

rians, Ammonites, and others, if the Lord had not appeared for them.

V. 5. *Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.*

It was such a miraculous deliverance that here are three verses employed in observing it, that it may be so fixed on the mind, that all who were partakers of the benefit of it might be disposed to glorify and bless the Lord for the same. *If the Lord himself who was on our side, now may Israel say: If the Lord, or, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul. Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.* Every verse, and sentence in them, shew it was a sore distress and affliction, and a most singular and marvellous deliverance.

V. 6. *Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.*

This is the church's thanksgiving for the deliverance the Lord had wrought for her. He had not suffered her to be swallowed up by the enemy: he had not permitted her to be swallowed up, to be overwhelmed, nor the stream of the enemies' wrath to go over their souls; nor the proud waters so to go over them as to bear them down, and sink them. All believers in Jesus, who have been exercised and engaged in fighting the Lord's battles against sin, the world, and the devil, have had, and such as succeed them will have cause to sing their song of thanksgiving unto the Lord Jesus Christ for the various deliverances of a spiritual sort which he hath wrought, and doth, and will over and over, work for them, and on their behalf. *Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey to their teeth.* It was matter of thanksgiving to David, to the saints in Babylon, and is, and will be to the church of Christ, to all generations, the many and marvellous deliverances the Lord hath wrought in various times, and on various accounts, for his church and people. The teeth of wicked men are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. And *the Lord has not given his people to be a prey to their teeth,* is very expressive of their malignity, and also that it was a very narrow escape. So it follows.

V. 7. *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped, or, delivered.*

So that the Lord wrought deliverance just in the very moment of their uttermost distress. Their escape was quick

and sudden : it was like that of a bird, for which the fowlers had artfully laid a snare ; and the bird was just in the snare ; but suddenly it snapped asunder, and it escaped. So here the snare was broken, the church was delivered. And how often do the hellish fowlers, Satan and his angels, and evil men, and our inward corruptions, lay snares for us ; yea, we are sometimes artfully caught ; yet our Lord Jesus most graciously appears for us, pleads his cause in the court of our own consciences, suggests a scripture to our minds, which delivers us from the machinations of sin, Satan, and his colleagues, and thus delivers us. And we can very properly adopt these words, *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers : the snare is broken, and we are escaped out of their hands, and from their snares which they had laid for us.*

V. 8. *Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

This is a most blessed confession of faith, and a most just one, arising from all which went before. It is in the name of the Lord, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who made heaven and earth that our help is. And every deliverance he is pleased to grant his church should lead his people to acknowledge this. It did the Old Testament saints, as here we see. May it us also. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH.

A Song of degrees.

We have in this Psalm an account given of the safety of all such as trust in the Lord Jesus Christ : their security is set forth and figuratively expressed : a prayer is offered up to Jehovah on their behalf, and a request is made that the Lord would make a visible discrimination between such as turned aside to their own crooked ways, and such as did not ; and it is pronounced it shall be well with the church of the living God—*Peace shall be upon Israel.* This is the subject matter before us.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees.—They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.*

Such as trust in the Lord, are such as are brought into a real acquaintance with the Lord ; it being impossible to trust in him before we know him. The word Jehovah, which implies and is expressive of the incommunicable and incomprehensible Essence, includes the Persons who are essen-

tially one in the **Essence**, though personally distinct. This includes with it the covenant which obtained between the Three who existed in the **Essence** before the world was; which covenant has been fully manifested and realized in the person, incarnation, work, and salvation of **Immanuel**: he is the foundation for all faith and hope in God: it is the office of the **Eternal Spirit** to make him known, which leads to such a spiritual apprehension of him as begets faith in him, and leads to such a fixation on him, that such are immutably settled, rooted, and grounded on him. Christ is the object of faith: it is on him we believe. Christ is the subject of faith: it is in him we are saved with an everlasting salvation. Christ is the foundation of faith: it is in him we trust. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever.* So says the Prophet **Isaiah**, chap. xxvi. 4. He gives this reason for it: *for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.* So in the **Psalm** before us, believers are described as they that trust in the Lord. *They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.* The Lord's temple was founded on **Mount Zion**; its foundation could not be removed; it abideth for ever: so the church of Christ is founded and built on him: he the foundation of it cannot be removed; he is the everlasting God, and steadfast for ever, therefore the church built on him is immovable; he is the strength of it; he abideth for ever; his church must abide for ever, he being the supporter of it. Thus the Spirit of God sets forth the immutability of the church in Christ.

V. 2. *As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even for ever.*

There was **Mount Zion** on the side of the north, and the **Mount of Olives** on the east, and other mountains on the other sides of **Jerusalem**; so that it was naturally as well as artificially fortified and encompassed about. So the Lord is round about his people: he encircles them with his everlasting love; he surrounds them with his everlasting mercy; he encompasses them with his salvation; himself is their shield; he is as a wall of fire round about them; he is their refuge; he is their glory. This he is now; this he will continue to be from henceforth, even for evermore. *The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms,* says **Moses**. Then the church, saints, and people of God must be as safe and secure in Christ as they possibly can be. This is very encouraging to faith.

V. 3. *For the rod of the wicked, or of wickedness, shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous: lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.*

The Lord in his sovereignty chose the land of Canaan for the Israelites, he appointed their portions in it by lot; and though wicked men and their enemies might again and again seize on the same, yet it reverted back to those who were the proper proprietors of it. The rod of the wicked did not always rest on it: *the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous.* God will not be always wroth. If he cause grief, yet he will turn again and have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies. A reason is given why *the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous.* It is this, *lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.* The righteous are they who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ; the Lord's justified and chosen ones are his portion, they are the lot of his inheritance; yet their persons, families, estates, and good name are sometimes oppressed and afflicted by wicked men. But this does not always continue. A reason is assigned for this; it is, *lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.* Such as are righteous in Christ, are not without sin in themselves, and they may be under temptation by long afflictions and oppressions from seeing the wicked prosper, to forsake the ways of God, and join with the wicked, and in some instances, do as they do. Therefore the Lord will not suffer them to be always afflicted, nor be always under the hand of their oppressors. No, he will not.

V. 4. *Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts.*

This is a prayer offered up by the Prophet on behalf of those who were truly godly. None are good in the scriptural sense, but such as are made new creatures in Christ Jesus. These being regenerated and born of God, are denominated in the sacred page, good; they, as believers in Christ, having received him into their minds as all their salvation, and looking unto, and resting on him alone for everlasting life, are upright in heart. On the behalf of such this prayer is put up to the Lord for them—*Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in heart,* may all spiritual blessings abound towards them; may an abundance of spiritual gifts be conferred on them, that they may walk as seeing him who is invisible, that they might be useful in their day and generation. We see the same spirit in this prayer which contains true genuine Christianity—a praying for the holy brethren.

V. 5. *As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel.*

Thus the Prophet prays there may be a discrimination made amongst the professors of the Lord Jesus. Some of them were good and upright in heart, some of them were under the power and influence of their besetting sins and corruptions; they had their crooked ways, they turned aside unto them. The Prophet foretells how the Lord would deal with them—he would leave them to themselves; they should be carried away with their own lusts. They should thereby be manifested they were but professors of truth, that they never were the possessors of it. *As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.* This is a most awful scripture: it is more frequently fulfilled in the visible church of Christ than any of us are aware: it contains a curse from Christ executed in a time state upon Christless persons and professors of the gospel. Let it be so: the Lord is righteous; and whilst he deals thus towards such as live in sin secretly, and are not the better for all their attendance on his holy ordinances, he will distinguish his own people with evidences of his own peculiar favour towards them. Peace, which comprehends all the blessings of the gospel, shall be upon Israel. May the Lord teach us to improve by this Psalm. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH.

A Song of degrees.

This Psalm is thought to have been written by *Exra*, or some one who returned out of captivity. In it is celebrated the return of the church of Christ out of Babylon; an event so great and extraordinary, that the people of God knew not how to express themselves on the occasion. It seemed to be so signalizing, they were at a loss to speak of it: they ascribe it to Jehovah. Prayer is offered up for a more complete return from captivity, such as would be so acceptable as causing rivers to be in dry places, and as acceptable as brooks and streams of water in southern countries. A proverbial expression is made use of to encourage the expectation of the church in her complete redemption—*They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy*: and the Psalm is closed with an assertion that thus it should be.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees.—When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.*

It was an event foretold by Isaiah, Jeremiab, and others. Under it Christ and his spiritual redemption are most frequently by these prophets, declared and set forth; the one is

sometimes made the pledge of the other. Yea, Cyrus and his work seem to be made use of as typical of Christ, Jehovah's anointed one; and his work of building the temple, and suffering his people to go out of their bondage and distress, made use of as a figure to express the same by. One cannot but conceive the speaker in this Psalm was an eye-witness of this marvellous event; he speaks in the name, and personates others: *When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.* It was so wonderful, mysterious, and divine, they knew not what to think or say concerning it. They were like persons just emerging out of sleep, who having been pleased with an acceptable dream, were half persuaded of the truth of it, whilst at the same time they could scarcely credit it.

V. 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.*

The mercy bestowed on them, which they had at this time an inward sense of, filled them with exceeding great joy; such as they could not restrain, but were constrained to give outward demonstrations of, by outward gestures; their mouths were filled with laughter, and their tongue with singing: this had been foretold. The Lord said unto them by the prophet Isaiah, *Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing, declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob,* chap. xlviii. 20. Their mouths being filled with laughter, is very expressive of the joy of their minds; and their tongues being filled with singing, shews they could not forbear expressing their joy in God. It was taken notice of by others, so that they remarked it: *Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.* And so he had; for the deliverance from Babylon was in some things greater, and beyond their deliverance from Egypt; they therefore acknowledge what the heathen said, *The Lord hath done great things for them,* by saying over the same words.

V. 3. *The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.*

The Lord had done wonderful things, to put it into the heart of Cyrus, an heathen prince, to let them go free, without money, or reward; to give them orders to take with them the vessels of the temple, which had been taken away by the king of Babylon; and to order that these Jews should be helped with money, goods, and cattle, and to go and rebuild Jerusalem, and the temple; they might well say,

The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. So as we have respect to our Lord Jesus Christ, and his redemption, which is free, full, and replete with blessings, which are all the fruits of divine favour, and sovereignty; when the eyes of the mind are opened to conceive rightly of the same, the partakers of it cannot but say, *The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.*

V. 4. *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south.*

This petition is, as I conceive, offered up on the behalf of the whole captivity. Some of the Jews remained in Babylon, notwithstanding the free and generous edict of Cyrus. It may also be considered as expressive of the faith of the Old Testament church, concerning the universal call and restoration of all Israel in the latter day. The allusion seems to be to *budea*, which lay south of Babylon, and to the southern parts of Judea, which were dry; see Joshua xv. 19. The restoration of the Jews would be as acceptable to spiritual minds as rivers in the south, or like streams produced by the south wind, which brings rain, and melts the snow from the hills, which running into the valleys causes flows of water in great abundance. Under which expression, *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south*, may be considered the abundance of conversions, and spiritual blessings, which will take place, and be bestowed on the Jews in the latter day; and also the abundance of spiritual blessings which flow from Christ down upon his beloved ones.

V. 5. *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*

This is true, and it is here made use of to encourage faith and hope, that the prayer contained in the former verse would be answered. Praying, and seeking the Lord, is sowing in righteousness; this hath been, and is frequently accompanied with tears. It is recorded of Jacob, that *he had power with God*—that *he wept and made supplication unto him*, Hosea xii. 3, 4. He repeated the fruit of all this with joy; so will all God's wrestling Jacobs, and prevailing Israels: there is nothing more sure and certain than this.

