

verses now before us. Here is 1. Israel, or the body of the commonwealth. 2. Aaron's house, the ministers of the tabernacle. 3. The fearers of Jehovah; that is, strangers, converts of all nations. O Israel, that is the whole body of the people, on whom the Lord's name was called. *Trust in the Lord.* Trust in the *Holy Ones*, who exist and coexist in the one incomprehensible Essence. Trust in the revelation they have been pleased to make concerning the good pleasure of their will, expressed in their covenant transaction, and which they have caused to be recorded in the scriptures of truth. For Jehovah, in all his persons and perfections, will and covenant, is your help and shield. Thus the prophet addresseth the church.

V. 10. *O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.*

Whilst Aaron is mentioned, yet he having long before this been removed to heaven, it must mean his descendants and posterity. They were the priests of the Lord, and ministered before the divine Majesty in holy things. These are called upon to trust in the Lord. Whilst Christ was most evidently and expressly set forth in every part of the services they were appointed to perform, yet he would not have them rest in the types, shadows, symbols, and memorials of Christ, but go from them to him, and centre wholly and alone in him. Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, as engaged by covenant and oath, to save with an everlasting salvation every one that believeth in Jesus, he is their help and their shield.

V. 11. *Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.*

Here all who fear the Lord, be they of what nation, kingdom, and people they may—the whole Catholic, and universal church of Christ, are addressed to trust in the Lord. All saints are one in Christ Jesus; they all trust in Jehovah for life and salvation. Ye that fear the Lord, and are enlightened into a saving knowledge of the way of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, trust in the Lord, and go on to honour him in, and by so doing. He is their help and shield: it is he who is the Saviour in time of trouble: he is the shield to defend against all the assaults of hell.

V. 12. *The Lord hath been mindful of us; he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.*

The Psalmist here sets forth an invincible reason why the Lord is to be blessed by the whole church, in the three divisions he had before given of Israel, the house of Aaron, and all that fear him. The Lord's remembrance of his people

is for their good: it is that he may bless them. One reads the words thus: *The word of the Lord* (that is Christ,) *hath remembered us for good.* He blesseth us, as he turneth us from our iniquities. Or, the words may express this: he being mindful of us, hath blessed us. Jehovah hath been mindful of all his people: he loved them from everlasting: he chose their persons in Christ, and gave them being in him before all time: he blessed them in him with all spiritual blessings: under his views of them in their fallen state, he blessed them in providing salvation for them: in giving Christ to be salvation unto them: in bestowing him, and all the blessings of salvation on them: in giving them the gospel, in which the whole is revealed and set before them. *The Lord hath been mindful of us. He will bless us.* In that he will continue his blessing unto us; his whole election of grace; Jew and Gentile; priests and people: he will bless the house of Israel: he will bless the house of Aaron. The former in their waiting on him in worship. The latter in their administration of his ordinances.

V. 13. *He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great.*

Let them be of what age or degree whatsoever. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And to such as are renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him, Christ is all and in all.

V. 14. *The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children.*

This is expressive of the further and increasing blessing of Jehovah on his Israel, ministers, and the whole church. They are to be increased in light and knowledge, in gifts and graces, in faith and utterance, in numbers and multitude. This to be continued: this is to be more and more: this the present generation were to be; so were their successors. An invaluable blessing is contained in this declaration.

V. 15. *You are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth.*

This contains the whole essence and perfection of good. For in Jehovah's blessing all his good-will, yea, the whole good pleasure of his will, is contained. The Psalmist addresseth the whole church, constituted of Israel, the house of Aaron, and all that fear the Lord, as one complete body to Christ; and says, *Ye blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth.* Thus he entitles them blessed. So they must be considered in Christ. They are blessed ones: they

are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth. And if the Lord which made heaven and earth hath blessed them, they must be blessed indeed. If we read the words thus, ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth, then they are declarations of what all the Lord's people are.

V. 16. *The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.*

Heaven is the dwelling place in which Jehovah shines forth in such light and majesty as no man hath seen or can see. Such is the infinity of the divine essence, that the heaven of heavens cannot contain him: this is the Lord's, the heaven and heaven of heavens; he possesses it, he fills it. But the earth, this lower world on which we exist, which is his also: he hath given it to the children of men, it is the seat of his militant church, it is to remain for this purpose until the second coming of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ.

V. 17. *The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.*

The grave is the place of silence, the dead in it are incapable of praising the Lord there. It seems the continuance in life is to be preferred to sleeping in the grave, even by the saints of God, themselves, in some cases and circumstances.

V. 18. *But we will bless the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord.*

This seems to be an explanation of the former verse, *The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.* But we living saints will take advantage, from the state we are continued in, to exercise ourselves in the Lord's work and worship, *We will bless the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore:* for his blessings bestowed upon his whole universal church, both of Jews and Gentiles. This shall be our employment, we will now begin it, and proceed in the same most delightful work for evermore. *Hallelujah. Praise ye the Lord.* Thus the Psalm ends.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND SIXTEENTH.

This Psalm concerns the Messiah; in it he professeth his love to Jehovah. The Saviour had been in a state inexpressible, in which the sorrows of death and pains of hell gat hold upon him, which had filled his mind with unutterable grief. In these circumstances he called upon Jehovah,

who heard and answered him. He speaks of the deliverance which the Lord had wrought for him, and declares he will walk before him, out of gratitude for this in the land of the living. He mentions in what way he will shew his thankfulness: pleads what he is, for acceptance with the divine Majesty, and concludes with the word *Hallelujah*.

V. 1. *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.*

The person of Christ, the incarnation of Christ, the life and obedience of Christ, his love, his faith, his hope in God, his sufferings, his death, his resurrection from the grave, his life in his resurrection state, with the real devotedness of himself to the whole will and glory of the Father, form a most wonderful mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. I have endeavoured, according to the wisdom given me of God, to shew how this is opened and set before the church of the living God, in and throughout the book of Psalms. I mention this now, because we have gone through many of them, in which this great subject hath no place: here it hath a place. It is the Messiah is the speaker throughout the whole of this sacred hymn before us: he begins it with an address to Jehovah, which word includes the divine personalities in the essence existing. I have considered, and shall here consider Jehovah in the person of the divine Father, to be as here addressed by the ever blessed Messiah, unto whom he professeth his love. *I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.* It is not that this was the original cause of Christ's love to the divine Father: No, but our Lord here expresseth himself thus: Because he is here about opening and expressing the sense he had of the love the divine Father had exercised and expressed towards him in the day of his sorrows and sufferings. When he stood before him, and was charged by him with all the sins of the elect, and was made sin for them by him, and felt the curse, death, sorrow and misery due to the same. He then cried out, under the immense load, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* He then offered up strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death. And out of the immensity of love wherewith the Father loved him, he was pleased to hear and answer him. He was heard, says the apostle, in that he feared, Heb. v. 7. Here the most adorable Saviour expresseth his apprehension of the Father in these words before us, *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.* The words are expressive of the Mediator's being truly affected, and well pleased.

V. 2. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

This would be a motive with Christ, so long as he should live in any of his members in this present world, to excite them to call upon the Lord, so long as they had any days of sorrow and affliction, and pour out their hearts before him. And so long as Messiah lived after the power of an endless life, he would most thankfully acknowledge the love of the divine Majesty in the person of the Father, for this most gracious evidence and fruit of his love, and of his delight and acceptation of him, in his sufferings and obedience unto death, when he was made sin and a curse for his beloved ones.

V. 3. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of death gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

These words are expressive of the state Messiah was in when he called upon the name of the Lord, when he poured out his supplications before him, which the Lord inclined his ear unto, and for which Messiah would praise him for ever. As the Father had caused the iniquities of all his people to meet on him, and made him a curse, so all this was actually felt and apprehended by him. In consequence of which the sorrows of death, and all contained in eternal death, so far as consistent with the dignity of his person as God-man, came in upon his soul and body, and the pains of hell gat hold upon him. The very uttermost expression of divine wrath, contained in Jehovah's curse due to the sins of all the elect, came in upon Messiah's mind; he was the subject of all this. He found trouble and sorrow, such as none but himself ever did.

V. 4. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

The whole transaction which concerned the imputation of sin, and the infliction of the curse on the Surety, was between the Father and Christ: which, when it took place, none could deliver Messiah but Jehovah. Therefore, when he was in this state in which he was made sin and a curse, he called upon the Father when the sorrows of death compassed him about, when the pains of hell gat hold of him, when he found trouble and sorrow: it was then he called upon the name of Jehovah for deliverance, *O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul.* His deliverance must be the act of the divine Father: this was agreeable to covenant acts. The soul of Christ was the subject of the whole curse due to the sins the Father had laid upon him, and imputed to him, and he only could deliver him. He, therefore, cried

and made supplications unto him, saying, *O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul:* and the Lord answered and delivered him. This the following verses, to the close of the 9th, give proof of.

V. 5. *Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.*

This is a perfection of the divine nature, he is gracious; so is he also righteous. He is essentially so, yet here the word righteous is expressive of his faithfulness. Our God, says the great Mediator, speaking in the name of all his people, is merciful. None had ever so great and abundant proof of all this as himself: for none was ever made sin and a curse but he; yet notwithstanding this, he found God's love unchangeable, his nature immutable, his truth inviolable, his mercy infinite. He, therefore, here speaks of it: he had been under sin and the curse, he had been compassed about with the sorrows of death, the pains of hell had gat hold of him: yet out of, and from above all this Jehovah had raised and delivered him; which he ascribes to the grace, righteousness, and mercy of God, *Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.* This is our Lord's declaration, he had found and had full proof of the truth of this in his own person as Mediator. He would his church should ever keep this in remembrance; he therefore speaks it out in all their names.

V. 6. *The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.*

They are such as are humbled and emptied of all help and succour in themselves, whom the Lord preserveth in the true faith and fear of his holy name. Messiah had been preserved all through his incarnate state. In the day of the Lord's fierce anger he was brought low, he was drawn dry, he was weakened, he was oppressed, he was afflicted; yet Jehovah helped him, he brought him up out of all, Jehovah raised him above all. Upon this, he says, by way of address to his own soul,

V. 7. *Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

Christ had a quiet and comfortable estate in God: when he had finished the atonement, and bowed his head upon the cross, saying, *It is finished,* he entered on it. He was fully rewarded for all his pains and sorrows, in his session at the right hand of God, and in seeing the travail of his soul: he here solaces his soul in views and with the prospects thereof, saying, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* He will wear the

crown of salvation with unrivalled fame for ever and for ever.

V. 8. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.*

Our Lord was completely delivered by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, and delivered out of the hands of all his enemies, by Jehovah the Father, when he raised him from the dead. And for this he gives thanks, and makes his acknowledgments in this Psalm before us.

V. 9. *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*

Christ is in heaven, crowned with glory everlasting; he there liveth unto God, he is the representative of his church: the life, the light, the glory, the perfection thereof. He lives in all his called people; all their spirituality and walking with, and before the Lord, unto all well-pleasing, is the sole fruit and effect of his indwelling in them: so that Christ and they being one, he might in this very sense, and under this very consideration, well say, *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.* There is nothing contrary to the gospel in this.

V. 10. *I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted.*

These words are quoted by the apostle, to prove the New Testament church hath the same spirit of faith the Old Testament saints had. *We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken: we also believe, and therefore speak,* 2 Cor. iv. 13. *I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:* thus speaks the great Mediator. He was, or had been, as the surety of the Lord's flock, sore broken and wounded in body and soul; he had been smitten and afflicted.

V. 11. *I said in my haste, All men are liars.*

The words of the 22d verse of the 31st Psalm will, I conceive, open this. Christ has there been speaking of his sufferings, and having been delivered out of them, he says, *For I said in my haste, I am cast off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications, when I cried unto thee.* Now the word haste, can mean no other than the great and sore sorrows of Christ's body and mind, it having been the subject matter of that Psalm. So here, when the Mediator says, *I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: I said in my haste, All men are liars.* It must most certainly mean the same, Christ had been in soul distress inexpressible. The expressions used in this Psalm are fully expressive of this: he had been in the greatest bodily distress, torture, and torment he could possibly

be in. All his disciples forsook him, and fled from him, when and whilst he was in this state of suffering. He might well therefore say, *All men are liars*: or, all men are vain, or empty, or vanity: and thus a prophetic hint was given, concerning his disciples forsaking him in his passion. So that he trode the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him, all his help was from Jehovah; and this was and is the crown he sets on that subject.

V. 12. *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?*

From hence to the end of this invaluable hymn, the great and glorious Mediator sets forth the way in which, and by which he will shew forth, express, and declare his gratitude to Jehovah who had heard him, who had answered him, who had been gracious, faithful, and merciful unto him, who had delivered him, who had dealt bountifully with him. He, under a sight and glorious view of all these, asks this question: *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?* Having put the question to his own mind, he makes a reply unto it in the next three following verses.

