

that is our Saviour is our God. With respect to the words as they were offered by the prophet, *Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger towards us to cease*; they contain a request to Jehovah, as the God of salvation, that he would complete the restoration of his people, and thereby cause all appearances of his anger to cease from the Jewish people and nation. Turn to us, and turn us to our former estate: cause to cease, or dissipate from us, thine anger.

V. 5. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

These questions are so many pleadings with the God of salvation. These pleadings are all in faith: they are only used as so many arguments with the Lord, that he would go on to continue what he had begun. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? Shall the tokens and righteous expressions of thy displacency with us, not cease? Surely thou art the God of salvation. Thou hast brought back the body of the people. It is true, others yet remain behind. Shall they not also be restored? Wilt thou continue thine anger to thy people Israel, to some or other of their posterity to all generations? We pray it may not be so.

V. 6. Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Surely we hope thou wilt. O revive us from sin and sorrow. Help us, Lord, to rejoice in thee, our almighty deliverer. Thou hast thus begun our deliverance. We have hereby a full proof of thy faithfulness, that thou wilt not wholly cast us off from being a people, until thy Christ is born amongst us, and made known to thy church of which we are a part. Then, should there be a rejection of him, it will be an act of justice in thy divine Majesty to cast off the bulk of the nation for this crime. Whilst we must leave this with thee, we cannot but pray for the advent of the Saviour. This is requested in the next words.

V. 7. Shew us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.

Let thy mercy be openly displayed, of which we have so often heard, and which is contained in the mysterious incarnation of thy essential Word. Grant us all contained in the salvation of that Jesus, who has been so long promised to us, and looked for by all thy believing people. All thy mercy which thou wilt display on thy church, is treasured up in him. Give us a spiritual apprehension thereof. Grant us thy salvation, in all the fulness and perfection of it, in the person and mediation of Christ, thy beloved. Thus the prayer ends. Nothing can be more gospel-like. It is most

truly godlike and divine. There is the whole salvation of Jehovah set forth before us, in the person, work, and offices of the glorious Mediator. When saints are in any sorrow and distress, they are directed to look to him. This was the case with the whole elect church under the Jewish dispensation, and will be the case of the whole election of grace to the end of time.

V. 8. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak : for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints : but let them not turn again to folly.*

The prophet having in the past verses prayed for the full and complete salvation of the church, from all evil and enemies, and expressed his faith in the incarnation of the Messiah, and in that mercy Jehovah would express and display in him, waits on the Lord for an answer of prayer. This he is very attentive unto : *I will hear what God the Lord will speak.* It is just what Habakkuk did on a like occasion, *I will stand upon my watch, and set me on the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me,* chap. ii. 1. It well becomes us to watch fit opportunities for prayer ; and also to watch or attend to the answers the Lord is pleased to give us, and what the Lord is pleased to teach us hereby. It must have been so in a very special manner with the Psalmist, who had been praying for the coming of Christ in the flesh. He had declared in the name of the whole church, and prayed Jehovah would show his mercy, and grant them his salvation. He therefore wants to attend to *what God the Lord would speak*, what reply he would make to this. He wants to know when the blessed Immanuel will make his appearance : as they were returned from Babylon, it was well known there was a precise and determinate space of time for the same, and which was now advancing ; for he will speak peace unto his people. Christ, the Prince of peace, would be sent ; in him God would speak peace unto his people, and to his saints. *Yet let them not turn again to folly ; [or, that they may not turn again to folly ; or, to them that turn the heart to him.]* The Lord God had given a full answer to this prayer, and it was but to turn to Daniel's prophecy, where it might be found. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy,* chap. ix. 24. Which scripture was most exactly suited to this prophet's request. Those words, *but let them not return again to folly, or that they may not turn again to folly,*

or to them that turn the heart to him, are expressive of the fruits of reconciliation: 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, and not turn again to the folly of sin, which saints and the people of God have renounced.

V. 9. *Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.*

The prophet speaks with the fullest assurance, as if he saw Christ visibly before his eyes. He knew the word of God could not be broken, nor the promise of his advent be frustrated. God the Saviour would be incarnate; he would be seen by mortal eyes; he would dwell in the land of Israel; he would manifest forth his glory in human nature; he would heal the bodies and souls of men, by the word of his power. The body of Christ was the true tabernacle, or temple, which the Lord pitched, in which all the fulness of the Godhead resided. John says, *And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,* i. 14. He was nigh them that feared him, as the life, their light, their strength, their holiness, righteousness, purity, salvation, glory, perfection, and heaven; and his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation. It is by beholding him in the glass of the everlasting gospel we are changed into his image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

V. 10. *Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*

In the person of Jesus, the Saviour of his church, all the perfections of the divine nature shine forth. The bowels of divine mercy, and the infinity of God's compassions, are all expressed, and made known in him. The truth of God, of all his revealed will, of all his promises and declarations of grace, with the whole of his revelation concerning salvation, are all fully realized in Christ: he is the truth of God; he is the very seal of truth to all which Jehovah hath spoken; he is the righteousness of God manifestatively and representatively; he is Jehovah the righteousness of his church, and his righteousness is their everlasting garment of perfection. They are made the righteousness of God in him. Christ is our peace. In him is this wonderful sight; mercy, truth, righteousness, and peace, all united, and shining forth in full-orbed glory. The believer cannot but be refreshed with a sight, view, and spiritual apprehension of the same. So was the Psalmist; he is so full he must proceed, and say more.

V. 11. *Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.*

Christ's human nature may be said to spring out of the earth, as it was conceived in the womb of Mary, and born of her. It is spoken concerning him, *In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel*, Isa. chap. iv. 2. Righteousness, or the Righteous One, looked down from heaven, and took on him our nature, without all spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin. Righteousness and Truth, thus united in the person of Christ, God-Man, the true Immanuel, here was every thing which God's holiness, justice and truth, required. The conception of Christ was immaculate; the human nature of Christ was spotless; his birth was undefiled; his life was holiness in its uttermost perfection; his obedience was the very perfection of all which the law required; his death a most efficacious sacrifice. So that the Father beholding him could not but be well pleased. O that we could but enter into this subject!

V. 12. *Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase.*

This is descriptive of the blessed fruits and effects of the incarnation of Christ. The descent of the Spirit is one fruit of it. The everlasting gospel, in which the person of Christ in all his glory, and his unsearchable riches, are revealed, are benefits which follow, on the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. Our knowledge of him, and faith in him, are the fruits which flow therefrom.

V. 13. *Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps; [or, and shall set his steps in the way.]*

On the glorious manifestation of Christ in the flesh, Righteousness is here expressed as going before him, as his harbinger, to make ready and prepare his way. It was in the way of righteousness he set his steps; in this way he walked; he never was out of this way. His whole life was an obedience of the whole law; it was an obedience to the will of him that sent him, an obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. We, in communion with him, walk in the way of his steps, having him going before us as our pattern and example. May we take a view of him in the love of his mind, the glory of his person, the perfection of his incarnate life, the benefit of his salvation, in the full assemblage of all divine perfections, as they meet and shine

forth in him. May we contemplate him as Jehovah's righteous one, and view and review the sight the Father took of him, when he became incarnate, and abode therein, until he had brought in by his obedience an everlasting righteousness. Then we shall reap profit by reading this sacred ode, in which he is set before us by the Holy Ghost. The Lord grant this for his mercy sake. Amen.

PSALM THE EIGHTY-SIXTH.

A Prayer of David.

It is the same with the title of the Seventeenth Psalm, and it was there explained;—how Christ prayed, why he prayed, his need of prayer, to whom he prayed, the ground and encouragements he had for to support his mind in prayer, and his object and end in prayer. These are the subjects which have been freely, fully, and frequently opened, in the first book of the Psalms, so that it is only to refer unto them, and any inquiries concerning these matters will be thereby satisfied. This Psalm is a Prayer of David, the beloved one; the antitypical David, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the only one in this third book of Psalms, except the eighty-eighth, I would venture solely and entirely to apply to Christ. The subject matter of this is, a prayer in which the great Mediator expresses his griefs and distresses prophetically. He is earnest in his supplication; he expresses his holiness, faith, and fervour in his prayer, as motives with the Lord to attend unto him. He mentions the goodness and power of God, as that it would be one day acknowledged by such as should be truly converted to him, throughout all nations. He requests for wisdom to direct him, for singleness of heart to persevere in the Lord's ways prescribed for him to walk in. He offers up his thanksgiving for deliverance out of his deepest distress; he expresses the wrath and malice of his enemies against him; he prays for help and salvation. This is the outline of it.

V. 1. *A Prayer of David. Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me; for I am poor and needy.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh, might most probably address his divine Father in these words; for as he was made of a woman, made under the law, and circumcised, so he was bound to keep the whole law: as such, it became him to attend to the whole ritual of it, both ceremonial as well as moral. As he went to the yearly feasts, and when at Jerusalem attended the hours of prayer

at the temple, so he might be there when this very Psalm was sung, which was expressive of his holy heart. He might well say, *Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me, for I am poor and needy.* In his state of humiliation, he had not a place where to lay his head. The Apostle will explain to us the poverty of Christ: he says, *ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich,* 2 Cor. viii. 9. Our Lord would the Father should look on him agreeably to the state he was in, according to the frame of his mind, and the apprehension he had of his own case. It well becomes us to imitate Christ in the same way, in our accesses to the throne.

V. 1. *Preserve my soul, for I am holy: O thou, my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.*

Christ prays to be preserved in his soul. He was impeccable, being the man in God; yet being made in the form and likeness of sinful flesh, and being made like unto his brethren in all things, he thus prayed. Yet he uses an argument in his prayer which none of us can. *For I am holy.* In the margin it is, *one whom thou favourest.* The learned say, the word here rendered *holy* is the same which is used in the Sixteenth Psalm, *Thou shalt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption.* Christ, the holy one of God, was sanctified by the Father, and sent into the world, and he was holiness to the Lord. It is also said, the word properly signifies *good, merciful, pious, devoted to the service of God.* If we take it up under both these ideas, it will be most suitably applicable to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the speaker here. None but him could approach God in his own person, and say, *preserve thou my soul, for I am holy:* he could, for he was as man the holy One of God; he was, as the man in God, the fellow of the Lord of hosts, incomprehensibly and incommunicably holy. As considered in his union and relation to his church, he is the fountain and spring of all their communicated holiness. *Preserve thou my soul, for I am good, merciful, pious, devoted to the service of God,* will well apply to Christ's mediatorial person, work, and office. He was every way fitted for his office: he was full of mercy to the elect of God; he was good, personally so; he was *pious*; he was in heart, life, and conversation, like unto God; he was in his person, office, life, work, and death, wholly devoted to the law. He might therefore most properly mention all this in his address to the Divine Majesty. It is like what the same most holy one says in these words, *I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work*

which thou gavest me to do, John xvii. 4. O thou, my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee. All that Christ, as the Father's Servant, was to be, to do, and suffer, was notified in the everlasting covenant. Our Divine Lord acted according to the whole of this, in and throughout his whole life of humiliation. He prays on the footing of this, for acceptance of his person and work, and complete discharge from all the imputation of sin and curse laid on him, as the surety of his people. *O thou, my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.* The ground of all which hath been so frequently opened, that I conceive nothing further need be repeated: namely, how Jehovah was Christ's God; in what sense he was the Father's servant. These subjects have been so explained, that it appears unnecessary to repeat them here.

V. 3. *Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.*

Our Lord was frequent in prayer: he was mighty, and prevailed. He prayed for himself and for his whole mystic body; he needed mercy himself, he being charged with their sin: they all need mercy, and he hath by his obedience, sufferings, and blood-shedding, made a passage-way for the conveyance of it unto them. It is the best exercise we can possibly be engaged in, to be looking wholly at his mediation.

V. 4. *Rejoice the soul of thy servant; for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in our world, was *a man of sorrows*. God alone was his comforter; it was Jehovah alone was his consolation. He renounced the whole world, with all the creatures, joys, and comforts in it; his heart and affections were set on heavenly things; he looked to the Lord alone for mercy and support, to carry him through his soul-travail, and to lift up his soul above the curse which was to be executed on him, for the salvation and deliverance of all the elect. This he expected, and his reasons for it are given in the next words.

V. 5. *For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee.*

The great Mediator encourages his own vast mind to lift up his soul to God in prayer, from the consideration of the Lord's goodness, and readiness to forgive sin; and seeing he was plenteous or abundant in mercy to his elect, when they call on him, surely he would be so to the head and representative of the elect. This is a great scripture, to open the heart of Christ to our view; to give us his views of the exceeding riches of Jehovah's pardoning mercy, of

his readiness to forgive; that it is but to ask and to have the knowledge of this wrought powerfully in Messiah's soul. He says on it:

V. 6. *Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications.*

The importunity of our Lord's mind in prayer is most clearly expressed. The greatness of prayer consists in the fixation of the mind on God, on the subject matter requested, and the energy with which it is offered, and in expecting a reply unto it. This is contained in the words before us, which ought to be attended unto by us; for as Christ spake as never man did, so he likewise prayed as none beside ever did or can; and his prayers are recorded in the Psalms, and this is one of them.