V. 6. *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

This is a confirmation of the former assertion; it is the same words in another dress; it is explanatory of what was the case with the people of the Jews on their emerging out of captivity; and also of what will be the case of the Jews when they shall be restored out of all nations at the latter

day. They, having received the true knowledge of Messiah, and looking to him whom they pierced will go forth from the places they were in; they will go off and out of themselves weeping; they will have the true gospel at that time in their hands and hearts; they will be bearing precious seed; the word of God will then dwell richly in them; these shall doubtless come again out of their present state of dispersion, these shall bring their sheaves with them. It is very expressive of a gospel minister's life; he goeth forth with the everlasting gospel which he preaches; he sows it as precious seed in the church of God; he waters it with tears and prayers; the Lord's blessing accompanies it; the Lord crowns his labours with success; he has seals to his ministry; and at the last day, he shall doubtless come again with joy from the grave of death, *bringing his sheaves with him*; and will, in the new Jerusalem state, be addressed by his dear and precious Lord with, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*. May the Lord bless what is here set before the reader, if acceptable to his glorious majesty. Amen.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED & TWENTY-SEVENTH.

A Song of degrees of, or for, Solomon.

Some attribute this Psalm to David as the writer of it; others to Solomon. It may be it was composed by David, after the prophet Nathan had informed him that not he but his son Solomon should build the temple of the Lord. For which David made provision of gold and silver, and other things. He also gave unto Solomon the pattern of it, which himself had received from the Spirit of God. You will find an account of all this, and of what David said unto Solomon, in an assembly of the great nobles of the nation, a little before his death, together with an account of the immense provision he had made for the whole building, in the 28th and 29th chapters of the first Book of the Chronicles. As also by looking into the second of Samuel, chap. vii. you will read the account given by the Lord unto Nathan, whereby David is informed he is not to build the Lord's temple, but a son of his, who was then unborn, and whose name was to be Solomon, was to be engaged in this good work. David refers to this in his address to his assembled nobles, 1 Chron. xxviii. verses 2—6, 8. On this very occasion David addressed Solomon thus: *And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect*

heart and with a willing mind : for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts : if thou seek him, he will be found of thee ; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. Take heed now ; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary : be strong and do it, chap. xxviii. 9, 10. As David knew, notwithstanding all the preparation he had made, and the advice he had given, that the whole success of the building depended on the Lord, he might, supposing he wrote this Psalm on this occasion, very pertinently begin it thus : *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.* If it be considered that the Psalm was written by Solomon, who might set upon building the temple with this Song, then it is to be considered in the same view with his making a prayer at the dedication of it, when it was completely finished. We may consider it a Psalm of Solomon, or Solomon's. It may be considered as one of the thousand and five songs he made ; which beside that which is called *The Song of Songs*, which is Solomon's, is the only one extant. It agrees with many things in the Book of *Proverbs*, and *Ecclesiastes*, that all things depend on the power and providence of God : that without his blessing all man's endeavours are vain. This is sufficient to express the subject-matter of it.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees for [or, of] Solomon. Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it : except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

By the house here, I should understand the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem. It was of the Lord's appointment ; it was a symbol, figure, and memorial of Christ and his incarnation ; it was to be builded by Solomon. Many and numbers of Jews and Gentiles were employed in the building ; every thing was laid out, and every material was ready to their hands ; they had nothing to do but to put all together. It was the temple of the Lord. Yet except the Lord from first to last, from the beginning to the finishing of the same, did interpose, and carry on the whole by his own Spirit and energy, the structure would never be completed : *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.* Thus Solomon casts away all dependance on human means ; and before he takes one step towards building the temple of the Lord, confesses his whole dependance for erecting the palace for the Lord, to be on him alone ; and also the keeping and continuing the inhabitants of Jerusalem in peace whilst this good work is going on and bringing to perfec-

tion; and that there may be no adversary, or evil occurring, during the whole period this building should be perfecting: *Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.* It is in the Lord alone there is strength, peace, and security. The city was only safe as the Lord was the keeper of it: the watchman waketh but in vain, except the Lord watch over it for good: men labour in vain, the watchman waketh in vain, except the Lord build the house, his church, and watch over it, and do it good. All which may be considered as very applicable to the church of Christ under the present dispensation. To lay the foundation of the true church of Christ, according to its form and order as laid down in the New Testament—to raise up its walls—to organize its members—to place proper officers—to have its ordinances, discipline, and worship, in all their proper order, and the gospel in its purity, is wholly of the Lord; yet when done, it is he must bless the whole, or all will be in vain. We need the Lord's presence and blessing; we need therefore ever to acknowledge our dependance on him; it is one great and principal part of divine worship.

V. 2. *It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.*

The Lord's temple was built without any looking unto or dependance on man; all human wisdom and confidence was rejected in the whole; the plan was given by the Lord God himself; the model of it was in Solomon's possession; nothing was left to the wit or wisdom of men; there was no need to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows, whilst engaged in this good work; no, I should conceive it was a season of grace to such as were employed in the building; somewhat like what it is with you and me when engaged in God's holy ordinances. I should conceive the minds of the workmen at perfect peace, their conversation together much on the grand subject of the temple, and its intention as referring to the glorious Messiah, its grand and glorious antitype. I should conceive their minds were wholly disencumbered from all carking cares. They did not rise early without being refreshed in body and mind; they did not sit up late as though they wanted amusement; they were not careful how they should provide for their families; they were, as the beloved of the Lord, perfectly contented; they enjoyed sweet sleep and refreshment by it, this was from the Lord; he giveth his beloved ones sleep. This may be understood of Solomon, who was a man of peace, to whom the Lord gave rest and peace, and

under whose reign the people of Israel and Judah enjoyed great tranquillity. We may improve the words thus: an industrious man is very commendable; yet all his industry, without God's blessing on it, is nothing worth. *It is rain for you, says the prophet, to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.* Carking cares disturb the mind; it is the Lord thy God that giveth thee to get wealth; it is he which blesseth thy labours; it is he who removeth thy sorrows; he it is who giveth unto thee, as his beloved one, sleep, which is the nurse of nature, and fits thee for further business and employment in this thy present state.

V. 3. Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

As all other gifts necessary for life and godliness, are bestowed on the Lord's beloved ones, so children are bestowed on them as an heritage from him. It is the end for which the Lord ordained the holy state of marriage; by which the family of saints, as well as the family of sinners is kept up; it is the gift of God's blessing, to increase the families of his saints with good children. *Lo, children [or, beloved children] are an heritage of the Lord:* they are his gift, they should be looked on and as received as such; this would lead godly parents to be thankful unto the Lord for them: *and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* *Fruit of the womb,* is the same which was expressed before, by the term *children.* These are given by the Lord out of his own royal bounty; they are a reward bestowed on the godly; yet it is a reward of grace, not of debt. It was so as it respects our Lord Jesus Christ. The many sons and daughters bestowed on him, and whom he engaged for, and whom he will safely conduct to glory, and of whom he will say, when he presents them to the Divine Father, *Lo, I, and the children which thou hast given me,* are an heritage of the Lord, bestowed on him out of the immensity of everlasting love. Christ was their father, their shepherd, their head, their husband, their brother, their friend, from everlasting; they are his goodly portion and inheritance.

V. 4. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

As arrows shot by a mighty, strong man, do much execution, and are a mean of resisting enemies, and are shot to defend from enemies, and are useful and serviceable in their place, so are children of the youth. Not young children, nor children in their youth; but such as were born of parents when they were in the prime of life, when they were

in their youth: such being generally strong and robust, which are generally healthy; their parents live to see them grow up, and such are often supports and comfort unto them; defending them from injuries and evils with strength and force, just as a mighty man defends himself against opposers with arrows in his hand. And such as are born again by the Spirit of God, often defend the church, by arrows drawn out of the quiver of God's word, and directed against the enemies of God's chosen.

V. 5. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*

By *quiver* here, is to be understood *house*. To have an house full of children, is to the godly a blessing from the Lord; this is here declared. To have children of the youth, to have the house full of them, increases a godly man's happiness; it adds honour and real dignity to the man, it secures and defends him from outward enemies. The children of the youth will not be ashamed to defend their parents, to plead their cause, to secure them from harm; but they shall be bold and courageous, they shall go forth with a martial spirit against the enemies of their father's house: *They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.* So in the church of God it is very ornamental, and also beneficial, to have multitudes of spiritual sons and daughters, who are begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Churches full of them are glorious and beautiful to the spiritual parents, and of such, no doubt, it may be said, *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.* May this be daily the case with the churches of Christ continually. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH.

A Song of degrees.

The blessedness of such as fear the Lord, and the various blessings which are bestowed upon them, and which they have the enjoyment of, are in this Psalm very particularly specified. And this is the subject-matter of this divine Song.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees. Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord: that walketh in his ways.*

Such alone are blessed who know Christ by the supernatural light and teaching of the word, and of the Spirit.

When these know Jesus, and what it is to be in him and blessed by him, then this fruit appears, they fear the Lord; they have an holy reverence for his name, of his person, of his grace, of his righteousness, of his sacrifice, of his salvation, of his fulness of grace, of his fulness of glory, of his relationship to his church, of his interest in it: all which received into the mind, and operating on the will, produces the true fear of the Lord, and leads to walking in his ways, in his ordinances, and commandments blameless. I see not why this Psalm may not be entitled a description of the true church of Christ; it is most certainly a very blessed account of the saints of the Most High, individually and collectively. It may most truly be said of each and every one of them, *Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord: that walketh in his ways.* Such are blessed in body and soul; such are blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings; such are blessed with all the blessings of a free, full, and complete salvation; such are blessed with free access to the throne of grace; the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow to it, is upon them. It may therefore be most safely pronounced, and proclaimed in their hearing, *Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord: that walketh in his ways.*

V. 2. *For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.*

To eat and drink, and enjoy the fruit of our labour, this is the gift of God. For the ministers of Christ to enjoy in their own souls the fruits of their labours in their reading, meditation, and preaching Christ, and his unsearchable riches, is a fruit of free grace: this also is the gift of God, for them to see the fruit of their labours, in the conversion of souls, and in their being established in their most holy faith, this is an increase of their happiness; it is then well with them, so it is with the church under their ministry.—So in social and domestic life, such as fear the Lord and walk in his ways, they eat the labour of their hands; the Lord is with them, he sanctifies all things unto them, they are happy in body and mind. It is well with them even when exercised with afflictions and trials; they may well say, all is well.

V. 3. *Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.*

This, as it respects they who are married in the Lord, sets forth what a great part of their family happiness consists in: A vine on the walls of a house is very spreading, it is in

its own nature a very fruitful tree. A numerous family is in itself desirable; children, like olive branches green and flourishing, are very ornamental round about the table.—The church is compared in several scriptures to a vine fruitful and flourishing; the bride, the Lamb's wife, is fruitful in bringing forth children unto God; she is a fruitful vine, her children are the Lord's, they are all blessed by him, he is their Father, they are his joy and delight, they increase his manifestative glory and praise. Churches full of young spiritual converts serve to keep up his name in the earth, and they make his praise glorious; they are like olive plants, or sons of oil, round about his table; they are pleasant in the sight of his Majesty; they are pleasant in the view of his ministers and churches, they being a seed to serve him who shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

V. 4. *Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.*

Every one that feareth the Lord, every one that walketh in Jehovah's ways, that looks to Christ for all, and lives on Christ for all, and enjoys Christ in all; such shall eat in the fear of the Lord, such shall be happy in soul and body. It shall be well with such, in church and in social relation: in the conjugal state, in the single state, in each and every connexion, so far as they are under the blessing and protection of the Three in Jehovah. This the Psalmist having declared, he would have the same taken notice of, that it might clearly appear that godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. The prophet, therefore, to draw the eye, and fix it on these blessings, says, *Behold that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.*

V. 5. *The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem, [or, thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity] all the days of thy life.*

Such is the grace of Christ, he blesseth his saints, collectively and also individually, with upper and nether spring blessings. And whatever he may deny them of temporal blessings, he very particularly makes up by his bestowing on his church spiritual blessings: this he will most assuredly do, *The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion*, with his life-giving presence, with the joys of his salvation, with his peace and pardon; *and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.* This is a most glorious free-grace promise; it is absolute, it is very extensive, it is permanent and durable.

