

very delight was to oppress him. Our Lord might therefore well complain of them, and pray against them.

V. 2. *Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou Most High.*

Our Lord was continually overlooked by his enemies. He was withstood continually by them. They were daily increasing in number, malice, and ill-will. They waged perpetual war. Nothing he said or did could gain their minds; they turned it all against him. It could be no inconsiderable torment and grief to the great, pure, and holy mind, to be thus perpetually despised and oppressed. He opens his case, he pours out his mind, on this subject and occasion, to God, whom he addresseth as most high. I take it for granted, I have spoke so clearly and fully concerning Christ's prayers, the ground of them, and the object of them, as well as it respects the subjects contained in them, which were various, and they are therefore varied as the cases and circumstances required, that there can be no need to repeat it.

V. 3. *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*

As the former words, in the two past verses, contained the prayer, which was entirely a matter of request, for which cause the present circumstances were recited, so here we have our Lord's declaration how he will act at all times of difficulty and danger. *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.* May we learn from him to act likewise. Thus Messiah having made his application to God, he placeth all his hope and confidence in him, of being saved from all the wiles and stratagems of his adversaries; and changeth his prayer into praise.

V. 4. *In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.*

The word of revelation, and the promises contained in it, were all-sufficient to support the faith of the glorious Mediator. He knew by them what was contained in the everlasting covenant, and what he had a right to expect from the divine Father in consequence of the same. Messiah's faith comprehended all the promises. He knew all the grace contained in them. He was divinely sustained and encouraged by them. Hence he says, *In God I will praise his word. In God I have put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.* Thus his great mind is kept up. He proceeds with the subject with which he began.

V. 5. *Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil.*

Which was most critically and literally the case, respect-

ing the conduct which the scribes and Pharisees observed towards our blessed Lord. They, like serpents by the wayside, marked his steps, till a proper opportunity offered to dart from their lurking-places, and bruise his heel. Thus they acted continually.

*V. 6. They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.*

This was expressly the case with these wretches on Christ's passion night. A band of Roman soldiers were called out. Judas at the head of them entered the garden of Gethsemane, where Christ then was. The Jewish rulers hid their cursed designs against Christ under various pretences. Yet Jesus knew the eye of his God was on them, that he knew all their designs against him, and laid wait for his most precious life. Hence he says,

*V. 7. Shall they escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God.*

No; the Lord is righteous. Their hatred and contempt of Messiah; their lies and calumniations of him; their bitter cruelty and malice which they treated him withal, was before the Lord. They did not escape the vengeance of God; they were rewarded for their iniquity. In the anger of the Lord which smoked against them, they were cast down from their high stations, and became a prey to their enemies. Thus Christ's prayer here was a prophecy of what would most certainly overtake them.

*V. 8. Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?*

The person of Christ was the constant object of God the Father's mind. All his journeys and removals from one place to another were before him. The steps Christ took to avoid the rage of his enemies, were fully observed by him. The tears he shed at the grave of Lazarus, in consequence of the infidelity in the hearts of many present, God did not overlook. The tears he shed when he pronounced the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and the Jewish people, were so precious, as to be put into God's bottle. He knew all; he registered all; it was all most inestimably precious in the sight of the divine Father; and the knowledge it was so, kept up our Lord's mind in the days of his flesh.

*V. 9. When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.*

Thus we see, the glorious Messiah had full assurance, that how many, or how formidable his enemies might appear to be, yet on his crying unto God, they should all be brought down, and laid low, even in the dust. This I know, says the

true antitypical David. It cannot be otherwise, *for God is for me*. He taketh an account of each and every one of the indignities. He will appear on my behalf. He will avenge me of mine enemies. He then concludes the Psalm in the four following verses, by repeating the declaration of his faith in the divine promises, and by paying his tribute of praise and thanksgiving unto God.

V. 10. *In God will I praise his word, in the Lord will I praise his word.*

These words, in the substance of them, had been before expressed in verse 4th. The glorious Messiah here repeats them, shewing from whence he drew his matter for praising God. His word was the fountain and spring of it, as therein all the will and counsel of the eternal Three concerning him was contained and set forth. He knew, by reading it, how far he had accomplished the will of him that sent him, and what further remained for him to suffer, do, and accomplish. Hence the word in which all this was set forth became most truly his delight. That he had been a dove, a dumb dove, under his tremendous sufferings and cruelties endured from the outrage of his enemies, was matter for praise. It was to him a token for good, an evidence he should be carried on through all further mockery and opposition. He praises God for the same, and his faith is strengthened hereby. He adds,

V. 11. *In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.*

None ever trusted God as Christ did. He trusted in him, and in his word expressed, and in his promises given in the everlasting covenant, before the foundation of the world, for the acceptation of his person, obedience, and sufferings, and for all the blessings and benefits thereof, that they should all redound to the good of his whole church. *In God I have put my trust.* I have his will set before, <sup>me</sup> now I am in my incarnate state, in his word. He is immutable: it is enough for me to believe this. *I will not fear what man can do unto me.* I am passing on. More cruelties will be exercised. I will not fear, but patiently endure all. Let the malice of men, their rage, and cruelty increase. Let it be so, I will patiently wait for the salvation of the Lord.

V. 12. *Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.*

The Lord Jesus Christ was under the most solemn obligation, to be, to do, and suffer, the whole good pleasure of the Father's will. His heart was most truly in it. He here confesseth it. He renders praises that he had gone on thus far,

He saw he should have a complete deliverance out of the hands of all his enemies by his death and resurrection. He speaks in the fullest assurance of this, and as though it was already accomplished, saying ;

V. 13. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death : wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?*

It may be truly said, it was all night with Christ, whilst in his suffering state. His soul underwent a death of afflictions, and also of soul sorrows ; yet he was delivered from them. He speaks of the same as though already done, to express his faith. Surely the promise of deliverance, and the accomplishment of it, were all one to the divine Father. In the confidence of this, the Messiah is persuaded he shall persevere in his suffering work. *Wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling?* Most undoubtedly thou wilt. That I may walk before God in the light of the living, and sing thy praise, and triumph in thee on the morning of my glorious resurrection. It will be so. Amen.

## PSALM THE FIFTY-SEVENTH.

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

This is a golden Psalm. The word Al-taschith signifies, destroy not. It refers to the occasion on which it was written ; the history of which you have in 1 Sam. xxiv. David being at Engedi, is pursued by Saul with three thousand chosen men ; who sought David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. Saul, in his pursuit of David, came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where was a cave, into which he retired. David and his men remained in the side of the cave. And the men of David said unto him, Behold, the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe. After which, Saul, knowing nothing of this, arose up out of the cave, and went on his way. David also rose afterwards, and went out of the cave, and cried after him, informing him concerning this. I conceive the general notes of the title of this Psalm are most excellently summed up thus. The words are either the beginning of the song, *Destroy not*, or else the words uttered by David in his extremity, staying and bridling his passion. *Michtam of David*, as if he should say, this was the golden or excellent sonnet which David com-

posed and delivered to the Levites to be sung, and after the tune of the Psalm beginning with *Al-taschith*, when he was in some wonderful fear and danger of death in the cave of Adullam or Engedi, whither he was driven by Saul, and so compassed about by his guard, that he saw nothing but death in the cave, or destruction if he came out, and thereupon prayed to the Lord that he would not suffer him to be destroyed. This it is necessary to be attended to, that we may rightly know and apprehend the occasion which gave birth to the writing it. Whilst the whole, in the highest meaning of it, concerns the true David, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In it we have him as prefigured in his sufferings, which came upon him immediately from his countrymen and Jewish enemies. It contains his faith in God. We have an account of his sufferings; his prayer for the exaltation of God's glory; a prediction of judgment on his Jewish adversaries. He concludes with the highest exultation.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.*

It appears to me, that David's cases are not so much improved on, to point at, and express the Lord Jesus Christ in the sacred collection of Psalms, as they are in the 52d, the 54th, the 55th, the 56th, this before us, and the 58th and 59th Psalms. Christ is a wonderful person. The subject of his mediation in and throughout every part of it, is a wonderful subject. The Holy Ghost, in treating it, and setting it forth in the book of Psalms, delights in a variety, so as that the whole of it may be made known; as hereby Christ receives from each member of his church, in proportion to their taking in the same into their minds, a tribute of glorious praise. I do not consider in the Psalms I have mentioned, that the body or soul sufferings of Christ are the subject: it is the various persecutions of Christ, from his implacable enemies the apostate Jews, that are contained in these persecutions. Hence it is, they all end in a full deliverance from all those, and most commonly the resurrection of Christ is the completion of them. I want, so far as I can, to give the just idea of these sacred songs. I aim at it, yet the Lord only can convey it to the mind. The words before us concern Christ. He was for a season in danger from his enemies. He was again and again delivered out of their hands. He was in danger of death and destruction by their means. He was atlast in their hands, and they put him to death.

Nothing befel him, but his mind was properly impressed with. He carries his case, and presents it to the Lord. He prays according to it, *Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.* It was God alone who could bear up the mind of Christ, in his state of humiliation. Our Lord needed the Father's mercy, as the head of his body the church, continually. He needed it under his trials, sorrows, affliction, and cruel mockings and persecutions. His earnest request, and its importunity, proves all this: *Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me.* This is his prayer. His argument for it is this: *For my soul trusteth in thee.* Here is his faith. He expresseth the free exercise of it thus. *Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge.* It is the cherubim of glory in the tabernacle, in the Holiest of All, the allusion is. Here the Three in Jehovah, in their covenant acts, were recorded. Taking refuge here, was to trust alone in them, and their covenant transactions; whose will it was the atonement of Christ should be everlastingly efficacious to save every sinner who trusted alone in it, and that they would for ever take infinite delight in it. Now Christ, as the Messiah, as the surety, as the Father's servant, all his confidence was founded hereon; so that under all his sorrows, come they from whence they might, here was his centre. Hence he says, *Yea, under the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.* It was in these acts of faith, and by the views he had of the everlasting covenant made with him, as the Man in God, that his mind was supported whilst he was in our world.

V. 2. *I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.*

Our Lord was to be overcome by his enemies. He was to be crucified; he was to be laid in the grave; he was to be raised from thence; he was to be a conqueror. Yea, more than conqueror over all. Yet he prays, though he well knew the result of all. He knew all the path before him was planned in the counsel of the eternal Three, who knew his will was covenanted for it; yet he prays, not contrary to what was willed in the infinite mind of Jehovah, but in perfect unison with it. *I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me.* I know that he heareth me alway. He does; he will give full proof and evidence of this.

V. 3. *He shall send from heaven, and save from the reproach*

*of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.*

This refers to the resurrection of Christ. The Father sent from heaven, and saved Christ from all the dishonour cast on him by the apostate Jews, who treated our Lord as an impostor. This was fully done away, by the resurrection and ascension of Christ. Not that these wretches saw this; yet it was not for want of full evidence of the proof God himself gave of it hereby. Peter says, on the descent of the Holy Ghost, who came down to prove the acceptation and coronation of Christ in heaven, *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 36.* The resurrection of Christ was his open discharge, deliverance, and salvation, from all his enemies. It was the act of God. Our Lord here speaks of it as such. He sets his seal to it. He would it should be had in everlasting remembrance, it being the great manifestation of the great deliverance and salvation of all saints in him, and which would be wrought in, and perfected by them in him. To this purpose the word *Selah* is expressed, as an Amen. So it is, so it will be, so it shall be. *I the Amen, the true and faithful witness, the beginning of the creation of God, affirm it. He will send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.* He will display these perfections most gloriously hereby.

V. 4. *My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.*

These words are descriptive of the most grievous sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, which arose from the persons amongst whom he was. In consequence of his being in their hands, which sufferings were increased by their tongues, which were set on fire. It was the fire of hell. They were so inflamed, that the devil made use of them, as his instruments, to utter what he would have them express. Their teeth, which served for articulation, were as spears and arrows; to shoot at Christ; to express their venom against him; to speak blasphemously of him; to rouse his inward feelings; to exasperate him; to inflame him to the uttermost. Not that it produced any of these effects; our Lord was altogether without sin, yet our Lord felt all they said. Yet he was not unworthily affected with it. Here lies the mystery. Christ knew all; he saw all; he felt all; he heard all; he was fully apprehensive of all; he fully perceived all.

Yet he was not; he was impeccable under all. The tongues of his enemies were as a sharp sword. What a description is here of Christ's Jewish enemies! Lions are the most fierce of beasts; fire the most devouring of elements; spears, arrows, and swords, are the sharpest of military weapons. These are selected to represent the power and fury of our Lord's enemies. Yet Christ, in the day of his passion, was surrounded by an host of these, and they were assisted by the whole host of hell. He then, says one, resembled Daniel in the lions' den, and the three children in the fiery furnace. He stood alone, whilst exposed to the utmost rage of earth and hell. Everlasting blessings on him!

V. 5. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.*

This is a prayer put up by Messiah, for the exaltation of God's glory, which was to be displayed in carrying him through all he was the subject of. To remove him out of his present circumstances; in delivering him from all his enemies; in raising him from the dead; he knew the glory of God would be exalted herein, and his power most gloriously displayed hereby. Here would be a display of his mercy and judgment; of his love to Christ; of his regard to his person as his holy one, his sent one, his anointed one, his promised one. His salvation of him would in this most fully appear, in his being delivered from all his enemies. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.* It was so, by raising Christ from the dead; by exalting him to heaven; by setting him at the right hand of the majesty on high, far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. This was pre-figured, foretold, and prayed for in the Old Testament church and under the Old Testament dispensation.