V. 7. *In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee; for thou wilt answer me.*

The particular day of Messiah's trouble was, when all the sins of his people came in upon him, when they surrounded him, when they looked him fully in the face; when the Lord laid them on him, when he made him sin for them, and inflicted the whole curse due to the transgressions of all his people on him, their surety. This was a day of trouble to Christ, such as never fell on him before, nor can again to eternity. In, and under it, he called on the Lord. He was heard, and answered; he was sustained under the weight of sin, and the curse. He speaks, in the words before us, respecting his own faith and expectation concerning it, and that with the most assured confidence. This makes way for holy joy and gladness.

V. 8. *Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.*

None of all the angels of God's presence are to be compared to him; none of their works of might and majesty will bear any compare with Jehovah's: none of them can speak peace and pardon to a wounded spirit; none of them could assist or sustain Jesus the mediator, when he was under the imputation of sin, and the stroke of God was upon him. Therefore that Jehovah, when he bruised Christ and put his soul to grief, did sustain and give him a triumphant issue out of all his sufferings, was to our Lord himself matter for holy joy and gladness, and would be admired throughout all ages and generations of time.

V. 9. *All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.*

There have been multitudes in the nations who were savingly enlightened into the knowledge of Christ, by the

preaching of the everlasting gospel, and by the efficacy of the Lord the Spirit on their minds. There will be greater multitudes towards the close of time, when the Lord's word shall run and be glorified. John beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, Rev. vii. 9, 10. This being the fruit of Christ's soul travail, he mentions it as an acknowledgment of the goodness and power of Jehovah, as it would in due season, be acknowledged by the elect in all nations, when they should be converted to the Lord.

V. 10. *For thou art great and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone.*

The essence, the majesty, the greatness of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, cannot be expressed. His power, his wisdom, his eternal godhead which he hath manifested in our world, and throughout his vast empire and dominion, exceed all thought, and transcend all praise. In the salvation of his people in Christ, his manifold wisdom can never be fathomed. He hath proved himself herein, to be God alone.

V. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*

This is expressive of the Mediator's dependence on Jehovah. He was to teach him every part of the way he was to proceed in. While the whole had been set before him in council and covenant, yet the Lord was to direct and teach him how to act in and throughout the whole performance thereof. *Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth.* He had given himself up to the will of the divine Father; his whole body and soul was a willing sacrifice to God; his heart, thoughts, affections, will, and understanding, were to be under Jehovah's control. He therefore adds, *unite my heart to fear thy name.* He requests his whole soul might be fixed on God alone. Thus he prays for wisdom, strength, and singleness of heart.

V. 12. *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.*

Christ was to be the subject of the whole curse due to the sins of all the elect. He was to be brought up from under it, after his whole soul had felt and sustained the whole contained in it. He praises God here for the deliverance he foreknew he should have for it: *I will praise*

thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore. This shews how deeply sensible the Mediator was of the Father's faithfulness in the fulfilment of all covenant engagement unto him. Never was a greater display of Godhead, than in raising up Christ; in calling Christ, and filling him in our nature with every grace, quality, and gift, for the performance of salvation work. Never any power put forth by God, exceeded what was put forth in sustaining Christ under the imputation of sin, and the infliction of the curse, and raising him from the grave of death. Christ, who was the object and subject in whom all this was displayed and put forth, expresses his thanksgiving for it. *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.* Next follows the reason for all this.

V. 13. *For great is thy mercy towards me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.*

Our Lord experienced all contained in the curse due to sin, in the garden and on the cross. His breathless humanity was laid in the grave, which is sometimes in the scriptures styled hell. It might be so expressed here, it being the last, and lowest act of Christ's humiliation. It was from this state Jehovah, as the Lord his God, raised him. Which resurrection was matter of joy and triumph to his soul; which he expresses in a very grateful and thankful manner. All his church will unite in him, and with him, in praising Jehovah for the same, to the ages of eternity. They being partakers of the glorious fruits and benefits thereof.

V. 14. *O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul: and have not set thee before them.*

Our Lord here speaks of his Jewish enemies, who were proud men. They were the great and leading men of the nation. They met a whole assembly of them, and consulted together to put Messiah to death; they were violent men; they determined to carry all before them; they had not God in all their thoughts. They sought after the soul of Christ; they are desperately set on taking away his life; of cutting him off from the earth. They had no regard to God; to his law; to the scriptures of truth; to what the effects of their most vile procedure against the Lord's anointed might be. Our Lord's most holy mind was opened to feel and apprehend all their devices against himself; he is impressed with the same, and addresses the divine Father accordingly.

V. 15. *But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion,*

and gracious: long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

Here is a most glorious recital of the perfections of the Lord God; of what he was to Christ; of what he is to us in him; of what support this afforded to the mind of Christ; and it may most assuredly yield support to the minds of all the saints and children of the Most High. He is a God full of compassion; he is a God gracious and long-suffering; he is a God plenteous in goodness and truth. All this the great Mediator makes use of to support his faith in the Lord God. He had, in the former verse, complained of his bitter and violent persecutors, and their most cruel and violent rage and persecution against his person. And here he considers that the Lord God was all-sufficient to yield him support: *O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul: and have not set thee before them. But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious: long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth:* the former words express the state Christ was in, the latter, from whence he derived his support. All the riches of the divine nature are viewed by him as they were to be displayed in a covenant way, according to the will, counsel, and covenant of the eternal Three in the one Jehovah. This is Christ's sanctuary; from hence his faith is encouraged and strengthened; he rests on this; he pleads it before the throne; he expects to be heard and answered. So it follows:

V. 16. *O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.*

When Christ was in the garden, where the curse fell on him, and on the cross, where it was fully exhausted on him, he was forsaken of the Father. There he needed God to be to him all he was; a God full of compassion, gracious, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and truth; he being there the representative of all his people; he having then and there all their sins, and the whole curse due to the same, on his body and soul. A proper view of this would, in the hand of the Spirit, create a vast idea of the greatness and comprehension of our Lord's mind concerning the infinity and immensity of the riches of divine grace. It is from his own intuitive knowledge of the same, he prays the Father would turn unto him, and have mercy on him: that he would give him strength to bear up under all he now was the subject of; and save him, the son of his handmaid. Christ was the son of Mary, who was the handmaid of the Lord.

When it was pronounced by the angel to her, *Thou hast found favour with God: and behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt call his name Jesus, &c.*; she said, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word*, Luke i. 30, 31, 38. Our Lord proceeded according to the flesh from an elect race, and he is himself the head and representative of the whole election of grace. He prays for salvation out of the hands of all his enemies; which only could be accomplished by his death and resurrection from the grave, and his entrance on his resurrection state, in which he lives to die no more.

V. 17. *Shew me a token for good, that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed: because thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me.*

This was fulfilled in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection from the grave and power of death. The Father shewed him a token for good, in his free and full acceptance of him and his mediation, in raising him up beyond all his sorrows and humiliation, and exalting him beyond the power of death and the grave. This was so fully ascertained and declared, that his enemies the Jews were ashamed, and confounded; evidence being given by God's raising Jesus from death to life immortal, and setting him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, that he had helped Christ in the days of his flesh, and had been his comforter; which were full proofs Jesus of Nazareth was no impostor. May what hath been written, reflect some light on the grand subject of the Psalm. Amen.

PSALM THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH.

A Psalm Song for the Sons of Korah. This is its title.

It might be this Psalm was penned on a survey of the city of David, soon after the buildings of it were finished. It is the stability and felicity of Zion, or the church, are celebrated. The accession of the Gentiles prophesied of; their enrolment in the church foretold. Christ, the fountain of salvation, of every spiritual blessing to his people, is extolled. He is an immutable foundation, on which his church is founded and established. Thus the nature and glory of the church, with the increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof, are set before us.

V. 1. *A Psalm Song for the Sons of Korah. His foundation is in the holy mountains.*

The writer had been musing on the things of God; on

the strength, beauty, and glory of Jerusalem. And by this means his heart being enlarged towards the Lord, as he was thus engaged, he breaks out abruptly, expressing his sentiments which employed his intellectual mind; saying, *His foundation is in the holy mountains*. He speaks as if he thought others were employed on the same subjects with himself. He therefore speaks, as the spouse also in the Canticles does, in an abrupt manner, *His foundation is in the holy mountains*. By the holy mountains is meant, mount Moriah, mount Acra, mount Zion, which Jehovah had chosen for the temple to be built on. As the dwelling-places of his people in the land of Canaan were beloved by him, so he loved the gates of Zion, even beyond them; because here his outward and visible worship was performed. One observes, as the temple foundations were on three mountains, so the elect of Christ, the church of the living God, are built on the everlasting love of God *in Christ*, to them, before all time; as also on the foundation of the union of the person of Christ, who is both God and man in one person; and upon the union the Holy Spirit hath unto us, as one with Christ. Sure we are, eternal election of persons in Christ, is an immutable foundation. Hence the apostle says, *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. That the person of Christ, as God-man, is the foundation on which the church is laid, is evident, from what our Lord said to Peter, when Peter declared, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*. Upon which our Lord said, *Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*; see Matthew xvi. 16, 18. And as it is the Holy Ghost who is the manifester of the Father's love, and the salvation of Christ in the word, of which himself is the inspirer and revealer, both in the written testimony, and also in the minds of the regenerate, and hereby becomes the perfecter of all God's vast designs in the elect; so he may, as co-equal and as co-eternal with the Father and the Son, be looked on as a foundation of the spiritual building. The church must be impregnable, as built upon the everlasting love, eternal decrees, and immutable will of the Eternal Three, in the one incomprehensible Jehovah. The strength, beauty, and glory of Jerusalem, the holy city, or *God's foundations in the mountains of his holiness*, the place where his honour dwelleth, are very delightfully and most truly acceptable unto him. So it follows:

V. 2. *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*

By Jerusalem is to be understood the Church of Christ, the seat of his worship, where the sacred ordinances of his pleasure are attended unto; which in God's sight are above and beyond all the empires of the world, which rise and fall entirely in conformity to the divine counsels concerning his church. His will must be accomplished in the salvation of all the heirs of glory; the world subsists only for their sakes. The church is built by God, on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord,* Ephes. ii. 20, 21. The church is God's foundation in the holy mountains; she is his beloved. The prophet proceeds to celebrate the glory, excellency, stability, and felicity of Zion, the church of God.

V. 3. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.*

Jerusalem was the city of God. Glorious things were spoken of it, and glorious things were done in it. The situation of it was pleasant; the buildings of it were magnificent; it was the royal residence of the kings of Judah. In it, or very near it, was the temple; the Ark and cherubim of glory, and the King of kings, and Lord of lords, dwelling in the midst of the outstretched wings of the cherubim. On such accounts, Jerusalem was the joy of the whole earth. Some commentators suppose the first verse of this Psalm to be a part of its title; which, under that view of it, is to be read thus: *For the Sons of Korah, a Psalm, a Song, when he laid the foundation on the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.* Under this view of it, I should conceive it might be sung when the foundation of the Lord's house was laid by Solomon. Of whom it is said, *Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite,* 2 Chron. iii. 1. The church of Christ is a city. She hath her proper form and order; she is quite uniform; she has her proper streets and avenues; her proper laws and ordinances; her palaces and squares; her laws, orders, and officers. God is in her of a truth. To her, great promises are made; to her, great glory belongs; in her, glorious things are spoken; all the mysteries of grace are unfolded; the divine counsel and will of the Three in Godhead are explained; the communion of the eternal Three

with saints is declared, and their communion with the Three in Jehovah is set forth. And glorious things are spoken in her, and unto her, concerning her more glorious visible state in this our world, when the Lord shall be her everlasting light, and her everlasting glory.