V. 6. *Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.*

This is the perfection of the divine blessing to a blessed man, and such as are blessed of God, to see the good of Jerusalem; to hear and perceive the Lord's church is prospering; that the gospel hath free course, that it runs and is glorified. That multitudes are added unto the Lord, that they flourish and abound in faith, hope, and love: that this is the fruit of the Lord's being in their midst. All this is very delightful to the children of the most high God; so is the promise which respects the continuation of all this; so that this last verse is setting a seal to what is contained in all the former verses of this Psalm, *Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel*;—an increase and succession in the church: this will be the case age after age. *And peace upon Israel.* The peace of God, and the peace-maker, the Son of God, and of the gospel of peace, and of the grace of God, and the peace bringer, the Spirit of God, and the ministers of the gospel, who preach peace by Jesus Christ to such as are far off, and to those who are nigh; these shall rest upon, these shall dwell, these shall be with, these shall be enjoyed, these shall remain with God's Israel.—Amen. May we enter spiritually into the subject of this scripture. Amen.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the subject of this Psalm. His afflictions from his youth, his sufferings on the day of his passion, the punishment which would fall on his Jewish enemies, are freely and fully expressed here.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees. Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say.*

I consider the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, the speaker here. He came into our world by birth: from his first entrance into it, to his going out of it, he was the subject of sorrows, and he was afflicted. The meanness of his birth and parentage, the early persecution which broke forth against him when but an infant, by the rage of Herod and his courtiers, together with the malice of the Scribes, Pharisees, and rulers of the people, which broke forth and was constantly exercised, either secretly or openly exercised, might well be expressed by him in prophecy as they are here: *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth,*

may Israel now say. Such of them as had been attendants on his ministry, and looked back to what befel him at his birth, when he was born in a stable, and laid in a manger; as they considered he was, about the second year of his age, driven with his mother and reputed father into Egypt; when it was looked at how his life had ever since been in jeopardy, and how many times he had by miracle escaped out of the hands of his enemies to preserve his life, might well be appealed unto as witnesses of the truth of what Messiah here says concerning the cruelty and malice of his enemies against him.

V. 2. *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.*

The conception, the birth, the youth, the manhood, and every step and progress of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his humanity, was for us and our salvation; it was all holy, pure, and perfection itself. He took our nature into union with his person, who was set up and in repute with God, as the man in God, before all worlds. In that nature which was conceived in the Virgin's womb, he was born into our world; he was circumcised, he was redeemed, he was offered unto the Lord; he was sanctified in it wholly and throughout by the Holy Ghost; in it he was baptized. In his human nature, consisting of body and soul, he was holiness unto the Lord: he obeyed as God-man, he offered his whole person as God-man, he suffered as the man in God. He was persecuted by his enemies from his youth; this is repeated twice, to shew how it affected his holy, pure, and spotless mind; *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.* They could not prevail with him to renounce that he was the true Messiah, the Christ of God: no, he laid down his life, and shed his last blood to confirm this.

V. 3. *The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.*

When he was in his suffering state, and during his passion, these words here predicted of him were most expressly realized. Whilst he remained in the hands of the Roman soldiers they stript him of his raiment; they bound him with cords to a pillar; they flogged him. This was so performed by them, that they made ridges in his back and sides; they tore skin, flesh, and made him bare even to the bone, so that his body was like a plowed field; the gashes made in it were like ridges made in a plowed field; these were on

his back ; *The plowers plowed upon my back : they made long their furrows.* Whilst every part of our Lord's sorrows and sufferings are most minutely set forth in the sacred hymns, psalms and songs, contained in what we style the Book of Psalms, yet we shall never comprehend what our most blessed Lord, in every part of his life, and in his passion and death, underwent for us : may the Lord the Spirit imprint this fresh expression used on this subject effectually upon us. Our Lord's words here are very expressive of the violence of his tormentors, and their rage against him, and of the wounds and torments they had inflicted on him.— What must the feelings of our Lord have been when they made such furrows on his back, that it was all furrowed and welted with such long wounds, that it was more like a plowed field than any thing else. Blessings on him for his grace and patience, it is *with his stripes we are healed.*

V. 4. *The Lord is righteous : he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.*

Thus Messiah comforts himself under these indignities and cruel usages, which were to befall him from his most inveterate foes. He committed himself to the Lord : he was the judge between him and his tormentors ; he would judge righteously ; he would cut asunder the cords of the wicked ; he would most assuredly reward them according to their iniquity ; Jehovah would avenge Messiah's cause.

V. 5. *Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.*

These words are spoken in the person of the Messiah by the prophet, his personator : they are prophetic, they suggested to the Jewish nation, the unbelieving and blasphemous Jews who would not own the Messiah, but joined with the Romans in putting him to death, what would come upon them from the Lord for it ; *Let them, or, They shall all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.* They could not hate Christ, but they must hate Zion also ; it was a righteous act in God, to render tribulation unto them ; it hath most awfully come upon them, for the word of the Lord cannot fall to the ground.

V. 6. *Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up.*

This is descriptive of their being to be left in a most destitute and withered state. Grass upon the housetops is useless. It withereth very soon : it comes to no perfection. Before it groweth up it begins to consume. So it is here predicted concerning these persecutors and tormentors,

these enemies of Christ, all those who hate Zion, that the curse of God would come on them suddenly and irresistibly, that they should be cut off when they least expected.

V. 7. *Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.*

The mower who cut the grass, which grew on the housetop, could not fill his hand with it. Neither could he that bindeth up the sheaves, take up a sufficient quantity of the grass which grew on the housetops, gather up a sufficient quantity of the same to fill his bosom with. Thus the prediction in the words before us is to this amount. Let these Jewish enemies of Messiah be as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it be grown. Let them be as inconsiderable in the minds of others, as the grass is upon the housetops to the mower who filleth not his hand with it. Or to him that bindeth sheaves of corn, who would by no means stoop to put the grass on the housetop, which is good for nothing, into his bosom. An addition to all this is expressed in the next verse.

V. 8. *Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord.*

This had been said in the harvest time to those who laboured in the fields. Boaz, when he entered among his reapers, saluted them, saying, *The Lord be with you: and they answered him, The Lord bless thee*, Ruth ii. 4. Now such would be the state of the crucifiers of Messiah; they would wither; they would be wholly neglected; they would be thought nothing of; they would have not to bestow a blessing on them; they which go by would not say so much, even in words, as this amounted unto: *The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord*. Thus the wicked, the haters of Zion, the apostate Jews, are left in this Psalm under the curse of God. May the blessing of the Lord be upon us. May we, and others also, bless us in the name of the Lord. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH.

A Song of degrees.

I shall consider this Psalm as most truly applicable unto Christ; and consider him as here spoken of in the depths of distress, into which he was plunged. Out of which he cried unto Jehovah, before whom he was importunate, and on whom he exercised hope. His expectation for the Lord's

appearance on his behalf is very fully expressed in the 5th and 6th verses. Then the Psalm closes with an exhortation to the Israel of God to hope in the Lord. Proper encouragements are given for this; with him is mercy; with him is redemption; and he will redeem his Israel. This is to be a spiritual redemption: he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities. I conceive also the Psalm may include the church, as well as Christ, who is the mediator of it. So I will in my explanation comprehend both.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees.—Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.*

When we view and consider the Lord Jesus Christ in his incarnate state as the surety of his church, and the mediator of reconciliation, we can understand what depths of sin and misery his people were in; and also those depths of sorrow, and soul-travail, he himself must have been in when he stood up in his own person to be responsible to law and justice for them. When he was made sin and a curse, he was in depths indeed. Out of these he cried. It was Jehovah he cried unto. *Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.* None were ever in such depths of sorrow and distress as Immanuel, when he made his soul an offering for sin. Many saints have been most deeply and sorely afflicted in body, mind, and circumstances. These have cried out of their depths of sorrow and misery unto the Lord. *Jonas said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice,* chap. ii. 2. But Christ cried unto the Lord when he was under the imputation of sin, and the infliction of the curse. He was hereby in a state none beside himself ever could be in. His importunity in prayer is expressed in the next words;

V. 2. *Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.*

When we consider the Lord Jesus Christ in the depths, his soul-travail under the very infliction of the tremendous wrath of God due to the elect; and consider his vast and holy mind, apprehensive and comprehensive, so as to know, feel, and fully endure the knowledge of the state he now stood before Jehovah in, we cannot wonder at his importunity. *Lord, hear my voice:* it was out of the depths he cried. It was unto Jehovah he made his supplication: he requested the Lord would hear his voice: he most earnestly prays for audience with the divine Majesty. *Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.* When Jesus was made sin, he knew all contained in it: when he was

made a curse, he felt and endured all contained in it. The sufferings of Christ are not here mentioned, but the cause of them is: and his knowledge in his own mind of sin as sin, is most solemnly here set before us. This is a subject which we can never fully enter into. Yet the one perfect sacrifice of Christ very principally was contained herein.

V. 3. *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?*

I consider these words as spoken by Christ when he stood up between the sins of the elect, and the immediate severity and justice of the Father. They, as spoken by him, are expressive of the infinity of guilt, impurity, and demerit contained in sin; of the innumerable sins of all the elect. *If thou, Lord, shouldest be extreme to mark iniquities, O Lord, who may stand?* None; it was only Christ himself could stand before the Lord God, with all sorts and kind of sins on him, and present himself before the divine Majesty to satisfy all the demands of his holiness, law, and justice for them. He only could fathom the exceeding depth of sinfulness, contained in the natures, persons, lives, and crimes of all the elect. So that we may here consider Christ as confessing the impossibility of the Father's looking upon the sinful persons of his people with satisfaction, but upon the footing of his making a complete atonement for them. So it follows:

V. 4. *But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.*

I am the propitiatory sacrifice that answers all the vast demands of thy holiness, justice, and truth. Thou seest that in my person and oblation, which far exceeds, and everlastingly transcends, all the evil contained in sin. It is of thine own constitution and will I suffer, the just for the unjust: it is on the footing of my sacrifice thou pardonest iniquity, transgression, and sin. Thou hast revealed this in thy word: hence there is a foundation laid for hope in thee. It is the ground and reason why pardoned sinners may hope in thee. *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* If the Lord God had not revealed and proclaimed himself in Christ to be *the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin,* (Exodus xxxiv. 67,) there had never been any foundation to hope in God. But through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, and the proclamation of pardoning mercy, there is a foundation for hope in God. *But*

there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. And when this is brought home, by the Holy Ghost, in the ministration of the gospel, to a poor sinner's guilty mind, it carries all before it. He being made acquainted with the Lord's free grace, mercy, and salvation, is brought to believe on Jesus, and the Father in him. This produces a godly fear of offending the divine Majesty. He is brought under the mighty power and influence of divine truth; a sense of forgiveness of sins through the most precious bloodshedding of Christ, operates most effectually on the heart, and produces most gracious effects.

V. 5. *I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.*

Whilst I see no impropriety in applying, as I have done, the whole of this Psalm to Christ, yet I have no objection against considering the people of God as having their case and experience set forth in it. It is with some of them, when they have such views of their fallen nature, and such inward apprehensions of their exceeding sinfulness, that they are caused to say, *Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is mercy with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* In such cases, and under such soul-plunges, nothing will do but looking wholly out, and off all our sins, to what God is in Christ. It is what the Lord hath revealed of his mercy in Christ, which only can support the mind under full views of sin. There is mercy with the Lord: there is forgiveness with the Lord: there is redemption with him. I conceive what hath been written, as setting forth Christ as the first and great subject, hath that support in it for convinced sinners which is all-sufficient to carry them off all their sins, to centre in Christ and his atonement. These words, *I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope*, may be considered as spoken by Messiah, and also may be considered as belonging to his church before his incarnation. As the Lord Christ, considered in the substitution of his person, in the room and stead of his people, and he as having their sins in the whole sum total of them, and with all their several aggravations, on himself, and with the whole curse of the broken law due unto them, cried out of all this depth to Jehovah the Father; so as he could not pray in vain, and knew the Father always heard him, he might therefore well express his faith thus; *I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.* He waited for the Lord to

hear and answer him : he waited on the Lord for complete deliverance. It was the word of the Father to Christ in the everlasting covenant, was the foundation of hope on which Messiah rested. Our Lord's hope was out of himself; he had Jehovah for his hope.