V. 6. *They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah.*

These words are expressive of the contrivements and devices of our Lord's enemies against him. He, the holy dove, was sought after by them. They prepared a net to entrap and entangle him in his steps, which is very expressive of the various stratagems and attempts of Messiah's enemies. He says, *My soul is bowed down.* It was so, when all their rage was fully vented on him; yet he foretells their ruin. *They have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah.* Some of these predictions are as so many solemn warnings given the body of the Jewish



people. Hence here the word *Selah* is placed. Take notice of Christ's words here. It is a forewarning the Jews of the tremendous consequence which would follow on their stumbling at him the true Messiah, and persecuting him unto death.

V. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.*

The Messiah keeps his eye on the prospect of his emerging out of his present case, out of the hands of his enemies, and from his present circumstance, and looks at his glorious exaltation. His heart is fixed on God; it is fixed to submit to all his holy will in every part, and throughout the whole course of his sufferings. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed on thee, and in the most entire satisfaction to all the good pleasure of thy will. *I will sing and give praise*, for the deliverance thou art about to work for me.

V. 8. *Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.*

Thus our Lord prepares himself, with all the harmony of vocal and instrumental music, to celebrate his future enlargement and deliverance, with songs of praise. He calls upon his tongue, with all the instruments of music; he calls on the organs of his body, and the affections of his mind, to unite in the sweetest harmony and concert, to awake the morning, with the voice of melody, sounding forth the glories of redemption, and victory over the powers of darkness by his glorious resurrection from the grave and power of death.

V. 9. *I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.*

The resurrection of Messiah from the dead, was such a transaction of all the Three in Jehovah, as will cause the saints in heaven and earth to extol the mercy and truth of God for ever and ever. Hereby the everlasting covenant was fully ratified, sealed, and finished for ever. All the Lord's people, were they but sensible and spiritually apprehensive of what is contained in the Father's raising up Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead, would be blessing him perpetually for it.

V. 10. *For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.*

The mercy of God in Christ Jesus is beyond all which either elect saints or angels can comprehend. Its greatness is such, as cannot be explored. His truth is immutable; it is unto the clouds. It is indeed far above them. Saints on earth are vessels of mercy; when they are raised above the

clouds, and are actually in heaven, they will have to sing the greatness of God's truth and mercy for ever, in the kingdom of glory.

V. 11. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.*

Thus the Psalm ends, with such an exalted act of praise, as only could be offered up by the glorious Mediator. Yet it may be considered as the words of David as his personator, and as being in the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit, when he wrote thus. May what is contained in Christ, as the object and subject of this Psalm, do us good. The Lord add his blessing unto it. May we look on it as a glass in which Christ is seen. May he so reflect his light and knowledge of himself in it on our minds, as to feed and feast our understandings thereby. Amen.

### PSALM THE FIFTY-EIGHTH.

Its title is, *To the Chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David.*

The words Al-taschith and Michtam having been already opened, I shall say no more concerning them. Yet I would observe, that this is the third Psalm which follows in order, which is entitled A golden Psalm. The sixteenth Psalm bears this title, but that is not in connection with these. Here in the order in which the 56th, 57th, 58th, and 59th stand, it follows in each one after the other. David was a man in Christ; he was also a type of Christ. He was made conformable to Christ; and in his conformity to Christ, by which he was enabled to write of and concerning him, it cost him dear: for it was God's will he should be in a suffering state, and experience a variety of distresses, from Saul, from Doeg the Edomite, from the Ziphins, from the Philistines at Gath, from Absalom, from Ahithophel, and from the various rebellions which he was from time to time exercised with, that the Holy Ghost falling on him, he might under the divine agency be fitted and qualified to express the case and circumstances of his great antitype the Lord Jesus Christ. As I lay the foundation of this Psalm in the case of David, so I shall freely apply it to his Lord and Saviour.

It appears to me very particularly suited to express the iniquitous counsels of the enemies of Christ, who were the great senate of the nation, when they sentenced Messiah's death. Their malice is compared to the poison of serpents,

which are proof against every art made use of to tame them. The destruction of these enemies of Christ is here predicted; the triumph of Christ over them is expressed, with the effects which it will produce. This is the outline of it.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David. Do ye indeed speak righteousness? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?*

We need not wonder David entitled these Psalms, golden ones, as whatever his sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions were which led him to think, to write, to speak, to meditate on, and converse with the most precious Lord Jesus, must be golden ones indeed; as are ours also, when we learn from them, more and more of our need of our most blessed Lord, and most especially, when we are led to call upon, and make more use of our Lord in consequence of them. Our Lord Jesus Christ, from his birth to his death, was looked on by the first eye in the Jewish nation with a great deal of suspicion. As he grew up, and by his life and conversation, by his baptism, miracles, preaching, and journeys in various parts of Judea, the Sanhedrim grew more and more jealous of him. As his name and fame, for the wonderful acts and cures wrought by him, increased his reputation amongst the generality of the people, the rulers were almost mad. They therefore held private consultation concerning putting him to death. They held a common counsel; it is in private. They care not who is present at it, nor how they act, if they can but accomplish their design, which is to put Christ to death. They will admit of false witnesses. Any thing, every thing shall be put up with, and connived at, so they may but accomplish this end. Read the evangelists on the passion of our Lord, and you will have full proof of all this. In the Psalm before us, this subject is prophesied of, and the questions put are these: *Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?* The questions are calculated to rouse their attention; to put them on consideration; to remind them there was one higher than they; before whom they must appear; to whom they must be accountable. It therefore became them to think how they would be able to stand before the Holy Lord God with the guilt of Messiah's blood on them.

V. 2. *Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.*

So far were these from speaking righteousness, when Christ was before them, and he under them for examination, that there was no justice left. No: they judged un-

righteously; there was no truth nor uprightness found amongst them. They denied the holy One and the Just; they condemned him. Here therefore is Christ's charge against them. He introduces it with a confirming word, to seal the truth of his charge with the greater weight upon their minds. *Yea, in heart ye work wickedness.* It all comes out of the wickedness and villany of your own hearts. *Ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.* They gave a sum of money to Judas on purpose that he might betray Christ into their hands. This makes way for a full account and description to be given of them.

V. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.*

The generation in which our Lord lived, was notorious for sin. He styles it himself, a wicked and adulterous generation. Their hearts were gone from God; they openly rejected the Messiah; they were born in sin; they were brought up in sin; they lived in sin, and they would die in sin. They would not come unto, nor acknowledge Christ to be the Messiah, that they might have life. No: they had rather persevere in their entire renunciation of him to the last moment of their existence in this present world, and bring total ruin on their church and state, than act otherwise than they did. This was full proof that they were wicked; that they were estranged from the womb; that they went astray from God; that it was their case still; they go astray; they did so as soon as they were born, speaking lies; they continued to do so still. They are further described in the next words.

V. 4. *Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear.*

The malignity of temper which is in the ungodly, is the venom and poison of the intellectual world. The wicked are here compared to serpents for this. Our Lord calls the lawyers, scribes, and Pharisees, hypocrites; yea, serpents. He thus addresses them: *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?* Matthew xxiii. ver. 33. They were such towards him, in the exercise of their venom and malignity towards him. They were full of poison; they were full of venom; they exercised themselves as full of this, when Christ was before them. Let him say what he might, they turned away their ear from him. *They are, they were, like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear.* When the high-priest demand an immediate reply to this question, *Art thou the Christ the son of the blessed?* and our Lord replied, *I am,* he rent his clothes, charged our

Lord with blasphemy, and turned away his ear from him. It had been so, with the bulk of the Jewish elders, during the whole of our Lord's ministry. *They* hear Jesus of Nazareth! No: they will not. *They* acknowledge him to be sent by God! No: by no means, that they will not. *They* confess him to be the Messiah! No: nor shall all the miracles brought by all sorts of witnesses ever bring them to. They are by nature and temper serpents; they are full of poison. It is like the poison of a serpent. They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear. The deaf adder may either be a serpent of a species naturally deaf, or one deaf by accident. In either case, says an excellent writer, she may be said, in the language of poetry, to stop her ear, being proof to all the efforts of the charmer.

V. 5. *Which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely, [or, as in the margin, be the charmer ever so cunning.]*

These enemies of Christ are described both negatively, and positively. Their hearts work wickedness; they are wicked; they go astray; they speak lies; they are serpents; their poison is most deadly; they are like the deaf adder; they would neither be pleased with John the Baptist, nor with Christ. This being their case, and their continuation in all this, brings the curse of God in its execution on them.

V. 6. *Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord.*

These words are a prediction and prophecy of the fatal calamities which would inevitably come on the Jewish rulers, for their rejection, and murder of Christ. It is set forth in very bold and strong expressions. The figures used to illustrate and set the same forth, that it might have the most striking impression, and stamp a memorable idea of it on the mind, are bold and full of terror. This subject begins with this, is continued, and closes with the 9th verse. The first similitude to represent, and set forth these wicked ones, who are the subjects of this Psalm, is that of breaking the teeth of lions. *Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord.* The most terrible weapons, of the most terrible animals, of lions, are their teeth. But the power of these, and all beside, is most easily brought down, and subdued by the omnipotent power of God. Thus the Jewish enemies of Christ, were here forewarned of their destruction, whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear. All the enemies of Christ, in the Jewish senate, might have here seen

what would most certainly befall them; but they were like the deaf adder which stoppeth her ear. They would neither be charmed by the gospel, nor be terrified by threatenings; they will have none of Christ's reproofs; not they indeed.

V. 7. *Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.*

To illustrate further the destruction of these wicked ones, this second very striking similitude is made use of, to set it forth by. *Let them melt away as waters which run continually.* Torrents, and inundations, descend with great noise from the mountains, and cover the face of a country; but their cause soon ceasing to act, they run off, and appear no more. This is a very striking emblem of the weakness and instability of human power. *When he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrow, let them be as cut in pieces.* This is the third similitude to express the destruction of our Lord's Jewish enemies in the land of Judea. A man drawing a bow, when the arrow on the string is broken in two, instead of flying at the mark, it falls at his feet.

V. 8. *As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.*

A snail, coming forth from its shell, marks its path with slime, continually losing some part of its substance in its progress. An abortion wastes away in the same manner. These are the fourth and fifth similitudes made use of, to foreshadow the destruction of the Jewish rulers, people, and nation, for their sin in crucifying Messiah, the Lord of glory.

V. 9. *Before your pots can feel the thorns he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.*

There is a crackling and momentary blaze, kindled by a fire of thorns under a pot. It is suddenly extinct. This is the fifth similitude, to express the easy extinction of Christ's enemies. The sixth is a whirlwind, which sweeps away suddenly and irresistibly all before it. The Lord, by breaking the teeth of lions, by waters and inundations, by a bow cut in pieces, shoot out of a bow, by a snail, by abortion, by thorus under a pot, by a whirlwind, sets forth the wicked, as suddenly destroyed by the judgments of the Lord. This, which most certainly in the first place, may well be considered as a prophecy, and which is here uttered prayer-wise, and also as a prediction, hath received its most

solemn and awful accomplishment on our Lord's enemies, who imbrued their hands in his blood.

V. 10. *The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.*

Christ himself, who is here the speaker, is that just One who cannot but joy and rejoice in the destruction of his enemies. Not out of revenge, but because here is to be seen in such dispensations, the holiness, the truth, the power and wisdom of God, in his moral government of the world. In the administration of which, he fulfils his promises, executes his threatenings, and punishes the ungodly. Never was this more visibly displayed, than in what befel the Jews, after our Lord had triumphed most gloriously over them by his resurrection and ascension into heaven. This was so clearly seen and understood by the followers of the Lamb, that what follows in the next words, which close this Psalm, was the effect of it. They could not but applaud Christ for it.

V. 11. *So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*

What took place at, and after the resurrection of Christ, gave reason to say, *verily there is a reward for the righteous.* Christ was lifted up from the grave of death; he was afterwards lifted up from earth to heaven, and sat down on the right hand of God. He received his reward for his wonderful abasement of his person, for his humiliation, and work of salvation. This was made known by the everlasting gospel. This made way for a man, for believers in him to say, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous.* And looking at the judgments executed on his most inveterate enemies, to confess and say, *verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.* I keep in view that I am not sermonizing. Therefore let not the reader be offended because I carry it all to Christ, whilst I think it belongs to him; yet I am not against taking any portion of it for a text. Amen.