V. 4. *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there.*

In the church of Christ, of immortal seed, by the word and Spirit of the living God, sinners are born again, and brought to the knowledge of God and Christ, and are formed a people to *shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light*. The words before us are considered as a prophecy, in which an account of an accession to the Jewish church is spoken of. Some read the words thus: I will make mention of, or cause to be remembered, Egypt and Babylon, to, or among them that know me, that is among my worshippers. The Philistines, Tyrians, and Egyptians, were old and inveterate enemies of the Jews. The conversion of any of these, through the knowledge and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the bringing them to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the truth which is after godliness, could not but afford holy joy to saints who were informed of it by prophecy, as it must have done to those who lived to see and hear the accomplishment of the same. *Rahab* signifies the Egyptians; Egypt is so called, Psalm lxxxix. 11. and Isaiah li. 9. The word *Rahab* signifies strength and pride. It seems to be derived from the chief city so named, as Zoan. The calling of the Egyptians into fellowship with the Jewish church, is also spoken of, by way of prophecy, in the 19th chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, ver. 19, 20, 21. The Babylonians, whose chief city was Babel, are here mentioned as to be among the converts to the church of Christ. There was a church of Christ at Babylon in the apostolic day. Hence Peter says, *the church which is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you*, 1 Pet. v. 13. *I will make mention of Rahab, [or Egypt] and Babylon, to them that know me; or among them that know me; to such as are my companions or familiars. I will mention them as converted to the Lord Jesus Christ, and made partakers through rich, free, and sovereign grace, of the same common salvation. So speaks the Old Testament church; Behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; these also are become converts to the Lord Jesus Christ; they are become mine. This is, or these are born in Zion; they are manifested to be the children of*

God; they are become **one** with me; they are citizens of Zion; they are in church relation with me. It shall be said, and their faith will prove it, this man, and that man, *a man and a man*, i. e. great numbers of men in succession, are born in her. Multitudes of converts under the gospel should be brought forth to the glory of God, when the law should go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, after the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into the highest heavens. Which hath been accordingly accomplished, and the Acts of the apostles, and the sacred epistles, give full proof and evidence of it.

V. 5. *And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.*

He who was the foundation of Zion, the glory of Zion, from whom and whose birth Zion was to acquire all her glory, and He who should establish her, is the immediate subject of this verse. Dr. Durell renders the words thus, *The Man, even the Man*, that is, the Man of men, or the greatest of all men. Or, according to Mr. Romaine, *the name*, even our Lord Jesus Christ: he was to be born in Zion. It was from his birth Zion was to acquire so much glory: he was that most eminent personage, who was to become incarnate, to be born of a woman, whose birth was to be life, light, salvation, and glory to his whole church, and to each and every individual thereof. The church, which is styled *Jerusalem which is above all*, is said to be *the mother of us all*. Every one belonging to the election of grace may be said to be born in her. It being in consequence of their new birth, they have a right to enjoy and partake of all her ordinances. And Christ, *the man, even the Man*, or, *the Man of men*, or, *the greatest of all men*, or, *the Name*, even him *whose name is from everlasting*, was born for the honour, dignity, glory, and salvation of the whole church: he is the foundation of it; and he the Highest himself shall, doth, and will establish her, so as that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the same.

V. 6. *The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah.*

God's register of his church is in the *book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. Because this book is in God's possession, and all the persons and names of his people are before them, and they have been redeemed by the most precious blood of Christ, therefore these are all formed for his praise in regeneration, which takes place in the day of the Lord's power, when he sends down the Holy Ghost, who as the spirit of life enters into

them, and quickens them with spiritual life in Christ, and makes them alive to Christ. All which is effected in them, by the sole operation of the Holy Ghost. After which he takes of the things of Christ, and shews the same unto them, and glorifies him thereby in their minds, and exalts him in their hearts, and forms him therein as the hope of glory. Thus each true member of Christ and his church is born again, *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Thus their election in Christ is manifested unto them; they are hereby made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. And in this new-birth, and to such as are partakers of it, *Christ is all and in all.* I would quote here Dr. Durell, who thinks this verse related to the pedigree of our Lord, recorded among the Jews, and given us by the evangelists. "The Lord will have this recorded, in registering the people, that he, even the Man, the Man of men, or the greatest of all men, even him from whom Zion was to receive all her glory, even the Son of the Highest, who was to establish her, was born there." This most surely casts a vast dignity on the words. We need not wonder the word *Selah* should be added to this. It was used before at the end of the 3d verse. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.* What went before concerned the honour, dignity, and glory of the church, with the love and delight Jehovah took in his saints as they attended his worship, in their observance of his divine ordinances. This word *Selah*, which signifies, Mark this well, or Amen, So it is, or So it shall be, or a lifting up the voice in praise, was then used. The next three following verses give an account of the increase of the church, by numerous conversions of Gentiles unto her, of the honour and comfort of this spiritual community, of one amongst them, born for them, whose name is *the Highest*. Here the word *Selah* is again placed. Mr. Romaine, on these verses, expresses it thus: *I will cause it to be remembered by them who knew me in Rahab and Babylon; behold Philistia and Tyre, the people of Ethiopia.* Here was the Name born. He looks on this 4th verse as spoken by God the Father. The 5th verse he considers as spoken by the prophet, which he renders thus: *And of Zion it shall be said, a person and a person (God and Man) shall be born in her, and he himself shall establish her.* Namely, the church founded upon the incarnate God, against which, he says himself, the gates of hell shall not prevail. V. 6. *Jehovah shall record it, when he is describing the people, that there was the Man born; even He whose name is above*

every name in earth; or heaven; He who is the Fellow of the Lord of hosts; in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth personally. Surely this most justly required the *Selah* to be added, it being what will be worthy of remembrance in all ages, and throughout all generations.

V. 7. *As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee.*

The singers and players on instruments of music, in the worship of God, had in charge continually to laud and magnify his most holy name. It is here very expressive of the holy joy and rejoicing at the conversions which would increase the church, by the accession of multitudes in the Gentile world who would be turned to the Lord. The scriptures, under the metaphor of well-springs, fountains, streams of water, and living fountains of water, express the blessings of Christ's gospel; and of Christ himself. Christ is styled by his church, *A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.* Song iv. 15. And to *well-springs of salvation.* Isaiah xii. 3. *Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.* And here the church says, *All my springs are in thee.* Christ is the fulness of nature, the fulness of grace, and the fulness of glory. *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* All the springs of life, light, salvation, consolation, righteousness, perfection, glory, are alone in him. So says the apostle, *And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.* May it be given us rightly to conceive Christ's foundations are in the holy mountains. That he is the life, glory, and ornament of his church; that he was born in her, and born for her, and this will be recounted by God himself when he reckoneth up those who were born in Zion. Amen.

PSALM EIGHTY-EIGHTH.

A Song Psalm for the sons of Korah, to the chief musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.

It is said by a learned man, the Hebrew word *Mahalath* hath divers significations. It signifies a musical instrument: or, a choir and company of musicians: or, it signifies infirmity. And according to the same interpretation, the word *Leannoth* signifies to sing by turns. Agreeably to this, the instrument of music was called *Mahalath Lennoth.* It was

wrote by Heman the Ezrahite; and the next Psalm is entitled of Ethan the Ezrahite. They were the sons of Zerah, the son of Judah. They were in Egypt when the church of Christ was very sorely persecuted. This 88th, and the following Psalm, are, according to Dr. Lightfoot, the most antient writings in the world. The writers were men renowned for their wisdom. They are mentioned in these words, *And the sons of Zerah, Zinni, and Etham, and Heman, &c.* 1 Chron. ii. 6. Their wisdom is taken notice of. It is said of Solomon, *For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, &c.* 1 Kings iv. 31. There were also two men of the same name in David's time, who were singers and musicians in the tabernacle and temple worship, who were of the tribe of Levi. Of these you read, 1 Chron. xv. 17 and 19. The *Ethan* there mentioned was the son of Joel, the son of Samuel the prophet. He was a Levite. The *Heman* who wrote this Psalm, was of the tribe of Judah. The word *Maschil* signifies instruction. A very learned writer says, according to the title of this Psalm, it was to create dejection, to raise a pensive gloom in the mind; the whole subject of it being quite heavy, and full of complaints.

The subject matter of it is Christ, in his soul sufferings. This is the sole and only subject: it has not its equal in the whole collection. Many Psalms have this as a part of them; but this is wholly engaged hereon. The nature and degree of Christ's soul trouble is related. The utmost strength of expression is used to describe it. Our Lord's unexampled sorrows, both in body and soul, with his desertion in the day of the fierceness of his Father's wrath, with his bitter passion and approaching death, are most pathetically set forth in this scripture, or divine record of it, now before us; with the fervent prayers of Christ for the fulfilment of the divine promises, and the salvation of his church, and the manifestation of God's glory. This is the outline of the Psalm. One says, it was to be sung by the whole company of the Levites, as well by voice as with instrumental music, in times of affliction.

V. 1. *A Song Psalm for the sons of Korah, to the chief musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite. O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee.*

This Psalm is expressive of dolour; it is full of complaints. It sets forth our most precious and all-sufficient Surety and Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, in his dolorous griefs, sorrows, and agonies, when he was made a curse

for us. He was made sin for us, or he could not have been made a curse for us. Yet it is his being under the curse is the immediate and particular subject here. There is not a word of consolation throughout the whole of this Psalm, yet there is great faith exercised in the want of all this. It is, *O Lord God of my salvation*, even though the speaker is in those circumstances of soul distress, which none but himself could possibly be in. It was the knowledge Messiah had, of covenant transactions, which were the foundation of all covenant promises given by the Father unto him, in the council and covenant of peace, which kept up his vast mind in his incarnate state, and sustained it in the whole of his humiliation state, and under all his sorrows and sufferings of body and mind, yea, even under his dereliction. We have our Lord here pouring out his soul in strong crying and tears to him who was able to hear, and save him in the most tremendous season which ever could befall him. He is here entreating audience, help, and succour. *O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee.* The words are expressive of faith. He prays to Jehovah, as his covenant God, as the God of his salvation. He had been most earnestly engaged herein. He therefore says, *O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee.* More fervently he could not pray. He only wants the divine Father, the God of his salvation, to attend to his case, his suit, and his request.

V. 2. *Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry.*

We need only look into the evangelists, and we shall have a complete comment on the words before us. Matthew tells us our Lord, in the garden of Gethsemane, prayed thus: *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* Mark says our Lord fell on the ground, and said, *Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me.* Luke says, *And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* Paul says, *Christ in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.* I conceive this is fully and sufficiently in proof of these passages contained in these two first verses of this Psalm now before us. The reason for his importunity is given in the next words:

V. 3. *For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ was the subject unto whom sin

was imputed. His soul, or mind, was the subject unto which, and on which, all the sorrows due to sin were inflicted and executed. No sort of trouble, anguish, grief and torment, due to the sins of the elect, but Christ had the true knowledge, feeling, sense, and experience of the same. So far as was consistent with the dignity of his divine person, he was a man of sorrows: he was acquainted with griefs of every sort and kind: his soul was full of troubles: he had a real insight, and also a clear intuitive apprehension and feeling of the same: his life was to be laid down: he was hung on a gibbet for the very purpose of taking away his life. As he was nailed to it, and hung on it for six long hours, he might well say, *My life draweth nigh unto the grave.* In these circumstances he was, in the view of others, what he expresses in the next words:

V. 4. *I am counted with them that go down to the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength.*

These words are expressive of the disgrace and ignominy to which he submitted. He was the fountain of immortal life: he was the man in God, and none could take his life from him: yet he was in his sufferings, in all appearance, like other men. Nay, he was forcibly put to death, and seemed to be in the hands of his executioners as a man that hath no strength; no power or might to help, and to save himself. His enemies shook their heads at him, saying, *He saved others, himself he cannot save.* My ability, or power to help myself, is gone. I am helpless.

V. 5. *Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand, [or, by thy hand.]*

Such as are dead, their souls being separated from their bodies, they are set at liberty, or dismissed from the world, and are hereby separated from all communications with the affairs of this present time state, as dead bodies are. They are as dead bodies, like other corpses that lie in the grave. They are no longer remembered by God, as living objects of his providence upon earth. In this sense they are cut off from God's hand, which upheld and supported them in life. This speaks of Christ in his suffering state: he was as though he was numbered with the dead: it was as though the sentence of it had been executed on him; as though he was free among them: he was in his own views and apprehensions as if he was slain; as if he was laid in the grave; as if the Lord would remember him no more; as if he was cut off from all, and even from God his Father also. All these subjects were so apprehended by Christ, and his holy mind

was so sensibly affected with these conceptions, as made way for him thus to express himself in prophecy. Some conceive it is to be extended beyond all I have expressed : that it relates to those sufferings he experienced in his soul when he was made a curse. And that they are introductory to the next words :

V. 6. *Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ was under the stroke of God. It was he who laid him in the lowest pit. No pains due to sin, but Christ felt : nothing contained in the curse of God due to sin, but Christ was the subject of : he was laid in the lowest pit : he could not be in a state lower than he was : he was in darkness ; for the very sun refused to shine on him for a season : he was implunged in the deeps of divine wrath : he was deluged with it on every side. He acknowledges the hand of the divine Father in all this. *Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.* All contained in sin, as imputed to him, and all contained in the curse which was positively inflicted on him, he had set before him, to know, consider, and apprehend.

V. 7. *Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.*

Here we have the soul-travail of Christ ; which I would express thus. Our Lord comprehended, and apprehended in his vast mind, all contained in the curse due to sin, due to him, he having engaged to make his soul an offering for the same. None but Messiah could have a full intuitive apprehension of the same : he being God and man in one person was only equal to this : the wrath of God, which is his righteous displeasure due to sin, was poured out fully on him : all the storm burst in its fullest fury on Christ : all the waves and billows of Jehovah's wrath brake forth in all its fulness on him. To this the word *Selah* is set ; as though our Lord Jesus had said to his church, Take notice of this. As Christ's sufferings in his soul were tantamount to the second death, so in them he sustained all that was equal to the same, as it respected the positive infliction of the curse on his mind, and the withdrawalment of the manifestative presence of the divine Father from him.