V. 6. *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning.*

Our most precious Lord, as the surety of his church, as having an inward apprehension of his state and case, how he stood before the divine Father, and what request he had offered unto him to hear his voice and attend to the voice of his supplications; he having confessed, if Jehovah should be inclined to mark iniquities, without having respect to him the Mediator, none could stand before him; that his very acceptance of him as the surety, who was to offer himself as the one everlastingly efficacious sacrifice for sin, was full proof of his being a sin-pardoning God; that he waited for the Lord to bring him out of those depths in which he was, out of which he now cried; that his soul did wait for his deliverance; that his word was the ground of his hope—he expresseth his patience in hope, his constant exercise of it, his looking out with eager expectation for the Lord's appearance on his behalf—*My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning; or, which watch unto the morning.* The reference is to those Levites who were watchers in the Temple, who looked out earnestly for the break of day, that as soon as possible, they giving the notice of it, the priests in their respective offices, and the Levites in their respective services, might bestir themselves and prepare the morning sacrifice, which required many things to be done before it could be laid on God's altar, which was to be at nine o'clock in the forenoon, as the evening oblation was to be at three o'clock in the afternoon. Some conceive these words to be expressive of the looking out of the saints under the old testament for the coming of Christ in the flesh. As such, they express their earnest expectation of this most wonderful event. The watchers in the Temple did not more eagerly look out and long for the morning than the old testament saints did for the incarnation of Christ. The repetition of these words, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning;* are expressive of the earnestness and importunity of their desires after Christ and for his advent.

V. 7. *Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.*

Thus the blessed Messiah exhorteth all the Israel of God, from what he knew Jehovah to be, and from what he was to him, and had done for him, to hope in the Lord, seeing the Lord would lay all the iniquities of his people on him, and his righteousness and soul-travail were an all-sufficient atonement for all their sin, and that there was forgiveness with the Lord that he might be feared; on the footing of all this, Messiah says, *Let Israel hope in the Lord*. It would be well to notice such expressions as these—*Hope in the Lord; Trust in the Lord; Believe in the Lord; In the Lord have I righteousness and strength*—as they are fully expressive that the Lord is the object of faith, and hope, and trust. The reason why Israel should hope in the Lord is given: it is this—*for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption*. Jehovah in all his persons, as revealed in Christ as the God of our salvation, is the object and foundation of hope: the covenant of their grace lays a foundation for hope: there is mercy stored up in it for sinners, who have nothing in them but sin, and for the elect in the most desperate cases—*With the Lord is plenteous redemption*. Christ is their redeemer; his sacrifice comprehends all their sins; by it they are all removed from them, and they are completely purified in his blood; they are fully and freely forgiven all trespasses. There is a redundancy in Christ's redemption; the Father is everlastingly well pleased with Christ's person, righteousness, and redemption: Christ is complete redemption to his whole church. The Holy Spirit bears his testimony to the Father's free love, and to the Son's complete redemption, and he seals the truth of it on the mind of each believer in their believing on Jesus. In every extremity of soul, under all the apprehensions we may have of our own sin, guilt, and misery, this is a most excellent remedy—*Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption*. May the Lord bless these hints to us.

V. 8. *And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins; or, iniquities.*

Jehovah by his Christ would do this; it would be accomplished by his sending Christ into the world; by fitting and furnishing him for the work he was to perform. He was to carry him through all his sufferings, to raise him from the dead, by which he was to redeem the whole Israel of God from all their iniquities: so that what is here in the past-tense, is now to be expressed in the present tense, Jesus having finished the work. *He hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood*. May the Lord bless our meditations on the same. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST.

A Song of degrees.

In this Psalm, the great and glorious Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, is set forth and deciphered in his heart and mind, as clothed with humility; as exercising his mind, and conducting himself in a most humble way and manner; which may remind us of what our Lord said to his disciples in the days of his flesh—*The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*, Matt. xx. 28. From what he is in himself, he exhorteth his saints to trust in the Lord.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees of David, [of the antitypical David.]—Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.*

Some say, this was written by David, the son of Jesse, when he was young, and that he here gives an account of the state of his mind, that he was free from ambition. But surely, David could never say all this before the Lord concerning himself, neither could he exhort others to hope in Jehovah from what he was in himself. I am willing to admit of this, as hath been already in the course of going over the Psalms observed, that in various cases, and in various circumstances, and various frames, tempers, and temptations David was in, and exercised with, the Holy Ghost lifted up his mind to Christ, (who was then to come,) and made use of him to write concerning Messiah, who was to be a man of sorrows, who was in his human nature to be the subject of all grace; it was to be habitual and seated in him, as light is in the sun, and as water in a fountain. I conceive this is to give the subject its true and proper place, and its true and just weight and importance. Under these views, I consider David as the personator of Christ, thus speaking to and before Him who is self-existent, incomprehensible, essentially blessed, holy, glorious, happy, and good; who in the councils of eternity was, as the divine Father willed and constituted him to be, Mediator, God and Man in one Christ; who sent him into the world to perform his part, agreeably to his covenant engagements. And the Father having provided him a body, which was sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and personally united to the essential Word, he is here set before us as he really was in his incarnate state, the meek, the lowly, the humble Jesus, who said in the days of his flesh, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you*

rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls, Matt. xi. 28, 29. In this Psalm he says to the divine Father, *Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty.* No; he was humility in its highest perfection, he was every way suited to his state and office; he despised none, he overlooked no one sinner who came to him: it was not what they were caused him to turn his back on them; his heart was not lifted up above them, his eyes were not lofty, so as to overlook them—*My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high or wonderful for me;* I am thy servant; I am just in heart, in affliction, in humbleness of mind, in humility, in my conduct and dealing, in my walk and conduct towards sinners, as thou wouldest have me to be; I have their good at heart, their salvation in view; it is my meat and drink to do thy holy will.

V. 2. *Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.*

This is giving an account of himself how he acted in our nature and in our world. He had all sorts of sinners to be exercised with, and all sorts of things to exercise his most holy mind. Some sinners despised him, others withstood him, others resisted him, others contradicted him; yet such was his behaviour, that he gave none, no not one of them, the least just cause for offence; he behaved with the utmost propriety. He preached the gospel, he gave them the best advice, he expressed himself with proper authority, he told them of their own particular sin, he warned them of their danger, he exhorted them to flee from the wrath to come; he might well say, *Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother;* so that when he was thrust to the brow of an hill, with a design to cast him down headlong, he said nothing, he only wrought a miracle on his own behalf, and for his own self-preservation; when he was insulted by the Jews, who again and again took up stones to stone him, he patiently passed from them, and went his way; when they even blasphemed him, he took it patiently; when they reviled him, he did not revile again; when he suffered, he threatened not; he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. Thus he, the great Messiah, God-Man, the glorious Mediator, behaved and conducted himself in our world: he took not on him the exercise of ecclesiastical nor political matters: he laid aside his form of God, and being in the form of a servant, he humbled himself, he behaved and

quieted himself as a child that is weaned of his mother. My soul, says he, is even as a weaned child. All this our Jesus was, and still is in his grace. He therefore concludes the Psalm, saying,

V. 3. *Let Israel hope in the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.*

Seeing Jesus is full of compassion and grace; seeing he is the one glorious Mediator, and his person and work is most highly acceptable in the view of the divine Father; seeing Christ is what he is, *let Israel hope in the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* He is immutable, and so is the person, work, office, love, and mercy of our Jesus: he is *the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.* The Lord the Spirit imprint these truths on our minds. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND.

A Song of degrees.

It admits of no doubt that *David* wrote this Psalm after he had expressed his desire of building the Temple to the name of the Lord God of Israel, an account of which you have 2 Sam. vii. The substance of which is this: The king being at peace, as he sat in his royal house, meditating on the great things the Lord had done for him, Nathan the prophet being present, the king says to him, *See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains,* ver. 2. The Prophet, well knowing what was contained in the words, rejoined, *Go, do all that is in thine heart: for the Lord is with thee,* ver. 3. After this, the very same night, the word of the Lord came to Nathan, and sends him with a message to David, informing him he is not to be engaged in this good work. But a successor of his, who was to come out of his loins, who would be a very glorious type of the Messiah, was the identical one, who was to be the consecrated one, who was to build the Temple. It was in him the kingdom was to be established, and the throne for ever, as a figure of the everlasting kingdom and throne of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is taken notice of in the 11th and 12th verses of this Psalm—*The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. If thy children will keep my covenant and testimony, that I shall teach them: their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore;* which words are quoted by the apostle *Peter* when he preached our Lord's coronation sermon on the day of Pentecost. He says, *Men*

and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day: therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne, Acts ii. 29, 30. So we have here an application of this part of the Psalm before us to our Lord Jesus Christ. It is very probable this Psalm was sung at the removal of the ark from the house of Obededom to the City of David, and also when the ark was brought by the priests into Solomon's Temple. Some think it was sung at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. The subject matter of it consists in expressing David's prayer to the Lord, and his great care and concern about the ark of God's presence, to find out a dwelling-place for it; his intercession for the Lord's presence with the ark and ministers of his sanctuary. He requests the Lord would not turn away from his church, but remember it on the account of his anointed. He recites his holy promise concerning the incarnation of Christ, and his throne, and royalty: he brings in the abundance of good the Lord had promised his church: he concludes with declaring that the enemies of Christ shall be clothed with shame, and the crown of Christ shall for ever flourish. This is the outline of it: yet I conceive we are to consider more particularly Christ is the grand subject of this Psalm; that his earnest desire to build his church, and consecrate it for an habitation to himself and for himself to dwell in, is more particularly intended. The provisions he has made, the order of his priests in it, their clothing, and his people's joy, are so set forth as to encourage our joy in him; are fully expressed and declared. This I shall aim to keep my eye upon, the Lord being my helper.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees.—Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions.*

Jehovah has the antitypical David in everlasting remembrance; his person, righteousness, and sufferings are always before him, as it respects the glory, dignity, worth, perfection, and efficacy of them. He, as the great intercessor of his church, might well by the mouth of David, as his personater, say, *Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions.* There was no salvation in all the afflictions of David the son of Jesse; but there is present and everlasting salvation in the afflictions and sufferings of the Son of God.

V. 2. *How he sware unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob.*

In the everlasting council and covenant, Jesus was engaged for, and he sware according to the oath of covenant

unto the mighty God of Jacob, to raise the elect church out of the ruins of the fall, and form it for Jehovah's praise. Agreeably with all this, the antitypical David says,

V. 3. *Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed.*

So said David, or to this effect, when he was disposed to build a tabernacle or temple, and discoursed with Nathan the prophet concerning it. And such was the celerity of Messiah to fulfil the divine will concerning the salvation of his church, that these words may well be considered as suited to that subject.

V. 4. *I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids.*

As Messiah spake by the prophet David, and was his representative, so his thoughts and words conceived and spoken by him on the occasion of his writing this Psalm, are made use of, to set forth the will and heart of Christ, in his views of building the house of God, the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. *Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids.* How long is this to be the case? the next words are an answer to this.

V. 5. *Until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.*

The tabernacle was an habitation for the Lord; as in the holiest of all was the ark, a type of Christ; and as between the Cherubim the Divine Majesty dwelt, in a symbol of his presence, a glorious cloud. But the place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob here alluded unto, was the temple, which David was devoutly disposed to have his concern in building. What the tabernacle and temple were, an habitation for the Lord, that Christ, God-man, is; he is the true tabernacle and temple, which the Lord pitched, and not man; in him, Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, dwelleth: they manifest their distinct subsistences in him; they shine forth in him; they are worshipped in him; and saints are admitted into real intercourse with them, in the person of Christ, *in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

V. 6. *Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.*

Whilst Eli was high priest in Israel, just before he closed his days, the ark of the Lord was taken by the Philistines, and carried into their land, and retained there seven months. These enemies being sorely visited by the Lord with divers

diseases, sent it back; and it was conducted by God's providence, so that the cart was drawn by the cattle into the field of Joshua, the Bethshemite, 1 Sam. vi. 14. This is what is here referred unto: *Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.* The Lord Jesus Christ was born near this place. *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting,* Micah v. 2. As Christ was born at Bethlehem, so near it, in the fields belonging to it, the first news of his birth was pronounced by the angel of the Lord to the shepherds, who were keeping their flocks by night. So the words before us may be considered as prophetic, as they also contain an account of what had before taken place; the word of God looking backwards and forwards at one and the same time.

