

the psalm or hymns which are mentioned in the gospel, which were sung during the celebration."

The subject of it is, that it is good to praise Jehovah for his works of creation and grace. To view his judgments on the wicked, and his goodness to his saints.

V. 1. A Psalm Song for the Sabbath day.—*It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High.*

As every ordinance of the Lord contains a subject in itself worthy of the divine Majesty, so did the Lord's sabbath, and so does the Lord's day. To contemplate the works of creation, the display of God's eternal power and godhead manifested in the same, was a subject for worship, adoration, and praise. It was a subject most exactly suited to that sacred day of rest. A Psalm Song was divinely prepared for the same. To contemplate the creation, the nothingness of the creature, the vast ends and designs of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, in the God-man Christ Jesus, who is the foundation, centre, and corner-stone of all things visible and invisible, is a glorious part and act of divine worship. The church of the New Testament are represented as worshipping the holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, that liveth for ever and ever, and casting their crowns before the throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created,* Rev. iv. 11. Yet on our Lord's day, which is the memorial of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave and power of death, we commemorate and give thanks for blessings which exceed and surpass all contained in the whole creation of God. Ainsworth says, the Chaldee paraphraseth the title of this Psalm thus, *An hymn, a song for the sabbath, a song which the first man said for the sabbath.* To have fellowship with the Holy Trinity in the blessings of grace exceeds the sweets, comforts, and enjoyments of all contained in the whole creation of God.

V. 2. *To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.*

Jehovah is the Most High. As he hath revealed himself fully in the person of Christ, as the Lord our God, it is good to dwell in meditations on the love of the Three in Jehovah to the elect in Christ, and on the covenant acts of the eternal Three; on the person of Christ; on his incarnation; on his life, sacrifice, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification; and on his powerful intercession, on the behalf of his church in heaven. These are most

delightful acts of worship for saints to be engaged in on the Lord's day. To begin the morning, and close the evening with such deep, glorious, and interesting subjects, is good to the spiritual mind. Believers in Christ can say, as truly as ever Old Testament saints did, *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High. To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.* The instrument to be used in this worship, and for this song, is mentioned.

V. 3. *Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.* Or, upon the solemn sound with the harp. Or, upon *Higgaion* with the harp.

The word *Higgaion* signifies meditation, which is a very important act of worship, more than is generally conceived. When we enter by meditation into spiritual subjects, we are best prepared to express before the Lord our real apprehensions and views of the same, let our acknowledgments be either prayer or praise. Why these instruments of music, which were designed to lift up the mind in the utmost praise and thankfulness of heart to the Lord, were used, is next suggested.

V. 4. *For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.*

The works of God in creation, all of them are perfect. Survey the whole creation in its form and order, in its use and end, in its design and harmony, it is all very good. Could we view and survey every creature in its nature, form, figure, and size; could we understand every tree, plant, and vegetable; and comprehend the birds in the air, the fishes of the sea, and every part of God's ways and works which come under our notice, we should have reason to say, as the prophet here expresses himself, and say individually, *For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.* And so much more reason have we for this when we have true, spiritual, and gospel apprehensions of the person and finished work, victories, and triumphs of our most precious Immanuel. This is the proper work of the renewed and sanctified mind on the Lord's day.

V. 5. *O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.*

The greatness of God's majesty shines forth in all his works. There is such wisdom evidenced in them, as we cannot comprehend. His thoughts are beyond our uttermost conception: we cannot find out the works of God

from the beginning to the end of them : his manifold wisdom is most gloriously expressed in the person of Christ : in the constitution and appointment of him to be God and man in one person : in him, and salvation by him, the hidden wisdom of God is unfolded : in his mediatorial work and office, in his mediatorial salvation and grace, we may well be swallowed up and lost. The thoughts, the purposes, the vast designs of the Holy Trinity, in their acts of grace towards us, and their eternal purpose in Christ Jesus concerning us, are very deep. We, on a true apprehension of the same, may well cry out, *O! the depth!*

V. 6. *A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.*

The prophet here enters on a new subject. From creation he turns to the subject of God's holy providence; which is nothing more nor less than the execution of his righteous pleasure towards all his creatures, rational and irrational, sinners and saints; which hath a wonderful mystery contained in it; such as none can have any tolerable conception of, except they are taught of God. *A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this*, which is about to be related, concerning Jehovah's judgments on the wicked; for it is this which is the subject, and which he introduceth in the next words:

V. 7. *When the wicked [or, ungodly] spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.*

There are seasons when the wicked spring as the grass. They flourish: every thing seems to be on their side: wealth, health, and all worldly goods, seem to abound with and towards them. Yet it very often is a solemn presage of their sudden downfall and destruction. But such as know not God, and his righteous judgments in a providential way, do not apprehend this. *A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool*; one void of spiritual understanding knoweth not this, that when the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is a most certain presage of their downfall. It is that they shall be destroyed for ever. Now this is proper matter of meditation for spiritual minds; yea, for the sabbath, and Lord's day, as it leads to consider Christ will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in

his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, 2 Thess. i. 7—10.

V. 8. *But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.*

Yes, he is above and beyond all creatures: he governs them, so as to accomplish in them all his own eternal purposes and designs: he is Jehovah, the self-existing, the all-sufficient God: he is the most High: he ruleth over all worlds, beings, and things. Therefore he will render recompense to his enemies: his saints shall see it, and rejoice in him.

V. 9. *For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish, all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.*

This is rendered by some thus: *they shall be scattered from the congregation of the just in the world to come.* This will be most assuredly the case. Even here on earth, it pleases the Lord to make an evident distinction between saints and sinners. Thus God's wrath and displeasure on the brutish man, on the foolish, on the ignorant, on the wicked, on the workers of iniquity, on Christ's enemies, on Christless sinners, are expressed and declared; which will be as surely executed as it is here recorded. It is a most awful subject. The prophet therefore turns from it to what is far more pleasing.

V. 10. *But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.*

The horn in scripture is symbolical of strength. It is expressive here of the kingdom of Christ; of his church on earth; of the glory and strength of the same. But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of a unicorn. The prophet, as a personator of the church, expresseth in the confidence of faith the conquest of all the enemies of Christ, and his church. As the unicorn is considered to be strong, and not to be conquered, so the church of Christ, having him for her strength, shall be invincible. It was said of God's people of old, by Balaam, *God brought them*, (i. e. the Israelites,) *He*, (i. e. God himself,) *hath as it were the strength of an unicorn.* Numbers xxiii. 22. Thus the kingdom, the majesty, the glory, the strength of Christ's church, shall be continued. All opposition shall fall before it. The enemies of Christ shall be finally subdued: the church shall be afresh anointed. *I shall be anointed with fresh oil*; or, ointment; even with that unction which teacheth all things.

V. 11. *Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me.*

This is uttered as a prophecy. It does not savour of the

flesh: it does not arise from corrupt nature. No, it is wholly and altogether spiritual; from an holy zeal for the glory of Christ, and good of his church. So what was foretold concerning the Lord's judgments on the wicked, on the workers of iniquity, on the enemies of the Lord, would, must, and will be fully and finally accomplished. Let these spring up as the grass; let these increase as they might; let these rage and roar; let these be increased with ever so great a number; yet they shall be destroyed for ever: they shall perish for ever. This deserves to be noticed. *For lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for lo, thine enemies shall perish: all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. But my horn shall be exalted, [or, my horn shalt thou exalt] like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil. Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear the desire of the wicked that rise up against me.* Thus the church here speaks in certain views of her being more than conqueror over all her enemies.

V. 12. *The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.*

The palm tree, or date tree, is of tall and upright stature, the branches fair and green. The Israelites made booths of it at their solemn feasts. See Levit. xxiii. 40. The fruit was pleasant. This tree, when loaden and pressed with boughs and fruit, bent not. It was an ever-green: it always grew, and was prosperous. The branches of it carried in the hand, or worn in garlands, were memorials of victory. The walls of the temple were beautified with these trees, which were graven on them, 1 Kings vi. 33. These were figurative of saints in Christ, and of their flourishing state in him. In Ezekiel's visionary temple we read of cherubims and palm trees, so that a palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub, and they were on the wall of the temple. See chap. xli. 18, 20. The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, whilst the prosperity of the wicked is momentary. As Christ in all things must have the pre-eminence; so I conceive here, Christ is to be considered in the first place to be the righteous One, who flourishes as the palm tree. He is the Lord our righteousness: he is righteous in himself; of himself; and from himself alone. He doth and shall for ever flourish like the palm tree. He hath borne up under the weight of sin and the curse, and he sunk not: he is always in a flourishing state: he is an eternal conqueror: his triumphs will last to eternity: his Church is in him: she is righteous in him: she is a conqueror in him: she flourishes in him: she is beautiful and glorious in him.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. The cedar is a tree, tall, strong, and durable. It is so dry, the timber doth not rot. It was made great use of in building of the temple. Hence it is mentioned here. And the righteous, it is said, shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Christ may be considered as prefigured hereby, for the majesty, glory, and excellency of his person. It seems to me, this application of the verse is more correct than it would be to apply it to the church, as the righteous is here spoken of in the singular number; *The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.* What follows seems to be the fruit of all this.