V. 8. *Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me ; thou hast made me an abomination unto them : I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.*

This most undoubtedly refers to our Lord's being forsaken by all his disciples at his passion. They all forsook him and fled. Peter denied and abjured him, as if his acquaint-

ance had been a disgrace and an abomination. At the crucifixion all his acquaintance stood afar off, and beheld the mournful scene. They beheld him surrounded by his enemies, and afterwards shut up in the sepulchre.

V. 9. *Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.*

Thus Messiah reiterated the complaint and prayer which he began with. He had said his soul was full of troubles; he had declared his life was in danger; that he was drawing nigh unto the grave; that he was counted as numbered with the dead; that himself was helpless; that he was as one dismissed from the world; it was in his frame and to his mind, as though he was cut off from the Lord God of his salvation; for in his present state, God had laid him in the lowest pit; his soul was the seat and theatre on which for God to execute and exercise, and display all his wrath due to the sins of his people to the very uttermost; he was in the darkness of desertion; all divine joy and consolation were suspended from him; he was forsaken of God. This is manifest by his dereliction cry. He was in deeps; surrounded on all sides with the sins of his people, and all sorts and kinds of sorrows and curses due unto them. Jehovah's wrath lay hard upon him, and the mind of Messiah was fully impressed with all contained therein. Hence he says, *Thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.* He was forsaken by his friends; the best of them only stood afar off from him; he was an abomination to his enemies; a most loathsome and detestable object in their eyes; he was shut up, and could not come forth from this state, agreeably to the divine will, until his life was taken from him, and his humanity shut up in the grave. This is the outline of all which went before. To all this he adds, *Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction:* the whole of Christ's sufferings reached his very heart, touched his very soul. *Lord,* says he, *I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.* He had before his passion begun; he did during his passion, and now in the very depth of the whole of it, he begins to expostulate with Jehovah the Father in the next and following verses.

V. 10. *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah.*

These questions contain the most powerful plea Christ himself could urge and express before the Father, for his own emerging out of his present state of suffering, and for his resurrection from the grave and power of death. *Wilt*

thou show wonders to the dead? So long as they continue in that state it cannot be. *Shall the dead rise up and praise thee?* Yet in me thou wilt shew wonders, in raising my body from the grave, or thy salvation of thine elect cannot be completed; nor thy glory in the same fully shine forth. Thy wonders cannot be declared, the elect dead cannot rise again and praise thee, as they must, but on the footing of my being raised up from my present state, in which I am under the imputation of sin, and the infliction of the curse, and from the state of death also, in which my body is to remain for a season. It must be so, or the dead cannot be raised, according to covenant settlements. The word *Selah* is here fixed, to shew the vast importance of the subject.

V. 11. *Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?*

I consider the former, with this and the following verse, to be Christ's pleadings with the divine Father on his own behalf, and on the behalf of his whole church, for his own personal resurrection from death and the grave. I consider all going before, concerning his tremendous sorrows and griefs, his soul-travail and desertion, to be the foundation of all these pleas; which were all originally founded on the everlasting covenant between the Father and Christ, and which was engaged for in the promises given by the Father to the Son. *Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave?* No, that cannot be; it is to be preached by my resurrection from the dead. *Shall thy faithfulness be declared in destruction; to the dead, in their state of rottenness and putrefaction?* No, it must be made clear, and be fully and openly made known by the raising my body from the grave, without suffering it to see corruption.

V. 12. *Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?*

The incomprehensible Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, have shone forth in all their wonderful grace and glory, lovingkindness and mercy, light and salvation, faithfulness and truth, in the person and mediation of Jesus Christ, and most openly testified of him, in carrying him through his sufferings, and in raising him from the dead. Our Lord's pleadings are to this effect. *Shall thy wonders be known in the dark?* Should I be shut up in the grave, that land of darkness and shadow of death, how will thy wonders be known; thy glorious power, wisdom, and faithfulness be manifest! How shall thy righteousness be displayed, but by thy raising me from the grave of death, and thereby making me known, and declaring me to be what I am, the true and

only Messiah. I conceive this to be explanatory of these interrogatives.

V. 13. *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.*

This is expressive of the vast importunity of our Lord's mind, and of the continuation and constancy of our Lord's prayer. He cried unto the Lord; he did this in the morning; he did it always. His whole heart and desires might be said to be nothing but continual prayer.

V. 14. *Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?*

Our Lord experienced in his own body and soul the utmost expression of God's curse and wrath due to sin. He knew he should be under the power and dominion of death for a short space; he was perfectly persuaded the Father would lift him up, and out of that state; he therefore prays the more importunately for it, and also for deliverance from his present sorrows. The words before us are equal with these, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It was as though he were cast off, when the divine presence was suspended, and all manifestative consolations were withdrawn. The face of God was hid, and Messiah was left to feel and endure all contained in the tremendous curse due to sin, which is the subject before us.

V. 15. *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.*

These are deep expressions; they are a prophecy; they have been accomplished in our Lord Jesus Christ. His whole life was one continued passion; it was one perpetual scene of labour and sorrow; of contradiction and persecution; he was afflicted from his youth up; it may be said, from his birth to his death, he was ready to die; he was prepared for that death, which he had the anticipation of all through life. The terrors of God fell on him when he said, *Now is my soul troubled*, John xii. 27. As also when he prayed, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*. Also when he was in an agony, and sweat great drops of blood. As also, when he was forsaken on the cross, *While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted*. My mind is wholly absorbed and so filled through and through with the same, that I am wholly swallowed up therein. Some read the words thus: *I am distressed, not knowing which way to turn myself*.

V. 16. *Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.*

All the curse and wrath of the Lord God Almighty, which contained his most holy and righteous displeasure against

sin came in upon Christ. It overwhelmed Christ; he was implunged in the whole of it; he was deluged therewith. The terrors of divine indignation came in so fully on his mind, and he was so susceptible of the same, that he was cut off from the very enjoyment of divine favour. He was cut off from the land of the living; he was cut off from God, so as for a season to be destitute of all consolation; he was so cut off by the terrors of the Almighty from all, both the creature and God, as to be wholly and in every true sense to be forsaken. He was the true antitypical Jonah, cast into the raging sea and billows of God's wrath, and God's fierce going over him, and God's terrors having cut him off, he hath thereby redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us.

V. 17. *They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together.*

This refers to the enemies of our Lord, who came round about him. They were daily afflicting him; they compassed him round; they were determined, what in them lay, to increase his griefs; they were like water, surrounding him continually the whole of his passion-day. They compassed him about together when and whilst he hung on the cross, fearing he would make his escape.

V. 18. *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.*

It was one of the most bitter parts of Christ's passion, that he was entirely forsaken. The cup of divine indignation was filled to the brim; it was put into his hand, and he drank it off to the very dregs. None could share in his sufferings; they were his personally, and alone. His disciples and friends, his lovers and acquaintance, were put far from him; they all forsook him, and fled, to hide themselves from the fury of the Jews. They went into darkness, or hid themselves in the dark, or in secret places. May the Lord lead us into such scriptural apprehensions of Christ's passion, as may endear him to our minds, and be a mean of nourishing them up unto everlasting life. Thus this Psalm ends without the least consolation, which should lead us to confess all our consolations flow from Christ's most bitter sorrows and sufferings. May the Lord bless what hath been written. Amen.

PSALM THE EIGHTY-NINTH.

Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite. This was the title of it. The writer was brother to Heman the Ezrahite, as was noted before; and Dr. Lightfoot, as it was there suggested, con-

ceives this and the former Psalm are the most ancient writings the world can boast of. This is a portrait of the everlasting covenant between the Father and the Son, which was before the world began. It contains a most clear and glorious record of the same. It begins with a preface by the prophet; then it expresses what the Father said to the Son in a covenant way; after which a most magnificent description is given of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the covenant itself, and who was given to be a covenant of the people, to elect Jews and Gentiles. The establishment of Christ's kingdom, and the glorious extent of it, are very expressly set forth. The safety and blessedness of such as know Christ, declared. The kingdom of David, as a type of Christ's kingdom, is expressed, with some distressful events hinted at, and used to set forth some particulars concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, in his sufferings, which led his disciples to make some false conclusions concerning him. Our Lord's expostulations and prayers to the divine Majesty, and his blessing God, conclude the Psalm, and with it the third book of the Psalms is concluded.

If the conjecture of Dr. Lightfoot, concerning the writer of this Psalm, is correct, then it follows that the terms David, and his kingdom, are only used here figuratively; and therefore what seems to belong to the loss of the glory of it in Rehoboam's reign, must more particularly apply to the sufferings and rejection of Christ in his incarnate state. As also to what were the thoughts of our Lord's followers, when he was dead, and actually buried. I give this hint here, as I shall so explain it.

V. 1. *Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite. I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.*

The prophet begins this most sublime subject with an act of worship, and a profession of his mind how it should be engaged for ever. He has before him the covenant of the eternal Three: his heart is deeply affected with the riches of mercy displayed therein. He means to sing and express the inestimable grace contained in the same. *I will sing of the mercies of Jehovah, the self-existing Essence for ever.* Not only now, to-day and to-morrow, but for ever. For these mercies will be continued in every age and period of time, and they will be matter for the celebration of Jehovah's praise, even to eternity. So far therefore as I can, *with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations;* by leaving this inspired view of the incomprehensible Three, for the benefit of saints for evermore. This

answers to the explanation of the title given in the margin. *A Psalm for Ethan the Ezrahite to give instruction.* It gives great instruction, and great light into the covenant transactions between the Father and the Son.

V. 2. *For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.*

The mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting. It is as immutable as Godhead: it flows from everlasting love: it is the fruit and effect of it to the elect, as considered in their fallen state, as the subjects of sin and misery. The everlasting covenant, founded on the person and covenant transactions between the Father and Christ, was framed on purpose for the display of the exceeding riches of mercy, on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory. God's faithfulness he will establish and confirm, in fulfilling every tittle of it, both to Christ and the whole church, and every member thereof. The continuance and the stability of the heavens over our heads may be considered as an evidence and memorial thereof.

V. 3. *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant.*

These and the following words are spoken in the person of the divine Father. The covenant is here opened: the person with whom the covenant was made is mentioned: what his name and office were by covenant transaction is declared: his establishment as the covenant head, with his confirmation in it, is expressly mentioned. *I have made a covenant with my chosen.* Messiah is God's chosen one; he is God's elect; in him his soul delighteth; his name is *David, or the Beloved, or the Beloved One*; his office in his mediatory work was to be the Father's servant; he was confirmed in office by the oath of the everlasting covenant; he who engaged him was the divine Father. He therefore says, *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant.* The Holy Spirit is not here mentioned, it being by his own divine inspiration this was made known to his prophets and the church. Therefore whilst he is as deeply interested in covenant settlements as the Father and the Son, yet he being the witness and revealer of the same is not personally and distinctly mentioned.

V. 4. *Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.*

This, with the former verse, includes the whole contained in the transaction between the Father and the Son; the latter is here revealed and spoken of as the mediator, the head of his body the church. His people were his seed. They were

given by the Father unto him: they were to be redeemed by him out of the hands of all their enemies. He as Mediator was to be exalted: his throne of mediatorship was to be built up: it was to be one and the same throughout all generations: or, from generation to generation. To all which the word *Selah*, as a word of importance, is added; as nothing can be of more importance than the will of the Father, the undertakings of the Son, what he engaged to be, and do, and obtain: as also the Father's good pleasure in all this; his promise which concerns all this. He will build up Christ's throne, and so establish Christ on it, that the blessings of his work and office shall come down on his heritage in every successive period of time.

V. 5. *And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.*

The immensity of grace, the greatness of God's love, the manifold wisdom of God, made known in Christ, manifested in Christ, set before us in Christ, and which is contained in the everlasting gospel, will be matter for holy wonder by all the saints. They will praise Jehovah in all his persons and perfections for the same for evermore. His faithfulness in revealing the same, in carrying the same into act and execution in Christ, who in the fulness of time became incarnate, and fulfilled all the Father's will, will be matter for worship in the congregation of the saints. This leads the prophet to take a view of Him, who had been entitled Jehovah's chosen; his beloved; his servant; of him who was the head of an elect seed; in whom they were to be established; of him, for whose glory, and the benefit of his church, his throne was to be built up to all generations. To keep which in eye the word *Selah* was made use of. To celebrate whom the following verses, from the 6th to the 14th verse inclusive, are appropriated.