V. 7. *We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool.*

The tabernacle was but one; but being divided into two parts, it is spoken of in the plural, tabernacles. None entered it but priests, and none into the most holy place, but the high priest, and that but once a year. The Lord's footstool here spoken of, was the mercy-seat. It was so called, because the Lord was enthroned above it, between the wings of the cherubims. The expressions, *We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool,* are expressive of the hearts of the worshippers; who, though they worshipped the Lord without the tabernacle and temple, in one of the courts of the same, yet their hearts would be in every part of the worship performed by the priests and high priest for them. Next follows a prayer.

V. 8. *Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength.*

The manifestative and influential presence of the Lord in the worship and assemblies of his saints, is most truly desirable. The tabernacle and temple, might each of them individually be styled, *the Lord's rest.* The ark might be styled, *Jehovah's strength;* it being a figure of Christ's body, a sacred pledge of his incarnation, a memorial thereof.

V. 9. *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.*

It must have been a most delightful sight to have seen the Lord's priests in their sacerdotal garments; to have heard them sing the Lord's song; to have heard them celebrating the sacrifice of Immanuel's one offering, in the typical sacrifices, as symbols thereof. So that saints

who were admitted into the spiritual apprehensions of what was contained therein, they could not but shout for joy.

V. 10. *For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.*

Solomon's dedication of the temple was symbolical of Christ's dedication of himself for the great work of salvation. And I see no absurdity in looking on this Psalm as Christ's consecration of his whole church to the worship and service of the Lord. Solomon concluded his prayer at that time, thus: *Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant,* 2 Chron. vi. 40—42. Here are three verses of this Psalm before us quoted by Solomon, and used by him in his prayer. It is added, *Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices: and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever,* 2 Chron. vii. 1—3 Thus it appears to me, the dedication of the church of the living God, may be considered as set before us in all this; and this Psalm, in some parts of it, may be considered as our Lord's dedication of the same; and the prayer, in verses 8, 9, 10, as his intercession for a blessing on every part and ordinance of his own instituted worship; which he pleads for in consequence of what he is, both to the divine Father and the church. *For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.* Messiah is the true David; he was the Father's servant; he pleased him well in all things; he was Jehovah's anointed; the Father could not look on him but he must be well pleased. He here pleads his own personal worth and worthiness for the obtaining the blessings he had requested, that they might be bestowed on his church.

V. 11. *The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.*

Here comes in the promise and certainty of Messiah's incarnation; of his kingdom, of his throne, and the certainty and continuation thereof. It was from David, king of Israel, that Christ was to descend: this was foretold and shadowed out by Solomon: it had been fully expressed by the Lord unto Nathan; he gave the account of it to David; it is recorded in the seventh chapter of the second Book of Samuel, verses 12—16. *And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*

V. 12. *If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.*

Thus the covenant of royalty made to David, is here expressed to be typical of Christ's royalty, kingdom, and duration. Which being so fully expressed in the quotations, I shall say no more concerning it.

V. 13. *For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.*

Zion, the church of God, was chosen by Jehovah in Christ, from everlasting. The form and order into which it was to be cast, as the seat of divine worship, was of divine original. The Jewish ordinances and worship were given from the Lord; so are all Christ's institutions, recorded in the New Testament. The visible church is the object of Christ's delight: his saints are his habitation; they are builded together in Christ, for an habitation of God through the Spirit; and it is the delight of Father, Son, and Spirit, to make their abode with them. These words, *For the Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation*, are declarative of the presence of the Lord with his church; of his delight in his saints; of his visits to them; of his communications unto them; of his desires to possess, to enjoy, and to dwell in them as his dwelling-place.

V. 14. *This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.*

I conceive Christ is here the speaker; he rests in his love to his instituted church; he delights to meet her in his holy

ordinances; he is in the midst of her; he dwells in her; he rejoices in her. His desire for free, full, and open communion with her, is most abundantly evident by his most holy word, which he is pleased to address her with, and by which he is pleased to speak to her heart.

V. 15. *I will abundantly [or, surely] bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.*

This is a most gracious promise; it belongs to the Old Testament church, as it was first given, as it does to the New Testament church also, so far as it relates to the Lord's blessing on his people, as congregated in his name and fear, according to his most holy and revealed will. The Old Testament church had Christ, in his person, glory, salvation, and as the bread of life, the water of life, the light of life, and in his everlasting and perpetual priesthood, and life eternal: in the temple sacrifices and services, in which he was proclaimed unto them: in all the perfection of his love and mercy as a Saviour: in the candlesticks and light, in the shew-bread and daily incense, he was set before the saints under that dispensation, as their light, as their bread, as their perpetual intercessor: in the brazen sea and lavers, as the purifier of his people, as their water of life. They had, in Aaron's budding rod and the pot of manna, both of which were in the most holy place, a solemn figure of Christ, and of his being the eternal life of his church, even in heaven. We have all this most fully realized unto us under the present dispensation, in the revelation of Christ, in the everlasting gospel of his grace, and in the ordinances of it, baptism and the Lord's supper. The Lord blessed the ordinances of his worship to the Jewish church, and engaged himself so to do: *I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.* He rendered, and continued to render, his institutions profitable to his saints; he satisfied her poor with spiritual bread. So he does to the present moment, in his present New Testament church.

V. 16. *I will also clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.*

The priests under the law were types of Christ. Their work and office were to set forth and proclaim salvation: their work and office included all this in it; which made way for saints under their ministration to shout aloud for joy. So under the present publication of Christ, and in the celebration of baptism and the Lord's supper, the ministers of the everlasting gospel are filled with the knowledge of Christ, and are full of him in their ministrations: they may then be said to be clothed with salvation, and saints then

may be expected to shout aloud for joy, in what the Lord Jesus Christ is unto them, in what he hath done for them, and in their completeness in him.

V. 17. *There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.*

By *the horn of David*, is to be understood the power and kingdom of David. This was to spring forth and bud in the church of Christ, by his rule and reign in his church, and amongst his saints; and it could not fail of being in a flourishing condition, when these promises were fulfilled. Christ dwelling in his church; his dwelling in his saints, as his own house and habitation; his blessing his ordinances; his church's provision; his satisfying his poor saints with spiritual bread; his clothing his priests with salvation; his causing Zion's saints to shout for joy; surely this would be, in a spiritual sense, to make the horn of David to bud; this would be to have ordained a lamp for his anointed. It is by the church, by the gospel, and by the ordinances of the same, as a lamp or candle, Christ's name, throne, his fame and renown, his kingdom, glory and majesty, are kept up, continued, and increased in this our present world.

V. 18. *His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.*

This will be the issue of the divine Father's procedure with all the enemies of Messiah, either in church or state. Such are enemies to Christ, who despise his gospel, corrupt his worship; who renounce him, and his reign and government. Such, the divine Father will set himself against; he will subdue and bring them down; he will clothe them with shame and contempt; but upon himself, the King Messiah, shall be everlasting majesty, honour, glory, and splendour: he shall wear his crown: it shall flourish on his most blessed head: it shall adorn his royal brow: it shall add dignity unto him. *His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.* This is a very blessed closure of this Psalm. The blessed Messiah, the head of his church, the king of his church, the saviour of his church: he, in his person, in his kingdom, in all he is, in all he hath done, will be crowned with glory everlasting. *Upon himself shall his crown flourish.* Amen. So be it, O Lord. Amen, and Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THIRD.

A Song of degrees of David.

This Psalm sets forth the blessedness of saints in their union and communion with one another, in the bonds of the everlasting gospel. It expresses the holy perfume they yield each other hereby. This is compared to the precious ointment poured out upon the head of Aaron, the high priest, a type of Christ, which ran down from the head to the collar of his coat. It is further set forth by the dew of Hermon, and by the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion. This was very abundant. For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees.*—*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of saints. They are all united to him; they are all one in him; he is their life; their light; their holiness; their righteousness; their sacrifice; their purity; their salvation; their perfection; they are all one in him. When they are united by his command, in the bonds of the gospel, in a church state, it becomes them to be all of one mind. The Apostle exhorts to this in a very solemn and affectionate manner, thus: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,* 1 Cor. i. 10. Without what is here exhorted to, it is impossible there should be unity amongst saints in church communion: union being the cause and strength of communion. This is the very cement in a gospel church state. The Psalmist calls on others to take a view of the union and communion of saints. *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.* It is a pleasant sight: it is lovely to observe: it is good in its own nature: it is accompanied with many blessings: it is in every respect good and pleasant: be it in social familywise; be it in social connexions; be it in the house and family of Christ; it should there most abundantly shine forth, and be exemplified. When it does, it redounds to the benefit of the church, and to the glory of our common Lord.

V. 2. *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments.*

Under the past dispensation, kings, prophets, and priests

were anointed with oil, to inaugurate them into their office. But Aaron, the high priest, is only here referred unto; because, as he was a most immediate type of Christ, so his unction was most abundant. The Lord himself commanded it. Moses, according to his divine command, composed an holy oil, or ointment, of pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and olive oil. This being compounded after the art of the apothecary, and on the day of consecration, Moses poured of it upon Aaron's head, and anointed him therewith; and it ran from his head down on the neck, or collar of his coat; not down to the bottom of his garments, that would have been to have greased them. Now this was a figure of the anointing of our great high priest, Christ Jesus. John says, we have an unction from the Holy One. There was a most odoriferous smell and perfume, which must have been very acceptable to the sense. Hence the spouse says of her beloved, *Thy name is as ointment poured forth.* Now the unity amongst the brethren of Christ is good, it is pleasant, it is perfuming; *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.* Now like as from Christ, all grace comes down from him the head on all his members, even the meanest of them; so brotherly love is from Christ, and is to be exercised towards all his members, even the meanest of them. This should be exercised in a church state: it hath a savour of Christ in it: it is very perfuming to the saints, and is to their honour and renown. Brotherly love is here compared to precious ointment, because of its effects. It is said, ointment and perfumes rejoice the heart; and so does brotherly love.

V. 3. *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*

As the anointing oil was to Aaron and his sons, in order to their officiating in the priests' office; as the dew of Hermon, which was a very high hill beyond Jordan, which was a hundred miles from Jerusalem; as the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion, on those hills which were round about Jerusalem, as it fell plentifully on these, and also on mount Hermon, so was the unity of these holy brethren here described. It was like dew which descends from heaven, and which is of a cooling, refreshing, and fructifying nature. Brotherly love cometh from heaven. It is the gift of God; it refreshes the souls and bodies of saints; they should abound in the exercise of it to the glory of God; it is as the dew of Hermon which fell from heaven

very abundantly. Brotherly love is as the dew which descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there, in the mountain of Zion, where the church was seated, *the Lord commanded the blessing* on his saints who dwelt and worshipped together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace; the eminent blessing, even the blessing of blessings, life, even spiritual life. Our Lord says, *I am come that ye may have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.* And it is bestowed in the richest abundance on such saints as abound most in loving each other with a pure heart fervently. The blessing the Lord bestows on them is, *even life for evermore.* All the blessings of God's love are comprehended in this—*Life for evermore.* May we enjoy it, to the glory of the giver of it. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOURTH.

A Song of degrees.

This Psalm seems to be designed by the writer for the use of the Levites, who were the guards and keepers of the Temple.

According to the divisions made by David concerning the priests and Levites who were to serve in the services of it, there were 24,000 to set forward the work of the House of the Lord; 6000 were officers and judges. The sons of Aaron were cast into twenty-four orders; some singers, others porters: some of the Levites had charges over the treasures of the Temple, some were porters, and others were watchers in the Temple. Now, it seems this Psalm was composed about the time these divisions took place, and that it was designed for the use of those who were watchers at night in the Temple-service. It contains an exhortation to bless the Lord: it consists in a dialogue; one calls on another to bless the Lord: those who are addressed are styled servants of the Lord. To this a reply is given, and the watchers in the Temple pronounce a blessing on the praying people of the Lord. And this appears to me to be the outline of this song.