## PSALM THE FIFTY-NINTH.

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

You have the history which belongs to this Psalm, 1 Sam. chap. xix. ver. 11. *Saul also sent messengers unto David's house to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and*

*Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.* So David rose and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him, &c. ver. 18. David in these, as in several circumstances of his life, is to be considered as Messiah's representative. My plan will be to consider Christ, the subject of it, and the speaker in it. He prays to be delivered from the power of his blood-thirsty enemies; he describes their indefatigable malice; he speaks of his own enlargement, through the tender mercy, and mighty power of God; he predicts the singular punishment which will be poured out upon his enemies, which would be expressive of his vengeance on them, and serve for admonition to others. The Psalm closes with acts of exultation and thanksgiving.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him. Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.*

The Lord Christ here speaks. His address is to the divine Father. The address is in faith. He calls him *My God*. He prays for deliverance from his enemies. In what sense Christ as man, as God-man, Mediator, and Saviour needed to pray in the days of his flesh, hath been very frequently shewn, in many of the Psalms already commented on; therefore I consider it altogether needless to go over the same again. Our Lord's type, David, according to the title of this Psalm, must have been in great distress at this time. So was our Lord himself whom he personated, when he was in danger from his Jewish enemies; who when they had him in custody, surrounded him with a guard, and kept close the doors of the palace of the high-priest, so that none were admitted, which they had the least suspicion of as being friends to our Lord. He was in the hands of his enemies. They watched him closely, hoping to hear something from him that they might accuse him. They beset him about in order to kill. He did not escape of their hands, when his hour for sufferings arrived. Otherwise he had again and again escaped out of their hands. He here addresses God in prayer, saying, *Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God.* This is the ground of his prayer, covenant relation and interest in God. This was always clear in his mind; this kept it up at all times; it was his support under all trials, sorrows, troubles and circumstances. He read his interest in the Father, and knew himself to be the Mediator of reconciliation, by what he read in the sacred re-



cord, concerning the transactions in the council of peace, and he prayed, obeyed, and acted in every place, case and season according to the same. He, as set before us in this Psalm, was in sorrowful circumstances; his enemies cried out, destroy him; they watched day and night for him; they have their eyes closely fixed on him. He knew all this; he is perfectly apprehensive of the same; he looks to God, and to him as his God in an everlasting covenant, for deliverance, and defence. *Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.* He knew, he was not to be completely delivered out of their hands, but by his own death and resurrection. Yet the humanity needed support. Some views of the good pleasure of the Father's will, concerning this, would be relieving to the mind, and it was in this way only, he could be succoured.

V. 2. *Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.*

These words, which are an addition to the former, shew the importunity of our Lord's mind, to obtain his request. It was the humanity was the subject of suffering; it was the understanding which knew what these sufferings were; it was the man in God obeyed and suffered. Christ in our nature, apprehended and suffered every sort and kind of sorrow, that nature of ours, which he took into personal union, was capable of. Here his sufferings consisted, in the most severe persecution, and rage even to madness of his Jewish enemies against him. His request is to be delivered from these workers of iniquity; to be saved from these bloody men. They were athirst for his blood; they care not what pains they take, if they may but accomplish their end. Christ felt the bitterness of their spirit; his holy soul was deeply affected with their rage and cruelty; it was one bitter part of his sufferings, to be thus cruelly and maliciously beset by them. He lays all this open in his prayer.

V. 3. *For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O Lord.*

It must enter into the mind of Christ, the subject he is here upon, beyond all our conceptions. He was, if I may so express it, all intellect. His mind was full of perception; it was perpetually in exercise; all before him made its proper impression on him; nothing could soil his holy mind. Yet his thoughts in a right, orderly, and regular way and manner, took into the thinking faculty, every part and particular indignity offered him. No: it could be no

little grief to him, to have a set of coarse ruffians, and such as were bloody minded, to be hired by the rulers of the Jews, to seek, and wait for him; and when they should get him into their hands, to forbear no sort of cruelty and indignity, but exercise it towards him to the very uttermost. He spreads this before God in prayer; he pleads his own perfect innocency; he had given no cause for this; no: it all proceeded from themselves; they were instigated in the whole of it by the devil. *Not (says Messiah) for my transgressions, nor for my sin, O Lord.*

V. 4. *They run and prepare themselves without any fault: awake to help me, and behold.*

This is a continuation of the same subject, containing a further account of Christ's enemies, with a declaration of his being faultless. He therefore entreats the divine Majesty, in the person of the Father, to awake; that is to attend to his supplication; to help him; to behold him, and also the rage of his most virulent enemies against him. His mind being more and more engaged in the subject, it increases his importunity; he pours out his soul the more abundantly, and petitions with the utmost intensity of mind, and his whole heart opened before the Lord, for an answer to his prayer. This is contained in the next words in the following verse.

V. 5. *Thou therefore, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressor. Selah.*

These words are very importunate. They are followed with a very strong argument, to prevail with God. He is addressed as, *Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel.* His incommunicable name, expressive of his incommunicable nature, is expressed. His covenant relation to his whole church is declared, *the God of Israel*; and as such, Messiah prays he would afford him help and succour, deliverance, and defence, from his present enemies. *Thou therefore,* (seeing mine enemies are what they are) *O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, arise* for my help. Awake to save me; make no delay; do thou visit all the heathen; for both Jews and Gentiles rose up against Christ. The Jews and Romans were concerned in putting Christ to death. *Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.* I look on these words as a prediction; and the word *Selah* is added to it, that it might be taken notice of.

V. 6. *They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.*

Whilst the words, in the first place, are expressive of

Saul's emissaries, coming after David, besetting his house, blocking up the avenues, who are here compared to a set of hungry blood-hounds, in search of their prey; so they most exactly suit, and are descriptive of that set of evening wolves, who thirsted after Messiah's blood; on whom their mouths were opened, who cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him.*

V. 7. *Behold, they belch out with their mouth; swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear.*

This is most awfully and exactly descriptive of our Lord's enemies at the time of his passion. No doubt but there were great exultations by the apostate Jews, that they had him bound, and delivered up to be tried by the Sanhedrim. What vile expressions, what horrible words, and execrations, may be conceived to be uttered by their impious lips at this time! It seems they were so shocking, the Holy Ghost would not permit the least mention of them, only says, *and many other things blasphemously spake they against him.* Luke xxii. ver. 65. What must the sorrows of our Lord's mind be, and his frame, and feelings, to be in such hands! even in this particular, we can have no adequate idea of the sufferings of Messiah. Indeed we can not. The base villain in our world, and when in the hands and exposed to the scorn and contempt of the basest of men, was never so basely treated as our most blessed Lord was.

V. 8. *But thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.*

It could not be otherwise. God could not approve of the cruelty of Caiaphas and his creatures; nor of the injustice of Pilate in passing sentence on Christ, whom he pronounced innocent; nor of the malice of Jews and Romans against the true and only Messiah. No: it was impossible it should be overlooked. Therefore these words are, I conceive, a solemn prediction of the contempt God would put on them, and how he would also most severely visit them for it. Thus our Lord begins to speak of his own emerging out of the hands of these enemies; which he ascribes to the tender mercy, and mighty power of God.

V. 9. *Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.*

To the strength of the enemy, Messiah here opposes that of God, which he knew would rescue him, and finally bring down the power of the enemy. *Because of his strength*, i. e. the enemy, I will wait on thee in prayer, and for an answer to my prayer; and will expect deliverance, *for thou, O God, who art my God, thou art my defence.* It becomes us at all

times, let our sins, miseries, corruptions, enemies, dangers and distresses be what they may, to oppose the all-sufficiency of God to them. It is truly blessed so to do. We can never be too much out of conceit with ourselves, nor renounce all dependence on ourselves too much. Nor can we ever place too much confidence in the Lord.

V. 10. *The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.*

Thus our Lord makes it evident, he had received some divine answer to his petitions. God's covenant mercy had relieved him. He entitles God the God of his mercy, who had prevented him with it, i. e. he had given him a view and sense of it, suited to his present sorrows, and the views he had of the rage of his enemies. He therefore begins to triumph. He says, *God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.*

Then, in the five following verses, our Lord predicts what punishments would fall on the people of the Jews, for their hatred, malice, wrath, and cruelty against him; all which were the fruits and effects of God's holy and righteous displeasure against them.

V. 11. *Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.*

The singular fate of the Jews is here most remarkably expressed, and just as it came to pass. Though they were driven out of their own land, yet they were not extirpated, but were, and are continued to the present moment as a distinct people from all others on the face of the earth. They remain at this day, a monument of God's vengeance against apostacy, that the church of Christ in the Gentile nations should not forget their punishment. They are scattered; they are cast off; they are put down from the glorious privileges and high rank in which they once stood. Thus the prediction is accomplished. *Bring them down, O Lord our shield.* I consider Christ here speaking in the name of his people among the Gentiles, to whom the Jews were desperate enemies, almost as much as they were to Christ himself, as appears from these words of the apostles, who says of them, *Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.* 1 Thes. chap. ii. ver. 16.

V. 12. *For the sin of their mouth, and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak.*

Here the causes of the Jews dispersion are assigned. It

is the sin of their mouths in the words of their lips. Their hard speeches spoken against their true Messiah, our most blessed and precious Lord Jesus Christ. It was for their horrible villany, wrath and malice against him; for those hard speeches spoken against him; for their lying slanders, horrible behaviour, lying accusations, and outrageous blasphemies, against Christ the Son of the living God. It is in consequence of that tremendous execration, in which they involved their descendants, when they said, his blood be on us and on our children, they were cast out of Judea, and were, and still are, scattered among all nations. They have remained under this curse these 1800 years.

V. 13. *Consume them in wrath, consume them that they may perish, or not be; and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.*

This prediction was accomplished in the total destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, when the Jews having no longer a city, temple, priesthood, and civil polity, ceased to be as a nation; though they have not profited by it, yet they have seen enough to have convinced them, had they attended to it, that God is not God of the Jews only, but also the God of the Gentiles. That he ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth have seen the salvation of God, and submitted to king Messiah, whose name is the Lord of hosts. It is now supposed the year in which the Jews will be called is 1822.

V. 14. *And at evening let them return: and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.*

This is very descriptive of their case and circumstances, since their extirpation out of their own land. They have been wanderers; they have returned hither and thither; they have gone about from one city to another, just like a dog, which, as an unclean animal, was to be held as such amongst their predecessors; so have they been treated, more or less, amongst all people amongst whom they have come. It is most just that they who have thirsted after the blood of the Righteous One, should want a drop of water to cool their tongues. The hunger of a dog is most deservedly their plague, of whom a resemblance to that unclean animal's disposition, hath been the sin. The present condition of the Jews is, they are excluded from the church of Christ. They suffer the calamities of a spiritual famine, and therefore they are dogs; for John, speaking of the New Jerusalem, the holy city, the church of the living God, says, *For without are dogs,* Rev. xxii. 15.

V. 15. *Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.*

They have been wanderers, even from one end of the earth to the other. They have suffered most exceedingly, in all sorts of ways. The singular punishment and vengeance spoken of by way of prediction in this Psalm, and uttered for the admonition of such whose ears the Lord had opened to receive instruction from it, hath been most awfully and strikingly accomplished. And here ends the Psalm, as it respects these subjects. What follows is Messiah's exultation and triumph, which he expresses in the language of thanksgiving, saying;

V. 16. *But I will sing of thy power : yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning : for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.*

Christ obtained an entire and complete escape out of the hands of his Jewish enemies, by his resurrection from the dead. This was to be ascribed to the power of God. It was, according to the exceeding greatness of it, Christ was quickened, and raised up from the state of the dead. This Messiah here exults in, as also in the mercy of God to him and his elect; who, though they are not mentioned, yet we must not exclude them, from him in whom alone their spiritual being, blessedness, and salvation is. God had been, agreeable to the covenant relation which subsisted between him and the Messiah, and according to all the promises thereof, his defence and refuge in the day of his trouble, for which he here praises him. *But I will sing of thy power : yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning.* The glorious morning of his resurrection from the grave and power of death; when he arose to die no more, and to live as everlastingly exalted above, and beyond all the rage and malice of his enemies. *For thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.* Thus our Lord acknowledges the Father's faithfulness to him, which is frequently the case in various places in the Psalms; which is easy to be understood, when we have clear conceptions of the acts and offices of the Eternal Three in the economy of the covenant. According to which, each acknowledges one the other in their distinct acts and offices, and they give each other mutual glory: and Christ being the glorious one, in whom all their acts and purposes, will, end and aim center. He becoming incarnate to accomplish the whole, speaks of his faith, love, and hope in the Father, who sent him, and gives him his praise for all his acts in him, for all his supports of him, and of all his faithfulness to him. I know of no other way of opening,

explaining, and speaking on these deep things of God. I hope this is satisfactory.

V. 17. *Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.*

Christ will to eternity give the Father glorious praise. He will sing unto him, and triumph before him. He will be for ever admiring and adoring God, for the relation he stands in to his whole church, and for what he hath done for them. They may well take up his words, and sing his praise in the use of them; and rejoice in giving these titles to their heavenly Father, and looking on him, as sustaining them. He is the God of their mercy; the God of their strength; he is God their refuge. May what hath been expressed do good to the reader! Amen.