V. 6. *For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?*

The Lord spoken of is the glorious Mediator. Here are two questions proposed concerning him, and they are both very easily answered. *Who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord?* None; no not one. He is, as God-Man, the image of the invisible God: by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or principalities, or dominions, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. Then none in the heavens can be compared unto him; he being their Creator, and they but creatures of his wisdom

and power. Therefore there could be no compare with him and them. Neither can there be between him and all the potentates, emperors, kings, and governors of the universe. None of them can be likened unto the Lord. No; in all things, in every thing, and upon every compare of him, he hath in all things the pre-eminence. This which follows must therefore be acknowledged.

V. 7. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints: and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

As it pleases the Lord to reveal and make himself known unto and in the assembly of his saints, so far he cannot but be had in reverence by them. It cannot but be so, by all who under the sacred influences draw nigh unto him in his instituted worship. The glory and infinity of godhead, the Persons in the godhead, their personal acts and transactions in grace, on the behalf of the church, these, as made known and declared unto them, cannot but fill their spiritual minds with awe, solemnity, and devotion. He is not only greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints, by such as have a most free, blessed, and intimate acquaintance with him, but he is also to be had in reverence of all them that are about him; for he hath said, *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified,* Leviticus x. 3.

V. 8. O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

None. The Lord Jesus Christ is Jehovah of hosts. If he had not been one in the self-existing essence, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, he had not been equal to his engagements in the covenant of grace. If he had not been a strong Lord, superior and beyond all in heaven and in earth, he could not have carried the covenant of grace into execution. If he had not been faithfulness in its essence and uttermost perfection, he had never carried the whole divine will of the ever-blessed God into complete execution. But he was all this, and therefore he was all-sufficient for the whole of it. The proofs he had already given of this are enumerated.

V. 9. Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

It is a most evident proof of omnipotence that the sea is kept in its own proper bounds. It hath overflowed the earth; it is never so to be again. Not that it is impossible as it respects natural causes: no; but it is impossible, because of the Lord's decree. He hath declared it shall not-

yet it often rages and threatens so to do. Hence the divine Majesty thus addresses the Jews; *Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.* Jer. v. 22. The great God and Saviour shewed his power and authority over the sea, when he divided it before his people Israel, and led them safely through it, to make himself an everlasting name. I conceive this is here alluded unto. Which if it were not done in Ethan the Ezrahite's time, yet it might be foretold by him.

V. 10. *Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain: thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.*

Which words must, as also the former, be considered as a solemn prediction of what the Lord would do, if we conceive with Dr. Lightfoot this Psalm written in Egypt, and during the sore persecution of the church of Christ. If we conceive of it thus, then the minds of saints must have been supported by it. If we conceive it written by Ethan the Levite, it must have been designed to support and encourage the faith of saints from what the Lord had done, to what they might expect from him. By Rahab is to be understood Egypt. This kingdom Christ broke in pieces by ten desolating plagues. He scattered the people, his enemies, with a strong arm. Which is frequently noticed in scripture as expressive of his mighty power, and his omnipotent arm. And here what he hath done, is a proof of what he will do on the behalf of his people, in their utmost need, and when they least expect it.

V. 11. *The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine; as for the world, and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.*

Jesus Christ made the heavens and the earth. He is the proprietor of them, and of all and every creature and thing contained in them. The world and the fulness thereof; he is the founder; he rules all, he governs all, he disposes of all; so that the words of the prophet are an acknowledgment and confession of his eternal power and godhead. It is good and beneficial to be found in the exercise of this.

V. 12. *The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.*

Mount Hermon was in the north, and mount Tabor was in the south of Canaan. The Psalmist puts these two mountains together; Thou hast created the north and the south. In the Hebrew it is, "Thou hast created the north and the

right hand;" that is to say, the north and the south. Tabor to the south, and mount Hermon to the north, shall rejoice before thee. I conceive the prophet by this means to express the presence of Christ in every place, with his particular view and notice of all the work of his hands; and still more, and most especially, of his church and people.

V. 13. *Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.*

As none can be compared to the Lord; no, nor any of the sons of the mighty likened unto him; the Psalmist, proceeding with the same subject, observes, he is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints; he is to be greatly revered by all who are about him. He is Lord of hosts; he is a strong Lord; his faithfulness is a most glorious perfection. Such is his omnipotence, that he ruleth the rage of the sea; he stilleth the tumultuous waves; he hushes them into a perfect calm. He broke Rahab in pieces; he scattered the Egyptians so easily, that it was as one that is slain. With the arm of his strength he overthrew all their host. He hath the heavens and the earth at his command; the north and the south are of his creating. To this, as summing up all, he adds, *Thou hast a mighty arm*: such as is all-sufficient to crush thy foes; to strengthen thy church; to carry on thy cause in the world; to get thyself a glorious name and fame in thy church, and throughout the world. And *strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand*; which thou wilt display as may be for thine own glory, and for the good and benefit of thy saints; and *high is thy right hand*, ever lifted up on the behalf and for the defence of those that fear thee. To all which is added, the very basis of Christ's throne, as God-man, Mediator.

V. 14. *Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.*

This is added as the conclusion of all. Christ's throne is all of grace. He is on it as the mediator of reconciliation to dispense his grace. Whilst he doth it in a way of divine sovereignty, and agreeably with his dispensatory office, it is with the most perfect equity. Justice and judgment dwell in him; they are his very habitation; in the exercise of which mercy and truth are his harbingers. They go before his face, to shew what is to be expected as he appears and shines forth; even a most glorious manifestation of the same.

V. 15. *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.*

Here a fresh subject begins, which reacheth to the end

of verse 18. From having spoken of justice and judgment being the habitation of Messiah's throne, of mercy and truth going before his face, the Psalmist breaks out into an expression of holy joy, and he pronounces the people blessed that know the joyful sound of mercy and truth. He declares the blessed effects which follow this: *they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.* The everlasting gospel of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is a joyful sound, of life and salvation, of righteousness and atonement, of peace and pardon, of free grace and access to God, by the person, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, to sinners as sinners. This was expressed by two particular figures under the past dispensation. The one was by the jubilee trumpet, of which you read thus: *And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month: in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you: and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family;* Lev. xxv. 8—10. The prophet in reference to this, speaking concerning the preaching the everlasting gospel, says, *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem,* Isai. xxvii. 13. The other figure was in Aaron the high priest, and the sound he was to make, when he went into the holy place, and when he came out; of which you read thus: *And beneath upon the hem [of the robe of the ephod] of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about:—And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not,* Exod. xxviii. 33—35. This was a joyful sound to the people, because it was an evidence of the high priest being engaged on their behalf, and of his appearing in the presence of God for them. Surely under these views it might well be declared, *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.* Sin and the curse being taken away and removed by Christ's atonement,

an everlasting righteousness being brought in by our Lord's obedience unto death, and this together with all the blessings and benefits of the same in the preaching of the everlasting gospel, and brought home to the Lord's people by the power and testimony of the Holy Spirit, sets their hearts at rest; so that they enjoy the divine benediction. The face of God shining on them, causes them to walk in the light of the divine countenance.

V. 16. *In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.*

The blessings here expressed, are further fruits of what the joyful sound of the free grace gospel of the blessed God produces in the minds of such as know it. They rejoice in the name, person, love, salvation, glory, and perfection of the Word incarnate; they are exalted in his righteousness; they are made the righteousness of God in him; he is *Jehovah their righteousness*; they have matter in him for their joy and perpetual rejoicing; all the day long they may well rejoice in him.

V. 17. *For thou art the glory of their strength; and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.*

This is another fruit of the blessedness of knowing the joyful sound. Christ is the strength of his people; the glory of his people; his favour is to them life everlasting; the enjoyment of his favour lifts them up on high; in his name they are exalted above and beyond all they are in themselves.

V. 18. *For the Lord is our defence: and the Holy One of Israel is our king.*

This is a further confession of their faith. Jesus is Jehovah; he is the Holy One of Israel; his people are in him; they are one with him; he is their holiness; he communicates it out of his fulness unto them; he is their head, and it is out of his fulness they receive their whole salvation; he is their defence; he is their king.

V. 19. *Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty: I have exalted one chosen out of the people.*

From this to the end of the 29th verse, the holy covenant is most fully and freely opened. The Father's views of Christ, his engagements with him as mediator, his names and titles are expressed: the Father's carrying on Christ in the performance of his work, the exaltation of Christ, with the spread and enlargement of his kingdom in the world, the establishment of the mediatory kingdom in Christ, and the continuation of his seed, and his mediatorial throne, are

the subject matter of these verses. So that it may with safety be said, we have here the Father speaking of the Son, and the Father speaking to the Son. In the which we have full proof of the divine Personalities. *Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One.* It is generally conceived David is here to be understood. That by Samuel, Gad, and Nathan, the Lord spoke of him; that this was in a vision. So what follows, is considered as what in a measure belongs to David and his kingdom, as it is to be viewed as a type, figure, and symbol of Christ and his kingdom. I confess this title, *thy Holy One*, seems only applicable to Christ. Therefore it seems to be no breaking in upon the divine truth, to carry the whole of it to the ever-blessed Messiah altogether. Jehovah the Father spake of him to the prophets, and by the church. Some of these had visions of Christ: he is God's Holy One. He said to these concerning him whom they apprehended as the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham—the Shiloh—the Angel of Life, who appeared to Moses in the bush, and was with the church in the wilderness—and those inspired persons who were by visions admitted into peculiar converses with the divine Majesty, had received this into their minds, that the Father in council and covenant had said to his Holy One, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty, I have exalted one chosen out of the people;* these words concerning the covenant transaction between the Father and our most blessed Surety. He was mighty; he was the chosen one; he was all-sufficient for Jehovah the Father to lay help on; he was capable of fulfilling the whole proposed unto him; his human nature was chosen, was exalted from among the people.

V. 20. *I have found David my servant: with my holy oil have I anointed him.*

Thus the subject is continued. David here is Christ; he is the beloved one; he is God's beloved one; the chosen one, the Holy One, the mighty one, the exalted one; the He, who is beyond, and who far exceeds all amongst all creatures, beings and things. It was the effect of God's manifold wisdom to find out one who could be a proper mediator between God and man. So that it is claimed as the divine prerogative to find out one who was mighty, to exalt one chosen from among the people; to fix on the antitypical David, to anoint him with holy oil, or with all the unction of the Holy Spirit, that he might be fitted for his mediatorial work. All which is spoken of as the Father's own incommunicable act. On which follow the effects of all this.

V. 21. *With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.*

As the Father raised up Christ the Mediator, and called him to his office and work; as he laid help on him, he being mighty to accomplish all the purposes of the divine will; he being appointed to be the antitypical David, to be the servant of the divine Father, in the work of salvation; and he being anointed with the Holy Ghost; it was with him the will and hand of Jehovah were established. The arm of Jehovah was put forth to strengthen him, in his going forward, and accomplishing his mediatory work.

V. 22. *The enemy shall not exact upon him: nor the son of wickedness afflict him.*

Which is expressive of the divine care, and process of the divine Father towards him, in his incarnate state.

V. 23. *And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.*

This shews, and foresignifies, that all the enemies of Messiah should be finally subdued and put under his feet.

V. 24. *But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.*

If we enter distinctly and particularly on what Christ, as the surety of his people, was to pass through, we may see the propriety of these promises of strength and power which the Father had engaged to put forth on the behalf of Christ, when he should become incarnate and become exposed to his enemies. Yet the Father would be faithful unto him; the mercy of the covenant should be exercised on him; it would be all-sufficient for him; it should be continued with him; and in the name of Jehovah his horn should be exalted—that is, his power, kingship, and kingdom.

V. 25. *I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.*

This sets forth the extent of Christ's lordship, gospel, and kingdom in the world. His gospel was to be planted in the isles of the sea. It was to extend to the rivers; from one part of the globe to the other. His lordship and gospel, his kingship and dominion, were to have extension: he was to be made known, and to be universally acknowledged: his power was to be visibly displayed on the European continent: his right hand was to be acknowledged in the rivers.

V. 26. *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.*

This sets before us the covenant relations between the

Father and Christ. It was according to this the Mediator could profess his faith in the divine Father, according to covenant settlements. The supports which he received, the accomplishments of divine predictions in him, the fulfilment of divine promises to him, the placing him to be salvation to the ends of the earth, the making this fully known and manifest, by planting the gospel in the seas and rivers, in various places of the world, would make way for Christ to address Jehovah, and say, *Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation*; and would fully be all this to the whole of his mystic body. The words are expressive of Christ's faith in the divine Father for all this, and his confidence he was all this unto him, and would be so to all his seed. *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.* And this covenant interest in me shall be further manifested by my making good more completely my covenant promise unto him. Thus it follows:

V. 27. *Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.*

The Messiah had before been entitled God's Chosen, his Beloved, his Servant, his Holy One, his Son; and here is he denominated firstborn, who was King of kings, and Lord of lords. As such he was God's heir, the heir of all things: the prince of the kings of the earth: all which was by delegation and appointment, he being the image of the invisible God, the firstborn, or the Lord and proprietor of every creature. It was by him *all things were 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, Col. i. 16, 17. He is the head of the whole creation. It is by him kings reign, and princes decree justice. He is at the right hand of God, angels, principalities, and powers being made subject unto him.