V. 13. *I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.*

No doubt but this is spoken in reference to what was the custom under the law. When the Israelites had received mercies from the Lord, they used to offer peace or thank offerings, some parts of which belonged unto them; on which they made a feast, and they and their friends fed on it, and rejoiced before the Lord: and at this banquet took up a cup of wine in their hands, and blessed the Lord. This was to them the cup of salvations or healths. Thus the Messiah here expresseth himself, that he would offer thanksgiving unto Jehovah for his saving health and deliverance of him. Now as this cup of wine, drunk at a feast of thanksgiving, was called the cup of salvation, and the cup of wine at the Paschal feast was the same; so Christ at that feast took the cup and gave thanks, and called upon, prayed unto, and praised the name of the Lord. After which he instituted his holy supper, which he concluded with singing an hymn.

V. 14. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people.*

In the courts of the temple, at the ordinance of worship, where public notice might be taken of it, such as would redound to the praise and glory of God. Now this hath been,

and will continue to be in the months, and by the praises offered unto the divine Father, by Christ's mystic body.

V. 15. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*

If so, then most inestimable and infinitely valuable must the death of Messiah be. In the sight and remembrance of Jehovah the Father, the sacrifice, bloodshedding, obedience, and death of Immanuel, must be beyond expression and conception precious. The death of the saints can only be precious in the sight of God, on the sole account of Christ's death. Some therefore read these words thus: *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, through the death of the Just One dying for the unjust.*

V. 16. *O Lord, truly I am thy servant. I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.*

Here, as I conceive, the Messiah pleads before Jehovah, who and what he is, for his own acceptance. He was, by the Father's will of constitution and appointment, his servant; who, in the execution of his mediatorial work, was to perform a service of obedience, in fulfilling all righteousness, and in making his soul an offering for sin. The anointed of the Father professeth this, and pleads it: [*Truly O Lord, or,*] *O Lord, truly I am thy servant: most truly devoted unto thee in my whole person, God-man; in all my faculties, and with the whole of my affections; in the whole of my humanity, body and soul; in the whole of my obedience, and in the whole of my sufferings; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: whom thou didst choose and single out beyond and above all others, to be the consecrated vessel from whom my humanity was to be derived; thou hast accepted me in the discharge of my obedience, sufferings, and death; thou hast raised me from the power of death and the grave, which is the fruit and effect of thine acceptance of me; Thou hast loosed my bonds; therefore I will praise thee.*

V. 17. *I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.*

The Messiah's whole person and office of priesthood in heaven, may be considered as this sacrifice of thanksgiving to Jehovah, as all the saints upon earth will for ever give Jehovah in all his persons, glorious praise for the same.

V. 18. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people.*

We need not look for the fulfilment of this by any act performed by our Lord after his resurrection. It is suffi-

cient to survey the heart of Christ herein: that he would acknowledge for ever, before his people, and in the presence of all his people, in and by these declarations, his sense of gratitude to Jehovah the Father, for his having been gracious unto him: for his deliverance of him from imputed sin, and from the inflicted curse: for his raising him from the dead. This, I conceive, is the gospel contained in all this.

V. 19. *In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.*

It is in the New Testament church that this is performed. And our Lord, after his resurrection, when he appeared to his disciples again and again, might act thus. It is not recorded: yet we are sure of this, he laid a foundation for the saints to celebrate the high praises of the Father, for all his glorious acts of grace towards him. And he here concludes with an address to his church to worship Jehovah: *Praise ye the Lord.* Which word, which is the incommunicable name, includes the Three divine Persons, Father, Word, and Spirit, to whom the sole praise belongs for all the displays of grace on Christ, and on the church in him. *I will pay my vows, unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people: in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord; Praise Jah; Praise ye Jehovah.* Thus the Psalm ends. If any thing written reflects any glory of Christ on our minds, and we thereby apprehend any thing concerning him which exalts him in us, the praise belongs to him. May the Lord make him increasingly glorious in our view. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEENTH.

This is the shortest Psalm in the whole collection: yet it is of vast importance as it concerns the subject matter of it; which is an exhortation to praise Jehovah for his mercy and truth towards the Gentiles belonging to the election of grace. The apostle quotes the first verse of it, and applies it to the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge of Christ, by the preaching of the gospel unto them, Rom. xv. 10. These obtained mercies by Christ, who both received them and believing Jews, into the same gospel church state, to the glory of God. For which they had, on both sides, sufficient cause to laud and magnify his most holy name.

V. 1. *O Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.*

The first words are an exhortation. Jehovah in his per-

sons and perfections is the subject of the song. It is spoken by way of prophecy: it respected what would take place after the death of the Messiah. The partition wall of Jewish ceremonies, which separated between them and the Gentiles, being pulled down by the sacrifice of Immanuel, and he having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby—and came, in the everlasting gospel, preaching peace to such as were afar off, and to them that were nigh—the elect among the Gentiles heard the joyful sound, and by it believed on Christ to the saving of the soul. The praise of all which was due alone to the Three in Jehovah: *O praise the Lord, all ye nations: [Hallelujah] praise him, all ye people.* Let Jew and Gentile unite in praise to Jehovah for his Christ, and salvation by him; for the gospel of salvation, and all the blessings contained therein; *Praise him, all ye people,* that the gospel of salvation is sent to you. This was one particular part of the glory of the apostolic day. The holy apostles carried, and sent the preaching of Christ according to his own command, to Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth; see Acts i. 8. The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, accompanied the preaching of it; the nations of the Gentiles were visited by it; many of them were turned unto the Lord; and Jews and Gentiles composed the church of Christ; so that most, if not all the churches we read of in the New Testament, were made of them. The church of Christ at Rome, was. The apostle, addressing the members of that church, says, *Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause will I confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles: and laud him, all ye people.* This is quoted in the first verse of the Psalm now before us. *And again Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust,* Rom. xv. 7—12. Thus we have the application of it by the apostle Paul.

V. 2. *For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.*

The kindness and mercy of God was great towards his saints under the Old Testament dispensation. It was multiplied in his making use of his apostles, who were all Jews to a man, and putting this honour on them to preach the gospel, and carry it from Jerusalem, after the day of Pentecost, into all the world. It is true this was done by degrees. Yet before the apostles were all removed from earth to heaven, the gospel had been preached throughout the whole world. He says, *their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world*, Rom. x. 18. The truth of the Lord is the everlasting gospel; in the which the whole of Christ is revealed, and his unsearchable riches are contained; it endureth for ever; it is as immutable as Christ himself; for which he ascribes praise to Jehovah: *Praise ye the Lord*. This is the third time the Lord is praised in this very short Psalm. *O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord*. Thus it begins and ends with the word *Hallelujah*. May the Lord bless it to us. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH.

This Psalm contains a solemn act of praise. I cannot but here, as giving a most glorious insight into the peculiar excellencies of the same, quote what is placed as the argument of it, by Dr. Horn. He says as follows: "In this Psalm a King of Israel appears, leading his people forth in solemn procession to the temple, there to offer up the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving for a marvellous deliverance from his enemies, and a glorious victory gained over them: after inviting the whole nation, verses 1—4, to join with him, upon this joyful occasion, he describes at large, verses 5—18, his danger, and his deliverance from it, which latter is wholly attributed to the power and goodness of Jehovah. After this, as Mr. Mudge has rightly observed, there ensues a kind of sacred dialogue. Being come to the temple, the victorious monarch speaks the 19th verse. They that open the gate, the 20th verse. The victorious monarch as he enters, speaks the 21st verse. They with him seem to speak the four next verses, to the 25th. The priests of the temple speak the 26th verse, the first part to the King, the other to the people. The people speak the

27th verse. The King the 28th. The 29th verse is the chorus verse, concluding as it began. The whole may be considered as a triumphal hymn, sung by King Messiah at the head of the Israel of God, on occasion of his resurrection and exaltation." Whilst all this is most truly excellent, yet it being beyond my capacity to follow, I shall consider this Psalm as expressive of our Lord's thanks for being raised from the grave of death, and exalted by his resurrection and ascension, and of the grace and glory of his kingdom. It is this I shall consider to be the simple outline of it.

V. 1. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.*

I consider the glorious Messiah the speaker. That he speaks thus at his resurrection from the power of death and the grave; after what he had passed through in completing salvation work, and conquering the whole host of hell; and also in the views he had of his triumphant ascension into the highest heavens, and of his exaltation over all his enemies; together with the blessings of his spiritual kingdom, as they would be enjoyed by his people. He here, by way of excitement, calls upon his whole church to join him in singing his deliverance out of the hands of all his enemies: *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.* It is generally allowed out of this Psalm it was that Christ sang after he had celebrated his holy supper. Jehovah was the author of Christ's deliverance; it is to him Christ gives thanks for it: he is essentially, manifestatively good; he is communicatively so; there is good reason to acknowledge him in his goodness, *because his mercy endureth for ever.*

V. 2. *Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*

Here the whole church of God under the Old Testament dispensation are included. Let them say, on this occasion, Christ their Saviour, and captain of their salvation, having obtained eternal salvation, and triumphed over sin, Satan, the world, death, and every enemy—let them now say, on this occasion, and to the honour of him, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.* Let them repeat it over the second time; *Let them now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*

V. 3. *Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*

This includes all the ministers of the sanctuary. Let them all unite in joining in one grand chorus in singing to Jehovah, saying, *that his mercy endureth for ever.*

V. 4. *Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*

This includes all of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, who knew the Lord, who are here comprehended under the term of such as fear the Lord, to join in this triumphal hymn of praise to Jehovah, with Christ himself the conqueror, and in whom they are more than conquerors, in saying, that the mercy of Jehovah endureth for ever.

V. 5. *I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.*

From hence the subject matter of the Psalm begins, which extends to the close of verse 13; the former four verses being introductory thereunto. Messiah had been in distress; he had been surrounded with the sins of his people; he had been encompassed with the curse of God; under the full sight and sense of all contained in this, he called upon the name of the Lord; the Lord had answered him: he had been brought out of the state he was in; he had been raised from death to life; he was, by his resurrection from the grave and power of death, set in a large place. Thus he expresseth the salvation, help, and deliverance, Jehovah the Father had wrought out on his behalf, and for him, and for which he calls upon the whole church to join with him in celebrations of Jehovah's praise.

V. 6. *The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?*

That Jehovah was with Messiah—that he raised him up in the councils of eternity—that he had made him strong for himself—that he it was who laid the iniquities of his people upon him—that he it was who had executed the curse due to the sins of all the elect upon him—that he it was who led him through all oppositions, and caused him to triumph over all his enemies, and the whole host of hell, at, and by his resurrection from death to life immortal, was a clear case, in the knowledge and apprehension of Christ the anointed one; he acknowledgeth it, he gives Jehovah the Father praise for it; he draws confidence and support from it; he says: *The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?* or, against my church. None can overthrow it, so as that it shall have no existence and continuance in the world; no, I and my church are one.

V. 7. *The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.*

What is here expressed shews, that the Lord would have his church and people be strong in him, and look on themselves in him, and on his complete deliverance as theirs.

On his resurrection, as a full proof and pledge to their faith of their own. Of his being fully saved, and lifted up above all his enemies, and of his being completely delivered out of their hands, and of his being lifted up and beyond the utmost extent of their rage and malice, as full proof they also should, in the Lord's own time and way. That as Jehovah had taken his part, that as Jehovah had helped him, that as he would give him to see his desire, or rather the just wrath of God come down on his Jewish enemies, so the church would and might be fully assured no weapon formed against her would prosper.

V. 8. *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.*

Thus Christ triumphs over all creatures and creature confidences: he here sets an example before his people: it becomes them so to triumph: they are always, in all cases and circumstances, prone to creature confidence: he is therefore pleased to express this a second time.

V. 9. *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.*

It is in Jehovah alone is everlasting strength. Whilst we are, it may be, too little acquainted with the mystery of Christ's person, as God-man, Mediator, and too little, it may be, with the knowledge of him as the mediator of reconciliation, and of him as so considered, to apprehend that his whole faith and hope was in God; and that he had as truly to go out of himself and off himself, for strength and succour to Jehovah, as we ourselves have; yet if this be not attended unto, we cannot without it make out many expressions in the Psalms like these before us. But on the right apprehension of these, the meaning of them is most clearly opened. To trust in the Lord, we must renounce all and every thing we are in ourselves. To trust in the Lord we cannot, but upon the foundation of his holy truth made known and revealed to us in the word, and by the Spirit. Our Lord's faith was founded upon the knowledge and revelation made to him of the everlasting covenant, and the promises thereof, and the divine stipulations of the Father unto him. The great Messiah did not depend on his own holiness, righteousness, and sacrifice, for acceptance with the divine Father; but he trusted in the divine Father for the acceptance of the same. And his ground for this was the covenant contract between the Father and him.