## PSALM THE SIXTIETH.

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

Shushan-eduth, says a blessed man, is either the name of some instrument to be played upon in singing this Psalm, or the beginning of some song, so called according to the tune wherewith David would have this Psalm sung; or *Michtam*, i. e. an excellent song, which may be sung either upon the instrument or tune *Shushan-eduth*, or that of *Michtam*. David would by this Psalm testify to the whole church his faith, and the benefit of his victory given him by God over the Aramites of Mesopotamia, and the other Aramites who inhabited Zobah. The history of it is recorded in 2 Sam. viii. and 1 Chron. xviii. Aram is the Hebrew name of Syria. Hence we read of Aram-Naharam, or Mesopotamia; Aram-Zobah, or Syria of Zobah; Aram-Damascus, or Syria of Damascus; and Aram-Bethrehob, or Syria of Bethrehob. We read in the 8th chapter of the second book of Samuel, that David routed Hadadezer's army, and soon after routed the allied army of Syrians from Zobah and Damascus, and put garrisons in their cities, and rendered them tributary. It is said, ver. 13: *And David gat him a name when he returned from smiting the Syrians in the valley of Salt, being eighteen thousand men.* It is said in 1 Chron. xviii. 12, that Abishai slew of the Edomites, in the valley of Salt, 18,000 men. In the title of the Psalm before us, Joab is said to have returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of Salt 12,000. To recon-

cile these accounts, it is conceived David attacked the Edomites, and on the field of battle, in the valley of Salt, cut off 12,000 of them, the number expressed in the title of this Psalm, and 6000 more in the pursuit, which make 18,000; or, that Abishai cut off 18,000, and Joab cut off 12,000 more: the honour of all which is given to David, he being king in 2 Sam. viii. 13. Others think it should be stated thus: That this Psalm being composed after David was seated on his throne, and the tribes of Israel had submitted to his sceptre, and he had been engaged in the reduction of other countries, that the subject of the Psalm is as follows—What Israel had lately suffered, from foreign enemies and internal jars: David speaks of himself, as appointed to conduct the people to victory and triumph, according to divine prediction—rejoiceth in the accession of the other tribes to that of Judah; and views Edom, Moab, and Philistia, already subdued by the mighty power of God. I shall consider the subject of it as belonging to David king of Israel, and as prophetic of Christ; of his wrath against his Jewish enemies; of his victories and triumphs; and of his people's confidence and triumphs in him.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, Mich-tam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram-Zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of Salt twelve thousand. O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.*

The words are addressed prayer-wise to God. They are offered up by David in the name of the Jewish church and people. Mention is made in them of the Lord's dispensations towards them. Sin is ever the object of God's hatred and displeasure; he cannot but visit for it; he did so, thirty thousand men were slain in one day, and the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, and carried off into their idolatrous land. See 1 Sam. iv. It was as though they had been cast off, when Saul and his sons fell in battle, and the Israelites fled before the Philistines; see chap. xxxi. *O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us.* This was the case when Abner set up Ishbosheth king over several of the tribes of Israel, and this in direct opposition to God's revealed will, who had declared David the son of Jesse should be king, which was the occasion of war and bloodshed for six or seven years. It was a token of God's displeasure against them for sin. This is acknowledged in this prayer. *Thou hast been displeased.* A petition is put up, requesting the Lord would return in his wonted kindness. *O turn thyself unto us again.*



Some evidences of which were given in making David so successful over his and his people's enemies. The whole may likewise be applied as prophetically declaring the state and case of the Jewish nation and people, who were cast off, and are still scattered over the face of the whole globe, and will remain so until the Lord, who is displeased with them for their continuance in the sin of their predecessors, in rejecting Christ, is pleased to turn them to himself, and give them a pure language, that they may all call upon him with one consent.

V. 2. *Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.*

This was the case in the land of Judea, when there were wars between the house of Saul and the house of David, and there were civil war and contention between Israel and Judah. It was the cause of many breaches and sad divisions amongst the people. A stop was put to it when David was declared by the joint assent and consent of all parties, after the death of Abner and Ishbosheth, to be king of all the tribes of Israel. Before this, the land trembled. It was broken by factions. There were sad breaches made. It was still in a tottering condition, but prospects were now very promising; yet none but God could perfect the same. He is therefore addressed to heal the whole. It is also very expressive of what befel the land of Judea, after the ascension of Christ, and of the prayer of the Jews in the latter day.

V. 3. *Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.*

This is an expostulation with the Lord. A recital of misery which the Israelites had been exercised with. They are styled *hard things*. It is more solemnly expressed in saying, *Thou hast made us to drink of the wine of astonishment*. Which, however applicable to what might have been the case under the government of the judges which judged Israel; or in Saul's time, when he slew the Lord's priests; or during the civil commotions which took place when David first came to the throne, and lasted some years, let it be applied to any of these cases as it may, yet it was most literally and awfully fulfilled in the Jewish nation, state, and people, when wrath came upon them to the uttermost for their apostacy from God, and for their rejection of Christ.

V. 4. *Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.*

In raising up, and setting David on the throne, notwithstanding all opposition to this, God had accomplished his promise. It was a token for good to the whole nation.

They saw, the Lord preserved, and exalted him for his people Israel's sake. To this therefore the prophet sets his seal. *Selah.* Mark this. He who hath thus fulfilled his promise, will most assuredly fulfil all his promises. It will be so even to the end: though, in the most tremendous sense, God has shewed the apostate Jews hard things, and made them drink of the wine of his wrath, even to their astonishment, yet he will set up a banner to them. He will send Christ in the preaching of the gospel to them. He will give him as a banner unto them. He shall be displayed unto them: This shall be according to the truth of his promise. It shall be very instructing to the minds of such as shall turn to the Lord. They shall be blessed by Christ, the banner being displayed, and made known amongst them. Thus Christ, the true Messiah, will be found by them the great security and preservation, the glory and honour of the Jewish nation, when they shall turn to the Lord. It will be as a seal to the truth of God, therefore it deserves to be very particularly remarked. To which purpose the word *Selah* is fixed.

V. 5. *That thy beloved may be delivered; save with thy right hand, and hear me.*

Which may be considered as spoken in the person of Messiah, who, as he died for all his elect, both Jews and Gentiles, and they are God's beloved ones, so their salvation, finished by Christ, is brought home to their ears, and received into their hearts, by the everlasting gospel. And the Jews will be delivered from their present state of unbelief by being brought to the saving knowledge of Messiah their prince, like as the Israelites were saved from joining the house of Saul, and seeking kingly government from thence, when they clearly understood, by the Lord's setting David on the throne, it was the good pleasure of his will they should submit to him, and confess him to be their lawful king. And like as David might pray on the behalf of his people, as the beloved of God, that they might be saved from all their enemies, that the right-hand of God might be made bare on their behalf, and that the Lord would hear him for them; so Christ, as Mediator, may be considered as here praying as the great Intercessor on behalf of his Jewish church in the latter day, that she may be saved from, and out of the hands of all her enemies.

V. 6. *God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.*

These words belong to David king of Israel. God had spoken in holiness of him, by his prophets Samuel, Nathan, and Gad. He had accomplished what he had spoken con-

cerning raising him to the throne. The insurrections which had been amongst the people were crushed. He views this, and reviews what God in his holiness had spoken concerning him. He finds in it matter for holy joy. He says, *I will rejoice*. He had good reason for so doing. He further says, *I will divide Shechem*, a place in the tribe of Ephraim, the same with Sychar, where our Lord met with the woman of Samaria, John iv. Abner set up Ishbosheth king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel, 2 Sam. ii. 9. But David being now enthroned, and being fully persuaded of the holiness and faithfulness of God, in the fulfilment of his promise to him, says, *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth*. This belonged to the tribe of Gad: it was on the east of Jordan, and south of the sea of Galilee. The word Succoth signifies booths or tents: it was so called from Jacob's setting up booths or tents, when he came from Padan-Aram. Near it was a large valley. *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth*, was expressive of giving proper parts and portions of land to such as dwelt in or near it; or, in other words, it shews how completely David was enthroned king over all Israel. That there was universal peace throughout every part of his kingdom; that all faction ceased; and he possessed the hearts of his subjects, those beyond Jordan, as fully as those in Jerusalem.

V. 7. *Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver.*

Gilead was noted for the best of balm, and for the most excellent pastures. It was eastward of Jordan. It fell to the lot of the half tribe of Manasseh. It was not till after the death of Ishbosheth, David was king here. *Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine*,—the land, and its inhabitants. *Ephraim also is the strength of mine head*. This tribe was seated in the very heart of the promised land. For about 320 years, the tabernacle of God was lodged at Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim. In the war in which it was carried off by the Philistines, it seems the Ephraimites, though well armed, behaved with the utmost cowardice. See Joshua xviii. ver. 1. 1 Sam. iv. Psalm lxxviii. 6. Yet 20,800 valiant men of this tribe attended David's coronation. In his reign, Hoshea the son of Azariah was their deputy-governor, and Helez the Pelonite their chief captain. See 1 Chron. xii. 30. and chap. xxvii. ver. 10. 20. This tribe was very numerous and powerful, ten tribes received their name from it; and David was mightily strengthened by the submission of

this

tribe to him. Hence he says, *Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver.* Judah was the kingly tribe. This was foretold by Jacob. God himself gave the law. The prince of this tribe was to rule the people according to the same. Thus David, surveying how the Lord had brought under all opposition, made him a conqueror, given him the hearts of his people, and subdued his and their enemies, rejoices, saying, *God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver.* They are so many solemn asseverations of the truth of God's promises to him, and of the faithful accomplishment of the same. God's word is as good as his act. God's holiness in speaking is as great support to faith as his performance of the same is. *God hath spoken in his holiness, therefore I will rejoice, and do so and so.*

V. 8. *Moab is my wash pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.*

When David was persecuted by Saul, he fled to the land of Moab, and committed his parents to the protection of the king of Moab. Some think he killed them, which so enraged David, that about twelve years after he ravaged their country, and reduced them to the basest servitude; so that such of their soldiery as he took prisoners, he caused to lie, or stand close together, and measuring over them with lines to mark them for death, or life, he killed the half, if not two-thirds of them. See 2 Sam. viii. 1, 2. The same seems to be referred to in these words, *Moab is my washpot*, signifying he could as easily exterminate them as he could wash his hands. He speaks of the Edomites in such a case as he need not fear them; for, says he, *Over Edom will I cast out my shoe*; signifying he was bold to challenge them to come forth and make war with him, if they dared. In the height of their prosperity they had given some umbrage to David. He had turned his victorious arms against them, and 18,000 of them were slain in the valley of Salt, and Joab ravaged the whole country till he had scarce left alive any of their males, and reduced the whole kingdom into subjection to Israel. This being the case, he addresses his own land in a most beautiful and figurative expression, saying, *Philistia, or Palestine, triumph thou because of me.* Or, if we understand this of the Philistines who were enemies to the Jews, and over whom he had frequently obtained success, then the words are a severe irony, saying unto them, *Philistia, triumph thou over me.* Thus he expresses his triumph and great suc-

ness over his public enemies. *Moab is my washpot, over Edom will I cast out my shoe. Philistia, triumph thou because of me.* All which may be considered as realized in the victories and triumphs of our great Lord, who hath subdued the whole host of hell, and who goeth on from conquering and to conquer.

V. 9. *Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?*

These questions are asked, it may be, to disclaim all help and confidence in any human arm. At the same time, as expressive of his confidence that no enemy, nor city, nor fortified place, would be too strong or sufficient to withstand him. Without waiting for any reply to both these questions, he immediately applies unto, and asks these questions of God :

V. 10. *Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go forth with our armies?*

Thus he casts himself on God. He had heretofore admitted the enemy to be very successful against Israel. In Saul's reign, the Philistines came into the land of Israel with an host of 300,000 footmen and 6000 horsemen, and 30,000 chariots for war or baggage, and invaded the country of Israel. This was very distressing to the people of Israel. They were greatly terrified; and at this time the Israelites were deprived of all their arms, for the Philistines carried off all the smiths in the land of Israel, that no arms might be forged, Yet Jonathan and his armour-bearer routed this mighty host, so that the Israelites pursued them to the very borders of their country. After this the Philistines, along with Goliath, invaded the Jews, but he being slain, the rest fled home with the utmost precipitation. They continued to make inroads on Saul and his kingdom. David gave them several checks, yet for some time sheltered himself amongst them. About the end of Saul's reign, they invaded Judea, entered the very heart of the country, killed Saul and his sons, and spread terror among the Israelites. David having taught his subjects the use of the bow, attacked the Philistines, and in many battles with them he cut off their giants, and rendered them his tributaries. Now in some of the cases mentioned, it seemed to look as if the Lord had forsaken the Israelites, and cast them off. Hence the question here, *Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? Wilt not thou lead me into the strong city? Wilt not thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies? Wilt not thou lead me into Edom?* Surely thou wilt. I will therefore pray unto thee, and expect all this from thee; as him who is able to do exceeding abun-

dant above all we can ask or think. I will pray for help and succour; I will pray for victory and success. I will, without doubt or wavering, look to the Lord for all I need.

V. 11. *Give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man.*

Thus he rejects all confidence, of help from trouble, of success over his enemies, of victory and triumph, in any case, or by any means, but in the Lord alone.

V. 12. *Through God we shall do valiantly: for it is he that shall tread down our enemies.*

This is a most glorious way of giving honour to God. He asks for that very help on which he trusteth. He expresseth his faith in a glorious triumph, and closes this Psalm. Our Lord Jesus Christ may be considered as the glorious King and Conqueror, spoken of in it. We may here view his wrath and vengeance, as foresignified, which would be executed on his Jewish enemies. We have here, as in a figure, his victories and triumphs recorded. May he that readeth understand. Amen.

This is the last of the Michtam, or golden Psalms. They are in all six; viz. the 16th, the 56th, 57th, 59th, and 60th Psalms. Some conceive the term Michtam refers to the tune, or instrument of music, on which they sung it; as it also doth to the matter of it, it being a golden Psalm.

## PSALM THE SIXTY-FIRST.

The title is, *To the Chief Musician upon Neginah, of David.*

The word *Neginah* is the singular of *Neginoth*. It is conceived to be the tune to which this Psalm was set.