V. 28. *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.*

The great design of the covenant of grace, as it respected the elect, was to display mercy towards and upon them. This was all treasured up in the Christ, the Mediator of it. God had engaged for the full and free communication of it on the vessels of mercy. He here declares he will keep his eye on his purpose in Christ, and mercy towards him and his church; that it shall be for evermore one and the same

immutable display of compassion; that his covenant with the Mediator shall stand fast in every age, and throughout all generations with him.

V. 29. *His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.*

Thus you have the divine engagements of the Father with his Christ set forth. He the Holy One, the mighty One, on whom Jehovah laid help, and by whom as Mediator all the vast designs of the Father were to be accomplished, was to be anointed, to be established. His enemies were to be subdued: his foes were to be confounded: they were to be plagued. Jehovah would maintain Messiah's standing: he would be faithful and merciful to him, according to covenant engagements: he would give him a kingdom, and a glory: he would plant his gospel in the earth: he would hear him, and he should acknowledge the divine faithfulness in being all to him engaged for. Jehovah would exalt his name, fame, kingdom, and dominion over and above all the kings of the earth. Jehovah would maintain the mercy of the covenant; it should be for evermore. *My covenant, says Jehovah, shall stand fast with him.* This covenant was made with Christ: he was the Mediator: he fulfilled all the conditions of it. Therefore the Father promises to bestow on him, and his, the blessings of it. *His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.* The elect are Christ's by the Father's gift, and by his own purchase. He shed his heart's blood for them; they are those for whom he endured soul-travail. And by the Father's promise to the Mediator, in the words before us, they are to endure for ever, and his mediatorial throne is to be as the days of heaven. He lives as the Saviour, Priest, and representative in heaven, after the power of an endless life; and he says, *Because I live, ye shall live also.* This is free grace indeed!

V. 30. *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments.*

This and the following verse contain a clause put into the everlasting covenant, which hath been, and will be, of great advantage to the church of the living God. The children here spoken of are Christ's; they are his seed; they are his offspring. What is expressed concerning them here befalls some of them, after they are renewed by the Holy Ghost, and endued with his gifts and graces. Some of these are left to themselves. They backslide from God; they forsake his law; they neglect his gospel, and the salvation revealed therein; they walk not in his statutes; they

abstain from his ordinances. Some of them act worse after they have been called, in some instances and particulars, than ever they did before.

V. 31. *If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments.*

To break the Lord's statutes, seems expressive of grievous sinning. And it hath been most awfully the case in some persons, and instances; they have sinned more grossly and tremendously after they have been brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord than ever they did before. It was so with David, with Solomon, with Peter; it has been so with others. The great Dr. Goodwin says, God will glorify his justifying grace more in some, and his sanctifying grace more in others. Some are permitted to be gross and grievous backsliders in heart and act; others are so carried on, as most eminently appears from their conversion to the moment of their departure from the body, to be the epistles of Christ, known and read of all men. Yet these two *ifs* are not here cyphers. They are not merely as suppositions; they express what hath been, and will in various persons and cases, be most solemnly realized. *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then God will act thus towards them.*

V. 32. *Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.*

Several expressions here are quite equal to what the Lord spoke in vision to Nathan the prophet, which he delivered to David, as they concerned his kingdom, and Solomon his successor. I will quote some of them. *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 unto my name, and I will establish 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,* 2 Sam. vii. 12—14. As it is therefore considered, that under the figure of the kingdom and royalty of David is set forth, in this Psalm, Messiah's kingdom, so to what befel Solomon and his son Rehoboam, when a rent was made, whereby the splendour of the house of David was greatly eclipsed, some conceive these words are to be applied. Surely it must be confessed, this will serve to reflect light on them. Yet I conceive they concern also the election of grace; and contain an account of God's dealings with his backsliding ones. *I will visit their trans-*

gressions with a rod. With some open visible correction and chastisement. And their iniquities with stripes. And he did the Corinthians for their profaning the Lord's table. *For which cause* (says the Apostle) *many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* See 1 Cor. xi. 30. All the sins of God's elect were laid on Christ. He suffered the whole curse and punishment due to all their transgressions and iniquities; with his stripes they are healed. This must not be forgotten; nor any thing spoken by the Lord so interpreted, as to obscure it. No; God forbid.

V. 33. *Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.*

This word *nevertheless* comes in here, just as it does by the Apostle, in what he says to Timothy. *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity,* 2 Timothy ii. 19. The Apostle brings in his *nevertheless* after a very great departure from the faith of the gospel. The Psalmist brings in his *nevertheless*, after a most awful and tremendous departure from the Lord, by actual backslidings and horrible sins committed against the divine Majesty. Yet the Father's love to Christ, and to the persons of the elect in Christ, is beyond the possibility of a change. God's covenant with Christ, on the behalf of his people, is always one and the same: he will ever be faithful to all his promises made to him, and in him, to all his seed: his truth will never fail. No; not to his people, let their conduct be what it may.

V. 34. *My covenant I will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.*

God calls the covenant, *My covenant*. It is so in every sense. He conceived it in his infinite mind: he proposed it to Christ, God-Man, and engaged with him by stipulation and re-stipulation, for the performance of the same. This covenant Jehovah will not break. Not a tittle of it will he nullify: not one promise of it will he alter: the words which he hath pronounced shall stand for ever. This is the very security of all faith and confidence in him.

V. 35. *Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.*

This contains the seal of the covenant. He swears by his holiness to the truth of it. It is the confirmation, as the binding act of the covenant. He will not lie, he will not fail the antitypical David.

V. 36. *His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.*

Christ will never cease having a church upon earth, until time is swallowed up in eternity. Then his church, when glorified in heaven, will be ever before him, and he will be glorified in them, and they in him to all eternity. And his throne as God-Man, Mediator, shall be perpetual before Jehovah the Father for ever. It will be as the sun, which was appointed, and is continued as God's ordinance to give light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and stars by night.

V. 37. *It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.*

The Lord God, Jehovah the Father, here closes this whole subject. He had said he would keep his covenant with the Messiah; he would not break it; nor would he alter any part of it. He confirms this by an oath founded on his own holiness. As sure as he was essentially holy, so sure should the Mediator, his seed, his throne, be continued for ever. He confirms it by the outward ordinances of sun and moon, and by the rainbow in the heaven. To which the word *Selah* is added. *It* [i. e. God's covenant] *shall be established for ever as the moon, and as the faithful witness in heaven. Selah.* Mark this well. And it most justly deserves to be very particularly attended unto by us. And here the whole which concerns the covenant between the Father and the Son closes. This is the end of it, as it respects the revelation made of it in this Psalm. The sun, the moon, the rainbow, are made use of as outward visible ordinances and evidences to confirm our faith in God's eternal will, and vast designs in Christ, upon his church and people.

V. 38. *But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.*

This begins a new subject. Whilst it belongs to the former, as it is most closely connected with it, yet this is quite an entire fresh branch of it. The general interpretation of the same is this. The prophet foreseeing the sad eclipse, and as it were the extinction of David's royalty and kingdom, after the death of Solomon, and the revolt of the ten tribes, and setting up for themselves, and setting up *Rehoboam* as their king: now as from thenceforwards the kingdom of Judah began to be low, so as never to arrive to that pitch it was in Solomon's days, hence what here follows is considered to have reference to these events. I conceive this may be considered as the groundwork, yet I rather prefer the application of the whole of them to Messiah. He suffered for sin: he once suffered the just for the unjust:

he sustained in his sufferings the whole curse due to sin the positive sense of divine wrath, the suspension and withdrawal of divine favour: he was cast off: he was abhorred. Jehovah's wrath was exercised on him, and towards him, as the surety who bore all the sins in his own body on the tree. Jehovah was wroth, or executed the fierceness of his wrath, on him his anointed One. It must be acknowledged these are strong expressions. That Messiah should be cast off; that he should be abhorred; that he should be the subject of divine wrath. Yet they are not stronger than these: he was made sin for us; he was made a curse for us. They convey a sense of what Christ himself conceived in his own mind, when he was in his passion. And they are used by Christ prayerwise for deliverance out of this state, and from these circumstances.

V. 39. *Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.*

It had been pronounced by an audible voice from heaven, in the person of Jehovah the Father, and Christ had received it as his testimony concerning him, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased; yet in the deeps of Christ's sufferings all this was so far from being visible, that it seemed all nullified. The person of Christ was profaned: his crown of Messiahship was casting to the ground by the blasphemous taunts of his enemies, who most heartily despised him, because he had declared himself to be the Christ.

V. 40. *Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin.*

He was delivered up into the will and hands of his enemies. All hell and earth were in battle array against him: he was exposed to all their rage: they left him not so much as a breathing time.

V. 41. *All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.*

This was most expressly the case when Christ hung on the tree. Such as then and there surrounded him, reproached him for his Messiahship, for calling himself the Son of God. Those who passed by the way stepped out of it on purpose to insult him. The very thieves who were at the same time crucified, joined with the chief priests, and scribes, in saying, He trusted in God that he would deliver him. If thou be the Christ, come down from the cross. If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. He saved others, himself he cannot save. If thou be the Christ, come down from the cross, that we may see and believe.

V. 42. *Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries ; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.*

The whole bulk of the Jewish people had their will on Christ. He fell into their hands. Nothing would satisfy them but his blood and death: the Lord took off all restraint from them: Christ was in their hands: this was matter of rejoicing to them: it was a feast to their vile minds.

V. 43. *Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.*

All the disciples of our Lord forsook him when he was seized upon in the garden; at his crucifixion, none of them appear to be present except John. None ever was despised like unto him. No sufferings could ever be compared with our Lord's.

V. 44. *Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.*

Which in appearance was the case to an eye of sense. It was all this in the view of the infidel and unbelieving Jews. Yea, even Christ's followers and disciples knew not what to make of his sufferings and death. So that the forementioned verses may be considered as a forerunning prophecy of what their inward thoughts would be, when Messiah should be cut off by the stroke of God upon him. One in the name of the rest said, *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*, Luke xxiv. 21. So it seems their faith staggered, seeing he was slain, and was put into the sepulchre.

V. 45. *The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.*

This is the close of this subject, and a most solemn one it is. Let us collect the substance of the same. Messiah was cut off; he was the object on whom Jehovah expressed his uttermost wrath and indignation against sin; he was dealt with as if he had been the abhorred of the Lord. It was as though the covenant between the Father and him had been made void; it was as though the throne of the Mediator had been cast to the ground; it was in appearance as though his person had been profaned. All help, all succour was removed from him; he was in the hands of law and justice; he was under the imputation of sin, and the infliction of the curse; he was in the hands of his most inveterate foes; his life was cut off; the days of his youth were shortened; he was covered with shame; he bore it on the cross. To fix all this on the mind, the word *Selah* is used here. And the great Messiah applies all this to God,

confessing his hand was in the whole of it, as all his sufferings were according to the council and predestinating purpose of God. Christ might be said to be covered with shame, when his corpse was entombed in the sepulchre.

V. 46. *How long, Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?*

Thus the Mediator begins to expostulate, and plead his sorrows and sufferings before the divine Father.

V. 47. *Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?*

Let it be seen thou rememberest me. That my soul-sufferings, blood-shedding, and the oblation of my soul and body in union with my person, are acceptable in thy sight. And that thou hast not created all men in vain, but appointed many of the sons of men to obtain salvation through my obedience and sufferings.

V. 48. *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.*

None of them but are under the sentence of it. Even I am to be separated body and soul by death, in submission to thy decree; I shall conquer it thereby. Raise my humanity therefore up, and over the power and dominion of it, according to thy covenant promise. The word *Selah* is prefixed here, to set an emphasis on it.

V. 49. *Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?*

Thus the Mediator pleads with God on the footing of covenant acts and transactions; which originated from everlasting love; which had been confirmed by God's own inviolable oath; which were truth itself, yea, as immutable as godhead. All this is put by way of question; which shews the freedom, the access, and the importunity of our Lord's mind with the divine Father, and before him.

V. 50. *Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people.*

Look on my beloved saints; they are thy beloved; they are most grievously distressed and reproached on my account. I myself am the scorn, and bear in my bosom the insult and reproaches of all the unbelieving infidel Jews, those mighty people, who despise me, and cast their reproaches on me. O remember this.

V. 51. *Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.*

Let the whole be done away and abolished, by thy raising my body from the grave of death. This is the only means

of confounding mine and my people's enemies; this thou hast promised, this thou wilt fulfil; I am fully persuaded of it.

V. 52. *Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen.*

Thus Messiah closes, with blessing Jehovah for delivering him from the grave and power of death. The Psalm is closed with a double Amen, to express the devotion and earnestness of the great Mediator's mind.

Thus ends the Third Book of Psalms.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF PSALMS.

It begins with the 90th, and ends with the 106th. So that it includes just the same number of Psalms the former did, viz. 17.