V. 13. *Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.*

Such as are favoured with the true knowledge of Christ, and are in the house of the Lord, in the church, and amongst the worshippers of the most high God, these, as watered with the dews of divine grace, shall flourish in the courts of our God. And this, because they are one with Christ the true vine, and root of all grace. Their flourishing like the palm tree, and their growth like a cedar in Lebanon, were figured forth in the same sacred emblems as figured Christ; he being the root of the righteous which yieldeth fruit. Their perseverance in every good word and work to their lives end is set before us in the following words:

V. 14. *They shall still bring forth fruit in old age: they shall be fat and flourishing.*

Spiritual growth consists in increasing views and apprehensions of God's love to us in Christ Jesus. It is hereby we bring forth the fruits of faith and holiness. These chiefly consist in real spiritual communion with the Lord; in greatly delighting ourselves in him, and in our blessing ourselves in the God of truth. Faith and its fruits should not be confounded. Christ is the object of faith; so far as faith looks unto, and lives on Christ, so far its fruits increase. These are so many spiritual acts towards the Lord. And old age does not make in the least against our living wholly, and altogether out of ourselves, on the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whilst we live on him, we are holy in all manner of conversation and godliness.

V. 15. *To shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*

The continuance in well-doing, with the perseverance of the saints in faith and holiness, is the fruit of God's faithfulness to them. It is to shew that the Lord is righteous, or upright, or faithful to his word of promise. He cannot be

otherwise: he is that God which cannot lie. He is, says the prophet, *my rock*. I have found, I do, and I ever shall find him so; and there is no unrighteousness in him. He never broke his word: it is immutable. The Lord give us to believe the truth of this. Amen.

PSALM THE NINETY-THIRD.

The subject of this Psalm, is the majesty, the power, and holiness of Messiah's kingdom, both in his church, and as exercised over all the enemies thereof. He is Lord God omnipotent. His saints will therefore have cause to rejoice and triumph in him. I conceive it may well be considered as very expressive of him, as seated on his mediatorial throne. This, and the four following Psalms, are without any titles:

V. 1. *The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.*

Jehovah Jesus having finished the work which the Father gave him to do, was exalted to his mediatorial throne. He reigneth, as God-man, over all worlds, beings and things; he reigneth in his church, and in the world; he reigneth with majesty; he exerciseth his power for the good of his people, and for the glory of his name; he hath founded his church on himself; he is the rock on which it is built. He hath established the world, and settled the course of nature, so that it cannot be changed by any creature. He hath so provided for his church, and so secured it, that all the combined powers of earth and hell cannot finally prevail against it; he shines forth in his mediation, and in his mediatorial grace, work, office, and reign, as Mediator, clothed with majesty; as Mediator he is clothed with power; he hath power both in heaven and earth; he is given to be head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fulness of him which filleth all in all; he hath girded himself for his government; all things in heaven and earth are under his control.

V. 2. *Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.*

Christ existed from everlasting; he was God-man Mediator, and head of his church and people, before all time; his throne was, by the will, council, covenant and oath of the eternal Three. *Thou art from everlasting, God over all, blessed for ever; the head of the whole creation, King of*

kings, and Lord of lords; thy name is from everlasting, and thou hast an everlasting name. Thus the eternity, godhead, majesty, power, and holiness of the king Mediator, are declared and expressed; which must exalt him in the renewed mind, when the Holy Ghost is pleased to engage believers to receive this account of their beloved Lord Jesus Christ into their minds. Christ is king of saints: he is king of nations; he is the king of earth and heaven. The prophet saith of him, *the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.* Jer. x. 10.

V. 3. *The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.*

This is expressive of the tumultuous rage and tyranny of wicked and ungodly men against Christ; against his reign, his throne, his government, his church and people, in this our world. Yet their malice is impotent, it cannot prevail; they must be overcome, think as they may, *the Lord reigneth.* And all his enemies are under his feet, they are all before him; he can most easily crush them: he will; he hath before this time, *spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it, or in himself.* What can his present enemies therefore expect, but to be finally crushed by his omnipotent arm? What therefore hath the church of Christ to fear? Nothing. It is written, *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.* Isa. liv. 17.

V. 4. *The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.*

This was fully proved, when the Egyptians followed the Israelites, and went in after them to the midst of the sea. Yet what was the event? Why this: when *the enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.* Why, says Moses, in an address to Jehovah the Saviour, *Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.* See Exod. xv. 9, 10. Christ is upon his throne; he is higher, and more mighty, than all the rage, malice, and enmity of his enemies; he is above the noise of many waters. Let his enemies be ever so numerous; let them make a noise like the rushing of many waters; let them be as tumultuous as the raging billows, or all of them combined together be as

the mighty waves of the sea, the Lord is infinitely above them. He is on his throne to defend his church; to save his people; to subdue, dethrone, and conquer his and their enemies. This is matter of great consolation to his church.

V. 5. *Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.*

The church is the house of the living God. Christ, as the Son of God, is the foundation and builder of it; *whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end*, Heb. iii. 6. The testimonies of the Lord given unto it, are his gospel, and holy institutions; they are very sure; they are stable and lasting, to be continued until the second coming of the Lord; they are holy in their nature, use, end, and design. Holiness becometh all the saints and worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the king whose name is the Lord of hosts: to this the prophet sets his seal; this is to be for ever the case in the kingdom of glory. As all the true subjects of Christ's grace are partakers of righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, so they may well glory in him; they may well sing his praises, and celebrate him for his throne; for his reign; for his majesty; for his power; for his holiness; for the security which they have in him. May the Lord the Spirit lead us into the subject before us, and thereby glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, by leading us into fresh fellowship with him, and with the Father in him. Amen.

PSALM THE NINETY-FOURTH.

The subject-matter of this Psalm is a prophecy. It contains complaints of the tyranny and impiety of the persecutors of the church. It is said, this Psalm was sung in the temple worship, when it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; and also when it was burnt a second time by the Romans, the Levites were singing these words of the last verse, *And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off*. Josephus stands amazed at it, that the second temple should be burnt by the Romans in the same month, and on the same day of the month, that the first temple was set on fire by the Chaldeans, and as some of the Jewish doctors say, when the Levites were singing the same Psalm in both destructions, viz. Psalm xciv. 23. *And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God*

shall cut them off. The prophet prays to the Lord on the behalf of his church; he comforts the persecuted; he would they should exercise faith on God's unchangeable love. God, the righteous judge, will deliver his people, and punish their enemies. It is beyond me to explain it, yet so it is; nothing hath ever yet fallen on the unbelieving and apostate Jews, but it was foretold in the book of Psalms. Even the destruction of the temple is included in this which is now before us.

V. 1. *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.*

Here is a peculiar title attributed to the Lord God. He is *the God of revenges*, as he is called *the God of recompences*, Jer. li. 56. The church was grievously oppressed by the Chaldeans; so was it afterwards by the Romans. The case of the elect and beloved of God in Judea was very sore and desperate: they needed comfort from the Lord. It was needful for them their enemies should be confounded and filled with terror. The words before us are very expressive of their cry unto the Lord, and of their importunity in supplicating the throne of the heavenly grace. There is no difficulty in conceiving this Psalm might be drawn up, under the inspiration of the eternal Spirit, for the use of the saints, when these things should come on them. And it might be sung in the worship of God, as a solemn memento of what would most assuredly take place. It is God's prerogative to judge his people. It is therefore here left with him: *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.* It is Jehovah God is addressed, in his essence and personalities. He is addressed as the God, the Three in the essence existing, as *the God of revenges*. This is again repeated. And the request is, that he would shine forth clearly to the comfort of his saints, and to the terror and confusion of his and their enemies.

