of his Son, for his acceptance of him in our room and stead, and for the testimony which he hath given of his infinite delight in the obedience of Christ unto death, even the death of the cross. It is true gospel worship to praise our Lord Jesus Christ for his love, for his incarnation, for his agony and bloody sweat, for his cross and passion; to bless him for his finished salvation, for his victories, for his triumphs, for his conquests, for his obtaining eternal redemption, for his becoming the author of eternal salvation.

This is gospel worship. Thus to make our true acknowledgements to him, is to bow before him. This is to pay our vows to him the Most High, which is what is here in the words before us called for and required. *Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most high.* It was due to Messiah from the whole body of the Jews, whilst none but the elect amongst them could act thus spiritually towards him; yet a true verbal confession of this would have preserved the Jewish state from its most tremendous overthrow. As Christ here gives an account of the worship which would be acceptable to him, so he enlarges the same in the next words:

V. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*

Christ is the hope of Israel. He is the Saviour in time of trouble. He encourages them to call on him. He would have them make trial of him. He says, *Call upon me.* It is very expressive of his being very near his beloved. It is here very suitably introduced, as at the time this Psalm refers unto, his, the people whom he loved, would suffer from their own countrymen very severe trials and persecutions, and all on account of their confession of Christ, that he was the true Messiah. It was so whilst Christ was in the midst of them. It was so after his resurrection and ascension into heaven: They had their days of trouble. It was a day of trouble peculiar to them, when two of the apostles, Peter and John, were cast into prison, and examined concerning the good deed done to the impotent man; yet they being let go, went to their own company, and gave an account of it. They praying, *the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness,* Acts iii. 31. It was a day of trouble to saints in the land of Judea, when all the apostles at Jerusalem were put into the common prison. Yet *the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple all the words of this life,* Acts v. 19, 20. Thus the Lord wrought deliverance, and fulfilled his promise unto them, and they could not but glorify him for it. And a time of trouble it was indeed, when James the son of Zebedee was beheaded, and Peter was cast into prison; yet prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him, Acts xii. 5. The Lord fulfilled the words before us, *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* In answer to the prayer of the church, the Lord delivered Peter, to his own astonishment and theirs also, as you will see if you read that chapter. I give these proofs, and elucidate the words of Christ before us by them;

not as though they did not belong to all the people of God, but because they are so immediately suited to the times the Psalmist alludes unto. They are as good to us now as they were then. Christ speaks to us. Here is his command. It is this: *Call upon me in time of trouble.* He adds his promise. It is this: *I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* For hearing thee, and for delivering thee—they are both great blessings. For the Lord to hear us in a day of trouble is an inestimable blessing; for the Lord to deliver us is an additional one.

I come to the fourth part of this Psalm. It begins at ver. 16, and is continued to ver. 20 inclusive; and contains a most awful address to the unbelieving and apostate Jews, in which a charge is brought against them for their hypocrisy, slander, and contempt of Christ, his gospel, and such of their own nation as professed it.

V. 16. *But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?*

When Christ was in our world, he lived in an *adulterous and sinful generation.* He exclaimed against it as such. The very sanhedrim was corrupt. The scribes, who transcribed the scriptures, the lawyers who interpreted them, the Pharisees, the devotionalists of that day, were all corrupters of the plain truth of God's most holy word, and most especially where Christ, the Messiah, was more particularly revealed and spoken of. They would and did put their own corrupt comments on all these. Our Lord pronounces eight woes against them in one sermon, pronounced by him at one time. It is recorded in the 23d chapter of Matthew. In the words before is a prophecy: it concerned them. A question is asked of them. God the Messiah is the speaker. *But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?* The question being put, it was for them to answer it. God calls them wicked. He speaks to them as such. They were so. They, all of them, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea excepted, were enemies to Messiah. They all hated Jesus of Nazareth. His very name was too much for them. They would by no means admit of confessing him to be what he really was, the *true Messiah*; yet they professed a profound knowledge of scripture, and a most exact explanation of the same. Yea, the scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat, as the only ones who could give a right interpretation of his writings, of the law, and of the prophets. Our Lord frequently cautioned the people against them in his day. God having addressed these as wicked, and put the question

to them, which includes in it that they were altogether unqualified for the office they filled, adds an enumeration of their crimes, which consisted in hypocrisy, slander, and contempt of Messiah, his gospel, and those who professed it.

V. 17. *Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.*

Such wicked ones could not therefore be suitable ones to declare God's statutes. They were not fit persons to take God's covenant in their mouths, and attempt to give an interpretation of it; yet they did; they would; neither would they admit of any comment but their own. The true revealed account of Messiah they wilfully rejected. The clear and open evidence of it, in Christ's miracles, they most contemptuously insulted, and altogether despised. Every admonition and solemn caution Christ himself gave them, they cast behind their backs. They hated his instruction; they trampled on it altogether. Thus the Holy Ghost gave a most exact description of them here in this Psalm, long before they had had a being in this our world. The New Testament account concerning them is full and clear evidence of the truth of this. They were the very worst, and most cruel and inveterate enemies Messiah had. A further account of them follows.

V. 18. *When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.*

A most grievous charge, yet it was a most just one, or the God of truth had not brought it against them. They connived at sin; yea, at the worst of crimes. They condemned it in others, whilst they were most grievously guilty of the same themselves. They were wicked; they hated instruction; they cast off the word of God in its truth and simplicity. Thus they increased their sin. They cast God's word behind their backs. They hated the true and clear knowledge of the same. In their courts of judicature, when a thief was brought before them, they were disposed to connive at his crime. When the thief Judas Iscariot came to them, and said, What will ye give me, and I will betray Jesus of Nazareth, and he shall be sure to fall into your hands? they hypocrites made no objection to consent and join with this thief in his perfidy. They were most of them given to adultery. They were disposed to connive at it, to extenuate it in others, to be partial to such. They cared not what they said, or what others said, let it be ever so false and unjust, when Christ was on his trial before them. They were all willing to consent with, and accept the witness of the basest of men, be they

thieves or adulterers, so it might give an opportunity to vilify and torment Christ. This is charged on them, and fully confirmed in the next words.

V. 19. *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.*

This was precisely the truth of the case, as it respected the persons here spoken of, when the Just One, Christ Jesus, was in their hands. Then their mouths were opened to speak evil of him. Then they gave their mouth up to speak evil; yea, to blaspheme him, the holy one of God. Then they framed their tongue to express deceit indeed! Yea, they engaged others to speak evil of him. They framed, by a mock trial and jury, a fit season to exercise the malice of their minds, in opprobrious words to Christ. By their words they insulted our Lord to the very uttermost of their malice and hatred, and contempt of him. It was here prophesied of; and we read, in the sacred record given by the evangelists concerning the passion of Christ, the fulfilment hereof.

V. 20. *Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.*

Which most awfully and exactly accords with the behaviour of the leading men and senate of the Jewish nation towards our Lord Jesus Christ, especially in his passion. They sat in judgment on him; they spake against him; they slandered him; they suborned false witnesses against him; yet he was their brother, so that their cruelty was the greater. He was *their own mother's Son*, which was an aggravation of their guilt. Christ was by birth a Jew: he was in this sense their *brother*, yet they slandered him. They despised him with their whole hearts, and with their whole souls, because he said, He was *the Christ the son of the blessed*. He was a member of the same national church with them, in which sense he might be styled *their own mother's Son*. He observed all the ordinances thereof, proving himself thereby a true Son, and member of the Jewish Church. Yet they cannot, they will not own him. They will not; no, they will not be reconciled to him. They went so far in their slandering him, that they could go no further. They utterly contemned him; so they did his followers also. They hated them for his sake. They hated his gospel, and all who believed it, and in him, as the great and grand subject of it. They said of such, *This people who knoweth not the law, are cursed*. These charges, from the 16th to the close of this verse, brought against the Jewish nation and people, for their hypocrisy, slander, and contempt of Christ, his gospel, his followers, and of him in his passion, are recited to shew, what judgments would un-

avoidably befall them, if they died in their sins. To prevent this, if possible, in some of those who might lay these things to heart, and call on the name of the Lord, and be saved from the wrath which would come on that nation for these sins, this was before recorded. Thus the whole charge and evidence which the Mighty God, the Lord, had expressed and exhibited against them, here ends.

The fifth part of this Psalm begins with the next verse, and concludes it. In which a warning is delivered in the most tremendous words it can be expressed. And the Psalm closes with most blessed encouragement to such in Judea as were believers in Christ Jesus.

V. 21. *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.*

God's judgments may be slow, but they are always sure. He had brought his charges in the former verses; now he denounceth his threatenings, and this before he executeth his wrath. The Jews, for slandering Messiah, who is styled their *own mother's Son*, and their *Brother* as such, are most justly obnoxious to divine wrath. Many solemn warnings were given them concerning this. In the Old Testament, which was the whole Bible in their day, by Christ himself, who from time to time, in his parables, sermons, and prophecies, gave them items of it, yet these judgments were suspended for a season. The Jewish people therefore thought they should never be visited by the Lord with an extermination out of their own land, for their rejection of Christ; but they are here informed they would find themselves mistaken. God's thoughts and theirs, concerning the Messiah, and their rejection of him, were vastly different. It is true he had kept silence, yet this would not be always the case. No. *I will reprove thee, and set them [that is thy sins,] in order before thine eyes.* He did so on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven to prove the truth of Christ's Messiahship, and to reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment. *Of sin*, says Christ, *because they believe not on me.* This was the sin of sins. The Jewish rulers, and the greatest part of that nation, had rejected Christ. *Of righteousness*, because *I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.* A full proof he had finished his work; that he was accepted of his Father, and crowned with glory and honour, and was sat down at the right-hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. *Of judgment*, because *the prince of this world is judged*, John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. By the death,

resurrection, and ascension of the Messiah, Satan was so cast out of the Gentile world, as to make way for the preaching the everlasting gospel, and setting up the kingdom of the Lord and Saviour in many parts of it. Peter, in his sermon on that most memorable day, quoted from the prophet Joel a passage in which the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple were most clearly expressed. Thus what is here expressed began to be realized.

V. 22. *Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*

This is a most solemn sentence. It is delivered by way of warning. It is also delivered in a most tremendous manner. The persons addressed are the Jews, and under this title: *Ye that forget God.* An awful one, as it includes their state, their sin, their guilt. *Now consider this, ye that forget God,* is an awful, a most alarming, and tremendous address. They are called upon to consider the charges brought upon them in the former verses. They are warned of the danger which awaited them, should they persist in their sins against Christ, his gospel, and people. *Consider this, ye that forsake God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there is none to deliver.* This is like what the apostle says of the same sinners: *For we know him that saith, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord will judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Heb. x. 30, 31.

V. 23. *Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*

These words contain real and blessed encouragement to such of the Jews in Judea as were believers in Christ; such as made a true acknowledgment of the Messiah, and offered up praise to God for sending him into the world to save his people from their sins, glorified God. Herein and hereby they glorified both the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. They were conformed by the Spirit of Christ to his holy likeness, image, and example. These persons, who had received Messiah for their salvation, and trusted wholly in him for all the blessings and graces of it, ordered their conversation aright, in holy conformity to him, as they looked on him, and lived for him, and to him. To whom a promise is here given, that a greater discovery of Christ and salvation should be made to their minds. *Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.* To praise Christ for his coming into our world, to save us from all our sins and miseries, is

the only way whereby we can glorify him. Our conversation is ordered aright, in proportion to our believing in Jesus. Thus the Psalm ends. May the Lord bless it unto us, even so. Amen.