V. 10. *All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.*

The enemies of Christ were innumerable: they compassed him about on the day of his passion: in the name of the Lord he overcame them. This, to illustrate his triumphs and victories, is again and again repeated in the two following verses. I should conceive, we are here not only to contemplate sin, Satan, the world, death, hell, principalities and powers, as subdued, conquered, and fallen before our Christ, and subdued under his feet, but that also before the end of time, all things will be subdued by him. He must reign until Jehovah the Father hath put all things under him. It was in the name of Jehovah he conquered this innumerable host: he describes their rage against him, saying,

V. 11. *They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.*

Be these whom they might, though they surrounded him, and compassed him about, yet Jesus in the name of the Lord destroyed them. Though they, notwithstanding this, recruited their numbers, and compassed him about again, yet they were destroyed. He says again,

V. 12. *They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.*

The figures here made use of are very completely calculated to express the multitude of Christ's enemies—their virulency; and also how soon the fire of divine wrath was kindled against them, and how soon they were quenched and destroyed. Bees when they are angry get together, and being troubled and provoked, become more eager and fierce; they sting and pursue such as trouble them. The person of Christ, his holiness, righteousness, and purity, provoked and stirred up the malice and hatred of the Jews against him: they compassed him about like so many bees. He bore the contradiction of sinners against himself. A fire made of thorns, is both soon kindled and soon quenched. So our Lord in these words, sets forth the rage of his enemies against him: they compassed him about as bees; to sting, wound, and torment him; he was proof against them; he was beyond them all; he soon quenched their rage. As fire among thorns is soon on a blaze and expires, so the wrath of Christ soon quenched and destroyed these enemies. I conceive this refers to the Jews' final overthrow by the Romans. *For in the name of the Lord* (says this chieftain and conqueror) *I will destroy them.* He hath done so: his enemies are all under his feet; they are quenched, they are destroyed. And who, or what future enemies may yet at

any time rise up, either against Christ or his church, he says, *in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.* So we are safe, and may well rejoice and triumph in him.

V. 13. *Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the Lord helped me.*

These words are spoken by Messiah to the enemy. They imply the fierceness of the enemy; thou didst sorely thrust. All the devils in hell, with all their fury and strength, were let loose upon Christ, whilst he was in his passion. All that men could do to torment and torture the body of Christ, they did. All the vile blasphemous words which could be uttered, were spoken out in this very season of distress, when Christ sustained the stroke of divine wrath: yet Jehovah helped Christ, he did not fall; he was impeccable, and obtained a complete and final victory over all his enemies. Thus this part of the subject ends. All which follows to the end, is Messiah's triumphal hymn, sung in consequence of his vanquishing all his foes, and enemies of every sort and kind.

V. 14. *The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.*

The divine Father heard Christ when he cried unto him: he was his strength when all hell was let loose upon him: Jehovah was his strength when the whole host of his Jewish enemies compassed him about like bees; when they thrust sorely at him, that he might fall. And here he ascribes and gives Jehovah the full praise and glory of all this; which is the very subject of what follows in this triumphal hymn. The Lord is my strength; he hath carried me safely through; he hath crowned me with everlasting victory; he is my song, I will triumph in him; he is become my salvation; he hath saved and rescued me out of the hands of all mine enemies; *he is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.* I will therefore ascribe the whole glory of my victory and deliverance unto him.

V. 15. *The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.*

The church of Christ, all the tents of Jacob, all the habitations of the saints of the Most High, might well be filled with joy and rejoicing, on account of the victories of Christ over the old serpent called the Devil: over the whole host of hell: over all his, and the enemies of his church.—They might rejoice in his salvation and victories: in these as being his own wonderful acts: and in him, as being their head, and as having performed these for their everlasting

advantage: in all and each of the tabernacles of the righteous, they might be well employed in shouting forth his glorious praise. *The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.* None can by any means resist it; all must fall before it. And it was most wonderfully displayed when all the hosts of earth and hell were subdued, vanquished, and everlastingly conquered by Christ Jesus. It will constitute a part of the worship of Christ in the tabernacles of the righteous, both in private and public, to praise the Lord Jesus for his work, victories, and conquests, down to his second coming; and his praises for the grace of his heart and the power of his arm, will be continued in eternity.

V. 16. *The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.*

This is again expressed to convey the subject more powerfully to the mind, and fix it thereon. The salvation wrought out, the victory gained, being so much here repeated, and the arm of Jehovah in it so frequently acknowledged, it is to exalt and put honour upon the subject. The power of Jehovah was not only put forth, but it was wonderfully exalted thereby. The right-hand of the Lord was still put forth; he, according to the exceeding greatness of his power, rose Messiah from the grave and power of death. It may be, this verse should be considered as preparatory to that subject.

V. 17. *I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.*

So speaks the glorious Messiah. He had before said, *Jehovah helped me. The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right-hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right-hand of the Lord is exalted: the right-hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.* To which he adds, *I shall not die, but live, and declare the work of the Lord.* I consider this as referring to his resurrection and exaltation, and life in glory. He did die; he had, as represented in this Psalm, died the death due to sin. It was by his death he overcame his enemies. His resurrection from the dead was his own personal salvation; it was full proof of his victories and triumph over all his enemies. He being raised from the dead, could die no more. He was to live to God; he could not live in heaven after the power of an endless life, as the high-priest of his church and people, but he must declare the works of the Lord. This he would continually do, by upholding his church, and blessing his gospel in the world.

V. 18. *The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.*

Yet the hand of God was very heavy on him. The Father bruised him with all the weight of vindictive wrath. He had inflicted on him, and filled his soul through and through with all contained in the curse due to sin. He had by imputation made Christ sin, that he might inflict on Christ the very curse due unto it; yet whilst Messiah suffered the whole, he outlived it. He could suffer no more, because the whole essence of it had been executed on him; he being superior to the whole death due to sin, and having borne the whole of it, he must be raised again. He was so, and therefore says,

V. 19. *Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go in to them, and I will praise the Lord.*

The gates of the temple are here to be understood; they were to be opened by the priests and Levites. They are called the gates of righteousness, because such only as were ceremonially clean were to enter into them. Here what is said by Dr. Horne, which hath been quoted, comes in most excellently. The great Messiah is by the prophet represented as going as the head and leader of his people, in a magnificent and royal manner, to the temple, to offer up his thanksgivings there for his victories and deliverance. *Open to me the gates of righteousness.* This demand is made to the keepers of the gates, to the porters at them. *I will go in to them.* For this reason they were to be opened. *And I will praise the Lord.* That was the reason why he would enter them.

V. 20. *This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.*

The temple was the seat of God's worship; hither righteous persons resorted to worship the Three in Jehovah, who had been pleased to reveal themselves in Christ, and had set him forth as a propitiation for sin. Into these gates Christ the holy one of God, the righteous one, the Lord our righteousness, often entered in the days of his flesh; and here he is spoken of as entering after his resurrection, to give thanks to Jehovah for his resurrection and ascension. This is all to be understood in a figurative manner, it being certain our Lord never entered the temple at Jerusalem after his resurrection. The expressions and representation therefore here given, must have been designed to express the greatness of Messiah's triumphs and praises to Jehovah for his carrying him through his whole work of mediation, which was to be performed on earth; and also, that his saints would find sufficient matter herein to laud and magnify his most holy name.

V. 21. *I will praise thee : for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.*

Christ had called on Jehovah in his distress : he had heard him, therefore the Messiah here says, *I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me ; and art become my salvation.* Jehovah the Father was Christ's salvation, in the same way as Christ is our salvation. He delivered him from all the sin and curse which had been laid to his charge, and out of the hands of all his enemies, by accepting his person, and his work of obedience and suffering ; and Christ saves us upon the footing of the Father's saving him. His acceptance is the acceptance of his people ; his righteousness is the righteousness of his people ; his one oblation of himself is the discharge of all his people ; so that sin can no more be imputed unto him than it can to Christ who hath put it away. *He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

V. 22. *The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner.*

The Jewish builders rejected Christ : they would not confess him to be the Messiah, yet God declared and proved him to be so ; in carrying him through all his sufferings, in raising him from the dead, in lifting him up from earth to heaven ; in exalting him, and seating him at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens. The corner-stone limits the building, and is ornamental to it. Christ knits and unites his whole church into one body ; he is the foundation, and also the corner-stone ; he is the beauty and glory of the whole spiritual building.

V. 23. *This is the Lord's doing ; it is marvellous in our eyes.*

It seems these words are spoken by the church concerning the exaltation of Messiah. It was Jehovah's doings: to exalt Christ, who had been humbled and emptied ; who had been a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; who had been laid in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps, whose humanity had been in the grave, was marvellous. When we survey it by faith, it is marvellous in our eyes. This advancement of our Lord Jesus Christ is wholly from Jehovah.

V. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made ; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

This day may include the whole of Christ's incarnate state. It may also be very expressive of the day of Christ's resurrection, which Jehovah made honourable and glorious, by the act and energy of power which he put forth in *bringing*

back from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. And the whole day of grace in Christ, which will continue until his second appearing, may be said to be honourable and glorious; of which it may be said, *This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.* There is continual reason for this, because Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, is always set forth in the gospel, and its ordinances, as one and the same, in his person, in his love, in his mercy, in his righteousness, in his sacrifice, in his fulness: and the testimony of the divine Father concerning him and his salvation is always immutably one and the same; so that there is the same ground of joy and rejoicing in him one time as another, and for one believer as another.

V. 25. *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.*

These words signify *Hosanna*. When our Lord entered in the first day of his passion week in a triumphal manner into Jerusalem, and came to the temple, the children cried out, *Hosanna to the Son of David.* The chief priests and scribes, who heard this, asked Christ, by way of insult, *Hearst thou what these say? Jesus said unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? Matth. xxi. 15, 16.* This is the word *Hosanna, Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord. O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.* The whole of which was sung when Jesus went from Bethany to Jerusalem; when those who were then present, the one going before him, sung, *Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* Jesus following, the company which came after him took the same subject up. They sang, *Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest, Mark x. 9, 10.* This is full proof the Psalm, and these words, belong to Christ.

V. 26. *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.*

Messiah came in the name of the Lord, with the power and authority of the Lord. He had demanded entrance into the temple before. *Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go in to them, and I will praise the Lord, ver. 20.* The gates being opened, Messiah, as he enters, the priests and Levites may be considered as saying, *This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.* Messiah, as he enters, says, ver. 21, *I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.* Then those who enter with Christ

say, *The Stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity,* ver. 22—25. Then the priests of the temple speak to the king Messiah, *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* Then they turn to the people, and say, *We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord,* ver. 26. For apprehending this part of the beautiful drama of this song, I am wholly indebted to Dr. Horne; and for the further remainder of it.

V. 27. *God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.*

Mr. Ainsworth says, this word, *cords*, is sometimes used for thick twisted cords, Judges xv. 13; and sometimes for thick branches of trees, used at some feasts; see Ezek. xix. 11; Lev. xxiii. 40. So that it may be read two ways, *Bind the feast with thick branches; or, bind the sacrifice with cords.* This Psalm being used at the Passover, which was a festival of great joy, the propriety of the expression is very evident, *God is the Lord which hath shewed us light.* Let us keep this, and every festival day, with holy festivity, with joy, thanksgiving, and praise to God. Let us bind the beast with thick boughs, or branches. Let us cover all the court over with them, until you come to the horns of the altar. Or, let us bind the sacrifice till the priest have offered him, and poured the blood at the horns of the altar. These words are considered by Dr. Horne as spoken by the people; the next by Messiah.

V. 28. *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.*

This is spoken personally. The great Immanuel professes his interest in God. *Thou art my God.* This was founded upon eternal acts and covenant settlements. On this account Christ here says to the divine Father, *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee.* This being so precious, and of such importance to him, he therefore adds, *Thou art my God, I will exalt thee.* It is the Father's covenant relation to Christ, from whence a sense of the blessedness of the divine favour flows into Christ's soul.

V. 29. *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

This is the grand chorus. All the church here joins. No one dissenting voice here. It is the same for substance in heaven. The whole glory of salvation is given to God and

the Lamb. Thus the Psalm ends as it began. May we be spiritually animated by it! Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH.

The excellent Mr. Lee, M. D. says, the 119th Psalm is so artificially contrived, on purpose that it might be learnt, together with the Hebrew alphabet, by the Hebrew children and youth, for the perpetuating the study of the law among all ranks of people, it being as a sort of Hebrew primer. It seems rather Ezra than David was the writer of it. The eight alphabets in it seem to have relation to the eight great hours or watches, said to be appointed about the time of Ezra, for the service of the waiters of the temple, if not by himself.

Each of them makes a distinct Psalm by itself, as any one at a single glance may observe, and be so on purpose divided, that at the sounding of the trumpets for the opening of these hours and services, the waiters in their courses might all be summoned to wait on the divine law during the ministration, and that the study thereof might thus be perpetuated without intermission. The ground of it is taken from the first and nineteenth Psalms.

The subject-matter of this long Psalm concerns our Lord Jesus Christ. It is descriptive of him as the man in God, whose whole heart, life, obedience, and walk, were one most perfect copy of God's most holy law. His tempers, his affections, his graces, are most particularly deciphered in it; his delight in the law of God, his zeal for its holiness and precepts, are very clearly expressed. Various terms are made use of to set forth the word and ordinances of the Most High, each expressive of the perfection of the same.