V. 2. *Lift up thyself thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.*

Whilst all this was the prayer of the church, yet all this is to be also considered as prophetic. So that here is nothing of malice and enmity against even the persecutors. Whilst the church could not but entreat the Lord in a way consistent with his interest and relation to his people, and consistent with the glory and honour of his perfections, he would be pleased to avenge himself and his chosen, from the rage and cruelty of the enemy. Christ is the judge of the earth. It is with him to render vengeance to his enemies: it is with him, and he most assuredly will, render a

reward to the proud. It shall be fully proved by his dispensations in his most holy providence, in every instance, that *pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*

V. 3. *Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?*

Here are questions asked quite suited to the subject. The wicked and ungodly were risen up against the church; they had gained great advantages. Be they Chaldeans, or Medes, Persians, or Assyrians, or Syrians, or Egyptians, or Romans; so that they did actually triumph in their victories and successes over the poor Jews. The question put to Christ, the judge and governor of the earth, is, How long shall it be so?

V. 4. *How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?*

Here are two more questions put to the Lord God to whom vengeance belongeth, concerning the proud, the wicked, the workers of iniquity, the enemies, the persecutors of the church. These enemies uttered and spake hard things: they boasted of themselves, and of what they would further do, in their rage and malice against the true believing Jews. It may also refer to the rage and malice of the Jews against the true disciples of our Lord in the land of Judea, and even against the Gentile believers in the Roman provinces, so far as their influence could extend. These enemies spake out of the fountain of their own hearts; they uttered hard speeches of contempt and blasphemy concerning Christ, the Messiah; they poured out reproaches on all who called on his name. Nor did they stop here; they proceeded to the most severe persecutions.

V. 5. *They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage.*

This was very lamentable. We in this age know nothing of it, except in the history of it. It seems very applicable to the cruelty of the Chaldeans, who slew the young men of Israel with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, i. e. in the temple. And who had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him who stooped for age, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 17. The prophet here complains before the Lord, concerning these, and other such like cruelties.

V. 6. *They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.*

Surely all this must be sorely distressing to the prophet, and to the saints of God in his time. No marvel he complains of it; it went to his very heart; it pained his very

soul. He had in the former verses prayed to the Lord, and entreated him to avenge himself of the enemies of his church, by a righteous requital of his wrath on them. And in these two verses, he recites the tyranny and brutality of these: saying, *They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage. They slay the widow and the fatherless, or the stranger, and murder the fatherless.* The various cases the Lord's visible church have been in, and passed through, with their sufferings and persecutions, are by us inconceivable. The prophet next speaks of the impiety and infidelity which was in the minds of these persecutors, and which they even published with their lips.

V. 7. *Yet they say, The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.*

The impiety contained in these expressions, can never be explained. The acts of cruelty before recited were but the fruits and effects of the same. To deny Jehovah's omniscience and omnipresence, contains the very essence of all sin. To say the God of Jacob will not regard the wrongs done his people, is to be a blasphemer. The prophet therefore, in a very solemn and judicious manner, put some important and awful questions to these worms of the earth, and they are contained in the next and two following verses.

V. 8. *Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?*

The character of *brutish* belongs to you; for there is enough before your eyes, and continually realized to your senses, as might save you from your being so deeply and desperately sensual and ignorant in your conception of Godhead. What, can you conceive that he who gave you the capacities you are endowed with, does not know you altogether? Surely he does. Surely you must be extremely brutish if you do not understand this. Let me address you under your present proper character. I will ask you if ye do not know, and if ye have not understood this, brutish among the people and fools as ye are, *when will ye be wise?* I will also propose the following question to you:

V. 9 *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?*

Can you conceive the organs of hearing and sight were created in you, and that he who formed them is without hearing and eye-sight? Surely you cannot, brutish as you are, on recollection, conceive the most high God gave you hearing and eye-sight, and did not thereby give full evidence that he is all ear to hear, and all eye to behold, and comprehend all you are. Surely he must be.

V. 10. *He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?*

Most certainly he that made the ear and set it in the body; he that set the eye in the body, that the whole man might receive in the light and knowledge of outward visible objects thereby; he that chastiseth the heathen, as is evident by what came upon the Egyptians, the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Midianites, and others, shall he not know? Can any thing be hid from him? Can any word be spoken against him or his favourites, and not be before him, and comprehended by him? Is this possible, think ye? He who created the eye, can you conceive he is not all eye? or that his eyes do not run to and fro to shew himself strong on the behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards him? If you can think so, which seems to be impossible, let this be attended unto by you:

V. 11. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.*

The apostle quotes these words in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. iii. 20.; and as an expositor, instead of *man*, he putteth *wise*. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.* As it respects the prophet, he says to this effect, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, the inward deceptions and reasonings of all men, that they are vain; they are vanity, and nothing beyond it.

V. 12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.*

Here begins a new subject. He turns off from the former, and speaks here, and in the following verse, of the benefit of divine chastisement, as it proceeds from God as the father of his people. It leads the church of God to know their father's will: it affords them peace even when their persecutors fall into their own pit. The words, as they are here put, are set in opposition to all natural wise men's reasoning. When the Lord's church and people are oppressed, they conceive it must be a curse to them. No, saith the prophet, it is not; it is a blessing; I pronounce it so. And he well might. For long before his time, Moses said to the people of Israel, *Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.* The words in the Psalm are an address to the Lord: *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.* It is one of God's holy ordinances to bring his people into trying cases; to open their minds to apprehend them; to give them a feeling sense of them; and then to open his own word unto them; and out of his holy gospel,

which is here styled his law, to teach and also instruct them, so as to increase their knowledge of him, and their communion with him. Thus the Lord's chastisements become a blessing unto them.

V. 13. *That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.*

It is as the Lord is pleased to open his holy gospel to the minds of his afflicted ones, and shews them why and wherefore he is pleased to afflict them, that their minds have rest in him under their persecutions, and during their days of adversity. The time will come when they will see the Lord will have a pit digged for the ungodly. It must be so, for the following reason, which is given in the next words:

V. 14. *For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.*

His love towards them is invincible: his mercy everlasting: his power infinite: his covenant is from everlasting to everlasting, one and the same. He may leave his beloved ones in the hand of their enemies for a season, but he will turn again and have compassion on them according to the multitude of his mercies. He may leave them to themselves, and to the influence of their own inherent corruption, yet he will turn again and have compassion, and subdue their iniquities, and shew them that he hath cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

V. 15. *But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.*

God's severe chastisements of his beloved church and people, shall by other dispensations be changed into mercy. I conceive our Lord Jesus Christ may be considered as the subject of these verses: that is, from the 12th, and down to the very close of the Psalm. My reasons are as follows: he was *the blessed man*; he was the man of blessedness; he was chastened by Jehovah; he was taught out of his law. When he had completed the work of salvation, he rested in the grave, from those days of adversity or sorrow he was the subject of in his incarnate state. He, when raised by his resurrection and ascension to heaven, rested there, and saw the desperate fall of his Jewish enemies into the pit of temporal destruction. He was cast off, and cut off, but not for ever. His being restored to an enjoyment of the love of the Holy Three to him, is full evidence the Lord will not cast off for ever—that he will not forsake his saints. But judgment, vindictive wrath exercised on Messiah, shall turn out to be a full proof of his righteousness. That he is the righteous one; the righteous branch: who is essentially,

personally, mediatorially so. Which, as revealed and made known, will cause the upright in heart to follow him, and cleave to him as the Lord their righteousness and strength. Other reasons are to follow, when we get some verses farther, as evidence there must be some revelation of Christ in this hymn before us.

V. 16. *Who will rise up for me against the [wicked, or] evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?*

Our Lord might well ask these questions by the prophet in prophecy, as foretelling how it would be with him in the day of his sufferings. None appeared on his behalf. Not Joseph of Arimathea, nor Nicodemus, would appear in court, when the evildoers, and the workers of iniquity, rose up in the great senate of the nation, and consulted to put him to death. He was then forsaken by all. His sorrows and feelings on these very accounts must have been many, and very exquisite. He might therefore well express himself as he does in the next words;

V. 17. *Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.*

Had not the Messiah been kept up by Jehovah the Father, agreeably to covenant transactions, he had sunk; he had almost dropped, he had been in the grave. If we would have a right view of this, we must ever remember, Christ was the man in God. That he was crucified in weakness: he was left to all the weakness of sinless humanity. He felt all, he endured all, he was tormented in all, he was passive in all, he was perceptive in all, he was comprehensive in all. So that nothing which came upon him when he suffered the just for the unjust, but he was most truly apprehensive of: and in his body and soul, he needed all that succour and help which the Father promised him in covenant stipulation.