PSALM THE FIFTY-FIRST.

It bears this title, *To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in unto Bathsheba.*

A very learned man reads it thus: "To the conqueror, to the beloved, when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone in to the daughter of the oath." The occasion of the Psalm you have, 2 Sam. xii. ver. 24, 25. *And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon, and the Lord loved him. And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord.* David had several sons before this, by Bathsheba, who had been now for some years his lawful wife, whose names were Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, then Solomon was born. These four were born unto him in Jerusalem, of Bathshua; (in the margin, it is Bathsheba,) the daughter of Ammiel; (in the margin it is Eliam.) See 1 Chron. chapter iii. ver. 5. This Psalm, says one, "is a prayer of the real David, under his sufferings, whereby he espoused the church (the spiritual Bathsheba) and raised up peaceful and pleasant children by her."

To understand the subject and design of this Psalm scripturally, it is absolutely necessary to observe what follows. Some years before it was penned, David said to Nathan the prophet, *See now I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.* In which he expresseth his desire and design to build the temple. The prophet encourageth him to this, saying, *Go, do all that is in thine heart, for the Lord is with thee.* The same night the Lord sends Nathan to David to forbid it, yet promiseth him a son, who should succeed him in the throne; who should be a glorious type of the Messiah, and should build a temple to the name of the Lord God of Israel. You have this account recorded in the seventh chapter of the 2d book of Samuel. It is also recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the 1st book of Chronicles. If you read both you will be fully convinced of the propriety of my referring to them. You have David himself reciting the substance of them, to

his son and successor, Solomon, in the twenty-second chapter of the 1st book of Chronicles. I will quote a part of what David says to his son, to let you see the clear truth concerning the subject before us. And David said to Solomon, *My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house for the Lord God of Israel; but the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars, thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight. Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever,* verses 7, 8, 9, 10. Solomon was the son of Bathsheba, when she was his lawful wife, and after David had been her lawful husband for some years. We read the following sons were born of her, at Jerusalem, and these were born unto him, i. e. David in Jerusalem: Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, four, of Bathshua, the daughter of Ammiel, 1 Chron. ver. 5. In the margin the word is Bathsheba, and Eliam. When Bathsheba had borne Solomon, the Lord sent Nathan the prophet to inform David this was the son the Lord had promised him many years past. The Lord had given him the name Solomon, or, *The peaceable one*. When the Lord sent to David by Nathan, that this was he of whom he had spoken, he (David) called him *Jedidiah*, i. e. *The beloved of the Lord*. All these circumstances thus uniting, on this most sacred and solemn occasion, David wrote this Psalm, and gave it this title: *To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David; when Nathan the Prophet came unto him, after he had gone in unto Bathsheba*. So that the whole subject of it concerns Christ. It is a prayer, in which Christ is the mouth for all his members; in which he supplicates for mercy. He speaks as the surety of his church, and as responsible for their sin. He prays to be washed and cleansed from it; acknowledges what he was conceived in the womb, and shapen for. He speaks of the perfect sanctification of nature in which God alone can delight; he entreats for perfect washing and purification from all sin; he prays for a clean heart, for a right spirit, for a restoration of the joy of salvation to his mind. As the Messiah he prays for all the elect Jews, that they may be delivered from blood-guiltiness, and that their consciences may, by

faith in his blood, be discharged from the guilt brought on them by their predecessors in putting him to death. He closes with a request for the good of Zion and Jerusalem. This is the subject before me; nor need any object to it. There will be found nothing in this exposition of it, contrary to any article of our most holy faith. I shall therefore, without making the least apology for it, begin the exposition.

V. 1. *To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto David, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgression.*

As our Lord, before his incarnation, had a complete and intuitive view of all his people were, and would be the subjects of, both as it respected sin and misery; so, when he became incarnate, and lived in his incarnate state, he had every suitable view and perception, sense and feeling thereof. Hence, as the head of all his members, as bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, his mind could not but run out in the exercise of his most divine compassion and tenderness towards them. I conceive it would cast a glorious reflection of light from him, on this, and many other Psalms, were we thus to consider the subject. Christ in our nature, and world, felt for all his people. He prayed for each and every one of them; he entered into all their cases and griefs; he comprehended in his own mind all they were the subjects of; he, as their representative, as their head, who spoke on all their behalf, says to the divine Majesty in the person of the Father, *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.* Christ, as the surety, was the subject charged with the whole contained in sin, in the whole body of it, in his members. It was from the love wherewith God had loved them in him; it pleased the Father to exercise his lovingkindness unto them. They were the objects of everlasting love in the person of Christ. It was in him this love was expressed in acts of everlasting kindness. One of the greatest instances of it, was appointing Christ to bear their sins, and sustain the curse due to them. Christ here presents himself before the Father on their behalf. He prays for mercy; he asks it in his own name. *Have mercy upon me, O God.* On my mystic body, on the footing of my mediation for them. Let this mercy be according to thy lovingkindness to me, and them. Blot out their transgressions, according to the multitude of thy

tender mercies. I call their transgressions mine; as I engaged before all time with thee, to bear them in my own body. Let them therefore receive in their persons, and according to the variety of their cases, the full efficacy and virtue of my efficacious mediation.

V. 2. *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*

I consider this as very expressive of our Lord's praying for the full virtue of his most precious bloodshedding and sacrifice, to be manifested to the minds of his sinful and guilty people. It is an eternal truth, Christ would cleanse himself from every sin, and stain imputed to him, by his own most precious bloodshedding, as truly as he would wash out all the sins and stains of his people at the same time, and he also washed their persons in his own blood. This was done by him in the days of his flesh. Now as the gospel informs us, Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us, that he might sanctify and cleanse his church with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish; so the words of this Psalm before us, were equally as expressive, considered as spoken by the prophet in the name of Christ; and could not fail of affording to believers under the past dispensation, most glorious views of the sin-offering, and most precious bloodshedding of the divine Immanuel, who would be God with us, that he might accomplish this.

V. 3. *For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.*

These words were very becoming the great Surety of the whole church of the firstborn, whose names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, to express. It shews the greatness of his mind; the strength of his affection; the stedfastness of his will. He engaged from before all time to be made sin for his members. He was in the fulness of time most truly willing to bear their sins in his own body. He acknowledges himself to be their bondsman; he does this before his divine Father as the creditor. I acknowledge their transgressions to be mine. I have engaged to answer all the demands of holiness, righteousness, and justice. *My sin is ever before me.* I see the nature, guilt, pollution, and apostacy, which all my people are the subjects of. I confess the same with grief. It bows down my mind; it reaches my very soul. *My sin,* for I call it so, holy Father, because I am chargeable with it, on the

footing of my engagements with thee, in the everlasting covenant, *is ever before me*. My spotless mind loaths it; my holy soul abhors it. Yet I am willing to become the sacrifice for it, that it may be removed from my beloved ones.

V. 4. *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mayest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*

Here is an acknowledgment made by Christ, in the name of all his people, of their having sinned against the Lord. And surely if we enter into the particulars of what the Mediator did on their behalf in the days of his flesh, confession of sin must be one. And the sins of his people being his, as he undertook to be charged with them, and to make full atonement for them, so he could not perform this, but he must have in his own mind a perfect knowledge of them. And whilst he was in his incarnate state, as he lived in our world, in which was nothing but sin, misery, death, and damnation, he could not but enter into a contemplation on these subjects, and be suitably affected with them. Especially he must be suitably affected, in his mental faculties, by the views and perceptions which he had of the sin, misery, frames and feelings, of his body the church. He as their mouth here speaks for them. As their representative he says before God, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*. All sin is a transgression of God's law. It is an act of high treason against the divine Majesty; it is rebellion against his holy will. None ever saw the whole contained in sin as *sin*, but Christ. None ever saw the whole contained in all the inward sinfulness, and actual sinnings of the Lord's people, but Christ. None ever could make a clear, full, and particular acknowledgment of what is contained in the case of each and every particular person of Adam's posterity, but Christ alone. He here confesseth in his own person, sin. It is before God. He doth on the behalf of his people; he doth it as their substitute; he doth it to justify the Lord; that his righteousness, holiness, purity, and truth might appear. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mayest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. God is just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*. His justice is displayed in justifying and acquitting the sinner, upon the footing of having transferred his sins to Christ, and transferring Christ's righteousness to him. Our Lord in every act of his life glorified God, and did the will of him that sent him.

The whole of which being imputed by the Father to the elect, is their complete salvation. We have here in this first part of the Psalm, Christ praying for mercy, and the blotting out of transgressions. As Mediator, he entreats his blood and atonement, in all its virtue and influence, might be evidenced in his own purification from all the sins of his people which were imputed to him; and that all his members may be completely washed from their transgressions, and cleansed from sin thereby. He acknowledges himself responsible for their transgressions; he declares their sin is ever before him; that he is ready to confess the exceeding sinfulness contained in it. As it respects it, both originally and actually, it was all before the Lord. It was all against him. He only could pardon it; he only could justify from it, and save from condemnation. May the Lord the Spirit give us some gospel apprehensions of what I have stated. I conceive it will advance Christ in our esteem; I consider it perfectly agreeable with the glorious gospel of the blessed God. I shall consider the second part of this Psalm, beginning with the next verse, and closing with the 9th, and containing an account from Christ himself, of the immaculate purity, perfection, holiness, and sanctity of his human nature. His prayer for purging and cleansing from imputed sin, that he may be without it, and entreats that the Father would give him an enjoyment of joy and gladness, and shine upon him.