The subject-matter of these is as follows: the 90th concerns the duration of man's life here in this world, to the term of 70 or 80 years.

The 91st Psalm concerns the Messiah, and the safety of those who are in him. The 92d, is a Psalm Song for the Sabbath Day. The 93d, is descriptive of the majesty and glory of Christ's kingdom. The next Psalm, is a prediction of a curse against the enemies of Christ and his church. After, in the succeeding ones to the close of the 100th, the praises of Christ are celebrated for his glorious kingdom. The 101st may be entitled the character of Christ. The following one may be considered written as descriptive of the church of Christ in Babylon. The next is a solemn blessing and acknowledgment to Jehovah for mercies received. The 104th Psalm celebrates the six days' work of creation. In the 105th, the providential and gracious acts of the Lord towards his people Israel, are recorded. And the last of these, with which this Book closes, is a testimony for God, and his great goodness towards his church, with a recital of the various rebellions and sinnings of his people against him. This contains the general outline of this Fourth Book of the Psalms.

PSALM THE NINETIETH.

Its title is, *A Prayer of Moses the man of God.*

He is considered as having written this Psalm in consequence of what took place, when having sent twelve men out of the wilderness of Paran, to search the land of Canaan, on their return, ten of these brought up an evil report on the promised land, notwithstanding that the bunch of grapes, which two of them bore upon a staff, was full proof of the goodness of the land. The whole congregation of the Israelites fell a murmuring against Moses and Aaron, and spoke most awfully. Caleb and Joshua, two of those who were sent to spy out the land, stepped forward, declaring that what the others said was false. The land was exceeding good, and very easy to be conquered. They gave the following exhortation to the people, saying, *Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is departed from them, fear them not.* Yet such was the sinful rage of the people, that they cried out against Caleb and Joshua, Stone them with stones. On this the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation, before all the children of Israel. And he threatens the whole of them, and substitutes Moses and his posterity in their room and stead. On this Moses intercedes to the Lord for them. The motives he uses are great, and his arguments are powerful. The Lord accepts his intercession, and grants it; yet declares most solemnly, that none of that present generation, except Caleb and Joshua, should ever enter into the land of promise. To confirm the truth of which, those men which brought this evil report died by the plague before the Lord. You have the whole account of this, Numbers, chap. xiv. And in about the space of thirty-eight years, all who came out of Egypt, who were twenty years old and upwards, who when numbered at mount Sinai by Moses and Aaron, and twelve captains, one for each tribe, at the commandment of the Lord, amounted to six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty, Num. i. 46.; out of all these, but two men escaped death. They were left in the wilderness, and were, some by plagues, others by war, and some by sundry judgments, wasted away. So that when the Israelites were numbered by Moses and Eleazar in the plains of Moab, by Jericho, there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel

in the wilderness of Sinai, Numbers xxvi. Read the whole chapter; at least the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th verses; and also verses 63, 64; and remember, these are all exclusive of the Levites. This was a most solemn dispensation! on account of it Moses prayed. His prayer is the record of it, and shews how deeply his mind entered into the same, and was impressed with it. The subject-matter of the prayer is a solemn address to the Lord, in which his goodness is acknowledged; his eternity is confessed; his awfully accomplishing his threatening is owned; the future resurrection noticed; what the cases of the Israelites were in the wilderness; the term of man's life; an intercession put up, for wisdom to make a wise improvement of time; a request that the Lord would return in mercy to his people, that he would fulfil his promises, shine forth in his glory, and manifest his glorious majesty in and amongst them and their successors. Thus the prayer ends.

V. 1. *A prayer of Moses the man of God. Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.*

This man of God, including himself with the whole church of Israel, addresses Jehovah, the incomprehensible essence in the divine personalities, thus: *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.* This was a truth, as the Lord's dealings, from the fall, down to the then present time, proved. It was so in a most clear and striking manner, as it respected what the Lord had been and still was to Israel. He brought them out of Egypt; he led them in the wildernesses of Arabia. They were now at a fresh station. Hence the propriety of the expression, *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place* He had been so, he was so still. God's elect in Christ have had Jehovah, in all his persons and perfections, in his love and in his covenant, for their dwelling-place, their mansion, their habitation, from everlasting. He is all this to them in a time state. He will be all this to them in every age, throughout all generations, to the very close of time, and for ever.

V. 2. *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world: even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*

Jehovah is self-existent; he is without beginning and without end; he was from everlasting, he is to everlasting, immutably the same. He is the fountain of being; the creator of the world; he was before it; he produced it. *Before the mountains were brought forth, Jehovah was.* Before the earth and world were formed into an habitable globe, thou, O holy, blessed, and eternal Three, were the

covenanted Three, and didst stand related to thy church as the Lord God of their salvation. And it is from hence thou hast protected us, provided for us, and been all and in all to us.

V. 3. *Thou turnest man to destruction: and sayest, Return, ye children of men.*

He here refers to the mortality which prevailed, in consequence of God's wrath on the Israelites for their unbelief, by means of which they were consumed in the wilderness. The Lord's hand was visible in it. And most awful it was, that in the space of thirty-eight years, a generation of men should be cut off by such a stroke of God's just indignation, that sometimes 250 men were consumed by fire from the Lord; at another time 14,700 died of the plague; at another time 24,000. I mention only the gross sums, or these sums in the gross. As the wrath of the Lord was visible in all this, it must be most solemn, awful, and tremendous. What could lift up the minds of saints who were witnesses and spectators of all this, like contemplations of what Jehovah was in his Christ to them! the eternity of Jehovah; his power and godhead; his everlasting love to them in Christ; the everlasting love which he had bestowed upon them in Christ; their everlasting salvation in Christ, that God had given them everlasting consolation in him; this only was all-sufficient to bear up the minds of Moses and other saints in that age with him, under these be-reaving dispensations. As the Lord executed his sentence on man, *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, and hereby he turneth man to destruction, so he also *sayest, Return, ye children of men.* The resurrection of the body from the dust and grave of death, is pronounced by the Lord in his holy word; full proof is therein given. It is with God as a present act; yet it will not take place until the end of time. It is expressed in the word, *sayest*, to shew that God's word is his act. He will, in his own time, and by his son Jesus Christ whom he raised from the dead, call all that sleep in the dust out of their graves. He will say, *Return, ye children of men.* Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.

V. 4. *For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*

Although from man's fall down to the end of time is to us a long space, yet in the knowledge of Jehovah, before whom all things, past, present, and to come, are ever in view, it is as yesterday. So as it respects the distance of time, from the pronouncing the sentence of death imme-

diately on Adam's fall, to the general resurrection of the dead, is in our conception a long season; yet as it respects God's eternity, which is an everlasting *now*, it is all without succession: *For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past.* This does not seem to be sufficient to express the immensity, knowledge, and eternity of Jehovah, and his eternal duration, therefore it is added, it is *as a watch in the night*; which continues for a short space of a few hours. What an idea is here conveyed to our minds of the immensity of the nature and eternity of Jehovah! He is his own eternity. What we call time, is but God's will concerning the continuation of creatures in existence, that he may perform the counsel of his will concerning them.

V. 5. *Thou carriest them away as with a flood, they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.*

Never was such a dispensation of God towards the sons of men, except at the deluge; it is therefore expressed by it. Six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty persons, to be cut off in the space of thirty eight years! Hence the Psalmist compares it with what took place in Noah's time; saying, *Thou carriest them away as with a flood*; or like as thou didst at the flood. In the morning there is no appearance of this. So far from it, that they are like grass, very numerous. They grow up just as though they were to be green and flourishing in their bodies, and continue so for a season.

V. 6. *In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.*

This is a most solemn memento of man's frailty and mortality. From it we may learn there is no security from death, because the body may be vigorous, strong, and healthy. No; it is but a dust-heap. If the Lord withdraws its breath which is in its nostrils, it drops suddenly of its own accord. It may in the morning be beautiful; it may flourish and grow up to its maturity. It being what it is, brittle, and easily dissolved, it may in this respect be compared to grass which groweth up. *In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.* Thus many of us are, it may be, well in the morning, even when we are to be cut down by death, and numbered with the dead before the evening cometh.

V. 7. *For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.*

He here is speaking to the Lord, concerning those divine chastisements which he inflicted on the Israelites, at the

time this Psalm was penned: when so many of them were consumed by plagues, and earthquake, fire from the Lord, and divers and sundry kinds of deaths. As one who was in union with this people, who was at all times their intercessor, he speaks in his own name as well as theirs: *For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.* His heart could not but be affected with these tokens of God's anger and wrath against these sinners; seeing how they would be memorials and types to others in all ages, of God's displeasure against them for their unbelief.

V. 8. *Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.*

The Lord visited the Israelites for their iniquities. He set their secret sins in the light of his justice, and visited for them. He had said, *As truly as I live, saith the Lord, —your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me.—But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness,* Numb. xiv. 28, 29, 32. Thus Moses might say, as expressing himself on this subject, as he here doth, *Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.* And the next words are explanatory of this.

V. 9. *For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.*

These following words, will be the best comment on the words before us: Moses says, *And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the Lord sware unto them. For indeed the hand of the Lord was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed;* see Deut. ii. 14, 15. In which space of time, the years spent in the wilderness were filled up with very awful evidences of the Lord's wrath. So that such as were real saints amongst them, could not but meditate on the same with awe. They spent their years as a tale that is told. Or, as a meditation on their present circumstances, they dwelt much on those most awful and tremendous catastrophes which were before their eyes.

V. 10. *The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*

This is very expressive of the shortness of life. The con-

tinuation of man upon the earth is fixed; his time is limited; his days are numbered; he is but a tenant at will. Seventy years expired, and the lease is out; very few arrive to this age. Ten years added to this, is now a very long life; very few live to this age. It must be owing to a very strong stamina, if any live thus long. If they do, it is accompanied in general with many infirmities which old age cannot but produce. Life begins then to be burdensome; labour and sorrow are its natural concomitants. And yet this is very short of what the days of the antediluvians lived. It is a small space allotted us to live; our time will soon end; it is soon cut off. We fly away from our bodies, just as the bird from the egg, from the shell. This being the case, Moses and the people with him had very melancholy subjects to improve. And that they might improve them to a right purpose, he expresses himself on their behalf in the following words:

V. 11. *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.*

The former part of the verse contains a question: it is a most solemn and an important one; *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* Notwithstanding the people are under the visible stroke of God, it is evident the wrath of God hath, yea it is still breaking forth upon them; it will be continued until all the men of the present generation are exterminated thereby: yet who amongst them lays this to heart? Who are there who take into their minds what is contained therein? He seeing how little the minds of the people were properly affected herewith, breaks forth into an apostrophe to God on this very awful subject; *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* Thou hast cut off multitudes already, and swept them from the earth, and cast them into hell: more thou wilt, for thy threatening is not yet completed. Yet survivors are as careless as though they were not included in thy divine threatening, and were in no danger from the wrath to come. Surely it fully proves they know not the power of thine anger, and that thy wrath immediately breaking forth on the souls of men, sent to hell, is the very essence of thy curse due to them for sin. Let them be ever so regardless of this, yet *even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.* According to all the apprehensions which can be possibly conveyed to the human mind, concerning thy majesty, glory, self-existence, all-sufficiency, eternity, blessedness, holiness, hatred of sin, and most righteous indignation against sin and sinners, for it, so is thy wrath against it and them for it. If so, what must hell be? The curse

and wrath of God executed on the damned in hell, is such as cannot enter into the heart of men on earth. Yet Moses is solemnly astonished at the carelessness of sinners out of hell, that they could and did go on in the very same ways in which such walked as were cut off by God, as were actually now, at the then present time, in hell. He therefore offers up the following petition on his own, and on the behalf of the Lord's people with him.

V. 12. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

Our days and years are all numbered. Seventy or eighty are the bounds of them. Old Parr, who lived to be 150, and Benjamin Jenkins, of Shropshire, who lived to be 169, were not one jot better off for having their days thus procrastinated; no, it was only a proof of God's sovereignty; nothing more. They might not improve this to their soul's advantage. If they did, it was wholly owing to the grace of God. To number our days aright, and make a wise improvement of them, must be the fruit and effect of divine teaching; this is evident from the prayer before us. It would never have been prayed for that the Lord would so teach us to number our days, that we might apply our hearts unto wisdom, if we could do all this of ourselves. Christ is the true wisdom. To see life is nothing worth without him; that it answers not any end in living in this world, but as we live on him, and live to him, and to apply our hearts to such a study of him as makes us truly blessed in our communion with him; it is this is the truest wisdom, such as is worthy of God to bestow, and fit for us to ask.

V. 13. *Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.*

This is a request for the Lord's return in a manifestative and communicative way to his beloved Israel. The words, *Return, O Lord*, imply he was withdrawn. This was the case, otherwise they had been marching on to Canaan. The question, *how long?* implies his withdrawal from them for a season was like an eternity to them, they so much felt the want of his presence. The petition, *and let it repent thee concerning thy servants*, shews how much they dreaded the divine displeasure, and how much they prayed for all removals of the same from them, as a people called by his name.