V. 18. *When I said, My foot slippeth: thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.*

It was not possible for Messiah's foot to slip; he was the man in God; as such he was impeccable. Yet the scorn, the malice, the rage of his enemies, being against him what they were, he needed, in his man nature, divine support; he had it. The mercy of Jehovah discovered to his mind, held him up. This he here acknowledges: *When I said, My foot slippeth: thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.* It is blessed to have a right apprehension of this; as it leads us to such confidence in God our Saviour, as is altogether glorious and divine.

V. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.*

The thoughts of Christ were many; they were multiplied, and were as a multitude. Yet they were all regularly fixed, and distinctly exercised on every subject before him. In his passion he had the most tremendous of all subjects to contemplate. Such as sin; its exceeding sinfulness, with all contained in it; the curse of God due unto it; he had to feel the whole contained therein. There could be no comfort for him in these subjects; no. It was impossible there should. Yet in the multitude of thoughts within him, the comforts which must for ever flow into his mind, after he had obeyed and suffered the whole good pleasure of Jehovah the Father's will, delighted his soul. It was views of it kept him up, and carried him through all his sufferings.

V. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?*

The question is put to God. It is an address of Messiah concerning the Jewish senate. Could it be that their iniquity could be connived at; or they not be overthrown? Their throne or power, as a court of judicature, was founded on iniquity. There was no righteousness in any single procedure of theirs towards Christ. He therefore here pleads against them: Wilt thou, O Jehovah, have fellowship with them, or shall they have fellowship with thee? these who have framed mischief by a law; by which my life is most unjustly to be taken from me; surely not. Thou wilt avenge my death on them. This is a sacred prediction.

V. 21. *They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.*

Here, as I conceive, is fresh proof that many parts of this Psalm, as has been before observed, must belong to Christ. The former verse expressed the unrighteousness of the Jewish senate in their mock trial of our Lord. This verse describes their gathering themselves together to condemn him to death. It was their delight, most awfully so, to gather themselves together against the soul of the most righteous Messiah, and to condemn the innocent blood of him to be shed, that his life might be taken from the earth. He only was the righteous one; his soul only was spotless, pure and innocent. It was by wicked hands he was crucified and slain. And here was a portrait of the same, set before the Old Testament church; which doubtless was of spiritual advantage to the same.

V. 22. *But the Lord is my defence: and my God is the rock of my refuge.*

This is expressive of Messiah's faith, under all the opposition of his Jewish foes against his person and disciples, Jehovah, says he, *is my defence*: and God, *my God, is the rock of my refuge*. It is no small attainment to know and understand scripturally and spiritually the covenant relation between God and Christ. I do not mean that the eternal Three are no otherwise related to each other, as coexistent in the one same incomprehensible essence, than by their covenant offices; no, God forbid. But I say, it is a real blessing to know how they are engaged and related to each other in the economy of grace. It is upon this footing Christ calls Jehovah his defence. Here lies the foundation of his saying *My God is the rock of my refuge*. Much hath been spoken on this subject, on many of the Psalms in the First Book. I therefore refer the reader thither. *My God is the rock of my refuge*. We learn from hence, all Christ's support was without himself, in God, as his covenant God.

V. 23. *And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off.*

This was a prophecy of what would befall the Jewish rulers and people, in consequence of their being the murderers of Christ. Jehovah brought their own iniquity upon them; they were cut off in their own wickedness; their temple was burnt by the Romans; their city also destroyed; the people massacred, and others led captives into all nations; and thus they were cut off in their own wickedness. *Yea, the Lord our God* (says Messiah the Prince, including his Jewish saints with himself) *shall cut them off*. And as the Jewish doctors say, these last words of the Psalm were sung by the Levites, immediately before, or just as this most awful event took place. May the Lord give us a spiritual insight into this Psalm, if it please him. Amen.

PSALM THE NINETY-FIFTH.

This Psalm belongs to Christ. It was written by David, under the special influence of the Holy Ghost. In it, believers in Christ the rock of salvation, are called upon to sing his praises. To excite to which, the Godhead of our Lord is most divinely expressed. He is self-existent; the creator of all things. He is the Redeemer of his church: he is the Shepherd of his flock: his people are the work of his hands; he hath formed them for his praise; they are his care and charge, to keep, to feed, to guide them all the

way to heaven. An exhortation is given by the Holy Ghost, to all who are in the visible church, not to harden their hearts, but to hear the voice of Christ in the gospel, and that *to-day*. The case of the unbelieving Israelites, who perished in the wilderness, is hinted at, as a proper preventive to unbelief and disobedience. This Psalm is quoted, Hebrews, iii. 7—11. And also, Hebrews iv. 7. and there the writing of it is ascribed to *David*, as the inspiration of it is to the Holy Ghost in the former chapter.

V. 1. *O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.*

It may with real propriety be said that the Holy Ghost, who is the speaker in this Psalm, here calls upon, and exhorts saints thus to praise the Lord, and to obey his voice. Christ is here the immediate object of worship: he is Jehovah. This incommunicable name is here given unto him: he is the Rock: everlasting strength is in him: he is salvation, present, free, full, complete, spiritual, and everlasting: he is the rock of salvation: it is immutable, and will remain unshaken, world without end: he is the rock of our salvation, we may therefore be well disposed to sing his praise: to sing with joy, and make melody in our hearts to him. We may conceive Old Testament saints, under the unction of the Holy Spirit, entering into the courts of the temple, saying, *O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.* This is very expressive of the holy delight, and spiritual joy, which well becomes believers in their public worshipping of Christ, their Saviour.

V. 2. *Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.*

It is a further excitement. Let this be done speedily; let us come immediately; let us present our persons before Jehovah the Saviour; let us come into his immediate view; that he looking on us, according to all the love of his heart, and the bowels of his mercy, we may be most powerfully drawn forth to utter and express his glorious praise. We cannot come before his presence but with thanksgiving, because we are every moment receiving from him the blessings of his grace, and the benefits of his salvation. Let us join with the grand chorus of singers in temple service, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. Surely we have great and good reason for the same. Let us draw arguments therefore from them to excite and call forth our gratitude.

V. 3. *For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.*

Christ, the object and subject here, is Jehovah. He is the great God; the living God; the true God; the only wise God; he is eternal life; he is the great and blessed Potentate; he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. *He is a great God.* Angels, princes, or whatsoever is called god, is not to be compared unto him. *He is a great King, above all gods.* Christ, as the Son of the living God, is beyond all which can be conceived, or expressed. He is the great God and our Saviour; his salvation is a great salvation; his praises for it will outlast time; it will be perpetuated to the ages of eternity.

V. 4. *In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.*

Those deep places of the earth which are as closets, so secret, that upon the deepest search by man cannot be found out, yet they are his. They are all known by him; they are all before him. If we take in the margin, the words read thus: *In whose hands are the deep places of the earth. He is every where present; he upholds all by his own power. The heights of the hills are his.* Strong and wearisome as hills and mountains are, and may be found for men to climb, yea, even such as are inaccessible by the sons of men, yet they are all the Lord's; and all before him; he fully comprehends them, their use, end, and design, with his own will and reason why he produced them.

V. 5. *The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.*

The great abyss of waters at the centre of the globe, the seas which flow from them, and are fed and maintained by them, are a vast display and evidence of the eternal power and godhead of Christ. So is the dry land. Which at creation was a mass floating in the waters; yet by the almighty power of our Lord, he having said, *Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.* Gen. i. 9. Thus he formed the earth: thus he made it an habitable globe: he established it: he formed it to be inhabited; in which Christ's church is to be for a season. Thus the greatness, the power of Christ, are taken into the consideration of saints in this psalm as a matter for holy joy and thanksgiving.