V. 5. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

These words are an address to the divine Majesty. The word *behold*, expresses the Lord Messiah would the Father should look on him; and behold him, what he was by his own act of divine predestination—as the consecrated one, who was to reconcile all things unto himself and make peace by the blood of his cross. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* Surely these words cannot be applied to Jesus Christ. Was he shapen in iniquity? No; he was not. Did his mother conceive the humanity which Christ received from her, in sin? No; God forbid. Had this been the case, Christ must have received taint and defilement. Then he must have been a sinner. Whereas, he was holy, harmless, and undefiled; the immaculate Lamb, whose soul and body were pure as the light. His human nature is styled *that holy thing*. When the angel informed Mary concerning the conception of her Lord's humanity, she said, *How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto*

her, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* Luke i. ver. 34, 35. Let it be observed, our Lord's humanity is called *that holy thing*, not *that holy person*; for it was an individual humanity, not a person Christ took into union with him. The humanity of Christ had never any existence of its own; it was formed, and immediately taken into personal union with the Son of God. So that our Lord Jesus Christ could never say in his own name and person, nor as being one with us, a real partaker of the common nature of man, *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* When the truly excellent Mr. Romaine, in his Exposition of this Psalm, at St. Dunstan's, came to this verse, he said to the hearers, *Now you think you have me.* He said the words were not rightly translated. He read them thus: "*Behold, I was shapen for iniquity, and for a sin-offering did my mother conceive me.*" The very learned John Hutchinson, Esq. reads them exactly the same. Both these great men view the passage as referring to our Lord's conception in the womb of the virgin. The angel expressly says to Mary, the mother of our Lord, *And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.* Luke i. ver. 31. Now it is expressly true, and it is pure gospel indeed, to believe and confess our Lord's human nature was *shapen for iniquity, and for a sin-offering his mother conceived him.* He took our nature that he might be made sin for us. He was shapen in his humanity for this very end and purpose. It was for a sin-offering his mother conceived him. *When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body [thou hast fitted me,] hast thou prepared me.* Heb. x. ver. 5. What is this but the same mentioned before? Christ was called in eternity to be the glorious Mediator. It was the immutable will of the eternal Three, he should put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. To this end he was born, and for this cause came he into the world. He might well therefore address the divine Father, and say, *Behold, I was shapen for iniquity, and for a sin-offering did my mother conceive me.* As his human nature was conceived without all spot or stain of sin, so the purity, perfection, holiness, and sanctity of it, exceeded all conception. And as it was taken into personal union by one of the persons in Jehovah, the holiness of it bore the stamp of the holiness of God, and one of our Lord's titles was, *the Holy One of God.*

V. 6. *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*

Thus the Surety of his church speaks, before and to him who constituted him to his office and work, of his being formed and conceived to be a sin-offering, and that he was perfectly fitted and framed for all this. Behold, thou, O God, desirest truth in the inward parts. My humanity is without sin; it hath thy whole law written in it; thy image of righteousness and true holiness, is perfectly implanted, imprinted, and stamped on it. Thou seest in me, all the holiness, purity, righteousness, and perfection thy law requires. *And in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.* Thou wilt lead me on, guide and teach me in every part of my work, in accomplishment of thy holy will, that there will be the most exact conformity between my will and thine. It was in the holiness, purity, righteousness, and perfection of the person of Christ, and in the true and distinct exercise of the will, mind, affections, thoughts, memory, and understanding of Messiah, upon God, in the whole revelation of his will made known to him in the scriptures of truth, consisted the perfection of our Lord's life and death. He was able to say, *I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* John xvii. ver. 4.

V. 7. *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

Here is a reference to the ceremonial purification; and very particularly to the leper and his cleansing, as spoken of in Leviticus, xiv. The leprosy was a typical prefiguration of sin; of original sin; of the inherency of sin; of the maladies it produceth in soul and body. The leper might be said to be the most unclean person in Israel. None could touch him, nor could he touch any one thing, but he communicated uncleanness thereby. He was put without the camp. When he was cured, he was to be brought to the priest. He was to go without the camp to him; he was to look on him; he was to behold if the plague of leprosy were healed in the leper. If it were, the priest was to command such rites and ceremonies should be performed: two live clean birds, with cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop were to be taken. One of these was to be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. The living bird, with the cedar, scarlet, and hyssop, were to be dipped in the blood of the bird which was killed, and it was to be sprinkled seven times upon the leper, and he was to be pronounced clean, and the living bird was to be let

loose into the open field. All which were so many solemn memorials of Christ. He only can cure the maladies of sin. The two birds prefigured Christ in his death and resurrection. *He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* The cedar wood which is durable, pointed out the continuation of the virtue of Christ's death. The scarlet wool, denoted the blood of Christ. It is his scarlet blood washes out our scarlet crimson stains. The hyssop, which is purgative, suggested how Christ was to purge our sins by the sacrifice of himself. The sprinkling the blood on the leper, was representative of the revelation and apprehension made of Christ, to the renewed mind, by the Holy Spirit. Now Messiah, referring to this, says, *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* But how could our Lord speak thus? Was he typified out by the leper? I do not conceive he was. Indeed I do not. Was he not in nature and person; was he not in life and conversation, without all spot of sin? He most certainly was. His body was purity itself, was it not? Yes: no snow could ever be fit to compare to it. His soul was the very essence of perfection. Yet all this need not set aside these words, as belonging to Christ; as spoken by Christ; as praying too on his own behalf; that he might be purged, and cleansed, and discharged from imputed sin. Our Lord, as the sacrifice for sin, had all sin, in all contained in its guilt and pollution, charged on him. Whilst it did not enter into his mind, and it was impossible it should, yet it was on his body. He was covered with it; the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all, and made him sin for us. He could not be discharged from it, but by his bloody-sweat, passion, and most precious bloodshedding. Why might he not pray for deliverance from imputed sin, as he did from inflicted curse? there can be no more absurdity in the one than in the other. Yet I rather conceive this may here be considered, as praying for the acceptation of his bloodshedding; that the divine Father would prove this, by giving him an outgate and happy issue from the state he was in; that he would set him at liberty on the footing of his sacrifice; that he would give all the redeemed to know and enjoy the full virtue of it in their minds. He was himself the subject charged with all their crimes. His blood was all-sufficient for himself, to acquit him from all contained in their guilt and pollution which was imputed unto him. He was bathed; he was baptized in his own blood. It removed from his person all which had been laid by the Father on him. He was as pure by means of his

bloodshedding, as though sin had never been imputed to him. He therefore prays in the name, and on the behalf of his whole church, *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* The whole church, washed, purged, cleansed, and justified in the blood of Christ, are clean, and shall continue so to eternity. They, as washed by Christ in the fountain and sea of his blood, are whiter than snow. *The blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth us from all sin.*

V. 8. *Make me to hear of joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*

This is an entreaty offered up by Christ to the divine Father, for the return of joy and gladness to his holy mind. It is very conceivable, whilst our Lord was under the imputation of sin, and working out reconciliation by his sorrows and sufferings, all divine joy and gladness was suspended from his most holy mind. When he had purged away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, then doubtless it was restored to him. His bones were not broken, yet his heart had been. He passed through and sustained the whole contained in the divine curse, due to all the sins he bore. He might well pray, the debt being paid, for the blessed fruits and effects of this. *Make me to hear of joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.* He would hereby be qualified to administer strong consolation, and divine health and cure to wounded spirits. He wants but one blessing more. It is expressed in the following words:

V. 9. *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.*

Give me such a clear conception and apprehension in my mind, by thy own testimony borne to it, and by the joy and gladness which I request thee to fill me withal, that I may be perfectly satisfied that thou hast, on the account of the oblation of my person, cast all the sins of my people behind thy back—that they are swallowed up in the red sea of my blood; and that they are freely and fully blotted out of thy remembrance, by the free and irrevocable pardon of them. Thus the second part of this scripture ends.

The third part contains a continuance of Messiah's prayer, on his own behalf, and for his church, to the very end of the Psalm. In which is contained, a prayer for the complete sanctification of all the elect. A request on his own behalf; a declaration of what he will do; a prayer for his elect crucifiers, and for all the elect Jews, that they may be discharged from the guilt brought on them by their predecessors, in putting him, the Messiah, to death. And he closes all with his request for the good of Zion, and

Jerusalem; or in other words, for the call and restoration of the Jews.

V. 10 *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew in me a right spirit.*

Our Lord from everlasting loved his whole church. He gave himself, in the everlasting covenant, for each, and every one of his beloved; he bore each, and every one of their particular sins; he died for each and every one of them in particular. They are all alike united in him. His intercession is personal and particular, for each and every individual of them. He here prays for them. It is for their regeneration and sanctification. His address is to the divine Father; it runs in these words, *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew in me a right spirit.* The sending the Holy Ghost as the spirit of life from God, to quicken and make such as Christ died for alive to God, is the fruit of Christ's death and intercession. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to create them anew in Christ Jesus, to renew them in the image of their minds, and render them in their lives and conversations like unto, and conformable to him. Our Lord here prays for this. His prayer hath been answered, by the Father's sending the Holy Ghost, who accompanies the gospel with power to the mind. He produces in us a spiritual and divine nature; he makes us partakers of Christ; the renewed heart is made pure and clean, by the knowledge of Christ, and in the exercise of faith in the everlasting virtue and efficacy of his most perfect righteousness and most precious blood. It is this which constitutes a good conscience. We have it, when we receive and give full credit to the Father's testimony and record, concerning his beloved Son; when we truly believe, and most cordially receive this truth into our minds, that, *the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin*, we are purified in our minds from the guilt of sin; we are acquitted in our consciences; we are then manifestatively pardoned. It is then we have a right spirit; it is then we are enabled to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; it is all the fruit of faith. No man hath a good conscience, who is not enlightened into a spiritual knowledge of the person, blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, and apprehends the virtue and efficacy of it in his own mind. There can be no walking with Christ, and before the Lord unto all well pleasing, until we have first received Christ, and are most truly and heartily well pleased with him.

V. 11. *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.*

When Christ was under the whole curse and displeasure of the Father, and sustained all contained in it, as due to the sins of the whole election of grace, the divine Father suspended from him the shine of his presence. All the consolations of the Holy Spirit were withheld from our Lord's humanity. His body and soul were without these; he was most truly sensible of this; he knew it must be so; that it was the consequence of his being the subject of imputed sin. He found a sufficiency in this subject, and state in which he was, to engage his vast mind. The curse which was now inflicted on his body and soul, could not but make him heavy unto death. He knew then what it was to suffer in the wine-press of his Father's wrath, till blood came out at every pore. Having passed through it, and obtained victory over it, he here prays, *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.* In which he includes his people. He had been cast off for a season, agreeable to covenant acts, that they might be remembered with everlasting kindness; he had been deprived of all divine consolations for a season, both from the Father's withdrawing, and the Holy Spirit's suspending his most sacred comforts. It was all for the benefit of his saints. They are too dear to him, and too deeply engraven on his heart to be forgotten of them. So these words are surely inclusive of them. Our Lord, on his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, would be in his Father's presence, and enjoy the blessedness thereof for ever. He would be anointed afresh with the Holy Ghost; he would then receive him in all his graces and gifts more abundantly than he had already; he would pour him out most richly. I conceive this may sufficiently enlighten, and enliven these words before us.

V. 12. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and comfort me with thy free spirit.*

The glorious Messiah had beheld the plan of salvation, as drawn in the infinite mind of Jehovah from everlasting. It was made known to him, and set before him, in the council and covenant of the Three in Jehovah, before all time. He most cheerfully engaged to accomplish it; his soul had again and again rejoiced in it, and been filled with joy arising from it. In the garden and on the cross, his whole soul was engaged in pursuing the work of salvation, by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. That he might obtain salvation, he parted with all; he underwent the loss of all; even the joy of Jehovah's salvation. It was not to be admitted of, that he should have any joy, whilst he was

making his soul an offering for sin. Yet this being once accomplished, it was to flow forth in full tide upon him; he was to be upheld by the eternal Spirit in the discharge of his work; he was to be assisted by him in offering up himself. Hence the apostle says, *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* Heb. ix. ver. 13, 14. Christ, in perfect harmony with all this, here prays, *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and comfort, [or uphold me,] with thy free spirit;* and declares how he would act in consequence of this.