V. 1. *A Song of degrees.*—*Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.*

The servants of the Lord here addressed, are such as were engaged in the Temple-service: it was a part of their service to bless the Lord. The priests pronounced the divine benediction twice every day, morning and evening; the high

priest once every year. The Lord's blessing on his whole church is a continued and an everlasting act; it is daily, hourly, and momentary; it cometh down like the dew, which tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men, but it is communicated to the Lord's church abundantly. The word, *Behold*, is here used by way of excitement—*Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.* Let a continual blessing be offered up by you to the glorious Mediator, whose name is exalted above all blessing and praise, whose worth you cannot reach, whose praise you cannot exceed. The Levites not only did service in the Temple by day, but also by night. It is said of the Levites, *the four chief porters were in their set office, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God. And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them.* See 1 Chron. ix. 26, 27. *And these are the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, who remaining in the chambers were free: for they were employed in that work day and night;* ver. 33 of the same chapter: so that it appears these words must be addressed to those persons, it may be from the whole church, reminding them of what became them; viz. to bless the Lord, and calling upon them for their performance of the same.

V. 2. *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary: and bless the Lord.*

The lifting up of the hands was a gesture in prayer; it was an item of their expectation of receiving blessings from the Lord, and it was also an acknowledgment of their having received the same. This was to be done by the watchers in the Temple: it would be a good proof they were upon the watch, that they were in the exercise and discharge of their duty, that their hearts were right with God, that they were sensible of the love of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, unto them, and the whole election of grace, and under a true sense of the same, were disposed at night, and in the night watches, to give the Three in Jehovah glorious praise for the exceeding riches of grace in their kindness towards them in Christ Jesus. Such as exhorted to this, must be conceived to be filled with a sense of Jehovah's goodness to themselves, or they had not called upon others to bless the Lord.

V. 3. *The Lord that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion.*

These words are pronounced by the Levites and watchers in the Temple. They are an answer to the former words, they

having been called upon to bless the Lord: to do this by night, as they stood in the house of the Lord, according to their office, to lift up their hands prayerwise, and bless the Lord in his sanctuary; and the words may imply that saints not thus engaged remembered them in their addresses at the throne of the heavenly Majesty. So these, who at midnight lifted up their hands in the sanctuary, were not unmindful of their brethren who had been praying for them; but return it unto them, by saying, *The Lord that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion.* And thus we may see how every part of the Old Testament worship was expressive of the Lord's blessing his church. The priests, the Levites, the people, the porters, and watchers in the Lord's sanctuary, blessed the whole church, and congregation of Israel, and each other in the name of the Lord—*Jehovah that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion.* It should lead us to consider that every ordinance of the Lord is most divinely intended by him to make us most blessed. May it be thus with us. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH.

This is one of the grand hallelujah Psalms. Christ is the subject of it: his servants are called upon to praise him: the reasons why they should, are mentioned: his eternal power and Godhead, his omnipotency are set forth: his judgments executed on the Egyptians, on the Canaanitish nations, on Sihon and Og, and all the kingdoms who opposed his people, are mentioned, and he is praised for the same, and for the distribution he had made of them, in giving it to his people Israel. The eternal duration of his name, and memorial for his glorious acts, are for ever, and throughout all generations: the vanity of idols and idolatry is set forth: all saints are called upon to praise the Lord: the house of Israel, the house of Aaron, the house of Levi, and all that fear the Lord, are exhorted to bless him: and the whole is closed with blessing and praise. This is the outline of this Psalm before us.

V. 1. *Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord: praise him, O ye servants of the Lord.*

Here is, as I conceive, the word Hallelujah three times over, and with it the hymn begins—*Praise ye the Lord: praise ye the name of the Lord, praise him, O ye servants of the Lord.* It seems as though it was an imitation of the blessing pronounced by the priest on the people, in which

the name Jehovah was uttered three times; as thus, *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace*, Numb. vi. 24—26. As the word Jehovah is in it three times distinctly expressed, to shew the whole three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, are Jehovah, so it seems to me, they are here acknowledged and worshipped in their distinct personalities, and in their distinct offices. Salvation is from the Father; he conceived and planned the scheme of it in his infinite mind. He proposed it to the Son and Spirit; unto whom it was proposed they should take their distinct parts in it. Jehovah the Son was engaged by the divine Father to be the saviour of his church and people. Jehovah the Spirit engaged for all the elect to raise them up out of the death of sin, and to communicate to each and every one of them spiritual and eternal life. The church, or prophet, as representing and speaking in the name of the redeemed of the Lord, might design to praise Jehovah the Father, Jehovah the Son, and Jehovah the Spirit, by ascribing the incommunicable name to each of them, as it belongs and is throughout the scriptures of the Old Testament given unto them. Not that there are three Jehovahs; but there are three in the Essence existing, who bear and sustain this incommunicable name, as being co-equal, co-eternal, and co-essential in the same incomprehensible Godhead. *Praise ye the Lord; Praise ye Jah: Praise ye Jehovah; Praise ye the name of the Lord, (that is Christ:) Praise ye the Lord, O ye his servants or ministers—So here is the Spirit. The Father is to be praised for all the acts of his grace in Christ on the behalf of his people from everlasting; the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is to be praised for his love, and the outgoings of his heart towards his church from everlasting, and for all which he hath done on their behalf in this our world; the Spirit is to be praised for his love to the church, and for his work and office on her behalf. Thus these words are an introduction to the subject-matter set before us in this sacred song.*

V. 2. *Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.*

Thus the church of God is here particularly addressed; such as were now before the Lord to worship him, be they priests or Levites, be they in the inner or in the outer courts, be they at the altar, or singing, or praying, they being all of one Father, one family, one faith, are called upon to praise the Lord, to praise the name of the Lord. *Praise him, says the Psalmist, O ye servants of the Lord; ye that stand in the*

house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. The Psalmist is most certainly in a very elevated frame: he has in view most sublime subjects, or he would not be so full of importunity to impress others with a sense of what he had the spiritual apprehension of, or it would not be, *Praise ye the Lord, praise ye the name of the Lord, praise him, O ye servants of the Lord. Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.* He has not yet done; his subject is all before him, yet he will not begin it before he calls again for praise.

V. 3. *Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good: sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant.*

Jehovah in all his persons and perfections, as revealed in Christ, is the object of worship; the Three in Jehovah are to be praised. One reason is here given—*for the Lord is good, essentially good*; his nature is a fountain of infinite goodness. All he is to his church in Christ is a proof of it; he is all goodness unto them. The Messiah seems to be most peculiarly the subject of this praise. It is therefore added, *Sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant*—There is nothing more so to a spiritual mind, it being a prime act of worship whereby the Lord Jesus Christ is exalted in his church and amongst his saints. Christ is the essence of all good to his beloved ones; he is continually bestowing some good or other upon them.

V. 4. *For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.*

This is the reason here assigned why the saints should act according to the former exhortation, and abound in the praises of the Three in Jehovah, because *the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.* The terms Jacob and Israel are used to remind these persons here excited to praise the Lord of their original and present state. Jacob at first was but low; there were but seventy persons which came out of his loins when he went down into Egypt. There the Israelites multiplied like fishes, and were now innumerable. All these terms might be designed to remind how Jacob wrestled with the angel of the everlasting covenant, and obtained the name Israel. Jehovah chose out Jacob's posterity to be a typical people, out of whom multitudes of the election of grace were to be found, and from whom they were to proceed. This was altogether owing to everlasting love and infinite sovereignty. The Lord chose the elect unto himself, he formed them for himself; they had a supercreation union to God; he chose them *for his peculiar treasure*; he possessed, and will for ever possess them as such.

This is the original of grace: the first act of God towards them was to love them in Christ, to choose them in Christ, to bless them in Christ with all spiritual blessings, to accept them in him to the praise of the glory of his grace. And Jacob and Israel being memorials and types of the Lord's love unto his beloved in Christ, hence under the celebration of his outward goodness to these, his grace towards his elect church is included.

V. 5. *For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.*

From hence to the close of the Psalm, the great deliverer and Saviour of Israel, our Lord Jesus Christ, is most particularly designed. The prophet here speaks in the singular number; he declares what he knew of the Lord, *For I know that the Lord is great.* Christ is Jehovah equal with the Father and the Son; he is great in dignity, in person, in title, in office, in his work and operations in heaven and earth: in his deliverances, and salvations, wrought out on behalf of his church. He is great in the displays of his wrath and judgments on his enemies, *I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord* (here he speaks in the name of the whole church) *is above all gods.* Christ is great in dignity, he is the creator of all things visible and invisible; he is great in person, he being God and man in one person, *God over all, blessed for ever.*—Amen. He is great in titles, which are, *Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* He is wonderful in office, he is the Mediator, the middle person between God and the whole creation, he upholds it: he is the head of the whole election of grace; he is the foundation, centre, and circumference of them; he is the Mediator of their union, and communion with God; he is the Mediator also of reconciliation. *He once suffered the just for the unjust to bring us unto God.* He is great in his work of salvation, he having put away sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. In heaven and upon earth he puts forth his omnipotent power and works his holy will and pleasure, and hereby gives full proof of his eternal power and Godhead. He proved himself to be Jehovah; to be great in counsel and excellent in working; to be above all gods, by what he did in Egypt, and on the behalf of his church there, which was, in succeeding ages, matter for Jacob and Israel to praise him; to give them occasion for saying, one in the name of all the rest, *For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.* This is explained in further particulars.

V. 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.*

Jesus is Jehovah: he, as Mediator, hath all power in heaven and in earth, his will is immutable; all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him; he is self-existent, he is all-sufficient, he is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He created all things, he governs all things, he upholds all things in the world, and in his church in it according to the counsel of his own will, *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places.* Thus absolute sovereignty is here ascribed to Jehovah the Son, who is the Saviour of an elect world; he hath also absolute empire here attributed to him over all things visible and invisible; his providence is here declared to be extended over all the works of his hands. His omniscience and immensity are implied, in what is here asserted, *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places.* Consequently he must fill heaven and earth with his presence and immensity, or he could not be present with his whole creation, to work in and throughout every part of it whatsoever it pleaseth him.

V. 7. *He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.*

Jehovah's economy in his providence, in what concerns our world in which we live, is altogether like himself, whose name is Wonderful. Vapours are engendered in the bowels of the earth; they are exhaled by the light and heat of the sun; they ascend from the ends or corners of the earth, and are drawn up into the region of the air; there they are condensed and become clouds, in which the rain is contained, which the Lord distils abundantly upon the earth. At times the clouds are so full of fire that they burst, and this is the cause of thunder, which makes way for the fire to shoot forth, which is what we call the lightning; these make way for the thus broken clouds to pour down torrents of rain, which serves to cool the air, and to abate the fierceness of the rage of a thunder storm. He bringeth the wind out of his treasures; he hath at all times, in the heavens over our heads, treasures of winds, snow, hail, thunder, lightnings, and he brings them forth as it pleaseth him. Every element is at his command, they are all his servants, *He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the*

wind out of his treasuries. This seems to be mentioned here, to convey an idea how Egypt was destroyed and brought down, by judgments which were executed on it by the agents in nature, under the immediate control of Jehovah; Jesus.

V. 8 *Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.*

He that did in heaven and in the earth, in the seas, and in all deep places, whatsoever he pleased, whose name alone is Jehovah; he who causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he who maketh lightnings for the rain; he who bringeth the wind out of his treasury; he it is who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast: this was Jehovah's act. It was wrought by himself as the deliverer of his people; it is ascribed unto him, *And it came to pass at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead.* Exodus, xii. 29, 30. This was the last of the ten plagues upon Egypt, yet here it is mentioned first; it may be because it completed the deliverance of the Israelites from their bondage to the Egyptians: as the drowning the Egyptians and Pharaoh in the Red Sea, was their complete victory over them.

V. 9. *Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.*

These tokens and wonders were, the turning the water into blood; the sending frogs, lice, swarms of flies, a disease amongst the beasts; a plague of boils and blains; the plague of hail, of rain, of thunders and lightnings; a darkness which lasted for three days. These tokens and wonders were all sent by Jehovah, the deliverer of Israel; these tokens and wonders were *in the midst of Egypt*: they were as so many expressions of the wrath of the Lord upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants. The Psalmist proceeds to the great acts the Lord wrought further on the behalf of his people, in conquering the Canaanitish nations, and giving the land unto Jacob and Israel.