The substance of this Psalm concerns Christ. It contains his prayer to God when overwhelmed with heaviness; his making him his shelter, his rock, and tower, against the enemy. It expresses his faith and determination to abide in God's tabernacle, and to trust under the wings of the cherubim. Then follows an account of his life in glory, in the views and apprehensions of which he praises God.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician upon Neginah, of David. Hear my cry, O God, attend unto my prayer.*

Were it possible to view Christ, just as he is revealed, and shines forth in every Psalm, which more and most especially belongs unto him, and could we enter into the same fully, by the light and teaching of the Holy Ghost, we should most assuredly enjoy a real and present heaven. But this is im-

possible ; for when we view Christ in them, it is but through a glass darkly. We are, from our regeneration to our glorification, taking in Christ into our intellectual faculties. It is but little we apprehend of him, yet the least degree of spiritual apprehension received into our minds of him from the Sacred Word, renders him more precious than the gold of Ophir. In the scripture before us, he is set forth as the true David ; as him that excelleth ; as the conqueror ; as the victory, and eternity of Israel. We have a prayer of his recited ; his frame in it ; his address to God ; his energy and ardency ; his importunity and fervour. It is such, as none but himself could most perfectly express. *Hear my cry, O God, attend unto my prayer.* To cry to God, is to pray to him. It is to pray the prayer, wrought in the mind by the Holy Ghost. The inward grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, was exercised and expressed much this way. He sometimes spent the whole night in prayer to God. He here cries to God, and calls on him to attend to his prayer, which is very expressive of his own importunity at the throne of the heavenly grace. He adds,

*V. 2. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock which is higher than I.*

Our Lord was often persecuted, and driven in consequence thereof from one part of the land to another. Hereby he was often in distress, and also overwhelmed in heart and soul. He knew what his life would end in ; he was well acquainted with the state he was in by his incarnation, and that nothing could befall him in the issue, but the most violent of all deaths. In fact, all sorts of pains, torments, agonies, griefs, and soul travail, was to be experienced by him in his death. As he was kept up in running his course with holy cheerfulness and alacrity, in the most perfect obedience to his Father's will, by looking at the joy set before him, which he was to enter on when he had fully performed the will of his Father, so he was sustained in his obedience and suffering, by praying unto, and in having communion with his divine Father. He here says, *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed.* We have here a window opened, by which we may look into the very heart of Christ. We may here see how Christ prayed, why Christ prayed, the frame of his mind in prayer, his fervour in it, and his petition, or what he prayed for, which is expressed in these words, *Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.* Jehovah the Father was Messiah's rock. He was to cast himself wholly on him ; he was to be sustained wholly by

him. Views of his everlasting love, set before him in the everlasting covenant, were to bear up his mind during the whole period of his life in this our world; he therefore prays accordingly. We are supported by views of what Christ is to us, and by remembering what Christ hath done and suffered for us. Our Lord was supported by views of what Jehovah the Father was to him, in the everlasting covenant, and had promised him, as the head of that covenant.

V. 3. *For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.*

This is the reason of Christ's prayer. He found himself heard and answered. Jehovah was a shelter to him; he quickened him; he strengthened him; he comforted him; he protected him from the rage of his enemies. He was to him as a strong tower from the enemy. God was to Christ what he is to us, only in a far greater manner, and to a far more great and glorious degree. As Christ exercised every grace to the uttermost perfection, so God exercised all the grace of the covenant, in every particular of it, on him, to the uttermost display and manifestation of the same; and this at all times most exactly as the case required. This is here acknowledged by the glorious Messiah in these words before us: *For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.* On this, our Lord devotes his life and office in heaven, to the glory of the divine Father, in his executing the whole work of mediation, which consisted in ever living to make intercession for us.

V. 4. *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever. I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.*

Christ's body or humanity is the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath builded, and not man. It is a tabernacle not made with hands. It is the pavilion of the sun of righteousness. It is by personal union one with the only begotten Son of God, who dwells in it, who inhabits it, so that in it dwelleth all the fulness of God. In it Christ abideth for ever. He entered heaven as the Man in God. He liveth in our nature, after the power of an endless life. He is before the throne, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He here says, *I will make my refuge,* (so it is in the margin), *I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.*

As the Holy of Holies was the place where the high priest appeared before God, and presented the blood of atonement, so heaven is the place where our Lord is to appear in the presence of God for us, and he now trusts the divine Father with all the worth and efficacy of his righteousness and sacrifice. He doth this on the footing of covenant settlements;



he therefore affixes the word *Selah* to this, it being of eternal consequence, and worthy of our continual remembrance.

V. 5. *For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those which fear thy name.*

The whole heart, mind, will, thoughts, life, prayers, sufferings, and every act and performance of Christ, was most minutely observed by the Lord. The whole was equal to his will; the whole was worthy of his acceptance. Jehovah would reward him for it. He did so. The Mediator here acknowledges it. *Thou hast given me the heritage of those which fear thy name*, which is to be admitted into the kingdom of glory, and serve him day and night in his temple.

V. 6. *Thou wilt prolong the king's life, and his years as many generations.*

This is a further explanation of the blessedness which would follow on Christ's glorification. The king Messiah, who is king Mediator, was to live for ever at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Death was not to put a stop to his days; they were to be prolonged, and he was to live for ever and ever. He was to be prophet, priest, and king in heaven, and exercise the same for ever. It is added,

V. 7. *He shall abide before God for ever. O prepare mercy and truth which may preserve him.*

I consider all as spoken by Christ, to give his church a full view of his whole heart. He would abide a Priest continually. He would save them to the uttermost, or for evermore. He would bless them continually. The Father would prepare mercy and truth for him, which should preserve his name on earth, so as that he should be worshipped throughout all generations. In other words, the Father, by raising up Christ to sit on his throne, would make it most evident that it pleased him, that in the God-man, Mediator, should all fulness dwell.

V. 8. *So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.*

It was these intuitive views and apprehensions which kept up the mind of Christ, whilst in our world; for which he declares he will sing praise to the Father's name, and go on daily, whilst in his incarnate state, to perform his vows; by which is to be understood living in perfect obedience to his Father's will. So ends the Psalm.

## PSALM THE SIXTY-SECOND.

*To the Chief Musician, to Jeduthun, a Psalm of David.*

The 59th Psalm bears the same title with this. I therefore refer the reader to it, as to the meaning of it. The subject-matter and object of the Psalm, as I conceive, are as follows: Christ is the speaker; he expresses his trust in God alone. A denunciation of judgment is predicted against the persecutors of him the Holy and Just One. Repeated acts of faith, with his resolution to trust in God alone, are recited. An exhortation for the people of God to do so too is also given; the reason for which is very strong. There is no confidence to be placed in man, or in the world; only dependence should be placed in the covenant power, and mercy of the Three in Jehovah, the covenant ones.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, to Jeduthun, a Psalm of David. Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation.*

I would here observe, the Holy Ghost is here celebrating our Lord Jesus Christ, our one alone Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, for his faith in God. Hence the title of this Psalm, *To the Chief Musician*, quite suits the hero, whose fame and praise are here set forth. He is the head of saints; he is the pattern for all saints; he is the first and greatest believer of them all. He undertook their complete salvation, on the sole word of promise which the Father gave him in the everlasting covenant. He went through the whole of his work, his eye being fixed on the same. He is the victory of Israel, as in his own person he overcame all sorts of evils, miseries, sorrows, difficulties, trials, temptations, persecutions, and distresses, and this in our nature. Sin, Satan, the world, death, hell, principalities and powers, he persevering, fell at his feet. He is the eternity of Israel, their rock, their strength, their all. His praise was to be sung in the Old Testament church. This Psalm was indited by the Holy Ghost for this purpose. It was delivered to Jeduthun, one of the precentors of the music. It is in our Bible; it is for our use; and by it the praises of our Lord will be continued down to the end of time. He says, *Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation.* He was a man of sorrows. He was to learn obedience by the things which he suffered. He was to be obedient in all things. He was to submit in every particular to the will of him that sent him—to every persecution which befel him. His human will was covenanted for; it was wholly swallowed up in the

divine will of him that sent him. His perfection consisted, in a complete activity and passiveness to the whole will of God. The everlasting covenant was opened to his mind. His knowledge of it was the foundation of all his faith; the promises of it supported him. The exercise of his holy mind on them enlarged his faith and expectation in God. He here expresses his waiting on God, in a quiet and passive obedience and submission to his holy will, and professeth his faith and confidence in him. He thus expresses himself on this subject. *Truly my soul is silent, or waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation.* Salvation from every sort of evil, and deliverance from all sorts and kinds of troubles, were to come from God alone. The Mediator was silent, or waited upon God alone for deliverance; not prescribing when salvation should be wrought out for him, or by what means it should be obtained, but leaving this entirely to the good pleasure of his will, whose he was, and whom he served, according to covenant transactions. Reader, be not offended that I carry these words, and many others like unto them, to Christ. Remember I am not sermonizing; my design now is, to shew how they suited Christ in his mediatory office and state, when he was incarnate. It therefore does not set aside the use of them, nor preaching what is contained in them in a lower degree, so as to accommodate them to the faith and expectation of such as are real believers in him.

V. 2. *He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.*

Jehovah the Father, according to the economy of the covenant between the Eternal Three, was Messiah's salvation, his rock, his defence. Christ must be in circumstances to feel the truth of all this, and the necessity of professing and exercising his mind in the belief of the same, which is the case here. He speaks with holy pleasure and delight on this subject. It did him good thus to express himself, as it gave glory and honour to the divine Father. *He only is my rock.* I want no other. *He only is my salvation.* My soul rejoiceth in him and it. *He is my immutable defence.* He is my high place. *I shall not be greatly moved.* I must feel the wrath of mine enemies. Their cruelty will reach my mind. A sense and apprehension thereof will affect me; yet it will be but momentary. I shall not be greatly moved. It will soon be over and past.

V. 3. *How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a boxing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.*

The Messiah here speaks to his Jewish enemies, who were

full of mischief against him. He was base and contemptible in their eyes; so were his followers. Why then so mad against him? You will gain nothing in the event, except it be your own everlasting confusion. *How long will ye imagine mischief against a man?* They looked on Christ but as a mere man. The question being put, he foretels their ruin. *Ye shall be slain all of you.* So they have been. This hath been awfully realized. How suddenly it would come on them is next expressed. *Ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.* Their destruction would be suddenly, and without remedy. Like the downfall of a wall that is out of the perpendicular, or a stone fence, the parts of which are not cemented together.

V. 4. *They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.*

This is a very just picture and description of our Lord's enemies, the scribes and Pharisees. They consulted against him; they would, if possible, deprive him of those honours which God had put on him, and would further advance and exalt him unto. What, is he the Holy and Just One! What, is he the Messiah, the Son of the living God! No, that he is not. They will rather perish everlastingly than believe this. They delight in lies, and in all sort of lying words, uttered by way of defaming the Holy Child Jesus. Yet they did at times carry it seemingly fair. Yet whilst they bless with their mouth, they curse inwardly. I consider these words of the evangelist a full comment on this scripture before us. *Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?* Matt. xxii. 15, 16, 17. Surely this was realizing what is spoken of them in prophecy. *They delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.* The word *Selah* is here set as a nota-bene. Mark this, as it well deserves.

V. 5. *My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.*

The Messiah having given an account and description of his enemies, and foretold their ruin, proceeds to express the reiterated acts of his own faith, and resolvedness to trust wholly in the Lord. *My soul, be thou silent, or wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.* He who is

the Essence existing, who gave me existence and being, as God-man, from everlasting—who gave me to be head over all things to the church;—who set me apart in council and covenant, and preordained me to every part of my work and office, as Mediator of reconciliation, my soul, be silent before him. *My soul, wait thou only upon him, for my expectation is from him.* He will deliver me in his own time and way. I renounce all but him; I must and will declare him to be, what he is to me.

V. 6. *He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.*

Which contains the same that had been before expressed, in verses 1 and 2, and makes way for summing it all up in the next words.

V. 7. *In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.*

The words, *In God*, have a greatness in them which can never be fully expressed nor comprehended. None but Christ alone is equal to the knowledge of these expressions. Many of us find grace in its uttermost, contained in these terms: *Chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world; the church in God the Father; a man in Christ.* We find herein, what we cannot comprehend. Here is the head of the church, the man in God, the Mediator, speaking in these terms, and he fully understands what he says. Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved. Thus he begins. At the 5th, 6th, and 7th verses, he repeats his faith thus: *My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation, and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.* A full proof, that Christ went out of himself, in the exercise of his faith, to God as his covenant God, for all his supplies. All his dependence was on God; his expectation was from him. God was his rock, his salvation, his defence. He centers here with confidence, saying, *I shall not be moved.* Then he utters himself to the very uttermost. *In God is my salvation. In God is my glory. In God is the rock of my strength. In God is my refuge; my all is in God.* It is the Lord God alone, who was salvation, victory, and glory to Christ. To behold this scripturally, spiritually, and intuitively, is a great sight: it makes way for high exultation in the coequal and coessential Three. It shews that Christ himself in his faith, and the exercises of it, is an example and

pattern for all the holy brotherhood. He did not rest in the acts of faith, nor on the fruits of the same. No; his faith had God for its object, his word for its foundation. He centered wholly in him.

V. 8. *Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us. Selah.*

This is an address given by Christ himself to all his people. He would have them trust in God at all times. He would have them seek God in faith and prayer. He would have their faith to fix on God alone. He would have their prayer to be such, as poureth out all the desires of the soul at once, into the bosom of God as their covenant God. *Ye people, pour out your heart before him.* Whatsoever you feel, express it; whatsoever you desire, speak it out. Keep nothing within you. Let the Lord hear all you would wish to say. Empty your minds. Pour out your heart before him. Let this be your encouragement, *God is a refuge for us.* He is so to me in my incarnate state; and he will be to you throughout the whole of your militant state. He set the word *Selah* to this, to assure concerning the truth hereof, and to encourage you thus to act.

V. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.*

Our Lord hereby expresses the reason why we should at all times trust in God, because there is no dependence to be laid on the creature. Let men be as they may, as to condition of life, low or high, they are full of vanity and deception. Men of low degree are vanity; men of high degree are a lie. Let each be put into the balance, they are lighter than vanity. Every person, every thing trusted in, will in the issue fail and deceive us; therefore trust in God, at all times, and for all things. This is our Lord's advice to us here, in the words before us.

V. 10. *Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.*

This is another dissuasive not to trust in any thing below God. Worldly men care for nothing so much as riches. Some hearts are so set on attaining them, they care not by what means they acquire the same. Wealth is sometimes a blessing bestowed by the Lord on such as he loves with an everlasting love. To such he says, *Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.* Yet when thou hast it, O believer in Christ Jesus, thou wilt ever need this caution, *If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.* Trust wholly in the Lord. Trust not in riches, they

are uncertain. Trust in God, at all times; trust in him for all things; trust him in all cases and circumstances; trust him with body and soul; trust him in life and death; trust him for time, and for eternity.

V. 11. *God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.*

Here in direct opposition to all the boasts of vain worldly men, and to such as trust in riches, is recited what God hath spoken. God hath spoken once. He did so on mount Sinai, when and where he proclaimed himself to be Jehovah, the fountain of all existences; he being self-existent; the fountain of all power in heaven and earth. *Twice have I heard this*, or, these two things have I heard; *that power belongeth unto God.* He proclaimed then and there, *The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin.* At the same time, he proclaimed himself jealous of his glory; as ready to avenge himself on the wicked, and able to abase the pride of man: *And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.* Exodus xxxiv. ver. 6, 7. Therefore there is no dependence to be put with the least safety, but in the covenant power and mercy of the Three in covenant. He therefore thus concludes.

V. 12. *Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy; for thou renderest to every man according to his work.*

The power of Jehovah to punish sinners for sin, and the mercy of Jehovah displayed in the pardon of sin, on the footing of Messiah's mediation, are two very important subjects, which deserve our deepest consideration. All men, out of Christ, will be rewarded according to their works. So then they must be concerned: We read expressly, *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire,* Rev. xx. ver. 15. May the Lord bless the subject contained in this Psalm to us. Amen.

### PSALM THE SIXTY-THIRD.

*A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.*

David was of the tribe of Judah. There were many wildernesses in it. Such as the wilderness of Ziph, the

wilderness of Maon, the wilderness of Engedi, the wilderness of Paran, which of these he was now in, is not so very easy to say. It seems to have been written when he was driven from Jerusalem, and the ordinances of divine-institutions, either by Saul's rage, or the rebellion of Absalom. I shall consider it, as expressive of David and of Christ. It most certainly contains some very ardent expressions and desires of the prophet, after the presence of God, and his worship in the sanctuary. He expresseth his worship of God to be incessant; his faith to be immovable. He foreshadows the end of the wicked. The exaltation, triumph, and glory of Messiah are expressed. The whole Psalm is most truly applicable to the circumstances of Christ in the flesh.

V. 1. *A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, thou art my God: early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.*

It cannot be doubted but that David, when in the wilderness of Judah, banished from, and deprived of the use of the Lord's ordinances, experienced their loss, and very earnestly expressed his desire after them. So that these words were very expressive of what his mind at that time was. *O God, thou art my God: early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.* And Messiah himself, when in our world, during his incarnate state, must have found this world to be to him but a barren wilderness. Every creature, and thing in it, must have been emptiness itself to him. He could not be satisfied with any thing in it, or from it; he must have viewed it all under the curse; he came into it, to remove the curse. Whilst in it, he was holiness itself; he was righteousness in its utmost perfection; he was purity in its highest perfection. His love to God, his faith in God, his seeking God, his worshipping God, his zeal for God, his desires after God, his delight in God, his hungerings and thirstings after God, were such as are here expressed and implied. He could say, *O God, thou art my God: early will I seek thee.* The evangelist Mark informs us, concerning Jesus, that *in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.* Mark, chap. i. ver. 35. And we are informed by another evangelist, that *our Lord went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.* Luke vi. ver. 12. In his accesses to God, in instituted worship, he had ineffable communion, in



which his knowledge of the covenant relation that he stood in was increased. This could not but make way for the most ardent desires for further fellowship. This he here, by the mouth of his type David, most freely expresseth. *My soul thirsteth for God. My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.* Without all doubt it was the case of David also. Yet it could not be to that degree it was in his great antitype.

V. 2. *To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.*

The sanctuary, or tabernacle, was the seat of divine worship in the days of David. The temple, not that built by Solomon, but by Zerubbabel, was the seat of public worship, for the whole congregation of Israel, in the days of Christ's flesh. Here the power and glory of the Three in Godhead were most gloriously expressed. The holy of holies, the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the cherubim of glory, the golden pot of manna, the rod of Aaron which budded, bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds, and was a solemn memorial of the perpetuity of the priesthood of Messiah, were so many symbols and memorials of God's power and glory, in a covenant way to Christ and his church in him. Whilst none but the high-priest saw these, yet it must be, the people must have been informed concerning them, and what they prefigured; so that when, for instance, the Psalmist worshipped God at the sanctuary, the eyes of his mind, as opened by the word, and by the Spirit, must have been enlightened to perceive, and apprehend the sacred mysteries expressed, and contained in these sacred figures, as also, what was expressed by the golden altar, its fire, and perfume; the golden candlestick, and its perpetual light; the shew-bread which was always on the golden table before the Lord; the veils of the tabernacle; all which, as spiritually understood, must have reflected the knowledge of Christ on his mind; likewise whom the priests and high-priests represented, and what the sacrifices were memorials of. As they were all full of Christ, so David, who knew them to be so, could not, when constrained to abide in a desolate and barren wilderness, but long for those sacred solemnities which heretofore he had enjoyed. Christ had an intuitive and vast knowledge of instituted worship; of all contained in it; of all designed by it; of all which was to be accomplished by him, as figured out in the same. It must have afforded him satisfaction beyond our comprehension, to attend all the sacred seasons, and observe all the di-

vine institutions. His worship of God in them must have been most truly acceptable and divine.

V. 3. *Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ knows the uttermost of God's love. He is the one immediate object of it; he is the immediate and most adorable One, in whom the essential and incomprehensible Three delight. His views of this, his communion with the Three in the essence; he being taken up into union with one in the essence, must be personally and peculiarly his own. His knowledge of it, his enjoyment of it, his praise for it, must exceed that of all saints in earth or heaven. I would apply these words therefore unto him in the first place. *Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.* In the second place they may well be considered as spoken by David, and they are the language and confession of all saints. The lovingkindness of God is above and beyond all things. It is the very spring in God himself, from whence Christ, our election in Christ, our state in Christ, our blessings in Christ flow. It is from hence the covenant of grace originated; salvation by Christ flows from it. When we are brought to know, and believe the love which God hath to us, then we esteem it better than life. When the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, then we say in prayer and praise to him, individually in our own persons, *Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.*

V. 4. *Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.*

This is expressive of the prophet's incessant worship of God, which I therefore consider as spoken in the name of Messiah. There was not in the whole of his life any cessation in his obedience to the will of God, and his worship of him. The words here, I conceive may be considered as expressive of the heart and mind of Christ herein. His life on earth was a limited duration; he would bless God continually, so long as he should continue on it. The way in which he would do it, he thus expresses: *I will lift up my hands in thy name.* Which is professing his perseverance in this course of his worship.

V. 5. *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.*

This sets forth the immutability of Christ's faith. His soul would be most perfectly delighted, and his heart most truly satisfied, in blessing God; in lifting up his hands in the Lord's most holy name; in worshipping him in his

sanctuary; in living wholly to him, and for him. It would yield his mind holy content and satiety. My soul shall be satisfied, in views and enjoyments of thy love, in real communion with thee in the blessedness contained in it, and the blessings which result from it, *as with marrow and fatness: and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.* It is very expressive of the sweetness Christ found, in communion with the divine Father, in waiting on him in the worship and service which he had commanded in his sanctuary.

V. 6. *When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.*

The human mind of Christ was in perfect unison with the divine. It was beyond all conception, capacious and comprehensive. If engaged in contemplations on God, it was intent beyond all our expressions. If exercised on the love of God, it was swallowed up in the immensity of the subject. When it was engaged in praising God, it was equal to the conceptions raised in it, and set home upon it, from the subject which was the matter of that praise. If the mind of Messiah was exercised in blessing God, it was carried out to such an apprehension of the cause why he performed such an act of worship, as made way for him to give the Father glorious praise. His soul was satisfied in these acts of worship; not with them, but in them, because God himself was the object and subject on whom all these acts terminated. We have an account in Matthew's gospel, that *Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, &c.* chap. xviii. ver. 21. Our Lord's mind was exercised day and night on doing the Father's will. He continually meditated on him; it afforded him a feast so to do. *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness: and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips. When I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* I must say, I think the mind, the understanding, the will, the affections, the thoughts, the memory, the life, the actions of Messiah, our most precious Lord Jesus Christ, are most clearly and fully opened and set before us in these sacred hymns. Yet I must add, we can never fully conceive of and apprehend the same. No: the subject is indeed incomprehensible; it being the man in God; and the life of him who was one person with *the Son of the living God.* It is the life of God manifest in the flesh; it is the life of God-man, in our nature, and in our world.

V. 7. *Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.*

The humanity of Christ, in union with the second in the essence, was to be supported, and carried on, through the whole performance of the mediatorial work and office, according to the covenant of the eternal Three, by the divine Father. Christ had received help. This he here acknowledges. It affords him strength of mind; it animates his faith. He acknowledges this. He says what effects it produced in him; what he will do, and how he will act hereupon. *Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.* The cherubim was the representative of the Three in Jehovah in their covenant engagements. The wings of the cherubs stretched out, and forming a cover, or arch over the mercy-seat, over the ark of the covenant, expressed the security and protection there was, in the everlasting covenant of the holy Three. Christ, the man in God, the Surety and Mediator of the covenant, knew this all. It was in the knowledge of it, he had his own security. He therefore here expresses it. *Because thou hast been my helper, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.* Thou wilt be all to me thou hast engaged for in the covenant. In the knowledge and faith of this *I will rejoice.* I cannot do otherwise. No, I cannot.

V. 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee; thy right hand upholdeth me.*

This most expressly suits with the Messiah, who persevered in God's ways, who went on with renewed strength and vigour to accomplish the Father's will, who went forth as the sun in his full strength, and became obedient in all things. My soul, my heart, my will, my whole delight is herein. *My soul followeth hard, or fast, after thee.* I acknowledge thy covenant faithfulness unto me, *thy right hand upholdeth me.* Thus the ardent desires, and expressions of Christ, after the presence and worship of God, have been declared, with his incessant worship of God expressed, and having declared his immutable faith, he predicts what would befall his enemies.

V. 9. *But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.*

By soul here, the life is meant. The unbelieving Jews sought the life of Christ; to destroy it, to take it away, to cut him off from the earth, was what they aimed at. Yet it proved when they gained this their end, it was their entire overthrow. It could not be otherwise. If they cut off the righteous from the land, it is most just they should be cut off too, by way of a most righteous retaliation. They are here foretold what will be their case. It stood out before

Messiah's appearing, as a solemn warning against them. *But those that seek my soul to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.* They shall come to a violent death; they shall have an early grave; they shall have their carcases devoured by the beasts of the earth.

V. 10. *They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.*

The punishments which befel the Jews, for their rejection, persecution of, and death of the Messiah, is very fully, clearly, expressly, and particularly set forth in the Psalms. It is here, though very briefly, yet most solemnly awful; in terms and expressions, very short, yet very striking. *They shall fall by the sword.* They did so; they were cut off by the sword of the Romans. The flaming sword of almighty wrath and vengeance pursued them. The Romans were the sword, yet the Almighty arm wielded it, and made use of it to destroy them. *They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.* The fox is a cunning and crafty animal; the enemies of the Jews were crafty and malicious; they did what they could, first to seduce them, and next to torment them. Thus the prediction was most awfully accomplished.

V. 11. *But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of him that speaketh lies shall be stopped.*

Christ, the king Messiah, would be exalted. He would be raised up, and seated on his mediatorial throne; he would exult and triumph over all his enemies. The glory of Messiah would appear; he would rejoice in God for all this. *But the king shall rejoice in God.* So would others belonging to him, and confessing him also. *Every one that sweareth by him shall glory.* To swear by the Lord, or by the name of the Lord, is, in the meaning of scripture, to confess, to acknowledge, to submit, to trust in the Lord. For instance, you read these words, Isaiah xlv. ver. 23, 24. *I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.* There is no salvation from sin, Satan, the world, death, and damnation, but in Christ Jesus alone; and Jehovah the Father will have this acknowledged by all the saved ones. To make a true and spiritual confession of this, is to swear by his name. *But the king shall rejoice in God, every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the*

*mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.* Our Lord's resurrection from death, his ascension, and exaltation to heaven, was his triumph over all his enemies. This was matter for him to rejoice in God. Yea, it was a subject for every one that believed on him, and confessed him, to glory in, whilst it made way to stop the mouths of all unbelievers.