V. 14. *O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*

This is a prayer on the behalf of elect Israel. Such of

them as with Moses were the Lord's beloved: they wanted a display of mercy; they needed an early or speedy display of it; they wanted such an out-breaking, and open display of the same, that they might be glad and rejoice all their days therein; they wanted such realizing views of it as might yield them soul satisfaction. They could not have this but by their being brought in their posterity into the land of Canaan.

V. 15. *Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.*

They were afflicted by their detention in the wilderness; by the judgments of God which there fell on apostates; by the solemn sights of God's wrath which had been executed on those who were amongst them. They pray that when all present dispensations are finished, they may emerge out of their present state; they may have joy agreeably to their present sorrow; may have gladness in proportion to their present affliction; and such as might equalize the years wherein they had seen evil in their pilgrimage, by their being brought into the land of Canaan.

V. 16. *Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.*

Be thou, O Lord, pleased to let thy divine will shine forth, in the full and open and clear manifestation of thy work, in bringing us out of Egypt; in leading us on in the wilderness; in thy end and design in the chastisements which have befallen us. And let thy glory in guiding us to the end of our journey, and admitting us as we expect thou wilt, into Canaan, let the glory of all this appear to our successors, to their children also.

V. 17. *And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us: yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.*

The beauty of the Lord was his holy temple. This, as surely as they were admitted into the promised land, would be built to the name of the Lord God of Israel. It would be as an ornament to them should they enter the land, because their successors would most assuredly be engaged in this good work of building the temple. The prayer is very importunate also, that the Lord God would establish the work of their hands; that he would fulfil his promises unto them and upon them; that he would establish the work of their hands; yea, that the work of their hands the Lord God would establish it. Which is to this effect—that he would, when they were admitted into the land the Lord

God had promised them, and would shortly invest them with, still continue his grace and favour unto them. Thus ends this most excellent prayer.

PSALM THE NINETY-FIRST.

This Psalm is without a title. It concerns our Lord Jesus Christ. It was from this Satan quoted a passage when he had the hellish impudence to tempt our divine Lord, knowing it concerned the Messiah. The words which he quoted are contained in the 11th and 12th verses. Whilst Christ is the subject of this prophecy, it is also descriptive of the state, safety, and habitation of the church, the saints of the most high God. Some consider it written by David, after the pestilence which happened in consequence of his numbering the people of Israel. To visit for which, the Lord sent the pestilence, and there fell of Israel 70,000 men.

V. 1. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*

The secret place of the most High was the holiest of all. To be under the wings of the cherubim of glory was to be under the shadow of the Almighty. The Messiah was the object of the love and delight of the Holy Trinity. He was secured and guarded by them: he abode under their shadow: they were his habitation, his safety, and defence: his church and people are in him: they are as safe as he is, he being their habitation, safety, and defence. They may therefore solace themselves in him, and rejoice evermore.

V. 2. *I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and fortress: my God; in him will I trust.*

Here is a declaration of what Jehovah, in all his persons and perfections, was to the speaker; of which a confession is made. I conceive the speaker here to be Christ: Who says, *I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge.* So Jehovah was. It was in him the glorious Mediator found refuge at all times. This was according to the settlements of grace, and agreeably with the divine transactions in the eternal covenant engagements between the Father and the God-man. He, in his incarnate state, was to be in such circumstances as to need to have Jehovah to be his fortress; to have him to be his God in covenant; as the incomprehensible Three had constituted Christ to become incarnate, to be exposed to the assaults of earth and hell, to be opposed by Satan and evil men, and he knew all this, so he might well enter

on his mediatorial work in these views, and with this confession of his faith. *I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.* When we consider he entered openly on his work, when he was pronounced by the Father to be his beloved Son, in whom his soul delighted, in whom he was well pleased; and when he was anointed by the Holy Ghost, who descended on him, he could not but say what he here doth. These words well became him. *I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.* It was in this confidence he overcame that foul fiend of hell, *Satan*, thereby proving himself to be the seed of the woman, who was to bruise his head.

V. 3. *Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.*

It seems clear the devil's temptations, with his attempt on Christ, in the wilderness of Judea, is here foresignified. His threefold temptation may be considered as the snare of this hellish fowler. Our Lord's overcoming him, which is the complete victory of his whole church, may be expressed under the figure of Jehovah's deliverance of him from the noisome pestilence. The words may be considered as a soliloquy, spoken by Messiah to his soul, by which he encouraged his own faith and hope in God.

V. 4. *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*

Like as the covering cherub over the mercy-seat was figurative of the divine protection, to all who rested alone on Christ, the propitiation, so the great *Messiah*, as such, was covered and protected by the essential Three, whose covenant with him was his foundation for trusting in them. Jehovah's truth, his faithfulness to his holy covenant engagements, were Christ's shield and buckler, to uphold him when he was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness of Judea, to be tempted of the devil.

V. 5. *Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.*

I should look on the Psalm before us very rightly entitled, Christ's temptation with his victory over the old serpent called the devil; and these words now before us, as not improperly expressive of the sorrows of our Lord in the garden of *Gethsemane*; and the arrow, or persecution of the Scribes and Pharisees, against him. Yet as it must be acknowledged, Christ and his church are one, and he as their protector, shield, and fortress, so I am not against explaining

these words as belonging unto them. As such, they are a promise, and also a declaration of their state and safety in the most perilous times. It is generally conceived what is here, and in the three following verses, belongs to David, when he having out of the pride of his heart caused the people to be numbered, the Lord sent the pestilence, which raged from Dan to Beersheba, and carried off 70,000 men. Yet David was preserved. Neither the terror occasioned by night, in consequence of this tremendous judgment, or the arrow or shaft of destruction which flew hither and thither by day, hit him. No, he was preserved by the Lord from the same.

V. 6. *Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.*

Thus safe and secure are God's Davids, his beloved ones in Christ, who is their habitation, their guardian, their shield, their fortress, their protector; they dwell in Christ; they are protected by his propitiatory sacrifice; they are under the shadow of the Almighty; he is their refuge; he is their God; it is in him they trust; they have nothing to fear either in life or death, neither by night or day; no pestilence nor destruction can fall on them, except it will be for their real benefit; then they need not fear, nor be a whit concerned for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. And these scriptures are all-sufficient to keep up their faith, and carry their minds off all distress, to a fixation on the Lord Jesus Christ.

V. 7. *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.*

How far this was literally fulfilled in the case of David cannot be ascertained. Yet the substance of it was accomplished. We are expressly informed, *And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; and as he was destroying, the Lord beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David, and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father's house, but not on thy people, that*

they should be plagued, 1 Chron. xxi. 15—17. It seems from hence, as if the case must have been, that multitudes fell on the right hand and left, whilst he escaped.

V. 8. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.*

Whilst it was sin in David to command the people, who were numberless, to be numbered, and it was not by the Lord's command, yet they were not cut off in consequence of David's sin. It was for their own: which on their being numbered was brought to light. So that the multitudes of them which fell being ungodly, their sin might be read in their punishment. This was therefore literally fulfilled. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.* I will quote the former verses, that the beauty of the connexion of them may appear. *Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day: nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.* So secure was David, when the pestilence raged throughout all the coasts of Israel.

V. 9. *Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation.*

These words, and those which follow to the end of the Psalm, appear to me as belonging to Christ. They may be also considered as expressive of the confidence of believers in him; which confidence is grounded on their faith in the word of promise. These words seem to be spoken in the person of the Father, as addressed to Messiah. Or, they may be considered as expressed by Christ, and spoken by way of meditation to himself, as giving an account of his faith, and the ground and foundation thereof. Jehovah was Christ's refuge: the most High was his habitation: as man, as God-man, as Mediator, in his incarnate state, he dwelt in the secret place of the most High: he abode safe and secure under the shadow of the Almighty. He, under these views, could be perfectly confident in those promises made by the Father unto him, in the everlasting covenant, that they would be fulfilled unto him, in his incarnate state.

V. 10. *There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*

No, Messiah was to be upheld; he was to be guided on; he was to be delivered from all evil; no plague was to come nigh him. This may, in a most especial and particular manner, be expressive of his impeccability. He could not,

as the Man in God, sin. No, it was impossible. Yet the devil would be permitted to make his attacks on him, that that enemy to Christ and his church might be everlastingly confounded.

V. 11. *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*

This the Mediator was well assured of. It is here expressed as well known to him. He was to be kept in all his ways of obedience and suffering with the utmost safety, and in the full vigor of mind, in accomplishing the will of him that sent him. Angels were to minister unto him. They well might; he being their Lord and head.

V. 12. *They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

Our divine Lord, by his incarnation, and in his incarnate state, was made a little lower than the angels. When our Lord, having been baptized, and received from the divine Father that solemn testimony of his Sonship, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, and the Holy Ghost in a visible symbol descended on him, and thus anointed him as the Christ of God, was engaged in his temptation, the devil quoted these two verses, (11th and 12th,) as belonging to him, as the *Messiah*. We read thus: *Again the devil taketh him up into the Holy City, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple. And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* See Matth. iv. 5—7. Our Lord does not deny but it was thus written of him; but proves by his citing another scripture, that trusting in God's word of promise, does by no means lead to presumption, nor set aside obedience to his most holy and revealed will.

V. 13. *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.*

This most assuredly belongs to the Mediator, Christ Jesus. It is a most glorious promise of the Father unto him. It concerns his full and final victory over all his enemies. As it here stands, I can see no impropriety of applying it to Christ's conquest of Satan in his threefold temptation, by which he tried Christ, and found himself baffled. Our Lord did then, most assuredly, tread upon the lion of hell. On him who by means of the adder, or serpent, deceived our first parents in Paradise. So did our Christ in his passion and on the cross. There he trod on the head of the old

serpent, called the devil. There, *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it, or, in himself*, Col. ii. 15.

V. 14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.*

It was love to the divine Father was the great motive which moved Christ in all his mediatorial engagements, and in the performance of the same. It was this which rendered the same so highly acceptable to the divine Majesty. Christ was to be most deeply immersed in sufferings. He was to be made sin, and a curse; or he could not accomplish the whole of his mediatorial work: he was in his body to be under the arrest of death. Yet, says Jehovah the Father, *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.* By raising him up above and beyond all his sorrows and sufferings, by his glorious resurrection from the dead. *I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.* He shall sit at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and have a name above every name in earth and heaven.

V. 15. *He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.*

Christ was in trouble when he stood in the room and stead of all his people; when he was charged with all their crimes; when the curse due to these came in upon him; he called upon the Lord when under the imputation of sin, and the stroke of divine justice was upon him. The Father heard, and answered him. *He shall call upon me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble.* It was even so. I will deliver him. This was also accomplished in the resurrection of Christ. *I will honour him.* So the Father did, by crowning him in heaven with glory and immortality.

V. 16. *With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.*

The glorious Mediator liveth after the power of an endless life. He is a Priest for ever; he liveth unto God; he is satisfied with the reward bestowed on him by the Father for his mediatory work. The Father will shew, he hath shewed him his salvation; he hath given him a full intuitive knowledge of the same, in all the glory of it; so that the most blessed Messiah who finished it must enjoy blessedness unutterable in the increasing knowledge which he hath of it, even now he is in heaven. I would observe, I am at present only engaged in casting light, so far as the Lord please, on the subjects contained in the Psalms. I am not sermoniz-

ing; therefore there would be no propriety in my running out into commonplace heads. I only aim to give Christ his due honour, according to what is revealed concerning him, in these most sacred hymns. May the Lord the Spirit be pleased most graciously to bless the attempt. Be it with ever so small a reflection of his own light, I have my full reward. Amen.

PSALM THE NINETY-SECOND.

A Psalm Song for the Sabbath Day.

The Sabbath day was the seventh day from the creation. On it he rested from all his works which he, Jehovah, had made, and he blessed and sanctified it, because that in it he rested from all his work which God created and made. *The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.*—It is added, *Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.* See Exodus xxxi. 12, 13, 15, 16, 17. It was sanctified by an holy convocation or assembly of the people; by offering of sacrifices, singing of psalms; by reading and expounding the scriptures; by praying, conferring, and meditation on God's word and works; and in exercising mercy on such as were in need. The Jews had their weekly sabbath; and their festival days bore this title, because they rested from all employment on them. Our Lord's body rested in the grave the whole of the seventh day, sabbath. All the Jewish festivals were *sabbaths*.

One says, "This Psalm was made to be sung and used in the service of God in the assembly on the sabbath day, with the public exercises of the church."

Some Hebrew writers say, it was made by *Moses*, in celebration of the work of the creation; there is no author thereof expressed in the title. This Psalm for the sabbath, and the 113th to the 117th Psalms, which the Jews call their *Hallelujah*, or praises of God, were sung at the *Passover*, and are