In going through the twenty-two divisions into which it is cast, I hope the Lord will reflect such light on the various subjects as will increase the praise of Jesus Christ. He is here in the full perfection of humanity, in the holiness of his nature, the purity of his nature, the integrity of his mind, in the fixedness of his will, in his love to God, in his motive in serving him, in his real delight in him, in his aim and design to glorify him, by his perfect obedience to the whole law. The motive of which in the heart of Christ was love; love to the divine Father, which he gave evidence of by loving his holy will, expressed in his holy law. And his end to be answered by his obedience was the glory of God, and his

highest expectations were to enjoy him for ever. Christ was the only perfect one who ever was in our world; he was impeccable: Adam was not. Christ's obedience was from higher motives than Adam's could be in Paradise. He was in his person the image of God. Adam was created in a likeness and similitude of conformity to him. The humanity of Christ was inhabited by the Holy Ghost; he filled both body and soul, he wrought all graces in it; so that Christ, as man, was the mirror of all grace, all excellency, all perfection, which is exemplified in this Psalm, which gives an account of the open and full display of all this in his obedience, which was and will be everlastingly acceptable to the divine Father. In which, by his imputation of the same to his beloved ones, they are made the righteousness of God in the person of Christ.

PART I.—ALEPH.

V. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.*

Christ is this blessed person: he is the undefiled one; he was holy, harmless, innocent, and pure. If he had not been so, he could not have walked in God's way. It was not his perfect obedience made him pure and undefiled. It fully proved he was so, but it did not constitute him so. Had Adam kept the holy law, it would not have made him holy; he was made holy, or an holy law would not have suited him. When he broke the law, he ceased to be holy, because thereby he committed an unholy act; which, being the defilement of his pure nature, he ceased to be a holy man in himself for ever. Christ was in his human nature more holy than Adam was by creation, or all the angels in heaven, because it was taken into personal union with the Son of the living God, and filled with the Holy Ghost, who dwelt personally in the man Christ Jesus, and anointed him; so that his understanding comprehended the whole good pleasure of God's will concerning him. His body and mind were the essence of purity, his heart was filled with the love of God, his thoughts were all regularly acted on what was before him, his will was perfectly sanctified to perform the whole will of God, his affections were most correctly poised, and properly fixed on God, and the things of God; and being sanctified throughout in body, soul, and spirit, he was blessed. He was in every sense undefiled; he went in the way which God set before him; he went on progressively therein; he walked in the law of the Lord, which must here be understood as comprehending the whole covenant will of

the Eternal Three; and also the whole of God's revealed will, as contained in his law, in his ordinances, in every part of his instituted worship; in all his commands to the full and utmost extent of them, which are in this Psalm expressed by a variety of terms. It is to be observed, we have various prayers and praises offered up in this Psalm which belong to Christ. It is also to be noticed, the Holy Ghost is here, by the prophet, testifying of the perfection which was contained in the heart, thoughts, mind, will, affections, aims, desires, prayers, and praises of our most precious and adorable Lord Jesus.

V. 2. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

By *testimonies* are to be understood the symbolical figures commanded by the Lord, and were in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple, and were patterns of heavenly things: such as the tabernacle and temple were; and the furniture in them; the holy, and most holy place; the ark, with its mercy-seat; cherubims of glory; the law in the ark; the golden pot of manna; its vail; the golden candlesticks, and the tables of shew-bread; the golden altar, with its incense. Now these being figures of Christ, it must have been of great consequence to have a right and true understanding of the mysteries contained in them: so also what was contained in the symbols in the open court of worship. In the brazen altar, in the lavers, in the brazen sea, as also in the sacrifices and services performed by the priests, by the high-priest, &c. &c. it was very necessary for the worshippers to have understood the end and design of God in these. Our Lord Jesus Christ; he kept God's testimonies; he was blessed in so doing; he sought him with his whole heart. Whilst the Psalmist speaks in the plural, we are sure none ever came up to answer the descriptions here given, but our most precious and adorable Saviour. He kept his Father's testimonies; he sought him with his whole heart.

V. 3. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

None are without iniquity of all the whole human race. Christ was not of the human race; yet is he the true and very man. This is wholly by grace. For he was not in Adam by nature: he was before Adam as man, in the sight and will, decree and appointment of the Three in Jehovah. Adam was made after his image and likeness, drawn in the divine mind before all time. Christ never had sin in him: it was wholly impossible he should: he walked in Jehovah's ways. If we will have these plural expressions, and I am

not against them if they are kept in their proper place, let us consider the whole church of Christ in him. Then the prophet must be understood to be speaking of Christ in the first place, and of the elect of Adam's posterity as one with him, as one in him, as saved in him, as law-fulfillers in him. All which is true and pure gospel.

V. 4. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently.*

This Christ says in the name of the whole Jewish church. This he did for them, and most exactly; his whole soul was drawn out into the most perfect and intuitive attention hereunto. He meditated on the scriptures continually: he kept the Lord's precepts concerning worship perpetually: he most diligently attended the worship of God. His whole life was one solemn dedication of himself to the Lord.

V. 5. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!*

This is the breathing of Messiah's soul. It is fully expressive of his vast and holy mind: he secretly addresses himself to the divine Father: it is here in an ejaculatory way, which is often more expressive than any other: it is that his ways might be directed to keep the divine statutes. By which I understand, the ordinances of divine institutions; such as the daily worship, and the festivals, &c. The precious Immanuel prays, and with great earnestness breathes out his desire, that his ways, his feet, might be directed to keep the Lord's institutions, and not drop the use of any of them.

V. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.*

This shews the vast latitude of Christ's mind. His obedience was universal: it reached to the uttermost of all the Lord's commandments. This was the desire of his mind: it was the delight of his heart: it was the whole of his will. To stand up before his Father, and say, *I have glorified thee upon the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*, would uphold his own mind even in the presence of God.

V. 7. *I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.*

It is expressly said of our divine Lord, that *he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*, Luke ii. 52. Our Lord's whole life and obedience were a progression. He went forward, step after step, in his most perfect performance and observance of the whole contained in the divine will: what was to be done, what was to be

avoided, he most carefully attended unto: to his perseverance in his obedience and his universal respect to all the divine commandments: he would give the whole glory to God: he would praise him with uprightness of heart, when under his divine teaching, and the light of his good Spirit, he should have learned his righteous judgments: what he had commanded in the moral, in the Levitical, in the judicial, and in the prophetic intimations of the good pleasure of his will; which are here called righteous judgments. The wisdom of God shining forth in each of them.

V. 8. *I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.*

This expresses the will of Christ. He would keep the Lord's statutes: he would walk in the law of the Lord: he would keep his testimonies: he would seek him with his whole heart: he would do no iniquity: he would walk in his ways: his obedience should be universal: he would persevere in all this. He prays thus, *O forsake me not utterly. O grant me my desire in all this.* Let us look at Christ in all this, and behold our perfection in him.

PART II.—BETH.

V. 9. *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

Our most adorable Lord, who was made in all things like unto his brethren, grew up from infancy to youth, and from thence to manhood. He was holy in his nature, person, mind, will, affections, dispositions, thoughts, words and works. He here asks a question to which he gives a complete answer. This is the question. *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way?* Youth is the prime season of life; it is the flood and spring of nature. Christ's youth was a glorious season, in which he brought forth fruit unto God. But here he puts the question to himself, before the Lord. *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way?* or, how shall such an one be kept pure, and free from all defilement? For our Lord was neither unclean in conception, nor birth; nor in childhood, nor in youth: he had nothing to be cleansed from. The question, as it respected himself, was how he should keep himself pure and clean. The answer is, by taking heed to his way; by walking according to the good word of the Lord. This Jesus always did. *In this consisted the perfection of his life.*

V. 10. *With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.*

This is Christ's request to the divine Father; who having formed him for his praise, and on whom his all depended, and whom he sought with his whole heart, to be kept walking before him with a perfect heart, and never in one single instance to swerve from him in thought, word, or will. So he prays, as containing the whole essence of all this, that he may never deviate herefrom. *O let me not wander from thy commandments.* Thou hast wrought, O Lord, thy law in my heart. Thou hast anointed me by thy Spirit; who dwells within me, and rests upon me. *O let me not wander from thy commandments.* Let me go on in the fullest and most perfect observance of them.

V. 11. *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

It was not possible the man Jesus should sin. It was not possible the man Jesus should cease obedience to the holy law, whilst in his incarnate state. No; yet the words and expressions made use of, and concerning him, in this Psalm, lead us into such views of his obedience, as no other scriptures do. We here see wherein his holy obedience consisted. It was in the holy activities of his mind; in his delight in God; in his dependence on God; in the devotedness of his whole soul to God; in the regularity of his thoughts, and the continual exercise of them all on him; on his waiting on him in all his ordinances; in his obedience to the whole of his revealed will; in his avoiding of all evil; in his seeking the Lord with his whole heart; in his entire dependence on him; in his taking heed to his word; in his walking according to it; in his continual perseverance in the ways of the Lord; in his not wandering in the least instance from the Lord; in his hiding, or treasuring up, the Lord's word in his heart. This was his preservative at all times, and in all places; in all seasons, and in every circumstance. He professeth this before the Lord, unto whom he was accountable for the whole of his life and walk, warfare and course. *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.* The scripture was precious unto him.

V. 12. *Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes.*

It was a consolation to the mind of Christ to contemplate Jehovah's blessedness. It was a part of his worship to rejoice in the essential blessedness of the divine Essence, and the Persons in the Essence, who though personally distinct, yet are as one in the enjoyment of all contained therein

and are equally blessed, as the one true, living, and everlasting God, the whole of the divine Essence being in each of them, and each possessed and filled with the whole blessedness, glory, and perfections of the Three in the one incomprehensible Godhead. Messiah here says, *Blessed art thou, O Lord.* He was taken up into union with one of the Persons in Jehovah; yet his human nature was not God; he was the man in God; and as God-man he is Jehovah's Fellow, whose name is the Lord of hosts: here he blesseth Jehovah, and prayeth to be taught his statutes. Thus we have had three most glorious acts of worship performed by Christ, which were parts of his most perfect obedience, and go to render it most truly acceptable to the divine Majesty. Prayer, praise, and blessing the Lord.

V. 13. *With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.*

Our divine Lord's whole life was one course of continual activity. He was sometimes most blessedly employed in speaking of the love of God; of his wonderful wisdom which shone forth in the gospel of his grace. The lips of Christ were like lilies, dropping sweetsmelling myrrh: his words were full of grace and truth. It did his own soul good to speak of his Father, and to the honour of him, and his free and sovereign grace. This he here declares. Nothing warmed his heart, and elevated his mind more.

V. 14. *I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.*

Every part of our Lord's obedience is by the Holy Ghost, in this Psalm, more and more opened. Christ rejoiced in the way of the Lord's testimonies: he understood the ordinances of divine worship: what was contained and designed by them: he viewed them as so many representatives of him: he rejoiced in them as the sacred memorials the Lord was pleased to set him forth by: he rejoiced in the way which he walked in from time to time, that he might be present at the worshipping the Lord in the use of them. All the riches in, and throughout the whole creation of God, were not, in the eyes of Jesus, such matter of joy and rejoicing, as he found in the observing and walking in the testimonies of Jehovah.

V. 15. *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.*

This was another expression of the obedience of the man Jesus in the fulfilment of his Father's holy law and will. The

whole of which was set before him in the scriptures of truth, in the ordinances of worship. And it was the employment of the holy and vast mind of Christ Jesus to meditate on the same, and to have respect unto God's ways, how such and such acts were to take place, and be performed according to the plan of the everlasting covenant.

V. 16. *I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.*

The Lord Jesus was of one will with the Three in Jehovah; he was to perform their will in his obedience to the law: this was to be executed with love, pleasure and delight: every act thereof was to result from his own most holy and pure mind. He declares his heart was in all this, that he rejoiced in the same: thus his thoughts were engaged in meditations on the divine commands, that he delighted himself in observing Jehovah's statutes, and that his will and understanding were fixed in this, that he would not forget the Lord's word. It all shews and fully expresses how the mind, the understanding, the will, the affections, the thoughts of our Lord Jesus were perfectly exercised on God, and on the things of God, in the service of God, to the honour of God, and for the glory of God. Let us look on Christ living thus in his incarnate state, that he might be our righteousness before God, and we shall most assuredly renounce ourselves, and say, In the Lord have we righteousness and strength.

PART III.—GIMEL.

V. 17. *Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.*

As our Lord Jesus expressed in his obedience, his entire dependance on the Father to carry him on, and bring him to the completion of it, so here he prays accordingly. He acknowledges himself to be Jehovah's servant: he was so in his humanity and office of mediatorship; he prays the divine Father would deal bountifully with him his servant, by upholding him, and his confidence in him founded on the contract with him, and the promises made, given, and engaged to be fulfilled by the everlasting covenant. That he having in his own soul the evidence of it, might live to him, and keep his word and perform every tittle of it.

V. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*

All Messiah was to be and do, to act and speak, was all set before him in the Scriptures. His mind was opened by

the Holy Spirit in a gradual way to apprehend what was written in them concerning himself. Here his request is for divine illumination, *Open thou mine eyes*. They were open, but as every step he advanced in his obedience he would need instruction, so he prays that they may be kept open; and that he by being more and further illuminated by the Holy Ghost, might behold wondrous things out of God's law. It may here be remarked once for all, that the word law in many parts of the scripture belongs to the gospel, which contains the whole system of grace: out of which Christ was to know, see, and perceive the Father's love to him. The Spirit's work upon him, this being received into his human mind, would fill him with holy wonder and admiration. It would also be a powerful motive to attract and draw his whole heart after the Lord.

V. 19. *I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.*

It was but for a limited season our Lord was to be in his incarnate state: time was every moment flying from him, he would improve it to the very uttermost; he makes use therefore of this as an argument in prayer. Seeing he was a stranger in the earth, he entreats the Father's will and pleasure might be more fully opened unto him, *I am a stranger in the earth*. He was so, he came from heaven, it was his native country. He said to his disciples, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father*, John xvi. 28. And as Jesus knew this, he requests the whole of the divine mind might be more and further opened unto him, *Hide not thy commandments from me*, what I am further to attend unto in accomplishing thy most holy will and good pleasure.

V. 20. *My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.*

Here we have a vast expression of the outgoings of Christ's soul, in a way of communion with the Lord. His holy desires after communion with him, his soul breaks forth in holy aspirations, and fervent longings to enjoy the presence of God, in his walking with him and before him; in his doing his will, in his waiting on him in his house and ordinances: this was a fruit of his most perfect obedience. He was at all times longing to worship the Lord in the most acceptable manner. It was his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him, to know more of the wisdom of God in the mystery of salvation, and to receive into his mind a more enlarged and apprehensive view of it, from the prophecies concerning it; for this Messiah's soul hungered and thirsted, *My soul breaketh for the longing*

that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. These words are vastly expressive of the intellectual communion our Lord had in the days of his flesh with the divine Father.

V. 21. *Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments.*

This was a righteous act in God, and holiness consists in loving where God loves, and hating where he hates. The proud Pharisees were cursed of God; they were the inveterate enemies of Christ; they did err from the commandments of the Lord; they rejected his counsel and will and revelation of the Messiah, set before them in the holy scriptures. It may be considered as a prophetic hint concerning them.

V. 22. *Remove from me reproach and contempt: for I have kept thy testimonies.*

The Lord Jesus, in the performance of his obedience as Jehovah's servant, had great reproach and contempt cast upon him: he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. When he was reviled he reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously; so he does here; yet he pleads his own innocence, and it is his argument with the divine Father, why reproach and contempt should be removed from him, *For I have kept thy testimonies*: which shews the integrity of his mind, respecting his integrity in his obedience to the divine will.

V. 23. *Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.*

The Elders, Scribes, and Pharisees, may be considered as princes, and the term may be applicable to them, as they were the principal men in the senate: and when they sat in judgment upon our Lord Jesus Christ, they spake most perversely against him; what they uttered was most malicious, it was full of spleen and venom, it was wholly unjust. They suborned false witnesses against the Lord of life and glory; the blessed Jesus, who was the servant of the Lord, and who most gladly performed a perfect obedience to the Father's law and will, was not taken off from pursuing this by the contempt cast upon him by the Jewish senate. No, so far from it, that in the midst of all, his heart, his thoughts, his mind, his will, all his faculties of memory and affection, they were all employed and engaged in meditation upon Jehovah's statutes. This opens to our view, believers, where, and upon what the mind of Christ was fixed and settled.

V. 24. *Thy testimonies also are my delight, and my counsellors.*

This is very expressive of the rule of Christ's life: how he went through his work and by what he was led. The written word was his directory, the ordinances of the Lord were his delight, his mind was deeply and particularly engaged in the study of them, he found real delight in attending them, in observing their end and design; in worshipping the Lord in the outgoings of his soul in them, in making them his counsellors: for in these he saw himself as the Messiah, and knew by them he was to proceed in the accomplishment of his work, by such and such regular steps. Here then, as in a glass, may be seen Christ's submission to his Father's will, as one part of his most glorious obedience; so that our Lord's life, as set before us in this inimitable Psalm, consisted of a vast variety of acts. And as I conceive they are all here most particularly set before us, may the Lord the Spirit give us such views of the same as may exalt Christ in our minds. Amen.

PART IV.—DALETH.

V. 25. *My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.*

Whilst our Lord's humanity was wholly pure and sinless, yet in the days of his flesh he knew and experienced what it was to be spent and fatigued with pouring out his soul to God in prayer; he at times continued all night in prayer to God. He knew what fasting and temptation were, and how these exercised the human frame; he knew what journeying from place to place; he knew what it was to apprehend the guilt, the filth, and the demerit of sin. He knew what it was to know that at the proper season the curse, in all its extremity, would come in upon him; his mind could not but be distinctly exercised on all these; he knew human nature would feel, it could not, even in him, but shrink and feel all contained in the things which have been enumerated. He might therefore well express himself to God in prayer to be quickened: and this too, according to his word of promise given in the everlasting covenant, *My soul cleaveth unto the dust.* I feel what I am in my incarnate state; not an angel but a man; and I experience I am a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. O Jehovah! quicken thy servant, revive his mind, let in some celestial rays of light upon my mind, to cheer, quicken, comfort and strengthen

me. Thy word of promise, passed in the everlasting covenant, gives me ground for expectation; let it be thus with me.

V. 26. *I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes.*

I have given myself up to be thy willing and obedient servant in all things: I do declare this before thy majesty. It is the delight and joy of my soul, thus to pursue and go on, in the most immediate course of obeying thy holy mind and will in all things: thou hast heard my prayer, in which I have expressed the whole desire of my soul before thee: O teach me thy statutes.

V. 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.*

We have a most blessed opening to our view of the most gracious intercourse which Jesus had with the divine Father whilst he was in our vale of tears. His fervent prayers and intimate communion with the Lord, were a most glorious part of his most complete obedience; he here requests the Lord to make him to understand the way of his precepts. It was by divine intuitive knowledge of the Father's will that he was enabled to perform the same: all was set before Christ in the divine revelation of it in the scriptures of truth; yet Christ, as man, needed divine illumination, that he might understand the same. On his being made to understand the way of Jehovah's precepts, he says he would exercise himself accordingly, *So shall I talk of thy wondrous works.* This was another way in which the blessed Jesus glorified his divine Father, in his walking with and before him in his incarnate state. To talk of everlasting love, to unfold covenant transactions, to let out and utter the secrets of the holy Three, to shew how God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: these were the wonderful things of God. To talk of these wondrous acts in God, which he came from the Father's bosom to make known, and in his own person to carry all the vast designs of God in salvation into act and execution, was part of our Lord's most blessed employment whilst in our world.

V. 28. *My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according to thy word.*

The soul of Christ was the subject of grief, sorrow and heaviness, whilst he was going on in the pursuit of that work and obedience by which the law was to be magnified and justice satisfied. He hated all sin with an invincible hatred; none ever saw it as he did; none ever understood

the whole contained in it but himself; he was inwardly and entirely free from the whole contagion of it. He was more pure in body and soul than the light; his person was most holy; yet he could converse with none in our world but were all full of it. At times what brake out from his beloved disciples, who were men of like passions with ourselves, could not but cause grief to his holy mind.—When he had a prospect of his passion, his soul could not but melt with heaviness at the sense of divine wrath; his heart and will were in his sufferings, and he was a willing sufferer: yet this did not hinder him from having feeling, and expressing all the sinless affections, frames, and feelings which belonged to his humanity; he here therefore prays for strength. The Father had declared he should have it, and here is his request for it, *Strengthen thou me according unto thy word*. Christ, as Mediator, was to receive all his strength in him, in the prosecution of his whole work from the divine Father, so that he prays here most agreeably with his view of the subject.

V. 29. *Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.*

Our most adorable Lord was in our world exposed and exercised with sinners, who with lying lips and deceitful tongues belched out most blasphemously, cruelly, and disdainfully against him. He here prays against their rage and cruelty, *Remove from me the way of lying*; and requests for himself he may be favoured with a knowledge of the grace part of the holy scriptures more abundantly; as this would be the means, in the hand of the Spirit, of drawing out his heart more abundantly, and of exciting him to go on in perfecting holiness in the fear of God, and of his cleaving to his divine Father in fulfilling all the requirements of his law, and the whole good pleasure of his will with full purpose of heart.

V. 30. *I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.*

There was nothing to Jesus more estimable than truth, it was his own choice to walk in it; all truth, and every part of divine truth, was very precious to Christ Jesus. He speaks of this before the divine Father; it is expressive of his love to him and all which concerns him, in the truths of the everlasting gospel, and the whole system of grace. Thy judgments, that profundity contained and expressed in grace, and in all the methods thereof in their originality, in its vast designs, in its plan in contrivance, execution, and blessings of the same, I have laid before me, and can-

not but most heartily concur with thee in the whole contained in the same, and am most willing to go on in executing the work and office which thou hast called me unto.

V. 31. *I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O Lord, put me not to shame.*

The whole law was written in the heart of Christ; the outward command of God, and the inward mind of Christ, were in the most exact unison. The glorious Jesus stuck fast unto the divine testimonies of the Lord, and walked in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless. This therefore is the request of Messiah to the divine Father, *O Lord, put me not to shame*; let me not be borne down by my enemies, but carry me through the whole and complete performance of my obedience unto death, even the death of the cross.

V. 32. *I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.*

Do thou, O Jehovah, quicken me according to thy word; do thou teach me thy statutes; do thou make me to understand the way of thy precepts; do thou strengthen me according to thy word; do thou grant me thy law graciously; do thou, O Lord, remove every hinderance out of the way, and *I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* Thus the glorious righteousness, or, in other words, the life, the holy life, the spotless life, the perfect life and all contained therein, both negatively and positively, are opened to our view; with the affections of his mind, the meditations of his heart, his worship of God, his approaches unto him, his delight in him and rejoicing before him. The Lord give us suitable conceptions of the same. Amen.

PART V.—HE.

V. 33. *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.*

It is very manifest to the observation of every intelligent reader, that it is but one person speaks throughout this whole Psalm. The connexion of the whole subject is most divinely seen throughout every part of it: the whole is one golden chain, it is all most agreeably smooth and harmonious. Here Jesus addresses himself prayerwise to the divine Majesty for instruction. When we consider our Lord in his incarnate state, his numerous enemies, his various trials, and those things which he had to encounter, we need not wonder at his various requests to the divine Majesty for

teaching; *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes.* It shews that Christ's mind was opened in a gradual way and manner to receive divine instruction. The human mind of Christ was opening continually; as he was by Jehovah the Father taught the way of his statutes, so his mind was powerfully influenced with the love of them, and his will led to yield all due and perfect obedience unto them; *Teach me* (says he) *O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.* It is but for me, as thy servant, to be more and further taught of thy mind and will respecting thy statutes, be they moral or ceremonial, let them respect obedience or worship, submission to thy righteous will or trust and confidence in thee, and my will be swallowed up in thine; *I shall keep it unto the end.* Thy will, O Lord, is mine; I most cheerfully acquiesce in the same, and rejoice to obey thy sovereign pleasure in all things.

V. 34. *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.*

As we have various steps of Christ's obedience recited, and in what way and manner he performed it, and in what it consisted; so I conceive these frequent requests for divine teaching and instruction very informing how Immanuel went forward in obeying the holy law: he could not without continual communion with God. This could not be without prayer; he could not pray without a subject; and as he could not contemplate what was set before him in the holy word, but he found the subjects vast and infinitely great, so he could not but pray for a more enlarged comprehension of them; he could only obey the divine will in proportion to his knowledge of the same. He would observe it with his whole heart, in consequence of his real inward knowledge of them; therefore he says, *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.* Our Lord's keeping the law, includes all that passed between the Father and the Son from everlasting. Our Lord's observance of the same was with his whole heart, and it was an internal and also an external obedience.

V. 35. *Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.*

The words which form this request are very expressive of Christ's looking unto, and living upon the divine Father, to support him, to quicken him, to instruct him, to preserve, to guide, and make him go in the paths of his holy commandments; and thus to exercise faith on God; and thus to be taught of God, and to go on with growing

strength in the paths of the Lord's commandments, was the delight of the Messiah. This shews that our Lord's obedience, including his whole heart, soul, will, and affections, sprung up inwardly from his own holy mind; and that he was possessed of love to God and man, agreeably to what the law required; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thyself.*

V. 36. *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.*

As every verse and part of this Psalm opens the nature as well as the perfection of Christ's obedience to his Father's law and will, in a variety of particulars, so the love of Christ to the divine will, as revealed, is again and again set forth. Here he says, as dependant on his Father for every gift and blessing of grace, that he would incline his heart unto his testimonies, and not unto covetousness: that is, that he would wholly engage his heart in the one, and save him from the other. For although he was God-man, the man in God and impeccable, yet in the days of his flesh he was to be tempted, and he was to overcome, by faith in the word of God, all the temptations of the enemy of souls: yet he would pray against the power of temptation, and to be delivered from the evil one. Thus expressing his dependance on the Father and the Spirit, for strength and victory over all the machinations of hell.