V. 6. *O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.*

This is the third time the word Lord, or Jehovah, is given to our Christ in this Psalm. He is called Jehovah when he is spoken of in the first verse, as the rock of our salvation. When he is set forth as a great God, and a great King above all gods, the word *Jehovah* stands first. So here, when an excitement is made to worship and bow down before him, the word *Jehovah* is again used. *O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.* As they had been called upon in the first and second verses to sing the praises of Jehovah, the rock of their salvation; and as in the next three following verses his greatness had been set before them, he being self-existent, and the creator of all things, earth, hills, sea, and dry land; so in this, and the following verse, they are called upon to praise him for his love and spiritual goodness unto them. He is the Lord our maker. *O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.* It is he, who having become the rock of salvation, hath been our maker also, and created us anew, and formed us for his praise. It is from him we received that good and perfect gift, *regeneration. This cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.* Let us therefore most humbly acknowledge this. O come, and let us worship him. By confessing his Godhead; by trusting in him for all our salvation, both now and for ever; by submitting in all things to his most holy will; by receiving his word; by acknowledging him in every one of his most sacred institutions. Let us prostrate, let us kneel before the Lord our maker, and present before him the fruits of our new, second, spiritual birth. We have great reason so to do.

V. 7. *For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To-day if ye will hear his voice.*

It is the essence of all blessedness to have Jesus Christ to be our God. To be his people; to be beloved by him; to be in him, and one with him; to be washed in his all-cleansing blood; to be pure in him; to have him to be to us, Jehovah our righteousness; to be made the righteousness of God in him; to be complete in him. Herein inexpressible blessedness consists. It is an addition to this, to know Christ is ours; that he is related to us, and that we are related to him; that he is most deeply interested in us, and that we are interested in him. The church before us makes a con-

fession of this, that there may be matter for further praise. *For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.* He is our bishop and pastor; he hath taken us into his holy care and keeping; he feeds us; he is careful of us; we are in his fold. *We are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.* Who therefore can have greater cause to sing and rejoice, and triumph before him? None. Yet as such, the Holy Ghost hath a solemn word of advice and exhortation to give you. He is the speaker here. He says, *To day if ye will hear his voice.* Surely the voice of Christ must be very sweet to his beloved. It is so. The gospel is the voice of Christ: he speaks in it to all his saints: they cannot but esteem all he speaks to them in it, and by it, so far as the Holy Ghost accompanies it to their minds. These words, which are the last clause in the verse, seem as if they ought not to have been here. They should, I conceive, have been joined with the next verse. I will therefore join them with the same, and read the words.

V. 8. *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness.*

The Apostle, in his three first chapters to the Hebrews, sets Moses and Christ together. Yet whilst he speaks very highly of Moses, he exalts Christ above and beyond him. The one was more worthy of glory than the other. Moses was a servant, Christ was a Son. He built the church: it is his own house: he dwells in it. *Moses verily was faithful in all his house, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after.* But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. To which he adds, *Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith) to day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness.* And he quotes all the remaining verses of the Psalm. And he does it by way of exhortation, to prevent a departure from Christ and his gospel. This appears by the use he makes of it. Which is this: *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, whilst it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,* Heb. iii. 12, 13. *To day if you will hearken unto his voice,* includes the whole time of its continuation, which will be to the second coming of Christ. The Holy Ghost gave this exhortation to the members of the Old Testament church; and he continues it to all the members of the New Testament church. He calls

them, *to day*, to hear the voice of Christ in his gospel, and ordinances thereof. It is owing to an hardening of the heart, if Christ's voice is not heard in it. As in the visible church of Christ there are true believers, and such only as profess the truth; there is a propriety in this exhortation. The Holy Ghost spake under the Old Testament dispensation, and uttered these words then by the prophet. An account is given of what took place in the wilderness, in the persons of the Israelites who did not hear the voice of Christ. *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness.* It was a day of provocation, or in other words, the children of Israel provoked the Lord to break forth towards them in wrath, several times whilst they were in the wilderness. They did so at *Massah*; at *Horeb*; at *Taberah*; at *Kibroth-hattavah*; at *Paran*, &c.

V. 9. *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.*

Christ was the person whom these persons tempted. So says the Apostle, 1 Cor. xviii. 9. Yet they saw his works, in miraculous mercies; in giving them bread from heaven, and waters out of the rock. And in most awful judgments they saw him also; in visiting with most awful punishments for their various rebellions against his divine Majesty.

V. 10. *Forty years was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways.*

This was a long space of time. The round sum is given. It was about thirty-nine years the people were in the wilderness. They murmured frequently: they were prone to unbelief, and to limit the Holy One of Israel. What is here said concerning them, *it is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways*, does not belong to the whole body of them, but to the rebellious who were amongst them; those who hardened their hearts, who were always provoking the divine Majesty, who fell into sin over and over, during the whole season they were in the wilderness. I will endeavour to make this more clear, before I finish the Psalm, by quoting the Apostle.

V. 11. *Unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.*

This oath was made at Kadesh, where the people refused to enter the promised land. See Numbers xiv. 21—23, and v. 30, 32. The land of *Canaan* was a type of that rest which is enjoyed by such as do believe on Christ to the saving of the soul. For if the land of promise had been the rest

spoken of, into which the Israelites were introduced by *Jesus*, or *Joshua*, then would not the Lord have spoken as he doth in the Psalm before us, which was penned long after that the people had been in that land. This therefore proves, the Holy Ghost does not here speak of the seventh-day sabbath, nor of the rest which was enjoyed in the land of Canaan, only as prefiguring the sabbatism of rest which remaineth for the people of God. He saith, *To day, if ye will hear his voice*, which will be continued in, and by the ministration of the gospel, to the very coming of Christ from heaven with power and great glory; so long it will be *to-day*. The use the Apostle makes of it, by way of quotation, is to prevent apostasy from the truth; which many amongst the Jewish professors of Christ were in danger of. He says, *For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; while it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief.* Hebrews iii. 14—19. When the number of the Israelites was taken, on the first day of the second year after they were gone out of Egypt, each tribe mustered the following number:

1. Judah.....	74,600	7. Reuben.....	46,500
2. Dan.....	62,700	8. Gad.....	45,650
3. Simeon.....	59,300	9. Asher.....	41,500
4. Zebulun....	57,400	10. Ephraim....	40,500
5. Issachar....	54,400	11. Benjamin....	35,400
6. Napthali....	53,400	12. Manasseh....	32,200

The whole numbers amount to 603,550. Out of all these, only two of them entered the land of Canaan. Caleb and Joshua were admitted. The rest, their carcasses fell in the wilderness. So severe is the wrath of God on unbelievers. He is as true in his threatenings, as in his promises. *Let us therefore fear*, from these examples; let all who are under the ministration of the everlasting gospel, and who enjoy and partake of the ordinances thereof, attend to what is set before us in these examples of God's wrath: *Lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that*

heard it, Hebrews, iv. 1, 2. And here I end. May the Lord command his blessing on what hath been commented on, if he please. Amen.

PSALM THE NINETY-SIXTH.

In this most sublime Song the Lord Jesus Christ is magnified, and his praises celebrated, for his greatness; for his glory, majesty, and honour; for his salvation; for his kingdom, and glorious empire, which is exalted over all that is called God, and which will one day be so exalted as that he will pass the final sentence on all flesh, for which his name will be magnified for ever. Some conceive the first and second coming of Christ are treated of here. It must be confessed it is a most glorious and comprehensive scripture.

V. 1. *O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth.*

I could wish it ever to be preserved in memory that the Jehovah, the self-existing essence, whose glory, greatness, majesty, and honour, are here so highly extolled, is our Lord Jesus Christ. A proper view of this would stamp dignity on every part of the subjects here recorded, of and concerning him. It is true he is most chiefly magnified, here and elsewhere, for what he is as King Mediator. Yet were he not a Person in Jehovah, equal with the Father and the Spirit, he would not have been worthy of the office of being the Saviour, the glory, and perfection of his church. A new song is called for; which implies it was a new occasion, an especial one. So that former songs were not now worthy of him. No, they must be all set aside. He is to be crowned Lord of all: to be set up as the universal King: Jew and Gentile are to submit themselves to him. It is observed by Mr. Ainsworth, that this Psalm is a part of the Song where-with the Lord's praise was celebrated, when the ark was brought, with great joy and solemnity, from the house of Obed-Edom to the city of David, 1 Chron. xvi. 23. He therefore conceives it contains a prophecy of our Lord's kingdom, and of the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge and worship of him. Christ is to be crowned on his mediatorial throne, by the praises and joy of his saints in him. The trumpets sound: the cornet is blown: the timbrels are struck up, and the tune is set. Then the worshippers express themselves thus; *O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.* Try to exceed all your former songs; they are not sufficient to utter forth his glorious praise; try therefore to excel in your praising him.