V. 13. *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*

Christ in his passion was numbered with the transgressors. On the cross, and now in heaven, he made intercession for the transgressors; and he ever liveth to make intercession for us. On his resurrection from the dead he gave full proof of this, by his appearing to Mary Magdalene, to Peter, and to all his disciples, who had forsaken him, and fled from him on his passion-night. Whilst he continued in his resurrection state, he gave his royal command to his apostles, *that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* Luke xxiv. ver. 47. On his ascension, and investiture in glory, he poured out the Holy Ghost upon his apostles. They were hereby qualified to preach Christ crucified, and Christ exalted to sinners. By this means, many of them were turned to the Lord. In every successive age since, the gospel hath been preached, the wonderful works of God have been declared, and it hath been the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth. In all which, what Christ expresseth in the verse before us, hath been most blessedly realized. Transgressors have been taught God's ways; they have been directed to Christ, as the one way, to all the grace and glory of the Father; they have through the true knowledge of Christ, God-man, the Mediator, and Saviour, been converted to the Lord; they have found eternal life, *in believing in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

V. 14. *Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.*

I consider this as a request, made by Christ, to the divine

Father, on the behalf of his Jewish crucifiers; and also including the Jewish church in the latter day; and under both these considerations I shall attempt an explanation of the same.

The greatest sin ever committed in our world, was putting Christ to death. It was with wicked hands he was crucified and slain. Some of God's elect were engaged in it: Their persons were dear to Christ, though they were thus exercised. He here prays for them; so he did when nailed to the tree. *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* Luke xxiii. ver. 34. And so he does also, in both, for some of the sinful posterity of the Jews. Paul says, *And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.* Rom. xi. ver. 26, 27. He quotes it from Isaiah, lix. ver. 20, 21. According to this the whole body of the Jews are to be called. And such of them as belong to the election of grace, must be included in this most important prayer of Messiah's in the verse before us. How otherwise can, or, how otherwise shall they be delivered from that tremendous imprecation, *his blood be on us, and on our children?* It is awfully evident that it continues to the present moment. Blessed be our Lord, all he died for, he remembers; he leaves out none of them in his intercession. On the cross his prayer was so effectual as to bring down the Holy Ghost on his elect crucifiers. He then made good his promise. *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.* Zech. xii. 10. This promise will be more fully accomplished at the restoration of the Jews to the land of Judea. It hath been conceived by some, no scripture will be more suited to the Jewish case, at their conversion to Christ, than the whole of this Psalm. Most especially these two passages, *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow,* ver. 7. And this, *Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.* It will be a season of great grace, and also of spiritual rejoicing. There will be songs, offered up to our most blessed Lord, beyond all which ever yet were. The blood of Christ, will be so set before them, in its godlike dignity, virtue, worth and

efficacy, and be so manifest to them, in removing from their minds the guilt brought on them by their predecessors, in putting Christ to death, that they will praise the God of all grace in the highest strains. The prophet, as personating the Jews at that time, cries out, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion on us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* Micah. vii. ver. 18, 19. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in this 14th verse of the Psalm before us, makes their case his own. He says on their behalf, to his divine Father, *Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.* The next three verses are very suited to those expressions of praise and gratitude, which will be uttered by the believing Jewish saints, after their return to Christ, when they will utterly renounce all but him.

V. 15. *O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.*

Which will be the prayer of those persons, when the Lord shall have poured out of his Spirit upon them. And they may here be considered as spoken by Messiah, he being their prince, and as their great prophet foretelling what should come to pass. When Christ shall reveal himself unto them as their only Messiah, he will arise upon them, as the sun of righteousness, with healing in his beams. He will be their salvation; he will be a wall of fire round about them; he will be their glory. Their lips will be opened to utter forth his glorious praise. Their mouths will most joyfully express it. Christ himself will rejoice in them and over them to do them good. Then the Jewish church shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name: *Jehovah Shamamah. The Lord is there. She shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of her God. Her walls shall be salvation, and her gates praise.*

V. 16. *For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it, thou delightest not in burnt-offering.*

No; they are all done away in Christ. And these persons will find perfect and everlasting salvation, and freedom from the non-imputation of all sin and guilt, in the one offering of Immanuel. Through the name, person, blood and righteousness of the only true Messiah, whom their predecessors, through eighteen centuries have rejected,

they will find the everlasting love of God, flowing into their minds; and they will have a most blessed sense, experience, and enjoyment thereof. To him therefore they will look. In him they will for ever centre. All others they will finally reject. They will find present and all-sufficient satiety in him. He will be their praise—their glory—their joy—their all.

V. 17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

Which will be their case indeed. Their hearts will be broken and contrite. When they shall have a real sight of Christ, and confess their sin, in forsaking him, *the fountain of living waters*, and hewing out to themselves *cisterns, broken cisterns which could hold no water*. Yet it is not on this account they draw nigh unto God: no; Christ is their only sacrifice for sin. It is by faith in him, their offering, they will draw nigh unto God. It is the sorrows, agony, bloody-sweat, pains, torments, dereliction of God-man, which alone are equal to the demerit of sin. It is himself, as having been made sin, and a curse, which only can heal the wounds made by sin. His heart was broken in the day of the Lord's vengeance; his spirit was contrite, when he stood in the place, and as the representative of sinners; he trembled, when it pleased the Lord to bruise him, with all the weight of his vindictive wrath, and put his soul to grief; he is exalted in the minds of all who know sin, by the teachings of the Holy Ghost, as the blessed healer; he will be the one object, to whom the called Jews will look for life and salvation. They will not look at themselves, nor at any thing they are in themselves. No; the eyes of man, shall be as all the tribes of Israel, toward the Lord.

V. 18. *Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*

This is a request, and also a prophecy, concerning Zion and Jerusalem, in time to come. As a request, it is expressive of our Lord's intercession, to his divine Father, on the behalf of the Jewish church. It is therefore called Zion. Its seat, or where it will be seated, is Jerusalem, which city is to be rebuilt. It will be inhabited. The gospel, and its ordinances will be there most gloriously established. A temple will be built, in conformity to Ezekiel's vision and prophecy, and the name of the city will be *The Lord is there*. It is the good pleasure of God's will to do good to Zion. It is in good pleasure he doth it. He will build up the walls of Jerusalem, both temporally and spiritually. It is the good pleasure of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to bestow, and communicate all spiritual good, to all saints, be

they Jews or Gentiles—be it now, or in the latter days. All which flows from Jesus, the Head and Mediator. He is the one glorious medium, from whose fulness it is communicated to us, through the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit.

V. 19. *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with offering, and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.*

The redundancy of these expressions is expressive of the abundance of grace which will be bestowed on the church of the Jews in their settled state in the last days. The Jews will find every type fulfilled in Christ; they will see him to be the end of the sacrifices; that he was the subject of all the prophecies, the glory of all. And they will find the substance, the true essence of all in him; and having every thing in him, they will delight to worship him, in which they will enjoy free, full, and open communion with him. And as the fruit of it, they will be filled with an exuberancy of joy. The joy of the Lord will be their strength. Thus the Lord will fulfil his word, *Behold, (says he) I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, Isaiah lxxv. 18, 19.* All which will be most highly well pleasing and acceptable unto God himself; it being the accomplishment of his gracious purposes in Christ Jesus concerning them. Thus the Psalm is closed. May the Lord bless the exposition of it, if it please him, so far as agreeable with his truth. Amen.

PSALM THE FIFTY-SECOND.

To the Chief Musician, Maschil, a Psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech. This is the title of this Psalm.

The occasion and history concerning it you have in 1 Samuel, chap. xxi. xxii; the substance of which is this: David being in danger from Saul, fled whither he might find a secure retreat, and came to Nob, a city of priests, where the ark of the Lord then was, and also Ahimelech, the high-priest. He was the son of Ahitub, great-grandson of Ahiah, whom he succeeded in the office of high-priest. David, in his flight from Saul, came to him. He said Saul had sent him and his attendants on a most particular business, which required the utmost secrecy and dispatch. He begged he would grant them some food. The high-priest told him he

had no bread, but the *shew-bread*, which none but the priests might lawfully eat of; yet he believed David and his men might eat of it, if for any due space they had abstained from women. David assured the high-priest, that neither himself or men had come near any for at least three days. Upon this the shew-bread is given him. He further asked for a sword, or spear; and the high-priest gave him the sword of Goliath, which had been hung up in the tabernacle as a trophy. Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdsmen, was there at the same time, waiting at the tabernacle upon some purification, and was a witness to the whole which passed between the high-priest and David. Some time after this, Saul complaining to his servants that none of them felt with him in his misfortunes, nor were disposed to inform him of David's treasonable plots, Doeg related what he had seen and heard at Nob. On this Saul sent a messenger, and commanded the high-priest and eighty-four priests of the Lord to appear immediately before him. They did so. He charged them one and all with being guilty of high treason. The high-priest, in a very meek and modest manner, excused himself for what he had done, professing his perfect innocence as it respected the king's charge against him and his family. Yet notwithstanding this, Saul sentenced the high-priest and all his relations to death. He orders his guards to butcher the eighty-five persons present. They would not. The king gives Doeg a command so to do. He did so, and killed every man of them; which shews he must have been a blood-thirsty, cruel man. A party was sent, it may be under the direction of Doeg, to murder every man, woman, and child, and the very cattle of Nob, the city of priests. These tremendous orders were so exactly executed, that none but Abiathar, Ahimelech's son, escaped, and fled to David, informing him of this most tremendous catastrophe. On which David said unto Abiathar: *I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh thy life seeketh my life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.* 1 Sam. xxii. 22, 23. Solemn and awful as all this was, yet it was a part of the displeasure of God, which pursued the house of Eli for his indulging his sons in their profaneness. See 1 Sam. ii. 27—36.

The subject matter of this Psalm is a severe censure and reflection on this enemy for his malice and cruelty. His destruction is prophesied of. It is very natural to conceive he might come to some miserable end, which it may be is in this

Psalm foretold. It must be here noticed, that in this, and in other Psalms, some parts of David's history and times; with some peculiar trials and persecutions which befel him, seem providentially calculated to suit Christ the true David, and therefore are made use of as cases to speak on. David was a type of Christ in many of his trials. Here before us he was persecuted by Saul; a mischievous man informs against him. He is no where but he hath enemies, either privately or publicly. So our Lord Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh, had his inveterate enemies: The senate of the Jewish nation, the Scribes and Pharisees, Herod and Pontius Pilate, the people of Israel. This Psalm may doubtless suit this subject: it may lead us to consider the malice of our Lord's enemies against him—the destruction which would come upon them from God himself in consequence thereof; and how clearly it would be to the view of the righteous—the perseverance of Christ, and his invincible integrity in the church of God—and his praise to the Lord for the destruction of his enemies.

V. 1. *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 Ahimelech. Why boasteth thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ was a conqueror over all his enemies; it therefore suits this Psalm well to dedicate it to him as conqueror. He is the invincible one; he overcomes all sin and miseries; all sorts and every kind of evils and enemies, let them be secret or open ones, let them be multiplied or reduced to an individual one. This scripture is for instruction; let saints, therefore, attend to what is recorded in it, for it is of or concerning David. It concerns the true *Beloved One*. It records his goodness towards him who was a type of the *Beloved One*—towards him who, when he was in distress, *when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech*, trusted in God, and found an abundance of comfort and support of mind, in staying on the Lord, and trusting in the mercy of God, which is the same for ever and ever. Doeg was, at least in his own view, a powerful man; it may be, a man of wealth and riches. He boasted it is likely of it. He hated David, and the Lord's priests. If he cannot seize on David, and kill him, yet nothing shall prevent him from shewing his hatred of him, and doing him and his friends all the hurt he can. Yea, when he has done it, he will make his boast of it. Here is a question put to him: *Why boasteth thou thyself, O mighty man? What,*

doest thou glory in slaying the priests of the Lord? What! does it sit easy on thy mind, that thou hast slain in one day the high-priest in Israel, and eighty-four priests with him? What! wilt thou make thy boast of how many men, women, children, and cattle, thou hast destroyed at the city of Nob? O thou mighty sinner! O thou cruel and bloody man! Be it known to thee, thou mayest diminish, but thou canst not exterminate the church of the living God in Judea. No; *the goodness of God endureth continually*. I am safe and happy under his care, notwithstanding all thy cruelty. I have communion with the Three in Jehovah, notwithstanding all thy evil sayings and devices against me. The enemies, and enemy of the true David, were cruel, implacable, unmerciful; yet, though it was with them, in their watchings over Christ, they said one to another, *report*, say any thing you can conceive, to traduce his character, and we will report it; yet such was his life of righteousness, holiness, and purity, that he lived down all their malicious charges against him.