V. 37. *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.*

Satan presented, in a visionary way and manner, *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, in a moment of time.* And saith, *All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* To whom Messiah said, *Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Now one part of our Lord's obedience consisted in avoiding all evil; in living wholly without, above, and beyond the least taint and infection from it. It was a part of his obedience to overcome the devil, to foil him: to have his mind, his senses, shut completely to all sorts and kinds of evil. He might therefore well, in the course of his obedience, offer up such a prayer as this: *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.* There are two parts in the true obedience of God's will required. The one is to turn, to abstain from, to abhor all sin. The other is to practise what the Lord's law requires, and calls for. These both seem to be comprehended in the words before us.

V. 38. *Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.*

Christ was the Father's servant, by delegation and appointment. He was *in the form of God*, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, Phil. ii. 6, 7. It was in his man nature he was subject to the law for us. In it, and during his incarnate state, he fulfilled all righteousness. As the servant of Jehovah he here prays. What he here prays for, is to be stablished in the word of the Lord; or, in other words, he rather here prays that Jehovah would stablish, or fulfil his word unto him. For the words run thus: *Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.* Christ was the true Nazarite; he was purity and holiness itself; he was sanctified in his very conception, in and from the womb; he was that *holy thing* that was to be called the *Son of God*; he was in heart, will, affection, in body and mind, devoted, as the Lord's servant, wholly to his fear; he was the Father's righteous servant, of whom it was testified, *The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake, he will magnify the law, and make it honourable*, Isai. xlii. 21. Here this Christ, the servant of Jehovah, prays him to stablish his word and make it good, by answering the prayers and requests he had been putting up. And it requires as much grace to expect returns and answers of prayer, as it does to pray. So here is another branch of our Lord's obedience.

V. 39. *Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.*

Christ had all the sinless infirmities in which he was manifested: he knew the reproach which fell upon him all through his life: he was looked upon with universal contempt by the bulk of the Jewish nation: he was traduced as a blasphemer, as a liar—as in compact with the devil—as a deceiver of the people—as a false Messiah—he would in the issue be put to death; and that accused as a false Messiah. Now all these false charges and reproaches were to be wiped out by his resurrection from the dead, by which he was to be declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness. Now Jesus, it may be, that his disciples might not stumble at what came upon him in his incarnate state, may be considered as making this request; *Turn away my reproach which I fear.* Let not my beloved be injured by the reproaches cast upon me. *For thy judgments are good.* All appointed for me to endure and suffer, is good: I submit unto it most cheerfully: the

whole of thy wisdom, truth, and love, which thou art pleased to manifest in my person and mediation, is all good: it is the essence and perfection of the open display of thine essential perfections.

V. 40. *Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.*

Thus Jesus goes on, and, like the sun in the firmament, runs his course with the utmost celerity. His love to God and love to man run parallel, and in one straight line together; he loved all men, yet not as the elect of God; he loved them as partakers of human nature. Yet he did not take the nature of man to become a common and universal Saviour; no, it was those the Father gave him were those alone whom he loved as the *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*. The glorious Immanuel addresseth the divine Father thus: *Behold, I have longed after thy precepts*. This enters deeply into the subject of Christ's obedience. His whole heart was engaged in glorifying the Father: his soul broke forth, and as it were started from his body, with the fervent longings he had at all times, after the ordinances and worship of the Lord. To express his love to the divine Majesty to the very uttermost, to glorify him in the highest degree upon the earth, this was Christ's greatest motive, and his highest end in, and also throughout the whole of his obedience. He here addresseth himself to Jehovah, whose righteous servant he was—to whom he was wholly devoted—whom he had addressed to stablish or confirm his word unto him—to whom he had looked to take away the reproach cast continually upon him. *Behold*, says he to him, *I have longed after thy precepts*: to have an increasing spiritual perception of their most divine excellency. He adds; *quicken me in thy righteousness*. Let the virtue and influence of the Holy Spirit be put forth more and more in and within me, that I may proceed in going about doing good, and healing all that are oppressed of the devil, and thereby prove, O God, that thou art with me. Thus we have our Lord Jesus Christ most divinely set forth in every passage of this Psalm. May the Holy Ghost, if he please, give us distinct and proper views of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose righteousness is ours, and whose name is *the Lord our righteousness*, and in whom we are made the righteousness of God, as may exalt in our view the acts, the affections, the longings and breathings of his soul after God, and as may most completely form him in us. Amen.

V. 41. *Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord, even thy salvation, according to thy word.*

Here is a fresh access of Christ to the throne of the heavenly grace. The request, as I conceive, is for a most enlarged view of the mercies of the Divine nature. He requests these might be brought home and realized in his mind. It would be well to have scriptural and spiritual apprehensions of the mind of Christ. The whole of Christ's holiness, righteousness, love to God, zeal for God, delight in him, walking before him, centering in him, were all internal acts of his will. That the outward holiness, purity, and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, were but the effect of what he was within. Jehovah was the object and subject of Immanuel's love: his will was the one invariable rule of our Lord's life and walk. The inherent perfections and blessedness were opened to the mind of Christ, as those which were the ultimate fountain from whence all holiness and perfection originated. The mercies which flowed forth towards and upon Christ and his church, were the fruits of an eternal transaction between the Three in Jehovah. This the human mind of Christ was opened gradually to apprehend. It was from hence our Lord was kept up, and also quickened and comforted, as he went on in the prosecution of his work. Hence we may see the propriety of these words; *Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord, even thy salvation, according to thy word.* The Father appointed Christ to be the salvation of the elect: and Jehovah was Christ's salvation: the Father promised him to carry him through the whole of it: he gave him his word as the ground of his faith. Christ as the subject on whom all the sins of the elect were laid, and the curse due to them inflicted; as such, our divine Lord, in the exercise and execution of his office, needed a view of the covenant mercies of the eternal Three to him and the elect, whom he undertook to save by his obedience and blood. He therefore requests such a bringing home to his mind, such an apprehension of this, as he might stay his mind on it. *Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Jehovah, even thy salvation.* Let me have a blessed salvation wrought out by thee, for me; such as shall give full proof that my finished obedience and death are accepted by thee. All this is according to thy word of promise, which thou gavest me in the everlasting covenant. I request it therefore on that ground.

V. 42. *So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.*

As the mind of Christ was opened to receive and apprehend the state he stood in before God, as the middle person between God and man, the man Christ Jesus—he was supported, excited, and encouraged to go on in the performance of his obeying the will of him that sent him. It was the word of the covenant which passed between Jehovah and Christ, which dwelt in Messiah's mind. This was the matter of his support and encouragement, wherewith he had to answer all that reproached him. His whole trust and confidence was in the word of Jehovah.

V. 43. *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.*

There is a very particular connexion in the two former verses, and this also; and so indeed in all which follows in this sixth division of this Psalm.

The precious and divine Jesus, who is in the whole of it set before us as going on from strength to strength, in glorifying the divine Father, both mentally and outwardly, he invokes the mercies of Jehovah, and also the salvation of Jehovah, that it resting in and engaging his whole mind according to covenant promise, the glorious Mediator might answer all the reproaches of the Scribes and Pharisees, which they would invidiously cast upon him. He entreats the Father not to take the word of truth utterly out of his mouth; but that by the word of Jehovah dwelling in his mind, his hope would be enlarged, and he would be still pressing on in agreement with the divine will; exercising his great, vast, and capacious mind on the judgments of God, which were so wonderfully revealed in the word of truth, in which were contained all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Christ himself is the person in whom all this is contained; and in his wonderful life and death all this is unfolded and set forth. It is not by the expression, *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth*, as though there was a possibility of it. No; it is rather to be understood thus: that as the Lord God had given Christ a speaking tongue, *the tongue of the learned, that he might know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary*—that Christ would, his own heart being filled with the mercies of God, his own mind satisfied with the salvation of God, his mouth so opened to speak of his mission and commission from God, that he might answer all questions, silence all cavils, remove all occasions of reproach, and so hope in the goodness of Jehovah realized in the outward

displays of the same, that the very effect of all this might more and more shine forth in his own life and conversation.

V. 44. *So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.*

To do this contained the very essence and perfection of the whole of Christ's life. This was the case, and it contained his whole heart and his soul. He only could do this as the whole of it appeared clear and plain to his intellectual mind and understanding. And the more fully he understood it, the more his whole heart would be engaged to give himself up wholly to the observance thereof: his obedience, he declares, should be continually, for ever and ever. Indeed, as Christ from his very conception and birth was the Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world, so his obedience, as he was made of a woman, made under the law, from his birth to his death was one perpetual act; it was for ever and ever—an immutable act. Therefore it was an everlasting righteousness.

V. 45. *And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.*

As the Lord Jesus kept the law of God out of an inward principle of love to God, and walked continually in the observance of it in all its commandments and ordinances, to the uttermost extent and meaning of them, so he found the same was the means of enlarging his mind towards the Lord, and to the remembrance of his name; so that he walked in holy liberty, and full communion with Jehovah. All which enlarged the mind of the glorious Mediator towards the Lord's revealed will, in his holy precepts.

V. 46. *I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, when before the Jewish rulers, was asked, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed?* He said, *I am.* So when Pilate asked him, *Art thou a king?* he replied, *Thou sayest that I am.* The apostle, commenting on the same, says, *that Jesus Christ before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession,* 1 Tim. vi. 13. Thus the most precious Mediator spake agreeably to the oracles of truth, even before the rulers and great ones in Judea, and was not ashamed of confessing himself to be *the Messiah, the Son of the living God.* So on all occasions he spake of the Father's love to him, of his gift of him, of his design in his wonderful salvation; all which, on various seasons, our Lord spake of, and declared to his hearers with holy pleasure and delight, without the least shame or diffidence.

V. 47. *And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.*

All these blessed sentences in this whole paragraph are vastly expressive of the will of our Lord concerning the fixation of his will, and the delight of his soul, in closely and precisely attending to the performance of the Divine pleasure. Christ here says to the divine Father, *I will keep thy law continually, for ever and ever. I will walk at liberty. I seek thy precepts. I will speak of thy testimonies. I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved.* To which may be subjoined, what our Lord Jesus Christ saith in John vi. 37—40. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* Christ's willingness in obeying the whole good pleasure of his Father's notified will, expressed in the everlasting covenant, and also his commanding and revealed will in the word, was that which gave perfection to his obedience. So that, agreeably to the truth of this, he might well say, as he here doth, *I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.* Then follows our Lord's obligation to the performance of all this.

V. 48. *My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.*

Jesus became the surety in the everlasting covenant. He undertook to bring in everlasting righteousness, to make his soul an offering for sin, to satisfy all the demands of law and justice. He became incarnate, that he might carry all this into act and execution. In his incarnate state, and by his circumcision, he became a debtor to do the whole law. Thus he might truly say, when he entered on the work of obedience, *My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved;* which was a solemn confession of his being under the obligation of covenant engagements to the divine commandments. All which were the Father's, of which our Lord thus speaks: *And I know that his commandment is life everlasting. Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak,* John xii. 50. Which, I conceive, serves to open these words of Christ here before us; *My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved.* As the will and heart of Christ were

covenanted for, so the will and love of Christ were most fully and freely exercised in the performance of his covenant engagements. As his whole soul was thus interested in the same, so he declares to the divine Father for himself, *And I will meditate in thy statutes.* Thus a fresh and most glorious account hath been set forth of the obedience of our Jesus to the secret and revealed will of his divine Father; which here seems very fully to express that his obedience, and all which he performed was an exact copy of the eternal transactions in the councils and covenant of the Persons in Godhead. May the Lord give us increasing light and knowledge into the same. Amen.

PART VII.—ZAIN.

V. 49. *Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*

Christ again and again calls himself in this Psalm Jehovah's servant, and makes use of the term, claiming it as an high privilege, being well pleased with it, and glorifying therein. He was so by his free and voluntary succession of the office of Mediator in the everlasting covenant, in which there were stipulations and restipulations between Jehovah and the Branch, and by these the covenant was constituted, and the parties engaged to act so and so towards each other. To this the word before us must refer. Our Lord Jesus, as the Father's servant, thus addresseth him: *Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope;* which may either comprehend all the promises made to him, as the head of his body the church, many of which concerned them, and some of them only concerned himself; or, it may be, a particular word in that great transaction, which might have some particular reference to the sustaining the humanity of the Saviour, in the day of the Lord's fierce anger. The word of Jehovah the Father, in his covenant engagements with the Mediator, was the foundation of Christ's faith and hope. It was from them he derived consolation, it was by them he was most divinely animated. He here requests the divine Majesty to remember his word unto him; he knew he rested entirely on it, and on the divine faithfulness, to make it good to him. He pleads this, that his being led to trust in Jehovah's word was his own great grace towards him. *Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.* The argument of the request rests upon the relation which subsisted between God and Christ. He was Jehovah's servant. This was the foundation of the covenant compact.