V. 2. *Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.*

You have—*sing unto the Lord, sing unto the Lord, sing unto the Lord*, three times over; which is very expressive how deeply the heart of the Psalmist was engaged in the subject before him. He says, *Bless the name of Jehovah*. Which fully proves Messiah, the anointed one, to be the immediate object of this song, and of the praise and honour he would, by his address to others, have them give to him. *Bless his name*. He is himself the blessed one; he is the Son of the blessed; he is essentially blessed; he is personally blessed; he is mediatorially blessed; he is most blessed for ever; he is the blesser of his whole church; he blesses all his church and people, both Jews and Gentiles. *O bless his name*. You will find your own account in it. Let it be your continual employ. *Shew forth his salvation from day to day*. You cannot be more properly engaged. It was the contrivement of the Three in Jehovah from everlasting to save the elect of human race, and raise them up from all the ruins of the fall by Adam's transgressions. It is covenanted for: it will be effected in the fulness of time. The Second in Jehovah will then become incarnate: he, by his obedience and sacrifice, will complete salvation-work: he will bestow all the blessings of it on you. *O bless him for it. O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day*. Preach it: evangelize it: let it be your one only great and grand subject.

V. 3. *Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.*

The glory of Christ, the essential, the personal, the mediatorial, and the relative glory of Christ, are revealed fully in the everlasting gospel; which may be styled Christ's glory, it being the revelation and publication of the same. Let this be freely preached: let the wonders of his grace recorded in it, be made known among the people. It deserves their attention; it will in the hand of the Holy Spirit do them good; it will increase his name, his fame, his praise, his renown. He well deserves this.

V. 4. *For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.*

He cannot but be praised by his people: he is in every sense praiseworthy. He is Jehovah the Saviour, the essence existing, saving, the praised God; he is great in himself, he being God over all, blessed for ever. He is the great

God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is great, he saves above and beyond all the guilt, pollution, and demerit of sin; he is great, as he saves to the uttermost, and for evermore, and for ever, all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. He is greatly to be praised for all this, and by all his saved ones. He is to be feared, to be revered and magnified, to be honoured and esteemed, above all gods, above all principalities and powers, above every name in earth or heaven. A full reason for which is given:

V. 5. For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

The apostle says, *we know that an idol is nothing in the world*, 1 Cor. viii. 4. The Lord Jesus Christ would be sent, in the everlasting gospel, amongst the nations; he would be preached to multitudes of Gentile sinners; his name would be magnified in the conversion of his redeemed amongst them. The vanity of idols, and the worshippers of them, would most clearly appear; it would be fully known that all the gods of the nations are idols, things of no value; they were unable to do good or evil, they were unprofitable: *but the Lord made the heavens*, which are full proofs and continual memorials of his self-existence. Yea, it would be made known by the everlasting gospel of the blessed God, that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the maker of the heavens and of the earth, and sea, and fountains of water, as truly as these are; as he also is the Prince of life, and author of eternal salvation.

V. 6. Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

As seated on his mediatorial throne, and in the display of his love and salvation, honour and majesty are before him. He sits as mediator in godlike honour and majesty, at the right hand of the throne of God, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord hath pitched, and not man. He hath strength; all power in heaven and earth is given unto him. He is beauty in its essence and perfection; he shines forth in the same, and reflects the glory thereof on his saints, on his holy sanctuary; so that they cannot but acknowledge it is even so. And they are disposed, from the apprehension and enjoyment they have of it, to call for a new song to God, to express their gratitude to him, and their acknowledgments of him thereby.

V. 7. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Here all nations, Gentiles and Jews, are called upon to

give glory to our Lord Jesus Christ. We expect the fulfilment of this most completely in the last days. As it was foretold, so the prophet here speaks accordingly, as well knowing it would then be accomplished, that then these would unite with the Jewish believers, saying, *O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth: sing unto the Lord, bless his name, shew forth his salvation from day to day.* Yea, and as though this was not sufficient, they will be for bringing a fresh song to celebrate his glorious grace, by ascribing glory and strength unto him, in giving the whole glory of their complete salvation unto him. The words themselves are an address to the kindred of the earth; they come in after the greatness of Christ's person, his majesty, honour, glory, and greatness, have been spoken of; and after the nothingness of idols has been hinted at. It has been declared, *honour and majesty are before him, and strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.* Then the prophet cries out as an ambassador for Christ, saying, *Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.* Yield yourselves up unto the Lord, submit yourselves to Christ, trust wholly in him for salvation and everlasting life; give glory to him for saving you from all your sins, and out of the hands of all your enemies; ascribe all your spiritual strength unto him, it well becomes you so to do.

V. 8. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.*

The glory due to Christ for salvation work, for the love of his heart, for the bowels of his mercy, for the compassions of his mind, to his church, surpasses all that can ever be conceived of by the whole hosts of saints and angels in glory. His name is above and beyond all blessing and praise; yet grace is of that nature, as it operates on the saints of the most High, that it aims after the highest ascriptions of worship and glory to God. All the offerings in God's worship, under the typical dispensation, were so many symbols and memorials of Christ and of his offering, whereby he hath perfected the putting away of sin, and by and upon the footing of which his whole church is made clean from all sin. The Old Testament church therefore, in this expression, *bring an offering and come into his courts*, addresses the Gentile believers, to come and join with them in this one glorious act of worship, viz. a renunciation of all hope and help, but in the one everlastingly complete and efficacious Oblation of the worthy Lamb; to trust alone thereon, as the offering which perfects for ever. Indeed, this is the greatest

act of worship upon earth ; to trust before the Lord for our everlasting discharge from all sin, and for eternal purity and perfection, now and for ever, upon the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.

V. 9. *O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, [or, in the glorious sanctuary:] fear before him, all the earth.*

The temple, which was the seat of God's worship in Judea, was full of Christ. He was expressed, and symbolically represented, by every thing in and which belonged to it. In this place Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit were worshipped ; here they were acknowledged in Christ, in their mutual loves, in their covenant stipulations on the behalf of the church, and in their covenant relations unto it. An exhortation to the kindreds of the earth, to the people of the Gentiles, to bring an offering, and come into the Lord's courts ; to come and worship the Lord in the glorious sanctuary ; to come and worship the Lord at his temple in Jerusalem, called here the 'beauty of holiness ;' a solemn piece of advice given, *fear before him all the earth*, is an intimation of the real unity of the faith in the bond of the Spirit, between real saints, whether Jews or Gentiles. And which will be most remarkable on that day when there shall be "one Lord, and his name shall be one."

V. 10. *Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth : the world shall be established that it shall not be moved : he shall judge the people righteously.*

This is most blessed news ; it may well be published in the name of Jesus among the heathen ; it is calculated to do them good, to say *that the Lord reigneth* : and he must reign, until all his enemies are made his footstool. He will establish this doctrine in his church in the world, and his saints in the world shall be established in the true belief of the same. The world shall continue until all the elect are completed by effectual calling. Messiah, the king of saints, and whose principality is that of grace, shall judge the people righteously ; his reign will be glorious, his gospel prosperous, and his kingdom great, and greatly enlarged among the heathen, and throughout the world, which shall be established that it shall not be moved out of its place, until Christ comes to put an end to time, by swallowing it up in eternity.

V. 11. *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad ; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.*

Mr. Romaine applies this verse, and the following verses, to the first and second advent of our Lord. I rather conceive it very applicable to the spiritual and personal reign of Christ

with his church in our world. There is a season and period of time fixed in the divine will, and foretold in the sacred word, when Christ will openly reign, and be acknowledged to be king of his church, and king of nations also. It will be universally proclaimed in this our world, *that the Lord reigneth*; also that he shall judge the people righteously: the heavens will be glad of this; so will the earth also: the very sea and its fulness will roar, as expressive of the satisfaction which is contained herein. These are figurative expressions, which denote to us, if the heavens over our heads could speak, they would rejoice in Christ's reign and government; if the earth could speak, it would be glad on such an occasion; if the sea could express itself, it would be by its loud and tumultuous roar, that the Lord reigneth. If we consider how, in the latter day, all iniquity will stop its mouth; that the heavens will no longer be witnesses to horrid oaths and imprecations; that the earth will be no further soaked with the blood of the slain, nor the creatures on it any longer burthened and oppressed; nor the sea any longer bearing on its waves sinners who are only fit for hell; we may see a beauty in the expressions made use of.