V. 2. *Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.*

There is no member in which more sin is contained than the tongue. James says, it contains a world of iniquity; it is set on fire of hell; it deviseth mischief. Doeg's did; so did Herod's; so did the tongues of the Scribes and Pharisees; so did the chief priests; so did the tongue of Judas—who were all enemies to Christ; so did those of the witnesses who came forth to speak on his trial; so did the tongue of Pontius Pilate. Never had any so many, nor so cruel enemies, as our Lord Jesus Christ. It might be truly said, their tongues were such as devised mischiefs. They were like sharp razors, working deceitfully. If you look at the account given of Doeg, you will find he is not overcharged. When Saul made his complaint to his guards, saying, *Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds? That all of you have conspired against me, and there is none that sheweth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me to lie in wait, as at this day.* This wretched Doeg, in his canting words, implies all was true. That David was in open rebellion against his sovereign; that the high-priest, and the rest of the clergy, were all traitors. He relates his story, taking up the king's words, and will not so much as name David. No; it is only *the son of Jesse*. No one can speak out the mischief done, by

uttering half expressions. It is more injurious to body and mind than is generally conceived. This man was sly; he was artful and insinuating. David did by no means overcharge him, in styling him a mighty mischievous man, in saying, *Thy tongue deviseth mischief; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.* Judas acted like this when he betrayed Christ. He came to him, Master, master, and kissed him, whilst at the very same instant he gave the signal to our Lord's enemies to seize on him, and secure him.

V. 3. *Thou lovest evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.*

This was true of Doeg and Judas. Evil was uppermost with both. Doeg loved to speak evil even of the priest of the Lord. He knew his words would work on Saul's mind. He cared not about lying, so he might ingratiate himself into the king's favour. He is no way concerned, even should it be the death of all the priests. He will by no means prevent it, by setting the whole subject which he threw out in a clear light. Our Lord Jesus Christ suffered much this way. His words were corrupted. His most divine sentences most basely perverted. The malice of his enemies was such, that they willingly and wilfully cast his words out with contempt, and before him, as if they made against him. The wicked Doeg being set forth, as boasting of his wickedness, as devising mischiefs, as using his tongue like a sharp razor, as working deceitfully, as a lover of evil, as one who hated the truth, as a liar, and delighting in it. The word *Selah* is added to this, as if the prophet would say, that a worse man could not be found, nor more sin and sinfulness in one man. Yet he has not finished his account of him. He adds;

V. 4. *Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.* [In the margin it is, *Or the deceitful tongue. Thou lovest all devouring words, and the deceitful tongue.*]

A most awful character this. A worse cannot be given; yet the truth of it cannot be denied, as belonging to Doeg. So it did to many of our Lord's enemies. It was no inconsiderable part of our Lord's sufferings, whilst in our world, to be vilified, traduced, and evil spoken of; to have the virulency of wicked tongues exercised on him, in despising his person, speaking against him, so as to express the utmost contempt of his actions and miracles. To point out the villany of sinners and enemies against him, who sinned not, neither was guile found in his mouth, seems to be one grand design of the Holy Ghost in this Psalm. The expressions are strong, very nervous; they are full of meaning. They may be well applied to all the apostate Jews; or to Caiaphas

and his colleagues in the senate-house, when Christ was before them; or when they conspired against him to put him to death; or to Judas the betrayer. Yet we are not got to the end of it. A full account hath been given of the wickedness of the person who gave occasion for writing this Psalm; and now to the end of it follows his destruction from the Lord, with the joy and rejoicing this would afford the righteous. This gives an opportunity for again saying, that the various circumstances David was in, and his cases, were means which were sanctified by the Holy Ghost, to lead him to write of the Messiah. This is the truth of the matter, as it respects what is here written. Much injury hath been done to the character of this man of God, by supposing he wrote in a passionate way, and wished the curse of God to fall on his enemies. No. Let all his writings be viewed impartially, and it will be found he is foretelling, not what he wishes might befall such and such, but what the Holy Ghost himself pronounces, by way of prophecy, shall befall them. And upon the strictest investigation it would be most clearly discovered, that he in all the Psalms, when on these tremendous subjects, speaks in the person of Christ.

V. 5. *God shall destroy thee for ever: he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.*

It might be, the curse of God might fall on *Doeg the Edomite, the chief of the herdsmen of Saul*, though no account is given concerning it. This might, if it fell into his hands, be a means of giving him solemn warning. But we know this did befall Judas Iscariot, and it came also upon the unbelieving and apostate Jews, who rejected Christ altogether. He was quickly sent to hell. Yea, he ran neck and heels thither, as fast as he could. As though he could not get there soon enough, he went and hanged himself. As for the Jews, destruction from the Almighty came on them. God hath plucked them out of their dwelling-place. He hath rooted them for a season out of the land of Judea. This is so evident, that the word *Selah*, nota-bene, or mark well, might well be prefixed. The whole of this hath been, in every particular, so accomplished in the destruction and dispersion of the Jews, that it needs no comment, except it be to note it in our minds, and consider how the wrath of God hath been revealed from heaven against them, and how it hath been executed on them, as also it will be on all the workers of iniquity.

V. 6. *The righteous also shall see this, and fear, and shall laugh at him.*

The saints and people of God are righteous before him, because he hath imputed unto them the righteousness of his Son, and they are made *the righteousness of God in him*. They see what the Lord doth in his church, in the world; they sometimes have clear views of his vindictive wrath and displeasure exercised on his and their enemies. They cannot but be filled with the most solemn apprehension of the same, and confess that with God is terrible majesty. They are filled with holy fear and awe, yet they cannot but rejoice when he delivers them, or others of the family of God; when he destroys their enemies, pulls them down, and plucks them up, so as they shall be no more injurious to the church of Christ. It could not be, but the destruction of Doeg, or his death, must have given cause for real saints in that day to rejoice—a man who had destroyed all the inhabitants of a whole city, even where the tabernacle of the Lord was.

V. 7. *Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.*

The essence of all the evil contained in sin, consists in taking off the heart from trusting in the Lord. It is most important advice which is contained in the following words: *Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.* Jer. ix. 23, 24. This was not Doeg's case. No; he made not God his strength; he trusted in his riches; he cared not by what means he obtained, be it by murdering the Lord's priests, or by killing the men, women, and children, and cattle at Nob. No; he cares for nothing of this; he wants abundance of riches; he has them, and the curse of God with them. Yet he thinks he is secure; therefore he strengthens him in his wickedness. A most awful and complete description of a rich persecutor of God's church. Who among the household and family of faith, when they saw the Lord exercising his righteous wrath and displeasure against him, but must rejoice in the same? It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to such as trouble and persecute his saints. And this man most sorely vexed them. He could not fall upon and cut off David, but he can fall on the high-priest and priests, and their families, and he destroys them except one man, for but one escaped. So our Lord is beyond, above, and now for ever out of the

reach of all his enemies. His people are not; they are in this present evil world. It is at them ungodly men set themselves; yet their hatred, contempt, and injurious treatment of them, falls ultimately on Christ. *He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* Yet there is a sense, in which it may be affirmed that no sort of oppositions and persecutions against the real church of Christ, or any of its individuals, ever did them the least harm. No; it did not David: this appears from the following words:

V. 8. *But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.*

David was not moved away from his hope in God, on account of the providential event which had taken place. His faith was not weakened. He was not altered in his attachment to the Lord's worship, cause, and people. No. Doubtless I must have seen into the afflictive dispensation, and beheld the hand of the Lord in it. He must be hereby led to God's awful denunciation against the house of Eli, and found matter to fill him with awful and admiring thoughts of God's faithfulness in executing his threatenings as well as in the fulfilment of his promises. He says, *But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.* The olive-tree yields the best and principal oil. It was made use of in the tabernacle. *Thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring pure olive beaten, for the light, to cause the lamp to burn alway.* Exodus xxvii. 20. The golden candlestick mentioned in Zechariah, hath seven lamps round the bowl at top, and seven pipes to convey oil into the lamps, and two olive-trees, one on each side of the bowl at top. And there is mention made of two olive-branches, which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves, chap. iv. 2. 12. Christ is the antitype of the golden candlestick. The Holy Ghost is in him, and rests upon him in all his sevenfold fulness of grace and gifts. Here are in this vision, which Zechariah saw, two olive trees, which, by a pipe from a branch of each, supplied the candlestick which the prophet saw. They are called, verse 14, *the two sons of oil that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.* One whom I greatly esteem asks, *What is a son of oil? Is it not one who partakes of the nature of oil? or is of a substance clear, bright, and pure, as that is? There is nothing but the substance of heaven that excels it for clearness.* David says, I am a son of oil. I am made fat and flourishing, as supplied from Christ with the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit. I am sure, the true David is all contained in

this symbol. He is the green olive-tree—he is always flourishing—he is, he has all contained in the fat, oily, limpid juice, and rich substance we call oil. All spiritual nourishment and comfort is in himself; he imparts it, as it pleaseth him, to his members. The whole fulness of it is in him; the words before us were spoken of him; they were spoken by him in his type. Notwithstanding all his enemies, of every sort and kind, he went on doing the will of the divine Father. He could say, *But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God*, always flourishing in holiness, purity, in righteousness, in the exercise of every grace, and every gracious temper; at all times full of spiritual vigour and strength. I am this in the house of God. Never shaken; never moved; no, not in thought, heart, and affection, from doing my Father's will, from the perpetual observance of the same. *I trust*, as Mediator, as the Surety of my people, as the Head and Representative of my whole church, for them and for myself, in the mercy of God for ever and ever. And here lies the whole foundation, for our confidence and encouragement to do so also.

V. 9. *I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name, for it is good before thy saints.*

The destruction of Doeg, as an enemy of his, and to the church of God, was matter for praise. If he was cut off by any solemn dispensation, it was the Lord's act. As it respects the antitypical David, the cutting off his enemies was and will be, matter for perpetual and everlasting joy and triumph to our Lord himself, and to his whole church and people, in earth and heaven. As the divine Persons act each from the other, according to the economy of the covenant, so they give each other a mutual share of glory, agreeable to their acts. The Lord Messiah here gives the praise of his deliverance out of the hand of any one of his enemies, or of all, to the divine Father. *I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it.* There is a depth here which can never be sounded. Christ will in heaven, for ever and ever, give the whole glory of his salvation to the Father. He will in every part, and act of it, praise him for ever. I will praise thee for ever because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name—trust in thee for the full display of thine everlasting love and delight in thee, in the full and open manifestations thereof. *For it is good before thy saints* that I should do so. It will encourage their trust in thee; it will increase their love for me, and their admiration of me; and thou wilt thereby be glorified. So ends the Psalm.