V. 10. *Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings.*

They were great, being filled with inhabitants, and their cities were great and walled up to heaven: yet Jehovah-Jesus, the true Joshua and conqueror, smote them, and slew their mighty kings.

V. 11. *Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.*

They all fell before Israel, and with them all their kingdoms. Thus the hand of the Lord was displayed, the enemies of his people subdued, their power taken away, and the Lord's word completely accomplished. Thus, as it respects our Jesus, he has conquered all our spiritual enemies, he has most completely vanquished them, he has made a complete conquest of them. The victory is his, the benefit is ours.

V. 12. *And gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.*

Thus he accomplished his holy purpose and promise, and put his people into the actual possession of what he had promised their predecessors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was a promised land: and the Lord bestowed it on Jacob and Israel, as an heritage. In all these acts of the Lord's we may see his vengeance on his enemies, and his mercy to his chosen.

V. 13. *Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever, and thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations.*

Christ is what God is, and God is what Christ is: the name, the person, the love, the work, the righteousness, sacrifice, intercession, fulness, word, and promise of Christ are immutably the same. He, and what he is, endureth for ever: so doth his memorial. His gospel, his ordinances, baptism, and the supper, which are memorials of his person, love, incarnation, of his life, sorrows, death, burial, and resurrection from the dead: together with the perpetual virtue of his sacrifice, these endure for ever, and throughout all generations. These will be continued until day and night come to an end; nothing but Christ's second appearing will be their cessation.

V. 14. *For the Lord will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.*

Our Lord will be the defender and the defence of his people in every age, and in and throughout all generations. He will protect his saints, he will plead their cause, he will judge their oppressors; he will feel for, and exercise his divine compassion on them; he will rid them out of the hands of their enemies.

V. 15. *The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.*

In this, and the two following verses, the heathen and their idolatry, are set forth in terms the most contemptible. The heathen, left to their own darkness, and to the imagi-

nation of their own minds, and not being favoured with the light of revelation, they made idols; they were silver and gold; they made them, they were the work of men's hands. It seems they were shaped so as to figure out the form of a man; a description of them follows.

V. 16. *They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.*

They were senseless, motionless: they were wholly inanimate. The eyes formed in them were but forms and shapes, their mouths were the same.

V. 17. *They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.*

It is an awful proof of the extreme sinfulness of human nature, and the total extinction of the divine image of God which man was created in, that any of the human race should ever have been left to themselves, to make gods to worship. It might well be said of such and their images, as it is in the next words:

V. 18. *They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.*

Their makers and their worshippers were as senseless as these images, as it respected the vanity of their minds.—We have had the same descriptions of these idols, of their makers and worshippers, before, in Psalm cxv.; so I shall add no more here on this subject.

V. 19. *Bless the Lord, O house of Israel: bless the Lord, O house of Aaron.*

The house of Israel includes and comprehends the whole Jewish church, which is called upon to bless Jehovah. They had great reason for so doing, he having chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure; they had reason to bless him for his judgments which he executed on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and for delivering them out of Egypt; they had reason to bless him, for what he had done on their behalf, in smiting the seven Canaanitish nations, and in his slaughter of their kings, who were all of them the enemies of Christ and his church; they had to bless him for his gift of their lands unto them for an heritage. They had to praise him for what he had said concerning his relation unto them, in these words unto Moses, *Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations, Exodus iii. 15.* They had to bless the Lord who had judged them, and pleaded their cause, and avenged them of their enemies;

they had to bless the Lord for the true knowledge he had given them of himself, and for saving them from the idolatry of the heathen. The prophet might therefore well excite them to bless the Lord. The house of Aaron comprehends the whole engaged in the office of the priesthood: whose office it was to minister, and bless the people of Israel in the name of the Lord.

V. 20. *Bless the Lord, O house of Levi: ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.*

By the house of Levi are comprehended all those who ministered in the service of the Lord, who were not priests. All the priests were Levites, but all the Levites were not priests; under the addition, *Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord*, are to be comprehended the worshippers of the Lord. All these in the daily sacrifices and services of the temple, in which Christ was most clearly and evidently set forth, had a sufficient cause and motive to bless the Lord; *Bless the Lord, O house of Israel: bless the Lord, O house of Aaron: bless the Lord, O house of Levi: ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.* Thus the whole congregations of the Lord's people are called upon to bless his name.

V. 21. *Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.*

This seems to be the reply of the house of Israel, the house of Aaron, the house of Levi, and all, both small and great, who feared the Lord; who having been excited to bless the Lord in their own persons, cases, and various circumstances, break out in one grand chorus, saying, with one voice, *Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.* Thus the Psalm closes. It may well be considered to be one of the grand Hallelujah Psalms. No doubt but it was used at some one of the grand festivals, either at the Passover, Pentecost, or Tabernacles. May the Lord give us such a view and sense of his mercies, as may enable us to be continually praising and magnifying his most holy name. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH.

The grand subject of this Psalm is an exhortation to give thanks unto the Lord for his goodness and mercy, which are perpetual, and endure for ever. The first four verses are as a preface to the whole of it. The goodness of Jehovah—the mercy of Jehovah—his being *God of gods*, and *Lord of lords*—it being He who alone doeth great wonders, *for his mercy endureth for ever.* This is the substance of the intro-

ductory part of the Psalm. Next follows an account of Jehovah's creating the heavens by his wisdom; of the earth also; of his stretching out the earth above the waters; of his creating great lights, the sun to rule by day, and the moon and stars to govern the night; which is ascribed to his mercy, which *endureth for ever*. This ends at the close of the ninth verse. Next follows an account of the destruction of Egypt, in their firstborn, of bringing Israel out of it, of this being effected by the strong arm of Jehovah; all which is ascribed to the mercy of Jehovah, which *endureth for ever*. This extends from the 10th to the close of the 12th verse. Then what the Lord did in dividing the Red sea into parts, in causing Israel to pass through the midst of it, with his overthrowing Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, is the subject of the 13th, 14th, and 15th verses. The 16th verse is consecrated to the praise of Jehovah for this great act, his leading his people through the wilderness. The succeeding verses, viz. the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22d, contain an act of praise to Jehovah, who is God of gods, and Lord of lords, for his destroying the kings of the land of Canaan, and for giving their lands for an heritage to Israel. Then the mercy of Jehovah is celebrated for remembering his people in their low estate, for redeeming them from their enemies: this is contained in the 23d and 24th verses. In the two next, which are the last verses, thanks are offered to Jehovah for giving food to all flesh. And the hymn is closed with thanksgiving unto the God of heaven; for *his mercy endureth for ever*. This is the outline of this most sacred hymn.

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

It has been again and again observed, in the going over the Psalms which have been already explained, that the word *Jehovah*, which is the same with the word *Lord*, is expressive of the incomprehensible Essence, or Godhead; and also that it belongs to each of the Persons who exist and coexist in it. The goodness of Jehovah mentioned here, must have respect to what he is essentially, and to what he is in the communications of his goodness to the world at large, to all his creatures in it and upon it, and to his church in Christ, who are to remain on it for a certain season. The goodness of the Lord here in an especial manner noticed, is for what he is in himself, and for the continued effect of the same. An exhortation is given to others to join with the Psalmist in this act of worshipping God, in giving thanks unto him: *O give thanks unto the Lord; for*

he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. The goodness of the Eternal Three is expressed and fully manifested in the Father's everlasting love in the covenant of grace; in the full, free, and complete salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the love of the Holy Spirit, who is pleased to reveal Christ, and to take of the things of Christ, and shew the same to the church and people of the most high God. Now, as all this proceeds out of the immensity of the goodness of Jehovah, and is the act and will of the coequal Three, so it is here the worship performed unto them, to give thanks for the same: *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.* Salvation proceeds from mercy, as election doth from love. And whilst election is the very fountain from whence salvation flows, yet in this hymn it is so far omitted as not to be distinctly mentioned. The burden of this song is mercy. You have it in this verse, and it is continued in every verse; so that you have twenty-six everlastings in it: *his mercy endureth for ever.* So long as the church lasts, so long as time is, we may well rejoice in this, Jehovah's mercy towards us in Christ, and as considered in him, endureth for ever.

V. 2. *O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

The repetition of the exhortation to proceed in the worship proposed, shews how deeply the heart of the speaker was in this divine service. The title *God of gods*, shews the estimation he had of Jehovah, the object of his worship. He was God by nature, from himself alone; he was over all that were called gods; none of them were to be mentioned with him; not even the angels of his presence; they were but creatures, he was their creator; he received his life, his being, his blessedness, his glory, his majesty, from none; they received their all from him. He has not received, nor can receive, any thing whereby any of his creatures, or saints, can add to his essential blessedness and excellency: *O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.* Thus the writer enters very deliberately on the subject before him: he is very deeply impressed with Jehovah's goodness, with his mercy which flows from it: this he cannot forget: and that there is a continuance in it, seems to increase the admiration of his mind: he considers it is extended over all Jehovah's works, throughout the vast empire of nature, providence, and grace.

V. 3. *O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Here is a fresh title given to Jehovah, *Lord of lords*. The

word *Lord* here, is not *Jehovah*; it is a word which is frequently given the Second Person in the infinite Essence. It signifies *Lord*, or *Governor*, or *Ruler*. All the powers of universal nature, throughout its utmost extent, are under the immediate agency of him whose name is God of gods, and Lord of lords. So that the prophet, from the consideration of *Jehovah's* goodness, lordship, sovereignty, and mercy exercised over all his creatures, and the work of his hands; therefore, as the chorus to each particular part of the subject, adds, *for his mercy endureth for ever*.

V. 4. *To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Thus the prophet goes on, in a very gradual manner, with his subject of thanksgiving. *Jehovah* is the God of wonders; he is a wonder-working God; his wonders of grace are altogether stupendous; his everlasting love, and vast designs in Christ, towards the whole election of grace, are all worthy of his nature, persons, perfections, and glory. His embracing, in his vast designs, the creation of the world—the creation of angels and man—his will concerning the fall—his revelation of Christ, his promise of salvation by him—his bringing Christ into the world, his making manifest the purposes of his will in and by him, are altogether wonderful. To him, to *Jehovah*, unto the God of gods, to the Lord of lords, to the universal Lord and Governor of the universe—to him who alone doeth great wonders, *for his mercy endureth for ever*—to him give thanks. Thus he prefaces the subject which he means to pursue. So that we have in these verses the introduction to the theme which is to follow; which being digested in the psalmist's mind, it was quite easy for him to pursue; especially so, he being under the immediate influence and unction of the Holy Spirit: *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the God of gods, for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever. To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.* This, when properly digested in the real spiritual mind, will most sweetly draw out the heart into holy thanks to *Jehovah*, and fill the mind with holy wonder, in the contemplation of his majesty, goodness, mercy, and in reviewing the great wonders which he alone hath wrought.