The word of promise to Christ was founded on this. Jehovah had drawn Christ to apprehend and believe this; he rested his mind hereon. All which he ascribes to the Lord.

V. 50. *This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me.*

Christ was, all throughout his whole life in our world, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs. He needed comfort for his holy mind whilst he sojourned in this vale of tears. It was not to arise from himself; it was to flow into his holy mind from the word and promises of God, each of which suited him in every case and circumstance he was to be in and pass through. It was his comfort, he here says, in his affliction. *For, says he to the divine Father, thy word hath quickened me.* He was reanimated by the views he had of the divine promise made to him, and which belonged unto him; and by this very means he had most blessed communion with God.

V. 51. *The proud have had me greatly in derision; yet have I not declined from thy law.*

None could be more haughty than the rulers of the Jews were, nor more contemptuously treat Christ than the Jewish rulers did. They exceeded all bounds; yet our Lord most patiently submitted to the whole of their rage and cruelty. Whilst not one contemptuous look, nor jeer, but he must have most sensibly felt; yet he submitted to all, he bore all, sustained all; because this was one part of his obedience to the divine will. The Apostle says of our Jesus, *he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself.* Our Lord himself here says, *The proud have had me exceedingly in derision; yet have I not declined from thy law.* No; nothing could take off his heart one single moment from attending to all set before him in the scriptures of truth. It was his very meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work.

V. 52. *I remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord; and have comforted myself.*

As the everlasting covenant had been laid before him, and what was to come on the Jewish people, was set before him in prophecy, and as the counsels of Jehovah from of old were faithfulness and truth, so the Mediator from the remembrance of this comforted himself; just as he did in the days of his flesh, when he said, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight, Matthew xi. 25, 26.* It was a principal act in the most consummate obe-

dience of our Lord—his full and entire acquiescence in the whole good pleasure of all the acts, decrees, and will of the divine Majesty. He knew it was most holy, just, and good. It was agreeable unto, and worthy of Jehovah, it being consistent with his infinite nature and essential perfections, and blessedness. Jesus drew comfort from such views and considerations as these.

V. 53. *Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.*

Our Lord, from the scriptures of truth, foresaw what would come upon the Jews for their despising him, the Christ of God—for their rejection of him as such—for their pride in having him greatly in derision—as he had in remembrance God's judgments of old, and these as accorded in the holy word, and had comforted himself; so in a view of the wrath of God which would most assuredly fall upon the wicked, he says, *Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.* For on the apostate Jews the wrath of God would come down to the uttermost. Put the following words in contrast with these, and I conceive you will have the most complete explanation of them. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes,* Luke xix. 41, 42.

V. 54. *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*

This is a fresh expression of the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ. His will was wholly engaged: his heart delighted in the execution of it: it afforded him matter for continual meditation: it warmed his soul: so that it was a cause of making Jesus merry in heart. Hence he expresseth himself to the divine Father thus, *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.* He took delight in approaching unto God, and singing forth his glorious praise, in making melody in his heart to the Lord.

V. 55. *I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law.*

This was the devotion of his mind, and here he expresses it. His divine and spiritual exercises in the night consisted in thinking over, and in pondering on the eternity, infinity, and majesty of Jehovah; in contemplating on the outgoings of everlasting love to him; in viewing his person as the object and subject of the love and complacency of the Holy Trinity; in remembering how the Lord had pro-

claimed himself to be the Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin. This was the subject and exercise of our Lord's mind in the night. He spent whole nights in prayer to God; it was a part of his most sacred employment to consider and search the scriptures; by the which he understood how far he was advanced in the course of his obedience, and what yet remained for him to perfect: hereby he was excited to go on, until he had completed the whole. So that here is a further view of the holiness and spirituality of Christ's mind; which was, what it was, by means of these subjects.

V. 56. *This I had, because I kept thy precepts.*

Thus our divine Jesus was continually reflecting the glory and transcendent excellency of the divine nature, as expressed in the holy law of God, in, and by every act of his mind, which was a most perfect transcript of it. He was perfect in heart: his mind was wholly stayed on Jehovah: he was his centre, his circumference, his all in all: he arrived to perfection in his life and conversation, in his affections and tempers, in his devotions and aspirations after God, because he kept the divine precepts. *This I had, because I kept thy precepts.* May we so look into the heart, will, and mind of Christ, and so survey how our most precious Immanuel perpetually exercised himself towards the Lord, as may lead us to the highest estimation of him, which the Holy Ghost can produce in our renewed minds. Amen.

PART VIII.—CHETH.

V. 57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have said that I would keep thy words.*

This is our Lord's confession, and profession, of what Jehovah was to him. He was his portion; his inheritance; his treasury; his God; his all. This hath often been opened in many of these most divine hymns we have before passed through. The head of Christ is God. Christ is the head of the whole creation: he is the fulness of nature, the fulness of grace, the fulness of glory. It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. Christ is the head of the whole election of grace. The one sole medium, and Mediator, between God and the whole creation. *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him,* 1 Cor. viii. 6. Christ as God-man, what he is as such, is wholly of grace. Not that his Godhead is derived. No; that is impossible. But that the man

Jesus should be predestinated to be one person of God, and thus be the image of the invisible God, the man in God, the Fellow of the Lord of host, the Alpha and Omega, the first and last in all God's thoughts, ways, works, purposes, and designs towards and concerning all the works of his hands, this is all of grace. Christ as mediator of reconciliation is also of grace. *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* 1 Tim. ii. 5. God the Father in a covenant way, is the God of Christ. Christ is under him, the one Lord: he hath the Lord for his portion. He here professeth it. *Thou art my portion, O Lord.* This is the very essence of Christ's blessedness. The Father was always with him, in his incarnate state: he did always the things which pleased him: he set the Lord always before him: his whole heart and soul was open to him. He says here, *Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have said, that I would keep thy words.* This Jesus undertook in the everlasting covenant before the world was. To fulfil which he became incarnate: he here declares what the Lord was to him: what he had said before him. And his heart is immutably disposed to keep Jehovah's words; to publish and proclaim the same, by his preaching the everlasting gospel, which was another part of his obedience to his Father's most holy will and pleasure.

V. 58. *I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.*

The man Jesus, as one with the essential Word, had Jehovah for his portion; which must exceed all which can possibly enter into the minds of elect angels or saints ever to conceive. God in all his persons and perfections, and with all contained in his covenant relation to us, in Christ, is the Lord our God. Yet this, and his being our portion, our inheritance, and our exceeding great reward, is far below what is contained in these words, as pronounced by Christ, *Thou art my portion, O Lord.* Jesus mentions this here, to shew it was the knowledge of this which kept up his great mind, and was the great motive which influenced him in and throughout every thought, word, work, and act of his obedience. An enjoyment of Jehovah's favour was the greatest desire of his mind. This he entreated for with his whole heart: he had requested his mercy: all which was according to Jehovah's word of promise made in the everlasting covenant to Messiah. God's favour is his face: for him to shine on his beloved Son, to look on the face of his Christ, this is his request here. *I entreated thy favour with my whole heart.* This is expressive of the vast out-

goings of Christ's mind, in free and open fellowship with the Lord. This was most assuredly answered. Our Lord saith, *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always*, John xi. 41, 42. Jesus, all the while he acted as the surety of his people in our world, needed Jehovah's mercy to be exercised upon and towards him, according to the office in which he exercised himself. *Be merciful unto me, according to thy word.* As he stood for all his members, so he became their mouth, and often prayed on their behalf. It may be so understood here. Not but Christ, as the surety, needed all contained in this for himself.

V. 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.*

Every fresh sense and apprehension of Jehovah's favour gladdened the soul of Christ: it reinvigorated his mind: he was not only refreshed, but he was quickened and excited in pursuing his obedience: he reflected on what he had already done in conformity to the divine will: he considered also what was still before him. And he applies himself with the utmost assiduity to the further performance of the same. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.* Christ's mind was all thought, and nothing but it: his thoughts were all most correctly arranged, and kept on the one grand object of bringing in everlasting righteousness: his feet were never out of the way. Therefore when he here says, *I turned my feet unto thy testimonies*, it is only expressive of his spiritual assiduity in proceeding on from strength to strength. This opens most gloriously to view the celerity of our Lord's mind in his obedience.

V. 60. *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.*

All which shews how the whole of Christ was engaged. His thoughts in thinking on the Lord: his mouth in speaking to the Lord: his heart in meditating on the Lord: his memory in considering the testimonies of the Lord: his will in obeying the Lord; *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments*: all this is uttered before the Lord.

V. 61. *The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.*

When the band of soldiers seized Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane, they robbed him of his liberty; they violently assaulted him; they bound him, and led him forth in triumph, and delivered him into the hands of his most cruel enemies; he was robbed by his enemies of his good name and fame, and character; and of his blood and life. Yet

they could not put a stop to his living and dying to the glory of God. *I have not forgotten thy law.* Jesus said in the days of his flesh, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father,* John x. 17, 18.

V. 62. *At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments.*

Thus the blessed Jesus was all prayer; all praise; all devotion, both by day and night, sleeping and waking: his mind was always suited to the highest acts of devotion: to have and hold the most intimate communion with the Lord. As the goodness and mercy of God are continual, so the holy mind of Christ was perpetually on the same. The comprehension of Christ, respecting the acts of the vast and incomprehensible mind of Jehovah, were such, that from the same he found matter for continual thanksgiving. He was so filled with the knowledge and sense of the same, that he could not express himself on the subject otherwise than he here doth. *At midnight will I rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments.* Which may be considered as expressive of the holy ordinances which the Lord had ordained and commanded. In which, and by them, his great salvation was expressed, and shewed forth.

V. 63. *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.*

This is a further expression of our Lord's most perfect obedience to the holy law of God in all things; he not only loved God perfectly, but he loved all whom God loved, and all whom God had brought to the knowledge of him, and to love him because he first loved them; he became a companion of all such. This being grace, he here speaks of it as such, *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts;* which is another effect of the complete life and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of his most perfect conformity to his divine Father's will. It shews where the heart of Christ was; it is very expressive of those with whom he loved to associate; of what he approved in these persons, and why he made them his companions.

V. 64. *The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy; teach me thy statutes.*

Jesus, who was wisdom in its highest perfection, even he

who could comprehend nature in its causes, operations, and productions, could say, *The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy, teach me thy statutes.*

Our Lord could look no where on any part of the visible creation, but he saw impressed on it the wisdom and goodness of the Lord: nor any part of the divine providence and procedure of the Lord towards his creatures, and the creation, animate or inanimate, or on his church and people, but he beheld such a display of mercy as could but affect his holy soul; on a survey of which he cries out in an exclamation, saying, *The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy, teach me thy statutes: let me profit thereby.* Thus a real sense of the favour of Jehovah to the man Christ Jesus, produced most blessed effects. He thought on his former obedience: he was by it quickened ~~by it~~ to present obedience; he applied himself with renewed diligence, and in a fresh and renewed revival of his graces, to an attention to the divine will. He made haste, and without the least delay he went on to keep the commandments of the Lord; he forgot not the law. He rose at midnight to give thanks to the Lord for the riches of his grace, which he had revealed and manifested in the display of his grace and mercy. He was a companion with all such as feared the Lord and kept his precepts; his very soul was swallowed up in admiration at the fulness of Jehovah's mercy towards the earth, and creatures, and church, and saints. Thus the greatness of Christ's mind is more and more opened, and discovered. May the Lord, the Holy Ghost, open our minds to the great subject before us, and the subject in the Psalm before us to our minds. Amen.

PART IX.—TETH.

V. 65. *Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word.*

This is an acknowledgment made by Jesus, as the servant of Jehovah, concerning his dealings with him. He had led him on thus far in the way of obedience; he had permitted him and given him strength, most obediently and devoutly to serve him; he had favoured him with the refreshing dews of his favour; with the light of his countenance; with an enjoyment of his favour; with real, blessed and most intimate communion with himself; he had filled the human mind of Jesus with a very extensive prospect of his Divine sovereignty, goodness, and mercy; for which the Lord Christ here makes his acknowledgments, saying, *Thou hast*

dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word. Thus Jesus expresses his gratitude to the divine Father for the same; which was all agreeable to his most holy word, and a full expression of his truth and faithfulness to Messiah.

V. 66. *Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.*

The blessed Jesus, in the days of his flesh, gathered instruction from all things with which he was exercised. It is said of him in the New Testament, *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered*, Heb. v. 8. What he learnt made way for the free and full exercise of his faith: this also led him into a sound judgment and knowledge of the same; this made way for his practice thereof. Yet he was a man, and as the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, wholly dependant on the Holy Spirit for divine teaching and increasing instruction.

V. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*

Our Lord Jesus never went astray, but his sheep did. One of them therefore, in the name of all the rest, confessed, *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*, Isai. liii. 6. And another speaking to the sheep who had gone aside from God, says to them, *For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls.* And Christ as their mouth, says, *Before I was afflicted I went astray; he was responsible for all his members: their sins and wanderings were all laid by the Lord upon him, he bore the curse due to these.* This is the cause why a stop is put to their wanderings; his blood is the cure for their wounds. His death puts a stop to their wanderings, so he says, in the words before us, *Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.* It is Christ's being wounded, tormented, stricken, and afflicted for his people; it is his having borne their sins, and carried their sorrows, is their reconciliation to the law and justice of God. Nor can they keep his word and holy institutions in their minds to any good purpose, any further than they have right apprehensions hereof; so that it was the knowledge which Christ himself had of the method of reconciliation, which, according to divine transactions, he was himself to work out, which kept him close to fulfil the word of him which sent him.

V. 68. *Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.*

This is a confession of what Jehovah is; his nature is a fountain of essential blessedness and perfection; he is an inexhaustible fountain of all communicable blessedness and goodness to Christ; to him, as the head of his body the church; to all the members of Christ, who are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. This Jesus was well persuaded of; as also that he was continually imparting his goodness to him, and to the whole church, in and through him; he therefore prays for more knowledge of the divine statutes.

V. 69. *The proud have forged a lie against me: [or, lies] but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart,*

In various parts and expressions of this most divine Psalm, we have very many interlocutory passages which refer to our Lord's passion. It was in a very especial manner, when Christ was immediately in his suffering state, the proud enemies, the Scribes, rulers, and Pharisees, forged a lie against him; not that it was then begun, it had been their practice before; yet it did by no means take off Christ's heart, nor hinder him from following on to keep the divine precepts; no, it was rather his excitement to this; which shews the holiness and immutability of our Lord's will.

V. 70. *Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law.*

By which expressions it is signified, the enemies of Christ were insensible; they were stupified, they were overcome; they could not act as men in their senses. Jesus was altogether full of activity; his whole soul was in full pursuit after God, both to do and suffer his most holy and righteous will; *I delight in thy law*—in every part, branch, and tittle of it.

V. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

Our divine Lord, in and throughout the whole of his incarnate state, might well be considered as having through the whole of it been afflicted: he knew the whole contained in human nature, and how far it was inferior to the angelic: he knew what all the sinless infirmities of it were, and in what they consisted: he knew what it was to be afflicted with temptations: it is expressly said of him, *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted,* Heb. ii. 17, 18. In consequence of afflictions, temptations, and sorrows, in-

numerable and inconceivable, the glorious Mediator was brought into an enlarged knowledge of the Lord's divine statutes.

V. 72. *The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*

Nothing above, nothing beneath, could suit the mind of Christ more than the law of Jehovah's mouth. The commandments expressed in the everlasting covenant, attracted the will, heart, and affections of Christ altogether. All the treasures of both worlds were not, to Christ, equal to his keeping the commandments of the Lord. Thus we have an idea conveyed to us, how Jesus prized his Father's holy law; how he preferred it to all things; how dear and precious it was to him. So we have a fresh view of his obedience set before us. May the Spirit of the living God make him, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, more dear, and precious unto us, by every word and sentence uttered by him in this sacred hymn. Amen.

PART X.—JOD.

V. 73. *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.*

The humanity of Jesus was made, fashioned, organized, and framed, by the immediate will and power of God; it was articulated by the Holy Ghost; it was most exquisite in its frame, texture, form, and size; not the least irregularity in it. Our Lord here acknowledges Jehovah's concern in the same; he was suited to be a proper vehicle for the Essential Word to dwell in and inhabit: *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me.* And that on purpose that I might be a perfect model of purity, holiness, and righteousness. I am entered on the work of obedience; I have most freely given myself up to do this; I have thus far proceeded in doing thy most holy will; my whole soul delighteth in the same; it is better to me to hear the voice of thy law, and enter into the same, than thousands of gold and silver; it being thus with me, and as I am in the uttermost pursuit of accomplishing thy holy law, give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments, and know more of the worth and excellency of them.

V. 74. *They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.*

Our Lord is here setting forth another and distinct act of his obedience. He, by his communion with saints, and in his communications unto them, would give them cause to

be glad in heart, and joyful in hope; especially as they should, by the knowledge of him, be so enlightened as to apprehend him in his most perfect obedience, in his perseverance therein: that his support were the promises of the everlasting covenant, and how he exercised his hope on them; he had good ground for his hope; it had been testified of him—*And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, Isai. xi. 1—3.* A sight of Christ, as the Messiah, would afford gladness of heart to saints who were longing for his coming in the flesh. And a sight of him in his incarnate state, could not but be refreshing unto them, as they looked on him as the anointed of God, and beheld in him the exercise of every grace.

V. 75. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.*

The knowledge of Jesus was great; his human understanding was vastly comprehensive; he knew all contained in the law, in the statutes, in the judgments, in the testimonies, in the precepts, in the word of God, as revealed in the word and ordinances given and commanded; he knew the whole contained in the everlasting covenant; he knew his own part in it, and how far he had proceeded in his accomplishment thereof; he knew he was to be a whole burnt-offering for sin; and sin could not be laid on him but he must feel it, and endure the curse due unto it. As having the anticipation of the same, and fully yielding to the will of the divine Father, he says, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.*

Which led him to pray according to his case, as thus expressed:

V. 76. *Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.*

Jesus knew his hour would come when he would be made sin and a curse; he knew what promises he had to rest upon for strength and succour at that time; he well knew what would then well suit his mind, a real view of Jehovah's merciful kindness. This alone could support him, this alone could comfort him. He had Jehovah's word to rest upon. He, as the servant of Jehovah, looked for the fulfilment thereof; he therefore says, *Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy*

servant. In this he was heard. Luke tells us, *And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven strengthening him.* Some will have it to be the holy Comforter, who alone could sustain the Mediator's mind when he stood before the divine Majesty with all the sins of the elect. They ground what they have for it on the following scripture: *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* Heb. ix. 13, 14.

V. 77. *Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live; for thy law is my delight.*

This request is one with the former, only it expresseth the importunity of Messiah's soul; and also his fervent desire that he might have such an intellectual apprehension of the tender mercies of Jehovah, that the subject might be so brought home to his mind, as that he might live to God under the whole weight of imputed sin and inflicted curse. He gives this as a reason why he requested what he did. For (says Jesus) *thy law is my delight.* Let me but express my love to thee, holy Father, and I am most perfectly satisfied.

V. 78. *Let the proud be ashamed, for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.*

This is a request made by Jesus, and in it is represented, by way of prophecy, what would befall the unbelieving and apostate Jews. They were, and still are, covered with shame, on account of their perversely dealing with Christ, and putting him to death. It was owing to wilful blindness and obstinacy in them that they rejected Jesus, and caused him to be put to death. Yet this did not put a stop to Christ's obedience. *I will, says he, meditate in thy precepts.* By which he understood what his sufferings in every part and sort, sense, pain, feeling, and perception, were to be; and by his meditations on what was revealed concerning them, he the more freely and fully gave himself up to the divine will and decrees of the divine Father, to submit most readily unto them.

V. 79. *Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.*

This is a prayer to the divine Majesty on behalf of saints in the land of Judea; many of whom, at the time of Christ's death, were not brought to the knowledge and acknowledgment of him, that he was the very Christ. Such Jesus prays for here, saying, *Let those that fear thee turn unto me.*

So they did after his ascension and glorification, when the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles, and so fully testified of Christ's Messiahship. They were fully convinced that that same Jesus, who had been crucified, was both Lord and Christ. The other part of the verse seems to belong to our Lord's disciples and followers present with him in his incarnate state, and afterwards. These having been brought to the knowledge of Christ, and of his testimonies, of all which belong to his holy ordinances, which as modes of worship he received from his divine Father, and delivered them to his apostles and church; he here prays the divine Father for them: *Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.*

V. 80. *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.*

This is a request for a progressive going on in continued obedience to the divine will of him that sent him, that his heart might be sound and sincere in and throughout the whole of it; which by no means conveys an idea that it was possible it might be otherwise. Our Lord's humanity in every part and faculty was impeccable. It was impossible for him to sin; and sin consists in non-obedience to the divine will. These expressions therefore, in his mouth, are only expressive of his entire dependance on the Father and Spirit for the whole he needed as man, as Mediator, as God-man, Immanuel God in our nature. May the Lord the Spirit open to our spiritual view the particular acts of our Lord's most holy mind, as set before us in this section of the Psalm, and may our souls be led to admire Jesus for the same. Amen.

PART XI.—CAPH.

V. 81. *My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.*

It would be well to read the whole of this Psalm, viewing Jesus stamping every part of it with the worth and dignity of his whole person as God and man, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The human soul of Christ, which was the glory of his humanity, and taken up into personal union with the Son of the living God, was the seat of all communicable grace and glory. So that the thoughts of his mind, the delight of his will, the outgoings of his soul, the acts of his understanding, were all sanctified by the personal union; and contained that perfection in them which cannot be expressed, nor conceived of. No; not by all the saints and angels in glory. Here our Lord is expressing the earnest desires of his mind to accomplish sal-

vation. *My soul fainteth for thy salvation.* He calls it *Jehovah's salvation*, as the whole plan originated in the will of the *Three who bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* Which salvation was to be wrought out by Jesus in our nature, as the man in God, who was personally one with the essential Word. To accomplish it was our Lord's desire. He expresseth his confidence he should; *I hope in thy word.* The covenant in which he was engaged could not be broken: the securities of it, and the promises thereof, could not fail. He here expresses his full expectation in *Jehovah* for the same. *My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.* Our Lord expressed himself, in the days of his flesh, on the same subject thus. *I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am straitened till it be accomplished!* Luke xii. 50.

V. 82. *Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?*

Jesus in his expressions here pursues the subject contained in the former verse. His eyes, the eyes of his mind, were continually fixed on the Lord. This was with the greatest intensity: he even failed of his bodily sight, as it were, by reason of the deep exercise of his thoughts in prayer, praise, study, in reading the scriptures; in closely attending to what was revealed therein concerning himself; in observing therefrom what also was his Father's will concerning his obedience and sufferings, sacrifice and death. He could not therefore, whilst he passed over all the subjects in his own mind, and viewed the sorrows and griefs which would invade his whole frame, but cry out before the divine Majesty, *When wilt thou comfort me?* It is designed to set forth and express the affections of Christ's human mind.

V. 83. *For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes.*

Our most precious Lord, whilst in his incarnate state, was not only humbled by his laying aside the form of God, and taking upon him the form of a servant, but he was humbled also as the Messiah. So that he was only in the eyes of the carnal Jews *like a bottle in the smoke.* They saw no form nor comeliness in him; nor any beauty that they should desire him, or trust in him; or glory in him. I conceive Jesus in his own mind felt and found he was as he here expresseth. *For I am become like a bottle in the smoke.* His purity and grace, his outgoings after the Lord, were never stopped: his graces never withered: they knew no decay; but he com-

prehended, intellectually, what he was in the sight and apprehensions of the people: the low thoughts they had of him: he knew they most heartily despised him: he knew at times his own relations after the flesh, and his real disciples also knew not what to think and say concerning him. All which had its full impression on his most holy mind; and, as we may say, could not but grieve his pure spirit. Yet it did only serve for the exercise and display of his mind in its actings, more and more, on whom and what his heart was fixed; which was on the Lord and his statutes. Let the insults offered him, the contempt put on him, be what they might, whilst he might be in the views of others, yea, and even in his own, *like a bottle in the smoke*. Yet, says he to the divine Majesty, *do I not forget thy statutes*. Which shews his whole soul was so set and fixed on them as never to depart therefrom.

V. 84. *How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?*

These are questions proposed by Jesus unto the divine Majesty. He was the servant of Jehovah: he was all will to obey him: he was all love to him: his time was all decreed: he only asks how many his days were: he wants to be informed how far time was gone with him: what yet remained before him: when, and how, the Lord would execute judgment on them that persecuted him. Not that he might rejoice in the downfall of his foes; but in the righteousness and faithfulness of God, in his righteousness, in his executions of his judgment of his most just and righteous wrath against the Jews for their rejection of his Son, the only true Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. For him to know when he should emerge out of this, and be so exalted as for all his enemies to become his footstool, is the subject matter of this verse.

V. 85. *The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.*

The proud scribes, pharisees, and rulers of the Jews, contrived, plotted, and assembled together, to take away the life of Christ. They were none of them after God's law; it had no place in them; they neither regarded it, nor did they practise it; they were always on the watch for Christ; seeking to catch something from him, that they might accuse him. When the time came for Messiah to suffer, then they suborned false witnesses against him. Thus they digged pits for him. All which was not after the law of God. No; it was a most grievous violation of the same. It comes in here as prophetic.