PSALM THE FIFTY-THIRD.

The title is, *To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil of David.*

This Psalm is almost the same with the fourteenth. It differs in a part of its title. The words, *upon Mahalath, Maschil*, are not there. That is only, *To the Chief Musician, of David.* It is said, the word Mahalath signifies a tune of the whole choir, or company of singers; and that David composed it, and committed it to be sung by the whole company of the Levites. Others conceive the word Mahalath is the name of the instrument of music, such as was made to sound by breath and blowing, by reason of the hollowness thereof. A very learned man in the Hebrew gives the title thus: *To the conqueror over that which causes infirmity (sin.) The giver of knowledge (the Holy Spirit) speaks to the beloved.* The subject of the Psalm is sin; the Fall; the state of the whole human race in it, and by it; the alone Saviour and salvation from it, the Lord Jesus Christ. A most fervent request for his coming. This would afford joy and gladness to his church, so that the title the learned man gives it may well become it, *To the conqueror over sin.*

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, upon Mahalath, Maschil, of David. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God, Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity; there is none that doeth good.*

Sin is the original of the fall, which is but the effect of it. Man's nature being wholly ruined and corrupted, the evidence of it appears in his fallen state and case. It hath produced heart apostacy. This is, in its very essence, atheism. Fallen man acts, in many instances, as though he did not believe the existence of God. He acts as though he renounced all profession of this truth—as if he really wished there were none, so deeply fallen by reason of sin is he. Every man is corrupt in nature, heart, lip, and life, by the fall. By one man sin entered into the world. Every man is equally fallen in Adam; the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, in which man was created, is entirely obliterated. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. *Corrupt are they, and have done abominable works.* This is the fruit of original sin. Adam was the first sinner of the human race. We all sinned in him. All our corruption is inherent; it all flows from within, out of our own hearts. The natural man is, in his natural state, inclined to abominable iniquity, and he doth it. *Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity.* Not only is he, and are they, the sons of men, corrupt, but it is here asserted that they prove it by outward acts.

They have done abominable works; they have proved where their hearts are, and what they delight in. There is none of the human race that doeth good. No; but it is recorded that *the imaginations of man's heart is evil from his youth.* Gen. viii. 21. This is most solemn; it is awful; it is indeed—indeed it is tremendous.

V. 2. *God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did see God.*

This is very expressive of God's omniscience and omnipresence. He is every where present. His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he pondereth all his goings. He sees, he knows, all, each, and every individual of Adam's posterity; all contained in their sinful natures; all the thoughts, purposes, acts, and reasonings of their whole minds; yea, of their whole lives. The Lord searcheth all hearts, and he understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. And we have in this Psalm an account of what fallen man, of what all, and the whole of Adam's posterity are, as sinners, and as viewed by God himself as such, and in their fallen state. It would be well to read this Psalm at all times with great attention and self-application. Here is the Lord's own testimony of what we are in ourselves, set before us; so that it contains full proof that he searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins.

V. 3. *Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

It is good for us to enter into a real examination of what is here declared. We can never be more truly delineated; we are here set forth most completely. If we are the children of God, and born again, and brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son, yet we were once in the very state of sin, guilt, pollution, and vileness here spoken of. If we are born again, yet we have infallible proof of Adam's fall in ourselves; for we have his sinful image, which was conveyed to us in our conception, and by our first birth into our world, inherent in our nature, received from him. We have this in us, as a daily and momently proof of our sinnership by nature. We may clearly see it in this one instance. We are all lovers of ourselves; we all see our own happiness; and, as one says, self-love is all contained in sin. Hence we all seek after pleasure and self-gratification. We seek this in ourselves. We seek this in having our own wills; in exercising our own desires and affections on creatures and creature good. We sometimes have such awful evidence of all this in our souls, as to prefer having our own affections gratified, even beyond enjoying real communion with Christ

Jesus. The natural heart is gone from God. The understanding is without the knowledge of God; the will is completely corrupted; the conscience is guilty, and the subject of the whole guilt which belongs to us, to each of us individually. The memory is exercised to no good purpose in millions of instances which concern us. I am now speaking of myself, and to you, who have, and are the partakers of like precious faith in the righteousness of God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is one great part of our experience to know ourselves; to know what we are in ourselves; to know the mystery of iniquity in us; as this makes Christ, who is the mystery of godliness, the more precious unto us. This very Psalm might serve our Lord Jesus Christ, in his incarnate state, to see and comprehend what all men were, elect and non-elect, as considered in Adam, the head of nature. We need but the Holy Ghost to shine on it, and reflect his own light by it into our minds, and we shall be out of conceit with ourselves for ever. In these three verses, the whole account concerning fallen man is given. What follows in the next three verses is a question asked. The fear which seized on the wicked, when God visited them, and the fervent prayer of the church for the coming of Christ, who is the one alone Saviour, to save his people from their sins, and raise them up above, and beyond all the ruin of the Fall, are manifest and remarkable. It was the coming of Christ, and nothing but this, would cause Jacob to rejoice, and Israel to be glad.

V. 4. *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.*

In most instances the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. Not so in all. It is egregious folly when they persecute the people of the most high God. He says here, by way of question, *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?* What time is referred to in particular cannot be said; it must doubtless refer to some persecution under the past dispensation; and it seems they were very greatly successful against them, according to the expressions made use of, *eating up my people as they eat bread*; as though they fed upon them very satisfactorily. The Lord, whilst he permitted it to be so, yet he was far from approving it. He seems to wonder at their boldness in so doing. He puts it as a question to them, *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people.* They are my beloved ones; they are they in whom is all my delight. How is it they dare make so free? How is it they are so bold as to meddle with them? *They have not called upon God.* In the 14th Psalm it is thus: *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my*

people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord. And we are there directed by the margin to the prophet Amos, chap. vii. 3. *Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail.* And by what follows, it is the sin of oppression is reproved; so as it respects the prophet Micah, to which we are referred, chap. iii. 3. *Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh for the caldron.* It is the cruelty of the princes is spoken of, which was a persecution in both instances. In whatsoever way it was they persecuted God's people, it was very hastily done. This seems to be implied in this expression, *They have not called upon God.* Or, it may be, to point these out to be like those who called not upon God for a blessing on their daily food.

V. 5. *They were in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame because God hath despised them.*

The workers of iniquity are at times in fear, where there is no cause for it; and sometimes the Lord works temporal deliverances for his people, beyond all expectation. It seems by the words here, God had for these. Their enemies were in fear, where no fear was: it looks as though his people were beset by enemies, *for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee.* It was so when the Lord would not permit the king of Israel and the king of Syria to gain their point over Ahaz king of Judah, and set up a king of their own appointing. Thou hast put them to shame, because God *hath despised them.* What I refer to, you may read in Isaiah vii. 1—9. If it could be established this was the matter of fact referred to, then the propriety of the next words would appear singularly striking. It was the promise of Christ was the preservation of the state.

V. 6. *O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.*

Christ is the salvation of Israel. He was promised to Israel; he was the glory of his people Israel; he was very greatly desired by them, who had seen and embraced him in the promise of his coming; he was to be born in Zion, in his church; he was to come out of it. God would bring back the captivity of his people by him. He was to be their great restorer and deliverer. When this took place, it would be a season of grace indeed. *O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord turneth again, or bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.* This is to have a second accom-

plishment. The prophet says, *And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever.* Isai. lix. ver. 20, 21. This concerns the restoration of the Jews, and their spiritual call to the knowledge of Messiah in the spiritual reign of Christ. Then Jacob shall indeed rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. May the Lord bless what is set before you, if it please him. Amen.

PSALM THE FIFTY-FOURTH.

It is entitled, *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, of David; when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?*

There were two cities in the tribe of Judah, called Ziph, one lay about eight miles eastward from Hebron. The inhabitants of this place, were so eager to have David cut off, though he and they were of the same tribe, that they informed Saul of his hiding-places, and invited him to come and apprehend him. The other, Ziph, was somewhere about the borders of Edom. You have the history to which this alludes in 1 Sam. xxiii. It was a very deceitful business with the Ziphites, and would have been very fatal to David, had he not removed from where he then was, into another wilderness. Yet even then, on Saul's being informed of it, he followed him, and pursued him in the wilderness of Maon. *And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David and his men made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take him. But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called the place Selahammah-lekoth, i. e. the rock of divisions.* Ver. 26, 27, 28. As this gave occasion for writing this Psalm, so here again, the Psalmist's case made way for him to personate the Messiah, who was persecuted by the Jewish people, his own countrymen, and delivered by them over to the Roman power. This is the subject of this scripture. We have in it Christ's prayer for deliverance; the dangers he

was in ; the enemies which rose up against him ; his fixation on God ; his deliverance ; his praise on this account. Thus you have the outline of it.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us? Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.*

I would here observe, as every word in the title, hath before occurred, and each of the expressions, *To the Chief Musician, on Neginoth, Maschil, &c.* been explained, so I shall have nothing to do with them wheresoever they may appear. Only I would just say, these words in this title, *of David, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?* are very expressive of the frame and feelings of our Lord's frame and mind, under this part of his passion, when he was delivered by the cruelty, treachery, and deceit of the Jews, into the hands of the Roman governor, and the rage and violency of his guards, and soldiers. Our Lord in these circumstances calls on God in prayer, and entreats him for salvation and judgment. *Save me, O God.* This salvation was from the rage of his enemies. The argument with which he enforces his petition is the name of God. *Save me, O God, by thy name.* God hath a name of renown, throughout the scriptures, for saving his people ; for hearing his people ; for attending to the various wants of his people ; for being gracious to the voice of their cry. The mind, the understanding, the will, the affections, the memory, of Messiah were so completely apprehensive of every thing which befel him, throughout every sorrow, pain and grievance which befel him, throughout every part, and during the whole course of his passion, that he viewed the whole process of the same, from the causes to the effects thereof. He requests, further, that God would judge his cause, if he deserved such treatment at the hands of the Jewish people. He also requests the strength of God might be put forth in his deliverance. *Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.* All which was very suited to our Lord's case, when he was in the circumstances, in which his type was, when he wrote thus to personify him.

V. 2. *Hear my prayer, O God ; give ear to the words of my mouth.*

This expresses the importunity of our Lord's mind, to obtain his suit from God. He commits his cause to God ; doth it in the utmost simplicity ; he doth it with the greatest confidence ; he leaves it to him to judge and determine

concerning it; he expresses hereby his expectation from the Lord. His prayer is heard, and bringeth down its requested blessings, as is noticed in the 4th and 5th verses. The following words are the reason of his prayer.