V. 5. *To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

It was by wisdom *Jehovah* made the heaven: it was by Wisdom-Mediator, even him who is the speaker in the eighth chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon. Various per-

sonal acts are attributed to this great one. Such as searching, or finding out. *I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions*, ver. 12. Acts of love and affection are attributed to him. *I love them that love me*, ver. 17. Also acts of joy and delight. *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men*, ver. 30, 31. All these are spiritual acts. Now it is by this wonderful One, Jehovah made the heavens, stretched out the earth above the waters: it was by him he made great lights, the sun, moon, and stars: and they were all so many acts and fruits of everlasting mercy. The act of creation was an act of divine sovereignty. *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created*, Rev. iv. 11. The world was created in the intuitive views Jehovah had of Christ God-man, as *the Lamb that was to be slain to take away sin*. In his infinite understanding he knew the whole of Adam's posterity would be all sinners to a man. He provided for the salvation of the elect, by preordaining Christ to be their surety; who was to be slain to take away their sin. Under these views of the subject, the creation of heaven and earth, and all contained therein, might well be ascribed to Jehovah's mercy. *To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever*. The heavens were created first, before the earth: that is, the matter out of which they were formed. The heavens, with all contained in them, were formed and fashioned by the word of God. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth*, Psalm xxxiii. 6. The incomprehensible Three, in the incomprehensible Essence, were jointly concerned in the act of creation. Here the Psalmist ascribes the making the heavens to wisdom. *To him that by wisdom made the heavens*. By which he does not intend that perfection in God, which so clearly shines forth in and throughout the whole creation. It is not here, as it is elsewhere said, *in wisdom hast thou made them all*. But here it is, *To him who by wisdom made the heavens*. Wisdom here is a person. It is he who is essentially the wisdom of God; and who is personally and manifestatively the wisdom of God; even the second Person, who was set up as God and man, in one Christ. It was by him God made the heaven and the earth: it was for him, he was the end for which they were created. The Apostle says, *God created all things by Jesus Christ*, Eph. iii. 9. In the first chapter of the Colossians the

Apostle, speaking of Christ as God-man, says, *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist*, verses 15, 16, 17. This most adorable Person, who is in the Godhead one with the Father and the Spirit in the essential Essence, and who by the will of the divine Three was set up by them to be God-man, is the *Wisdom* by whom the world was made. *To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.* The heavens were made before the earth, and together with them all the angels, both those which stood, and those which fell; and at the same moment the earth also. So it follows:

V. 6. *To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Moses says, *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was upon the face of the waters.* The world was in its chaotic state, was a mass of earth and water. The earth floating in it sunk, and was covered with water. By the power of the essential wisdom, the Son of God, the earth was stretched out above the waters. A centre was formed for the reception of the waters in the hollow of the globe, into which they fell; and this is agreeable to the divine account given us of this in the first chapter of Genesis. *And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas; and God saw that it was good*, ver. 6—10. These were most stupendous acts of Godhead. And here it is celebrated. *To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.* Hereby the world being framed was fitted to produce, at God's almighty command, creatures of all sorts, and food suited to each kind, for the benefit of man. All

which is here attributed to mercy. It is the sole burden of this song, and the close of every verse in it, *For his mercy endureth for ever.*

V. 7. *To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

There is an order in setting forth this subject which must not be overlooked. Moses says, *God said, Let there be light, and there was light.* Fire, light, and air, are the grand agents in nature. Light was before the sun; it is distinct from it. On the fourth day of creation God created lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night, and to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years; and said, *Let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth.* To these two, great lights were added. The Psalmist reviewing this, here says, by way of thanks to Jehovah for the same, *To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever.* Then these lights are more particularly expressed.

V. 8. *The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

This is exactly agreeable with what is recorded by Moses, who says, *And God made two great lights.* By which are to be understood the sun and moon. *The greater light to rule by day, and the lesser light to rule the night.* He made the stars also. *And to rule over the day and over night, and to divide the light from the darkness, and God saw that it was good.* This the prophet ascribes to the mercy of Jehovah; *For his mercy endureth for ever.* The lights, the sun, moon, and stars, or the ordinances of the material heavens; the Lord says to his people, by his prophet *Jeremiah, Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord, chap. xxxi. 35—37.*

V. 9. *The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Thus from verse 5, to the close of this 9th verse, the praise of Jehovah is celebrated for his creating the heavens by wisdom; for his stretching out the earth above the waters; for his making great lights; for his giving the sun to rule

by day; for his giving the moon and stars to rule by night. So that we have in these five verses an epitome of praise for the creation of the heavens and the earth; for his garnishing the visible heavens with lights, sun, moon, stars, and planets; for the end and use for which he appointed them. I conceive to each of these verses these words, *O give thanks unto the Lord*, should be subjoined. As thus, *O give thanks unto the Lord, the self-existing Essence, to him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto Jehovah, to him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto Jehovah, to him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto Jehovah, to him that made the sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto Jehovah, to him that ordained the moon and the stars to govern the night: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

V. 10. *To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

From henceforward, to the close of the Psalm, some special acts of Jehovah are recited; including the dispensations of his holy care and providence towards his people Israel, and in his destruction of their enemies. To make way for the release of his people he smote Egypt in their firstborn. He said, *Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt. And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maid servant that is behind the mill, and all the firstborn of beasts*, Exodus xi. 4, 5. And it was most awfully inflicted. This was in sore wrath against the Egyptians, but in mercy to the Israelites. Hence it is thus expressed: *To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for ever.* It was a very solemn part of the worship of Christ, performed by saints under the Old Testament dispensation, to celebrate his praises by recapitulating the great acts the Lord had wrought for them in his goodness to their predecessors. The destruction of Egypt was one of the Lord's great acts: it is therefore so often repeated in the word of God.

V. 11. *And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

This was the effect of the former. The death of all the firstborn of Egypt was the deliverance of Israel. The Passover was the commemoration of it; the bringing Israel out of Egypt was the Lord's own act; it is always ascribed to

him ; he is so often praised for it in the Psalms, it being so expressive of his goodness and mercy to the seed of Abraham, his friend.

V. 12. *With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm : for his mercy endureth for ever.*

The arm of the Lord was made bare, his power was most eminently displayed in this wonderful exercise of his providence towards them. It is here ascribed to his mercy—*O give thanks unto the Lord, to him that smote Egypt in their firstborn : for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the Lord, to him that brought out Israel from among them : for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto Jehovah, to him who with a strong hand and with a stretched out arm brought forth his people out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt : for his mercy endureth for ever.* Thus these three verses, the 11th, 12th, and 13th, are engaged in commemorating the destruction of Egypt in the death of their firstborn, in bringing Israel out from among them, and that by the outstretched arm and omnipotent strength of Jehovah, even our Lord Jesus Christ ; for he it was who was their saviour and deliverer.

V. 13. *To him which divided the Red sea into parts : for his mercy endureth for ever.*

It is conceived by the Jewish writers, that the Lord caused the Red sea to divide into twelve parts, so that each tribe had a passage for themselves ; which seems very probable, as hereby it was the more easy for them to make a quick and easy passage.

V. 14. *And made Israel to pass through the midst of it : for his mercy endureth for ever.*

It was a type of baptism. The Apostle says, *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea : and were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea,* 1 Cor. x. 1, 2. The divided waters were as a wall ; the Israelites were surrounded on each side of them : the cloud in which the Lord was, covered them, so they were as persons buried. It is said of them, *By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land : which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned,* Heb. xi. 29. The Apostle ascribes their passage through the Red sea to their faith ; the Psalmist ascribes it wholly to Jehovah—*And made Israel to pass through the midst of it : for his mercy endureth for ever.* Both are true : it was the Lord's act towards them, and it was their act towards the Lord. It was the Lord's command to Moses to say, *Speak unto the children of Israel, that they*

go forward, and at the same time to command him to lift up his rod, and stretch out his hand over the sea, and divide it. *And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea, Exod. xiv. 15, 16.* It was a wonderful act of the Lord on the behalf of Israel: it was great faith in the word and power of God in Moses and the Israelites to enter into and pass through the divided channel: it was foolhardiness in Pharaoh to pursue after them; yet he did so, and it was to his destruction.

V. 15. *But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Thus the salvation of the Israelites was the destruction of their enemies; and here are three verses in this sublime ode consecrated to celebrate the Lord's praise and mercy for his dividing the Red sea into parts; for his conducting Israel through it; for his overthrowing Pharaoh and his host therein: all which were great and stupendous acts. We may therefore well, to increase the beauty and perfection of the song, say, *O give thanks unto the Lord, to him which divided the sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the incomprehensible Essence, to him who made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the Three in Jehovah, the everlasting God, who overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.* I conceive this addition swells the majesty of the subject.

V. 16. *To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

This was Christ's act; he it was who took them under his care and protection, and went before them, and was their guide through the wilderness of Arabia: he fed them whilst in it with manna from heaven. It was a type of himself, who is the bread of God, the bread of life, the bread of heaven. He gave them water out of the rock of stone. This was typical of himself also, who is the water of life, the well of life, the spring of life, the water of life. They had these miracles continued all the while they were in the wilderness: when they sinned in despising the manna, then the Lord instituted the ordinance of the Brazen Serpent for health and cure; which being once set up, and looked at, the Israelites were healed, which was an evidence that *his mercy endureth for ever.* This verse is singly consecrated to celebrate Jehovah's goodness in bearing them up and carrying them safely through their journey to Canaan.

V. 17. *To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

When the Israelites were in the wilderness, after Pharaoh's destruction, the next and first who opposed them was Amalek, who fought with them in Rephidim. Moses commanded Joshua to choose men, and go out and fight with him, promising on the coming day to stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand. The issue was, Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi; that is, The Lord is my banner, Exod. xvii. 13—15.* This was as a pledge that other kings would also fall before them. So they did.

V. 18. *And slew famous kings: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

The smiting great kings, and slaying mighty kings, are here ascribed to Jehovah. *O give thanks unto him who is the fountain of being and essential blessedness, to him who led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto Jehovah, to Jah, the Saviour, to him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the Lord, to him that slew mighty kings: for his mercy endureth for ever.* It was in mercy to his church and in wrath to his enemies Jehovah thus exercised his providential dispensations.

V. 19. *Sion king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

An account is recorded of this, Numb. xxi. 20 to 30. This took place the last year the Israelites were in the wilderness. This conquest of Sihon, his people, and country, was of great advantage to the Israelites; it is therefore so often mentioned in the sacred scriptures, and it is here ascribed to the mercy of the Lord; so also is the destruction of Og and his people and country, which is recorded in the same chapter with the former, ver. 31 to the end.

V. 20. *And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

These kings conquered, their nations subdued and taken by the Israelites into possession, were proofs to them the Lord would also conquer all the kings and kingdoms in the land of Canaan for them.

V. 21. *And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

All beings, kingdoms, states, and things are at the Lord's disposal; all worlds, beings, and things, are in his hands.

These kings were enemies to Christ, they were worshippers of dunghill deities; so that it was most just with the Lord to slay them, and give their lands to those he pleased. He gave them to Israel.

V. 22. Even an heritage for Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever.

This was an act of royal sovereignty and favour. Moses says, *The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people (for ye were the fewest of all people) but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath, which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, Deut. vii. 6—8.* And it was from the same cause, the Lord slew great kings, and smote mighty kings, Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan, and gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his servant. *O give thanks unto Jehovah, to him who slew Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the God of gods, to him who slew Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the Lord of lords, to him, who having conquered Sihon and Og, gave their lands on the other side Jordan for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the incomprehensible Jehovah, to him who gave the land of Sihon and Og an heritage to Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever.* From hence to the end of this Psalm there is a celebration of Jehovah's praises for his remembrance of his people, for his redeeming his people from Egypt, and giving food to all flesh; and the whole is concluded with giving thanks unto him, the God of heaven, whose mercy endureth for ever.

V. 23. Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever.

This was mercy indeed. It is very conceivable the reference is to their low estate in Egypt. We are informed concerning their state and case, thus: *And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them, Exodus ii. 23—25.* All this was from the Lord's mercy,

which *endureth for ever*; as our salvation, and translation from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, also are.

V. 24. *And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

They were redeemed by the Lord out of and from their enemies; which was typical of the redemption of the whole church of God, by the Lord Jesus Christ; by whom we are saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; all which is, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life, Luke i. verses 71—76.

V. 25. *Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

This is an act of sovereign bounty; it is very extensive; it is the fruit and effect of mercy: *O give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good: who remembered us in our low estate: even when we were perfectly and entirely lost, as considered in and of ourselves. O give thanks unto Him, for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the Lord of all lords, who hath redeemed us from our enemies; for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the God of gods, who giveth food to all flesh; for his mercy endureth for ever.*

V. 26. *O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Thus the Psalm closes, in which the Prophet expresses the mercy of the Lord over heaven and earth, as expressed towards his church, in the deliverances wrought for his people, in the redemption wrought out for them, in his gifts bestowed upon them, and in the exercise of his universal providence towards all flesh, twenty-six times. Here are twenty-six everlastings in one Psalm, all flowing from Jehovah the God of heaven. *O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever. Amen.*

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH.

The subject of this Psalm is expressive of what the Lord's people endured in Babylon, when they were captives there. They wept, they hung their harps upon the willows as having no use for them. An item is given of the scorn with which their enemies treated them, and the reply given unto