May the Psalm itself, by the light and teaching of the Holy Spirit, reflect such views and apprehensions of Christ on our minds, as may be of lasting service to us. Amen.

## PSALM THE SIXTY-FOURTH.

*To the Chief Musician, a Psalm of David.*

The subject matter of this Psalm is Christ the Messiah, He here prayeth to be delivered from his enemies; from their counsels, and insurrections. He expresses their calumnies, and slanders against him; he speaks of their scoffs and blasphemies against himself; so that it well deserves the title of one of the Passion Psalms. Their indefatigable malice is set forth; their fall is predicted; and it closes with the exaltation of Christ, and his church in him.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, a Psalm of David. Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.*

The Messiah is set forth in this Psalm as most unrighteously dealt with by his enemies. It expresses Christ in his Passion. Not indeed as made sin by imputation, and sustaining the wrath of the divine justice due to sin; but he is here set forth as enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself. This hath been the subject of many past Psalms, as it is of this; yet with a wonderful variety. The eternal Father, from the fall, down to Christ's incarnation, set him forth as the one Mediator, the only atonement and sacrifice for sin; as, since his ascension, he sets him forth as the great high-priest who is passed into the heavens, who is a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The passion of Christ comprehends a vast variety of subjects; it includes the hatred of the Jews; their rejection of him as their Messiah; their denial of him; their persecution of him; their malice, rage, and cruelty; their conspiracy to take away his life; their hiring false witnesses against him; their admitting the perfidy of Judas the traitor; their giving Christ up to the Roman governor. These acts of theirs are part of

the subjects of Christ's passion, and are to be included therein, as truly as the contempt shewed him, when they blindfolded him, and spat on his face and buffeted him. As every thing Messiah was to be, to do, and suffer, was fully known by the Holy Ghost, so there is not a single circumstance which befel our Lord, but he caused it to be recorded in prophecy; and in none of the prophecies so comprehensively as in those recorded in the book of Psalms. We have his soul sufferings, his bodily sufferings, his persecutions, the contempt and scorn of his enemies, and the tortures they put him to, very minutely registered in them. It would not be amiss if they were particularly sorted. Such as belonged to the sorrows of his mind; such as express his crucifixion; as those which set forth the cruelty of the Jewish Sanhedrim on his Passion-night. Were these numbered by themselves by a skilful writer, it would most assuredly be for the profit of the reader; as also those of the persecutions of Messiah: with the venom and outrage of the bulk of the whole nation against him; we have gone over many of these. It can never be too often remembered in reading them, that the name, person, case and circumstances of David king of Israel, are all to be considered typical, under which Christ is spoken of, set forth, and foretold. The Psalm before us contains a prayer. It is put up to God by Messiah, who in the days of his flesh, offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears. He says, *Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.* Here is a double request: the one that God would hear his voice in prayer, the other is, that he would preserve his life from fear of the enemy. It is from his Jewish enemies he here prays to be preserved and protected. He knew his life was in danger; he knew their power and treachery; he prays to be preserved from them; or, if he fell, as he well knew he must, according to divine decree, fall into their hands, and fall by them, yet that he might be raised from the dead, and live in his resurrection state, above their utmost rage, as he would then be immortal in his body.

V. 2. *Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity.*

These words were a prophecy. They have had their accomplishment. The wicked Jews, in their rulers, priests, and elders, assembled privately at the palace of Caiaphas the high-priest, and took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. They wanted to seize him by craft; they will on it, that they might put him to death; they care not what an

insurrection of the people, or mob it gathered together, so it be but the means of securing Christ. They will hire a multitude of Roman soldiers to arrest and seize him, and they will be most highly pleased, if some of the dregs of the people, the very lowest and basest of them, be disposed to insult Jesus of Nazareth. Our Lord prays God, in the person of the Father, to hear his voice in prayer; to preserve his life; to protect him from the rage of the enemy; to hide him from the secret counsel of the wicked; to secure him from the insurrection of the wicked. He was so until his hour was come. Then he says to these, *This is your hour and the power of darkness.*

V. 3. *Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words.*

This is a clear and full description of these wretches and enemies of Christ. The account given by all the evangelists, fully proves this. Their tongues on our Lord's Passion-night, were whet like a sword. The Jewish rulers blasphemed him. They laid cruel and grievous things to his charge, which they could not prove. Their personal scoffings and revilings, were like a sword. This was one way they employed their cursed tongues against Christ. They also used it like a bow, to shoot arrows from. This they did by their bitter and venomous speeches against Christ, when he was before them, and tried by them, the night of his Passion. One very justly observes, a sword is a weapon that can be used only in open rencounters; but bitter words, spoken in secret, and at a distance from him who is the subject of them, are like arrows, which may be shot from an obscure and remote corner, and therefore cannot be warded off. Our Lord proceeds to express the rage and malice of his Jewish enemies against him; what they did with their tongues, whet like swords, and bent like bows, to shoot out their arrows, even bitter words, he next declares.

V. 4. *That they may shoot in secret at the perfect; suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.*

Jesus the *holy One*, the *perfect One*; was in the hands of his Jewish enemies thus most cruelly dealt with. Their tongues, in both these capacities, as *whet like a sword*, as *tongues bent like arrows*, to shoot out bitter words, were thus employed, openly, and also in a secret manner. To vilify, slander, to mock, to taunt; and also in a secret manner to shoot suddenly at Christ. This they did without the least fear or shame. They are most completely described in the words which follow.



V. 5. *They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?*

This was most exactly descriptive of the case, and almost according to the very process these enemies of Christ pursued. They first counselled how they might seize on him, and put him to death. Then they get a band of soldiers to lay violent hands on him, and bring him before them. They then, having him before them in their council chambers, let loose their tongues against him. They secretly, by their bitter words, shoot at him suddenly, in open court, without the least shame or remorse. They encourage themselves in this evil matter; they admit false witnesses against him; they care not how vile and false the charges are, so they can but retain him by any pretence whatsoever, and get him crucified. They rack their wits, they torture their very imaginations, how they may lay snares for his precious life; they commune again and again upon this subject; they are above all law; they will neither consult God, nor man; it is only such as think as they do, which they will regard. No: they say, who shall call us to any account for what we do? who shall see us? who shall be admitted into our plots, no one. We will even stir up the mob; we will persuade them to cry out, with the most violent clamour, *Away with him, away with him; crucify him, crucify him.* They are further described:

V. 6. *They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search; both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep.*

All their aim, when they had our Lord before them, was to search out some matter of accusation against him; but they were entirely baffled. They form a mock court, erect a tribunal, hire any one to come and utter any malice and hatred, under the immediate influence and invention of hell itself, so they may but traduce the person and character of Messiah. Their heart, their inward thought is deep, and they are each one of them like-minded. I conceive, we cannot find a more full account and description of the members of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and its rulers, who contrived to put our Lord to death, in any part of scripture more fully set forth. What must our Lord's frame, feelings, sorrows, and griefs have been, at this season! Such grief must have been occasioned to his most holy mind as we can have no tolerable idea of. But shall all this villainy pass unnoticed? will God take no vengeance on them for all this?

Most assuredly he will be avenged. Their scoffs, their blasphemies, their calumnies, their slanders against the Lord Messiah, shall most assuredly bring down God's curse and wrath upon them. They are forewarned of it, and Christ predicts it in the next words.

V. 7. *But God shall shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly shall they be wounded.*

This was the case, and a most righteous act it was. That whilst these worms were shooting their arrows, even bitter words, against the anointed of the Lord, he should level an arrow at them, by way of most righteous retaliation. They imprecated the blood of Christ on their guilty heads, and their posterity crying out, *His blood be on us, and on our children.* God took them at their word. From that moment their condemnation was sealed. This is very expressly opened in the next words.

V. 8. *So they shall make their own tongues to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.*

The horrible imprecation of their own tongues fell, in unexampled vengeance, on the heads of them, and their children, who continued to justify the deeds of their fathers, in rejecting Christ, and putting him to death. The Jews are to the present moment, a standing miracle in the world, of God's hatred and vengeance against all the contemners of the only Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The Jews who cried out, *his blood be on us, and on our children,* they made their own tongue fall on themselves, and on their succeeding and apostate race. *All that see them shall flee away.* The destruction of Jerusalem, filled men with fear. The destruction of the Jews at that time, and their extirmination out of the land of Judea, and dispersion throughout all lands, have filled the world at large with astonishment.

V. 9. *And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God: for they shall wisely consider of his doing.*

The greatest part of the world have heard of God's tremendous wrath, executed on the nation and people of the Jews. Their sufferings have been most grievous, and without a parrallel. Such as have only read, or heard of it, have been filled with fear and dread. It has been acknowledged it was the act of God; it hath been again and again confessed to be the work of God; and they who have entered most into a clear apprehension of it, and wisely considered of God's doings and dealings with the Jews, have most fully and freely declared it. Titus the Roman empe-

ror, confessed, that he had fought and conquered, by the favour, and under the direction of heaven.

V. 10. *The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.*

Christ is the righteous one. He emerged out of all his sufferings; he was raised up above, and over all the enemies of his person, and traitors to his kingdom and government, by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to his mediatorial throne in glory. It was views of this which kept up his great mind, amid all the insult and contempt of his enemies. He, the righteous One, and all his, who are righteous only in him, shall be glad in the Lord; they shall trust alone in Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, and all believers in Christ, who are styled upright in heart, they depending wholly in the person, righteousness, and blood of Christ for salvation, shall glory. Thus this Psalm ends.

## PSALM THE SIXTY-FIFTH.

*To the Chief Musician, a Psalm Song of David.*

This Psalm differs from all we have gone over. It is very descriptive of the church of Christ; of his peculiar grace displayed therein; in his hearing prayer; in his pardoning iniquities; in his admitting into real and close communion with himself. A most beautiful account is given of the beauties of spring, and the care and providence exercised over the visible creation; so as that all things are brought forth in their seasons, in a very regular and orderly way. The year is crowned with the Lord's goodness, and the clouds of heaven drop fatness; the pastures are covered with flocks; the valleys with corn; so that every thing, as expressive of the divine goodness, unite in singing and giving praise to the all-bountiful Lord of all. Under which imagery, the glory of Christ in his church, and the goodness of Christ, in it to his people, is declared and represented. This hymn is entitled *a Psalm Song*, it being begun with the voice, and the instrument of music followed.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, a Psalm Song of David. Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed.*

The church of God is the seat of worship, in which all the ordinances of divine institution are to be celebrated. To it saints are congregated, for the worship of the Three

in Jehovah, who bare record in heaven, to their acts of grace, and who give witness of it upon earth, in the gospel, and ordinances of it, and in the hearts of such as are called out of darkness into marvellous light. In social worship, saints meet, to praise God; to record his name; to celebrate his perfections; to praise him for his holy covenant; to thank him for the gift of Christ; for salvation by him; as also for the revelation he hath made of him in the everlasting gospel. To adore him for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and for admitting them into fellowship with himself, and his Son Jesus Christ, through the sacred teachings of the Holy Spirit. This worship was, when this Psalm was written, carried on in mount Sion, in Jerusalem. The foundation of the whole of it was founded on the covenant of the Holy Trinity. This was revealed immediately upon the fall. The types and figures given, were to lead them to understand what they worshipped the Three in Jehovah for. It was for that everlasting love, set forth in Christ the head of his body the church, who was the Mediator of reconciliation; who would one day become incarnate, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and thereby reconcile all things in heaven and in earth to himself. All this was celebrated at Jerusalem, for many a century before our Lord's incarnation. Here praise and thanksgivings were offered for him, and also to him. At no great distance from the temple and city, Christ offered the sacrifice of his body and soul in union with his person. *Praise waiteth, [or, is silent,] for thee, O God, in Sion.* Saints were full of the Lord's praise. They waited on him, and presented themselves, to give him praise, or they were silent before him. They were so filled with a sense of his goodness to them, for his grace, for what he had done for their souls and bodies, for the blessings and bounties of his providential kindness, they know not where to begin, or end. Therefore, under proper views of the same, they would pursue these subjects, each in their minds, and fall with prostrate awe before him, and silence should speak his praise. They would offer their sacrifices and pay their vows, in full dependance on the future sacrifice of the promised Immanuel, whose offering perfecteth for ever the putting away of sin. They would pay their vows to testify their gratitude to God, and the Lamb. Thus the Psalm begins.

V. 2. *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.*

This is the address. God, in all his persons and perfections, is the object of worship. His people pray unto him

as a covenant God. He heareth their prayer; he grants them audience; he receives their request; he answers the same; all which is very expressive of his mercy. *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come*, is an address, and also an expression of faith, and expectation, that on some future season, Gentile sinners would be visited with salvation, and in the name of the great Mediator, who is God and man in one Christ, would come to the Father to the throne of grace, and worship him, as their God and Father in Christ Jesus, as the Jewish church now did.