V. 3. *For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.*

As it respected David's countrymen, they acted the part of strangers, or aliens, in seeking to deliver him up to his unjust and cruel enemy. None in the whole nation more faithful to Saul than himself; so his great and royal anti-type, the Lord's anointed, the prince and saviour of his elect amongst the Israelites, was the best friend to the true interest of the Jewish people. None like him in this very particular to be found amongst them. He gave them divine warnings; he expressed to them in many of his parables the very case of the nation; the state of the Sanhedrim. He gave them most solemn cautions; he added many warnings; he expressed clearly what would be the very mean of bringing destruction on them; yet they would not cease opposing him. With the utmost cruelty and dissimulation, the Jewish people, as pointed out in prophecy, under the type of these wretched Ziphites, delivered over our Lord to the Roman power, and all this under pretence of Christ's being the enemy of both powers, that of the Jews and Romans. Luke tells us, *And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself is Christ a king,* chap. xxiii. ver. 1, 2. Our Lord was not only contemned of his own countrymen, but the chief of the Jews rose up against him. This is here matter of complaint. Their treatment and contempt of him, was cruel. It went to his very heart. He speaks it out before the Lord. *For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.* Our Lord would have this to be very particularly noticed, therefore the word *Selah* is affixed to it, on which he expresseth his confidence in God, and the full assurance he hath of the destruction of his enemies.

V. 4. *Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the true, the ever-blessed and glorious Messiah, in all his dangers and difficulties, fixed his eyes on his Father, and his God. He knew the divine promises; how they most exactly suited his every state and case; he knew his covenant interest in God, agreeable

with the antient settlements of grace; he knew he was brought into such and such circumstances, that he might see the suitability of them, and sue out the performances of them. This was the way in which Christ himself exercised his faith on God, whilst he was in his incarnate state. He knew the promises to be so many parts of the everlasting covenant which obtained between the Father and himself, before the world was; he knew the good contained in them; he knew the Father would most fully and faithfully perform the same. He therefore here says, *Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.* The expressions are great; worthy of Christ. They shew the object of his faith. He declares the same with the word *Behold.* God himself was the object of his faith, love, and hope. How this is to be understood hath been before declared. The substance of which is this, that it is founded on the free, sovereign, and mutual transactions of the Three in Jehovah in a covenant way, with the Mediator. He saying here, *Behold, God is mine helper,* is expressive of his entire confidence in this. It also points out to his saints where they also should look. *The Lord is with them that uphold my soul.* He hereby declares his church, as well as himself, shall experience Jehovah in his all-sufficiency to be the God of all grace unto them.

V. 5. *He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth.*

Thus Messiah foresees, and foretells the destruction of his enemies. Saul, under the direction of the Ziphites, having encompassed David on every side, was suddenly called off, to defend his country from an invasion of the Philistines, by which means David escaped, and beheld his enemies retreating. Thus Jehovah rewarded evil to his enemies. He loses his character amongst infidels in consequence of such expressions as these, *cut them off,* as though he delighted in the destruction of his enemies. No; this is not the truth of any such expressions in, and throughout the whole book of Psalms. No, it is not; God forbid it should. But David was a prophet. He knew what it was to write under the immediate direction of the Spirit-Jehovah; he says himself, *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.* 2 Sam. xxiii. ver. 2. He wrote concerning Christ, and utters prophecies concerning the destruction of Messiah's enemies. The words before us, according to Bishop Horne, are, *thou shalt cut them off in thy truth,* which meliorates them, so as to remove all harshness from them. All which was a righteous act in God. It hath been

most awfully fulfilled, in the destruction of the Jewish enemies of Christ, and their conquest by the Romans, with their extirmination out of their own land, which continues to the present moment.

V. 6. *I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O Lord: for it is good.*

No doubt, for the miraculous event, which made way for the Psalmist's escape out of the hands of Saul, David might be led to offer the sacrifice of praise to Jehovah, his great deliverer; his heart being now free from fear, it was no other than his bounden duty and service. Our Lord Jesus Christ was delivered, by his resurrection, out of the hands of all his enemies. In consequence of which he might well say, *I will freely sacrifice unto thee; I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good.* The name of the Lord, the faithfulness of the Lord, the goodness of the Lord, was never more fully made known, glorified, and expressed, than in the resurrection of Messiah from the grave and power of death. He was hereby declared to be Jehovah's anointed king; and by it he was fully and for ever delivered from all imputation of sin, from the curse of the law, which was fully inflicted on him during his passion; from every sorrow, pain, trial, enemy, and evil. It might well, with beauty, and most emphatically, be pronounced by our Lord, then, by way of address to his divine Father, *I will freely sacrifice unto thee; I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good.* Christ himself could not but consider what great things the Lord had done for him. It well became him to express, to and before Jehovah, the voice of praise and thanksgivings for the same. He here doth it, giving his own reason for it.

V. 7. *For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.*

This was completed by the resurrection of Christ, from death to life eternal. He being thus delivered from all his dangers, and out of the hands of all his enemies, blesseth and praiseth Jehovah. When we consider Christ, the man in God, taken up into personal union with one of the holy Ones in Jehovah, and that he was the object and subject of all the love of the holy Ones; him in whom all the election of grace had their being, existence, life, glory, and blessedness from everlasting: that in him is the beginning of all their prophecies—that he is their centre, and perfection; it most assuredly casts a most glorious blaze of light on each, and every Psalm. Not that it is to be expected, any one individual sees the full meaning of the Holy Ghost,

concerning the revelation of Christ, made known in them. No; it is utterly impossible. In the man Christ Jesus dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead personally; and it is reflected throughout his whole soul and body. It is reflected in his will, understanding, memory, thoughts, affections; it is to be seen in all his words and actions; in all his prayers and praises; in all his thanksgivings and blessings; so also is it reflected in all his sorrows, sufferings, persecutions, and every thing which he endured in the contradiction of sinners against himself. In reading the book of Psalms, it is good to view Christ and distinctly apprehend him, as one in the essence with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the incomprehensible Jehovah; as God-man, the image of the invisible God, the fellow of the Lord of hosts. Next, as we view him as the head of the whole election of grace, as the foundation and centre of the whole creation of God: as the Mediator of reconciliation, as the Saviour of his body the church: as the Captain of their salvation, as him who hath triumphed in their nature, over his, and all their enemies, there is a peculiar glory results from each of these views and apprehensions of him, who is our all. May the Holy Ghost, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, whose office it is to glorify Christ, and testify of him, and shed abroad in the hearts of believers a sense of the Father's love, bless his beloved and called ones with an-increasing knowledge of the Father's everlasting love, and the person and salvation, victories and triumphs, conquests and glories of our most precious, and now glorified Imanuel. Amen.

PSALM THE FIFTY-FIFTH.

To the Chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, of David, is the title of this Psalm before us.

It is supposed by some, David wrote it, when driven out of Jerusalem by the rebellion, and in danger of being suddenly cut off, and that he speaks of the treachery of Ahithophel, who was a type of Judas Iscariot and of his fatal end. We may rest assured, David's case was made use of, as a fit subject and season, to write and set forth the Lord Jesus.

The subject matter of it is, a prayer, or prophecy of Christ. In which the violency of his Jewish enemies is recorded; the state of his holy mind is expressed; his request that the iniquitous counsels of his enemies may be confounded, especially that the traitor may be most awfully

dealt with. He foretells the ruin of his enemies; he speaks of his own reestablishment as the Messiah, notwithstanding all his enemies. It seems that these Psalms in this second book, which I am going to recite, viz. the 52d, the 54th, 55th, and also the 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, and 60th, were written on some particular trials and circumstances which befel David; in which he was most remarkably fitted to be a type of his great antitype. And the titles given to each of these, confirm the same. We may from hence observe, that as no part of our Lord's sufferings is omitted in this sacred part of the Holy Spirit's testimony concerning him, so the various enemies of Christ, and his various persecutions are also described. May it be given us, in reading them, so to understand Christ in them, that he becoming more precious to us thereby, we may set the crown of crowns on his head; he being the prince of peace, and having made peace by the blood of his cross.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, of David. Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.*

Thus our great Mediator addresseth himself, on his own behalf, to the divine Majesty. He entreats for audience; he requests the ear of the divine Father. This was agreeable to covenant acts, purposes, and transactions. The ear of God being attentive, it would be certain evidence he would not hide himself, or fail of entering into the whole supplication offered up by the Messiah.

V. 2. *Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise.*

Here is matter of great instruction. We may learn much from it, the Lord the Spirit being our teacher. Here is the form of address—the matter of address—the importunity of the address—the simplicity contained in it—what the petitioner felt whilst he offered up his request. *Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my supplication. Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise.* Where, in whom, could all this be found in its perfection, so as fully to come up to these expressions, but in the God-man, Christ Jesus, our glorious Mediator, surety, and representative? Surely in none but him could it be. Next follows why it was, Christ thus supplicated the divine Father, and was thus importunate with him. He gives his own reason for it in the next words, which are expressive of the state and circumstances he was then in.

V. 3. *Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked, for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.*

This was most exactly the case with Messiah, in the day of his Passion. When the Jewish rulers, and the whole multitude of the people, were filled with rage against him; when they cried out, Away with him, away with him; crucify him; when they surrounded him; when they most cruelly oppressed him; when they laid grievous things to his charge, when they charged him with being guilty of blasphemy and sedition; when their hatred and wrath against him, broke forth in its uttermost rage and cruelty. Surely he needed divine succour. Jesus hated, slandered, and persecuted, needed the eye, the ear, the help of God.

V. 4. *My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.*

These words are very expressive of our Lord's mind on his passion-night. He knew all the plots of his enemies against him; he knew the treachery of Judas, and his dissimulation; he knew the hour was come for him to suffer; he had instituted the memorial of it, and reviewed what he was to sustain in the ordinance of his Supper. After which, he went forth over the brook Cedron. As he passed on, knowing all which would now befall him, his heart was sore pained within him. It was to be seen by looking on his blessed face, which was now distorted with grief: for he began to be sorrowful, and very heavy. He was sore amazed; he was exceeding sorrowful. He said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

V. 5. *Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.*

This was most strictly true, and fully realized in our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was in the garden of Gethsemane. There our sins met on him; there the Lord laid them on him; there the fire of divine wrath came down on him. He there felt the curse due to sin. He prayed, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. The terrors of God's wrath there fell on him, so that he was in an agony, and sweat great drops of blood. He was there overwhelmed with horror; he there found it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; he gave up his will to his divine Father, saying, *not my will but thine be done.*

V. 6. *And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.*

This is expressive of the sorrowful and calamitous case

Messiah was in from his Jewish enemies. It was after he had been sweating great drops of blood, he was betrayed, seized upon, and bound by his enemies. He might therefore well express his sorrowful condition, in prophecy, in such an exclamation as this; that, like a bird of innocency and peace, he might fly away into solitude and retirement, and be at rest from the rage, noise, and tumult of his enemies.

V. 7. *Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.*

Which is a continuation of the same subject. The word *Selah* is added to it, to suggest the importance of it. Whilst our Lord's will in all his sufferings was invariably and immutably one and the same, yet these words here are very expressive of the views he had of the sufferings and coarse treatment he should experience from his own countrymen the Jews. He continues this subject.

V. 8. *I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.*

It is to set forth the state of our Lord in his passion. What the humanity saw; what was felt. It was designed by the eternal Spirit, to shew that our Lord's mind was apprehensive of every part of his sufferings, and also to give an idea of his frame and feeling under them. It was not that Christ reluctated at them, and wanted to get out of the hands of his enemies. No: he said to Peter, *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?* Matthew xxvi. ver. 53, 54. Some say by twelve legions of angels, the number must amount to seventy-nine thousand, nine hundred, ninety-eight, or, eighty-one thousand, nine hundred and sixty.