V. 12. *Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice.*

This seems to be expressive of the happiness, joy, and gladness of universal nature, the whole creation, in the reign and government of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a doxology. It may be the prophet borrowed it, when he expresses for substance the same things: *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* Rev. v. 13.

V. 13. *Before the Lord, for he cometh; he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.*

These words well suit either the spiritual or the personal reign of Messiah, or they may be considered as applicable to his coming in the flesh, and to his coming the second time without sin unto salvation. On all which occasions, universal nature may well be called upon by the Lord's people to rejoice. As the words are here repeated, *For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth*, they express the reason why animate and inanimate things are called upon to rejoice. It was before the Lord, *For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth*. When the reign of Christ amongst the

Jews, brought home to their own land, and brought to the knowledge of our Lord, in his own time, is spoken of, we hear his blessed voice, saying, *For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy,* Isai. lxxv. 17, 18. When we hear Christ's voice speaking in his personal reign to the new Jerusalem church, he saith, *Behold, I make all things new.—Write: for these words are true and faithful.—It is done. I am Alpha, and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son,* Rev. xxi. 5—7. Here, in the words before us, when the Lord cometh to be acknowledged and crowned the universal king, the church by the prophet says, *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.* Which will be most exactly the case, when Christ shall reign in a most visible manner, as it respects an universal acknowledgment of him, before the close of time, and will extend his dominion to the ends of the earth. He will then judge the earth; he will then avenge himself of all the blood which hath been shed on it; he will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with his truth. All which will be according to the everlasting gospel of his grace. His coming in the flesh, was matter of consolation and great joy to his church: his coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, will be matter of unspeakable joy to his whole church. The great and universal judgment, with all the solemnities of it, together with his passing the final sentence on all on his left hand, will afford matter of praise to his saints. They will laud, extol, and praise him for it. They will sing the song of *Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints,* Rev. xv. 3. May the Lord bless the explanation given, so far as he pleases. Amen.

PSALM THE NINETY-SEVENTH.

In this scripture we have the reign of Christ; the majesty and glory with which he is encircled; the solemnity of his appearance; how all created nature trembles before him, and the homage they pay him. Saints rejoice in the confounding of all the enemies of Christ, which is effected by his omnipotent power, and by his outstretched arm. And the whole is closed with a very important excitement to love the Lord, and to rejoice in him.

V. 1. *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice: let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.*

The 93d Psalm began as this does, *The Lord reigneth.* The 96th Psalm, in the tenth verse, hath these words: *Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth.* This begins, *The Lord reigneth.* It is Christ who is the Jehovah here worshipped for his reign; he is Jah the Saviour; he is Lord God omnipotent; he shall reign for ever and ever. This is matter for joy and great rejoicing to all his saints. He will live and outreign the reign of sin, Satan, death and hell. *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever,* says Moses, Exod. xv. 18. Let the earth rejoice in this; the blessings which flow herefrom are inestimable: his gospel will have free course and be glorified: the earth shall one day be filled with it, and the glory of Christ also. Let the multitude of the isles, the inhabitants, be glad, at the prophecies which speak of the same. It is very correspondent with what the prophet says, *Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth: ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness, and the cities thereof, lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands,* Isaiah xlii. 10—12.

V. 2. *Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation [or, establishment] of his throne.*

These terms and expressions, clouds and darkness are round about Jehovah—the God-man, the king Mediator, are expressive of his majesty and glory. He is enclosed with these. It refers to the Holy of Holies, the seat of Christ; where he dwelt; there was no night there; he only who was light inaccessible, inhabited here. At the giving of the law, a cloud covered the mount; no sight nor similitude.

tude of the divine Majesty was seen: a fiery law was given. It was clear, bright and glorious: it being the very transcript of the divine nature and will. Clouds, darkness, fire and smoke, were Jehovah's regalia of state on mount Horeb. Fire consumes all things in its way, and burns up stubble, and all combustible matter. So Christ hath wrath for his enemies: his kingship and government are thus manifest to them; he is as a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap. Yet righteousness and judgment are the very establishment of his throne. He is seated on it to display and manifest to his beloved ones, all the blessings contained in his everlasting righteousness, and wisdom unto them. Yet when and where he reveals most of himself to his saints, his enemies perceive the least of him.

V. 3. *A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.*

This is expressive of those sore judgments which the Lord Jesus Christ inflicts on his enemies. Which is quite agreeable with what the prophet John says, *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings, and voices*, Rev. iv. 5. Jehovah Jesus, is God-man, King-mediator; he reigneth. The earth may well rejoice in him: the multitude of the isles may well be glad in it. The majesty of his throne—the dignity of his reign—the splendour of it, exceed all finite comprehension. His throne is surrounded with glorious pomp and dignity; it bears the ensigns of God; whilst it is entirely sustained in righteousness and judgment. Before him, when he comes forth against his enemies in wrath and anger, in the administration of his office of judge towards them, a fire goeth, to consume them on every side. Such is the immutability of his will, in his hatred against all sin, that it pleases him to display his eternal power and Godhead, by causing the very elements of nature to confess him. So it follows:

V. 4. *His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled.*

This was the case at the delivery of the law on the mount of Horeb. It is expressly said, *And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp, trembled*, Exodus xix. 16. And at the 18th and 19th verses, it is added, *And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the*

trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. In the next chapter it is said, *And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off*, Exod. xx. 18. Compare this, and what is said of the majesty of Christ in his person, throne, reign and kingdom, and they will serve to open each other, the one being taken from the other. It may also have respect to the everlasting gospel, which like lightnings went forth from Christ. At his word of command, which broke forth irresistibly upon the Gentile world, by the preaching of the holy apostles, and followers of the Lamb—*The earth saw, and trembled*. It caused a great commotion in the heathen world, and they trembled for the consequences, lest it should turn the world upside down, and establish Christ as the one universal king.

V. 5. *The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord: at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.*

This is taken from what had heretofore been referred to, concerning the Lord's descending on the mount, and speaking out of the midst of devouring fire, which was a display of Jehovah's glory and greatness; so it is all here accommodated to set forth the majesty of the same Jehovah, as King-mediator. *At his presence, or before his face; The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord: at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.* A full and further proof is given, that Jehovah the Mediator, is Lord of the whole earth, in the following verse; where it is said,

V. 6. *The heavens declare his righteousness: and all the people see his glory.*

Which implies that the heavenly creatures, or the heavenly creation, or the heavenly operations of the agents in nature, fire, light and air, in commotion—and as it produces its thunders, its lightnings, its winds, its rains, its tempests—declares the righteousness, the power and Godhead of Christ, over all created nature, be it animate, or inanimate: *The heavens declare his righteousness.* His wrath, justice and judgments towards the ungodly, are so many proofs of it. And his having again and again sent his elect angels to intimate his good pleasure to his saints, and his wrath to his enemies, are real proofs that *The heavens declare his righteousness; and all the people see his glory.* His glory is set forth in the everlasting gospel; this hath been preached in all nations: it will be again before the close of time. As it respects elect angels, who may be considered

as the heavens which declare Christ's glory: one of them proclaimed our Lord's incarnation and birth. He was accompanied by an innumerable company of the heavenly host, who sang *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men*; see Luke ii. 14. If the self-existence, the majesty, the Godhead, the reign, the sovereignty, the glory, power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, are so fully manifested in, and over all created things—if the whole region of the air, and all the elementary world, so fully testify of his self-existence, and that he is independent of all the work of his hands:—if they are all subject to his control:—if the hills, and all inanimated nature, confess in their way, that he is Jehovah, the Lord of the whole earth—then, says the prophet, let them all, be who they may, or what they may, be confounded who do not acknowledge this.