V. S. *Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.*

Not one single individual in our world is without sin. God's elect, called, justified, sanctified, saved people are not. There is not a just man upon earth, who doeth good, and sinneth not. It makes up the chiefest part of our experience in this present militant state, to be confessing our sinfulness; to be bewailing our inherent corruptions; to be going to God in Christ for the manifestation of his pardoning mercy. When we were first turned to the Lord, we had to bewail our sinfulness, guilt, and apostasy, in our unregenerate state, with the actual sins then committed by us. When we have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, we live to see, to know and feel, each for ourselves, the root of bitterness, indwelling sin, from whence all proceeds. This often makes us cry out, *Iniquities prevail against me. O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of death!* Blessed be God, Jesus is our advocate; his blood is our propitiation. If any of us sin, *we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.* We have free and full pardon through the blood of the Lamb. The Psalmist speaks in the fullest confidence of this. *Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.* This was to be, by the infinite virtue and eternal perfection of the offering of the Lamb of God, which hath been since offered. Now the whole church of Christ is purged. *He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and his blood, now, and evermore, cleanseth us, from all sin.* The free and full belief of this is the only antidote to remove guilt from the mind. It is also the best preservative from the love of sin, and to prevent falls into it. No one is overcome by besetting sin, nor any constitutional evil, when he receives this truth into his mind, and lives in the actual belief hereof, that the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth from all sin.

V. 4. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.*

The essence of all blessedness consists in being in Christ. This is the act of God. He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. This is the fruit of the Father's everlasting love to us. As the words are spoken singularly of *the man*, not of the men whom God chooses, it cannot be unwarrantable to look on Christ as *the man* here spoken of. He as man, and as God-man, is what he is by the grace of election. He is styled elect; and Jehovah proclaims him, as his elect. *Behold mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.* He was chosen to be, not one in the essence, but to be united to one of the persons in the essence. As such he is the prince of life; the heir of all things; the Man God's fellow; the brightness of glory; the image of the invisible God. He is one in society with the holy Three, the holy Ones. His life, his blessedness, his glory, his communion with God, may be mentioned, but it can never be opened, it being incomprehensible. We may say, in an address to God, as the Psalmist doth here, *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts.* He was not chosen for us, but we were chosen for him. Our election is in him; our eternal life is in him; all our spiritual blessings are in him. He approached on our behalf, in the council and covenant, which obtained between the eternal Three before all time. He dwells in God's courts; he is there our head; our life; our representative; our priest. We may well bless him, and God for him. We may well say to the divine Father, *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts.* It is real blessedness to be taken with the person, glory, majesty, dignity, honour, royalty, and happiness of Christ. When we are led to view our persons in him, then it becomes us to say after the apostle, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenlies in Christ. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.* Eph. i. ver. 3, 4. The true knowledge of these eternal verities causes us to say, *we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.* Communion with the Trinity, through the person of Christ, the sole medium thereof, is the greatest blessing we can enjoy on earth, or in heaven. In it we have soul-satisfying enjoy-

ments of the Father's love, of the Son's salvation; of the consolations of the Holy Ghost. We receive herein indubitable evidence that where Christ is, we shall be also, to behold his glory. And then we shall be satisfied indeed!

V. 5. *By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea.*

These words contain a prediction, uttered by the prophet David, the writer of this Psalm, in which he expresseth, how God would answer the prayers of the church, under the dispensation in which he lived. They were continually praying for the coming of Messiah. The time was fixed in the infinite mind and will of God, when he should become incarnate. Their prayers on this subject were acceptable to the Lord. It was to be accomplished, and they were to be answered by wonderful things in righteousness. These wonderful things were to be brought to pass by the death and resurrection of Christ; the overthrow of idolatry; the spread of the gospel amongst the nations and kingdoms of the earth; the conversions of the nations. *By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation.* The whole church unite in worshipping God, for this revelation of his mind and will. Here is confidence expressed in God, as hearing and answering their prayers. He is our God; he is the God of our salvation. We love and worship him for this. We look forward with holy spiritual joy, when he will be the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea. It is also by wonderful things in righteousness, the prayers of saints, under the New Testament, will be answered. They have been praying for the coming of Christ in his kingdom of grace; that he would more gloriously shine forth; that Antichrist, both in the east and west, might totally fall; that paganism might be destroyed; the gospel have an universal spread; that the Jews might be called; that all nations might be enlightened with Christ's glory. This will be accompanied with wonderful plagues and tremendous judgments on the enemies of Christ. *By terrible, [or wonderful] things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea.* This subject is continued in the next following verses.

V. 6. *Which by his strength settest fast the mountains; being girded with power.*

The Godhead of Jehovah is evidently displayed, in his

giving foundations to and fixing the mountains, as also from time to time, in his controlling the waves, and raging of the sea. He puts forth the same omnipotent power, and will continue so to do, on the behalf, and for the support and preservation of his church. He will never suffer the waves of this troublesome world, vented and expressed by persecutions, or in what way they may, to overwhelm his church. No; he will not. His everlasting arms are underneath it. He is the eternal God; the refuge of it; yea, he is the Saviour in time of trouble.

V. 7. *Which stillest the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.*

Thus it is expressed, that by that power which established the mountains, and confines the sea within its bounds, by the same he would pull down his enemies in the Gentile world, and establish his gospel, ordinances, and church amongst them; which being done, he would also defend and protect it, by the same almighty energy: the true views of which are very supporting. They are all-sufficient to bear up the minds of the Lord's people, in the exercise of faith and hope in him, for the accomplishment of all his purposes, and promises.

V. 8. *They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid of thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.*

The tokens, or signs, mentioned in this verse, are the displays of divine power and mercy, manifested in sending forth the everlasting gospel. It is called before, ver. 5, *Terrible, or, wonderful things in righteousness*. The preaching the gospel produced a saving knowledge of Christ amongst the nations. This produced a solemn, awful, and filial fear of him, so as for them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. In consequence hereof, the outgoings of the morning and evening rejoiced in God. That is, the inhabitants of the earth, such of them as had received Christ into their minds as the hope of glory, as truly as they experienced the sweet returning vicissitudes of day and night, of morning and evening, were made to rejoice in God their Saviour. This will be more abundantly the case, when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest; when his name shall be great among the Gentiles; when believers in Christ shall rejoice in him their Saviour, and shall praise him from the rising to the setting sun. Here this part of the subject ends. A second part is added to it, which is presented under some very



beautiful and striking imagery, under which are expressed the beauties of spring. The care and providence exercised by the Lord, over creation, so as all things are brought forth in an orderly and beautiful manner, are expressed, and all to set forth the Lord's dealings with his church.

V. 9. *Thou visitest the earth, [the church] and waterest it : thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water : thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it, [or, for so hast thou established, or constituted it.]*

The Psalmist had been, in the former parts of this Psalm, speaking of the praise due to Jehovah ; for his mercy in hearing the prayers of his people ; for his goodness in purging out their iniquities ; for his grace displayed in their election in Christ, and the admission they had in communion with him, whereby they enjoyed soul-satisfying good. He expressed the wonderful things God would perform, in answer to the prayers of his church. How that by the same power, by which he established the mountains, and confined the sea within its bounds, he would confirm his gospel and church in the Gentile nations. And now in the following verses, to the very close of this scripture, he expresses the blessed effects which his sacred presence and influence would produce in the church of his own right-hand planting. The earth, in its state of coldness and want of fertility, is made use of, to represent the subject. Our world is naturally barren and dry. It is made fruitful by kindly showers of rain. Every returning spring, it is as it were a new world. The rain is the river of God. By it it is watered and refreshed ; by the air, light, and genial reflection of the sun on it, thus it is renewed, and reinvigorated, and becomes replenished with all good. The corn sown in it springs up. The Lord cares for it ; he causes it to grow ; he cares for it ; he provides for it ; he waters it. *Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it : thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God which is full of water. Thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.* Thus the church of Christ is renewed by the agency of the Holy Spirit ; is revived by his blessed breathings ; watered with showers of heavenly blessings ; made fruitful by the river of God ; blessed with the riches of grace and mercy, which flow down from the inexhaustible fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ ; he arising on her, as the sun of righteousness, with health and healing in his wings, produceth most blessed and salutary effects. It is day with the church, it is spring indeed in it, when the Lord the Spirit imparts his sacred breathings, and influences, and Christ shines forth. A

further account is given of the good providence of God towards our world, and the things in it. Under which a further account is given of spiritual blessings.

V. 10. *Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly : thou settlest the furrows thereof : thou makest it soft with showers : thou blessest the springing thereof.*

The ground being ploughed, the seed is cast into it. But first, the ground being prepared, the former rain descends upon the ridges, and into the furrows, and dissolveth the parts of the earth. Thus it fitteth it for the purposes of vegetation, whenever the seed shall be cast into it. Then cometh the latter rain, to assist, and to bless the springing, and the increase thereof, unto a joyful harvest. So the Holy Spirit opens the heart to receive the word, the good seed of the kingdom. He waters it; he quickens it; he it is who causeth it to spring up to life everlasting. The Psalmist proceeds with the subject.

V. 11. *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths, [or clouds, or heavens,] drop fatness.*

The herbs, grass, fruits, and flowers, by the refreshing air, the fruitful showers, and reinvigorating sun, produce in the earth a most beautiful sight. It may be styled a most pleasing variegated crown, produced by the almighty Creator, by means of which the world shines gay and glorious. Under the control, and at the command of God, the heavens collect water; they distil rain; hereby the earth is impregnated, and made fruitful with terrestrial blessings. This is most beautifully expressed by another prophet. *And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, &c.* Hosea, chap. ii. ver. 21, 22. All done in nature is by the agency of the heavens, fire, light, and air. All done in the church of God, is by the sacred agency and cooperation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The whole being completed in the description, the Psalmist closes the subject, saying, *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness.* So when all God's will is accomplished in his whole church on earth, he will be glorified in his saints, and he will crown them with everlasting goodness; and they will ascribe all the glory to him, for all he wrought in them, for them, and by them, in Christ Jesus, for ever. They will say, *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* The redeemed will never stain the

crown of free grace, by attributing any thing to themselves; no, not throughout the ages of eternity.

*V. 12. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.*

The rain descending from heaven, causeth even the barren wilderness to become green. It clotheth the naked hills with the garments of joy and gladness. So the Spirit of God, when he was, and when he shall be more abundantly poured out from on high upon the elect Gentiles, and they shall be converted, and turned unto the Lord, this will be like the conversion of a barren wilderness into a fruitful field; by means of which, churches of Christ, rising on all sides in the Gentile world, like little fertile hills, will rejoice, and blossom as the rose. They will joy and rejoice in God their Saviour, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

*V. 13. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys are covered over with corn: they shout for joy, they also sing.*

This is very expressive of the effects of God's visiting the earth with rain. By means of it the meadows are full of grass; the valleys with corn; the flocks and cattle are in a thriving case and flourishing condition. All these ideas are to be referred to spiritual things and subjects. Fruitfulness in the church, is owing to the distillations of grace from heaven, which are in scripture compared to rain. The rain of divine influence refreshes the church. It fills saints with consolation; it makes them fruitful in every good word and work; it causes joy to real saints, as fruitful seasons fill the hearts of worldly people with food and gladness. May the Holy Spirit, open to us, the beauty of the imagery made use of in this song, and shew us its application to spiritual and heavenly realities, and lead us thereby to Christ, and the Father in him. Amen.

## PSALM THE SIXTY-SIXTH.

*To the chief Musician, a Song Psalm.*

In it the prophet excites those whom he addresses to sing the praises of God the Saviour. He expresses the power and extent of his kingdom. He recites the Lord's various deliverances of his church and people from temptations and afflictions, for which he calls on saints to offer the sacrifices of prayer and praise. He would have them declare to each other the mercies and lovingkindnesses of the Lord towards them, and to bless his holy name continually. This sonnet

is entitled a Song Psalm, it being begun by the instrument of music, and the voice followed.

V. 1. *To the Chief Musician, a Song Psalm. Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands.*

This Psalm begins with an exhortation to a most divine and heavenly duty. It is to make a joyful noise unto God; that is, to the Three in covenant; to the incomprehensible Three in the incomprehensible Essence, who were the one object of worship in prayer and praise; who were jointly and personally acknowledged in sacrificial worship; the Father, for appointing Christ as the one all-sufficient sacrifice; the Lamb who was to be slain, who was set forth in the offering, which was a memorial of him; the Holy Spirit, for creating in the minds of such as were spiritual worshippers, proper ideas of the salvation here recorded. As this worship was accompanied with all the powers of instrumental and vocal music, hence it was a joyful noise, or sound to the ear. As one day, the name and fame, the salvation and renown of the Saviour of the elect, both Jews and Gentiles, would, by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, be made to all nations for the obedience of faith; hence the address by the prophet to the elect in all lands; *Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands*: It is a subject altogether worthy of your sacred joy. God, in all his persons and perfections, is the salvation of sinners; of all sort and kind of sinners, whether Jew or Gentile, whether bond or free, whether male or female, belonging to the election of grace; and each, and every one of these, the Lord our God will call.

V. 2, *Sing forth the honour of his name; make his praise glorious.*

Christ is of high renown in the estimation of the Essential Three. His name is honourable. He is precious, or to them that believe, he is an honour. He puts honour on them. His name is called on them; they may make good use of it, and say, *We are called by thy name, leave us not*. His praise is glorious. He is the praise of all his saints. He is, says Moses to the people of Israel, *thy praise, and he is thy God*. The Old Testament church, in full sights of Christ, excites and calls on others to join with her in making a joyful noise to God. *Sing forth the honour of his name, make his praise glorious; or, give him glorious praise*. This is done, when Christ is acknowledged in the glories of his person; in the majesty of his titles; in the perfection of his work; in the dignity of his righteousness; in the infinite virtue of his blood; and in the eternal dignity of all his offices. *Sing forth, shew and declare the honour of his name, which is*