In the following verses from the 9th to the 14th inclusive, an account is given of the iniquitous counsels of Messiah's enemies; of the treachery and baseness of Judas Iscariot; and a prayer is put up that their tongues may be divided and that these enemies might be destroyed. This is the prophecy of it, the evangelists give an account of the fulfilment thereof.

V. 9. *Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.*

The city of Jerusalem was full of violence and strife, at the time of Christ's Passion. He was violently seized upon at midnight; he was arraigned before a prejudiced court; false witnesses were brought forth with their charges against

him ; yet they were so perplexed in what they said in open court, that they were contradictory to each other, and nothing could be made out of it. Thus our Lord's innocence remained, whilst their tongues were divided, so that they could not go on with their lying accusations. Thus our Lord's prayer, here before us, was answered. Our Lord's eyes were as flames of fire. He knew the utmost of their violence, strife, rage and malice against his person, as the true Messiah, the anointed one, sent of God, whom they rejected as their king, though he was so truly. Yet they said, *We will not have this man to reign over us.* A further account is given of them.

V. 10. *Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof : mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.*

The violence and strife mentioned in the former verse, are here described as going about the walls, as an armed band to guard the city. To promote rebellion, and protect the rebels, and banish Christ, the king of Zion, that he be not admitted ever more to enter the metropolis. Mischief and sorrow are the subjects, which engross the minds of the Jewish rulers. They consult how to put Christ to death.

V. 11. *Wickedness is in the midst thereof : deceit and guile depart not from her streets.*

Wickedness, accompanied with deceit and guile, and surrounded with violence and strife as its guard, were all found in Jerusalem, in the night of Christ's sorrows and overwhelming sufferings. This was evidenced by their admitting Judas to betray his Lord and Master into their hands ; an act of the most horrible baseness in them, as well as the basest perfidy in him. Yet it matters not, so that they can but get Christ into their hands. They can neither live, nor be happy one single moment, except they reek their hands in his most innocent blood ; they must take away his life, let the consequence of it be what it may. They will rather give themselves up to be under the influence of the devil, and be under the influence of the powers of darkness, than miss the present opportunity of putting Christ to death. O ! tremendous ! yet it was all this, as it respected the state of their minds, without an hyperbole. An account is given in the next three verses of Ahithophel, as a type of Judas the betrayer.

V. 12. *For it was not an enemy that reproached me ; then I could have borne it : neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me ; then I would have hid myself from him.*

No doubt but it was very grievous to David, for his son

and subjects to rebel against him. It doubtless went to his very heart, when he was told that Ahithophel, his particular counsellor, was among the conspirators. On his being informed of it, he prayed thus: *O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.* The Lord heard and answered this prayer. Hushai, by the providence of God, overset the good counsel Ahithophel gave Absalom. On which, plainly perceiving how things would go, Ahithophel went to his house, set his affairs in order, and hanged himself. So did Christ's betrayer. It must be a stab to our Lord's heart, the dissimulation and treachery of Judas to him. He speaks of it as such. Judas was also a type of the Jewish nation. His awful and tremendous end, was typical of the destruction of the Jewish people, and nation, for a season, on account of their rejecting of the true Messiah.

V. 13. *But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.*

He was guide to them which took Jesus; he was admitted by our Lord into outward fellowship with him; he was one of our Lord's acquaintance; he knew whither our Lord went for prayer and meditation; he was numbered by our Lord with the twelve; yet he, under the very form of friendship, betrays his Lord.

V. 14. *We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.*

Thus the many aggravating circumstances of treason and treachery in Ahithophel and Judas, the one against David, the other against Christ, are recited. They are most strongly expressed. Our Lord himself, in the hearing of Judas, said on that very night in which he betrayed him, *The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.* Matthew xxvi. ver. 24, 25. The remaining part of this Psalm contains a solemn prediction concerning Christ's Jewish enemies; of his own deliverance; of God's preservation of him; and of the destruction of his enemies. And it concludes with his own declaration, that he will trust in Jehovah.

V. 15. *Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.*

Thus, in this prophecy, an intimation was given of the awful end of Ahithophel, Absalom, the enemies of David, and traitors to his crown and dignity; and also the destruc-

tion of Judas Iscariot, and Jewish people, who were in open rebellion against the person, throne, crown, dignity, kingdom, and government of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their sudden destruction here predicted, seems to point at the destruction of those rebels against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The earth opened its mouth, and they went down alive into the pit, and closed upon them. It was sudden destruction from the almighty to them. They perished; so will all the enemies of Christ. Judas perished suddenly; so did the Jews. And the words are very expressive of the manner in which the bottomless pit will one day shut its mouth for ever upon all Christless sinners.

V. 16. *As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me.*

This the Lord Jesus Christ did. He called upon Jehovah; he found him near to save him; he had done so in the former part of this Psalm; he knew the Father heard, and heareth him always; he declares what his practice should be.

V. 17. *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice.*

Some say, morning, evening, and noon, were the three hours of prayer in the Jewish church. It is very certain Daniel prayed three times a day; and he looked toward Jerusalem, which was expressive of his looking to the person, sacrifice, and intercession of the glorious Mediator. There was a royal decree to prohibit this; but this man, greatly beloved, was not kept from his devotions by this. Read the 6th chapter of the book which bears his name. I conceive, in the words before us, the continuation of prayer is what is intended. As also the intensity of the mind as engaged in the performance, and the faith of certain expectation to be heard.

V. 18. *He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.*

This was the case literally with David, who after a battle between the rebels and the men of Israel had been fought in the wood of Ephraim, and Absalom had been slain by Joab and his men, who encompassed him about as he hung on the bows of an oak, by means of the hair of his head being entangled therein, was delivered in peace, and returned victorious and triumphant to the capital. So our Lord Jesus Christ, the true antitypical David, rose from the dead, and returned to the heavenly Jerusalem, a victorious and triumphant conqueror over all his enemies. It was Jehovah the Father gave Messiah the victory. He

and his church are one, He could say, as their head and conqueror, They that are with us, are more than they which are against us.

V. 19. *God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.*

God is from everlasting to everlasting unchangeably the same. He is the God of Christ and of all his people in him. It is his will to hear the prayer of Christ the Mediator, on his own behalf, and on theirs also. It is Jehovah the Father's will, to humble Christ's enemies. The word *Selah* is here placed in the midst of the verse. God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old, or from eternity. *Selah.* Mark this. *Because they have no changes therefore they fear not God.* They do not set their hearts to understand the Lord's ways in providence and grace. This is the reason why they fear not God. His dispensations are lost on them in this sense. They do not operate and produce a real change in them. Nor did they on the apostate Jews, after our Lord's most glorious and triumphant resurrection.

V. 20. *He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him : he hath broken his covenant.*

This is a further description of Ahithophel and Judas. They were each of them what they are here declared, perfidious traitors. The one was a traitor to his king, the other to his Lord and Master. They both brake the covenant of friendship.

V. 21. *The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart : his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.*

This is expressive of the cant of these men. Whatsoever Ahithophel might say to David, how smooth his words might be, yet he bore him a secret grudge, and was determined to join with Absalom against him. As for Judas he came to Christ, with Master, master, and kissed him, and at the same moment gave the band of soldiers this token, that they might seize on him.

V. 22. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee ; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*

Thus our Lord encourages his beloved ones. He gives them here most blessed instruction ; he commands them to cast them all off themselves upon Jehovah. The apostle Peter makes use of these words thus : *Casting all your care upon him, i. e. on God ; for he careth for you.* See 1 ~~Epist.~~ chap. v. ver. 7. He who bore our sins, and carried our sorrows, and who will never suffer the righteous to be moved

off himself, the one everlasting rock and foundation, would have us cast our every care, burthen, grief, and vexatious concern on him. He hath our real good at heart; he is truly interested in us, and concerned for us. We cannot honour him more than in so doing.

V. 23. *But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.*

We have full evidence of this, in the instances of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Also in Absalom, Ahithophel, and Judas; and also in the destruction of Jerusalem, and those rebels and murderers of the Son of God, the unbelieving and apostate Jews. The Psalm concludes with these words, *But I will trust in thee.* May we trust in him, even our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone can save and destroy. Amen.

PSALM THE FIFTY-SIXTH.

To the Chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath. The word *Michtam* signifies a golden Psalm. This is the title of the 16th Psalm, also of this and the four following ones. One speaking on the whole title of this 56th Psalm, says, "the words of this title in the original have a double signification, and may be interpreted either metaphorically, a *dumb dove*, for so *Jona* signifieth; *in a far country*, or *strange land*, so *Jerom*; or more properly, *for a soul suffering violence in a far country.* For the first word usually interpreted *dove*, is taken also in the other sense properly, and in its natural signification for *soul suffering violence*, in both which senses, *David* applieth this title to himself in his great distress.

David by a metaphor compares himself to *dumb doves in a far country.* Because when he was driven out of *Judea*, his own country, by *Saul*, who sought his life, and from the worship of *God*, and forced to fly to *Gath* amongst the *Philistines*, yet with patience, meekness, and silence, escaping, he neither sought revenge, though it was in his power, nor shewed any impatience, but betook himself in silence unto *God*, as if he had been dumb, and mourning like a dove. We may apply this Psalm to *Christ*, of whom he was a type." *Junius* referreth the words, *Jonath-elem-rechokim*, to the *soul suffering violence*, enclosed by a band or multitude of *Philistines*, enemies to him and his *God*. Some

read the words, *To the Master of the Harmony*, which is all one in sense, as *To him that excelleth*, or, *Chief Musician, Michtam of David*; i. e. The excellency of this Psalm is as precious as gold. I shall consider the subject matter of the Psalm. It foreshews, in what befell David, what would be the case with the antitypical David, who here makes his supplication to God. He places all his hopes and confidence in him, for deliverance from the wiles and stratagems of his adversaries. His mind is supported from the consideration, that all his sufferings are before the Lord, who will appear on his behalf. He expresseth his faith in the divine promises. He concludes, by offering up praise and thanksgiving.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath. Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.*

It seems to have been written about the same time with the 34th Psalm, only this was first, when he was in the hands of the Philistines, and the other when he was escaped out of their hands. Be this as it might, David on the occasion was a figure of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was persecuted by the Jews, and also surrounded by the Romans; so that he was taken by them, was in their hands, and severely treated by them. In these views of the subject, we have him here a dumb dove, altogether meek and passive under all the contradiction, rage, malice and fury of his enemies against his person. He was a dove for innocency and purity, yet his soul suffered violently from the rage of his enemies; from the scorning and despitelness of the proud. He was as a dove in a far country, being taken from one place to another; from one court to another to be examined. He mourned like a dove, in consequence of the bitter usage he met with during the season of his passion. He might well therefore offer the following prayer, when he was in these circumstances, and say, *Be merciful unto me, O God.* None but Jehovah could shew mercy to him. He wanted his mind to be supported; he wanted suited compassion and pity to be manifested to him, and to be exercised towards him, so as that he might be animated thereby. He gives his reason for his request, saying, *For man would swallow me up.* Saul and his courtiers would have very gladly swallowed up David, so would the Philistines and men of Gath when he was in their hands. The rulers and the people would gladly have swallowed up Messiah, when he was in their hands; they were always fighting against him; their