V. 7. *Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.*

The apostle seems to refer to these words, when he saith in his Epistle to the Hebrews, *And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*, chap. i. 6. Which words are almost universally applied to a command given by the divine Father, to the angels of his presence, to worship Christ at his birth, as recorded by Luke, ii. 14. Some read this passage with the marginal words, thus, *And again, [or, when again] he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.* They apply this to the second coming of Christ, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of his holy angels; who will, as the angels of his presence, accompany him. Let the words be taken in either meaning, they are brought in by the apostle to prove that Christ, as God-man, is far above, and infinitely superior to the angels. His person is beyond them; his name more excellent; they are but creatures, he is their creator; they are his subjects; he is the object of their worship. What he is, and hath by birthright, exceeds them; he is God-man; thus he is by birthright; he hath a more excellent name than they; he is the Son of God; this is by inheritance. The title of *the only begotten Son of God*, is his by inheritance: this title is his, personally, and incommunicably; he is the head of angels; their creator; their Lord and king; he is the immediate object of their worship, and ever will be. The Father gave them his command to worship him. They worshipped Christ at his birth, and in his incarnate state.

Angels ministered unto him, says Mark i. 13; they worship him in his exalted state: *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*, Rev. v. 11, 12. It is said, the words of the apostle, are not to be found in the Hebrew, but are the Greek translation of Deuteronomy, chap. xxxii. 43. But the Hebrew there hath none such. So says the learned Ainsworth.

V. 8. *Zion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced; because of thy judgments, O Lord.*

It is in the church the great works of Christ are spoken out and heard of. They cannot be rehearsed but it gladdens the hearts of the daughters of Judah. They rejoice in Jehovah their Saviour, he being their Lord. His sending his gospel hither and thither and conquering sinners, and turning them to himself, is very acceptable news to the saints of the Most High.

V. 9. *For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.*

Therefore he can confound his enemies; he can overcome his foes. He can send his gospel, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; he can enlighten the world, and fill it with his glory; he can cause the earth to tremble; he can shake the hills, and cause them to melt like wax before his presence; he can prove himself to be the Lord of the whole earth; he can make use of the heavens to declare his righteousness; he can form a people for himself to shew forth his praise; he can confound all graven images; he can command all the angels to worship him. For he is high above all the earth, he is exalted far above all gods.

V. 10. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints, he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.*

The prophet here addresses Zion, and the daughters of Judah, or, in other words, all the churches of the saints, as such as love the Lord; he would have such hate evil: every thing which is contrary to the will of Christ, and derogatory to his honour, truth, worship, and glory. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* He speaks of what the Lord doth for the souls of his saints; he preserveth them; he also maintains his own work and place in them; he pre-

search the souls of his saints; this is their security. He waters them; he strengthens them; he nourisheth them up unto life everlasting; he doth more: he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. This is declared for their encouragement.

V. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.*

They are righteous who are in Christ, who are righteous in him; and are in his righteousness, righteous before the Lord. Such are upright in heart, who are made so by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and by his effectual operation on the mind: light is sown for such; in the everlasting love of the Three in Jehovah; in their will, council, covenant, word, oath and promise, there is gladness for the upright in heart. For all the work and fulness of Christ are set before them in the everlasting gospel, and they are most truly welcome to draw everlasting consolation therefrom. Light and gladness, contain those spiritual blessings which flow from the free grace of the Holy Trinity, and are conveyed from the fulness of Jesus, through the Spirit, to the souls of God's beloved. All which being rightly considered, makes way for holy and spiritual joy and rejoicing.

V. 12. *Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*

The righteous have good cause for so doing: it becomes them, and is their bounden duty and service to rejoice in Jehovah Jesus, who liveth and reigneth over all things; who governs all; who is in all, through all, and will be all to his church and people for ever. They may well give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness: that his majesty, glory, justice, holiness and truth, shine forth in every one of his righteous acts—in all his reign and government—to all over whom he rules and reigns. Even sinners must confess to him, and before him, that the Lord is righteous. May we improve the subject, under the teachings of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PSALM THE NINETY-EIGHTH.

A Psalm. So it is entitled.

It concerns the Christ of God—the beloved one of God. It was written to celebrate his praises for his great salvation; he hath wrought it out by his own arm; he hath obtained eternal redemption; he hath gained a complete victory over

all his and his people's enemies; his triumphs will last for ever; he will wear the glory of them in heaven, so long as heaven is heaven. An universal chorus is called for, to unite in praising him, as Jehovah the Mediator, for his judging the earth; for his judging the world with righteousness; for his judging his people with equity.

V. 1. *O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.*

The subject the church is here presented with, calls for a new song; it being sung on a new occasion, and it containing a new subject. This is most correctly the case; the subject is quite new. We have had the reign of Christ set forth in some of the former hymns, but here we have the salvation and victories of Christ, which make this new. The 96th Psalm celebrated the praises of Christ for his reign, and the enlargement of his kingdom in the world; and amongst the nations. But this before us immediately respects Christ himself; his person—his salvation—his victory. The subject being so sublime, calls for a new song. It is to be sung so melodiously as to stir up every spiritual feeling in the renewed mind, and fix it supremely on Christ, who is the salvation of his church, and their conqueror; who has conquered all the host of hell. Every musical instrument is to be used in the grand chorus. The harp, trumpets, and cornet, and a Psalm was to be lifted up, as demonstrative of joy and victory. All this was to increase the holy joy and triumph of the mind: *O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.* Jehovah the Saviour, is the subject of this song. It is a new song, which was never sung to him before. It is to celebrate his honour as the Lamb, who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He hath done marvellous things: he became incarnate, and was true and very man; the true Immanuel, God with us; this was marvellous!—He shone forth and expressed his love in his incarnate state, in a most marvellous way and manner; he removed all the sins of his people from their persons, and before the Lord, and put them all away by the sacrifice of his whole person, in the flames of his own love; he conquered death by dying; he vanquished the whole host of hell; he gained such a victory and triumph, as none beside himself could. All the praise therefore is due to him alone. It is by his right hand, and by his holy arm he hath gotten him the victory. His church partake of all the fruits thereof; they follow after him, and

pick up the spoils. It therefore well becomes them to sing his praises for the same, saying, *O sing unto the Lord a new song, [on this occasion] for he hath done marvellous things.* Such as exceed all his other acts and works. With his right hand, by the exertion and energy of his power, and with his holy arm, he hath gotten him the victory—over sin, Satan, death, hell, and every enemy. O bless him for it.

V. 2. *The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed [or, revealed] in the sight of the heathen.*

Jehovah Jesus hath in his own person completed salvation for his church and people; he hath saved them in himself with an everlasting salvation; he hath set forth and given a clear and full revelation of it, in the everlasting gospel. In it, his righteousness is revealed and set forth in its meridian splendour, fulness and glory. This hath been sent to the Gentiles. Many of them have had this Christ, and his righteousness, revealed to them and in them by the word and Spirit; and found everlasting life in the same; views of which were matters of great joy to the Old Testament church. They were also so to it, for the interest they had in the person of Christ, the incarnation of Christ, the salvation of Christ, the victories of Christ, his conquests and triumphs; they found their own account in it. Therefore say they, *O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.* It is the fruit of his free grace, and ancient promise unto us. So it follows:

V. 3. *He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

The mercy and truth remembered, was the fulfilment of the Lord's promise of giving Christ; of sending him; of anointing him, and setting him to be for salvation to the whole election of grace, both Jews and Gentiles. When this was fully accomplished, then it was clear God had fulfilled his holy covenant; all the mercy and truth of which were realized in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Psalm was written long before the incarnation of our Lord, or his work of salvation finished, or his victories obtained, or his gospel sent to the Gentiles, or his salvation made known to the ends of the earth:—yet all being engaged for, and the will of the Holy Ones concerning the same immutable, and the revelation given concerning it complete, hence it is spoken

of as fully as if already past. The house of Israel here means the true church of Christ amongst them: *He hath remembered his mercy and his truth*—This expressed a past act. His church had been in his eye, and on his heart from everlasting. When he fulfilled his wonderful engagements on their behalf, it was a proof of his remembrance of them; it being expressive of his mindfulness of them, and his faithfulness unto them. His fulfilling his mercy and his truth towards the house of Israel, made way for his performing his promises concerning the elect among the Gentiles. Many of them have seen the salvation of our God. And before time is closed, we conceive from various prophecies and promises, the gospel of salvation will be extended to the ends of the earth.

V. 4. *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.*

There cannot be a greater blessing sent to any people, place, or nation, state, or kingdom, than the gospel of Christ. It can never be too highly prized; it can never be too gladly received. The Jewish church, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, foreseeing the Lord Jesus Christ would be sent in the preaching of the gospel, sooner or later, throughout the earth, calls for a joyful welcome and reception of it. Words are here heaped one upon another, to set home the subject with emphasis on the mind: *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth.* Jehovah Jesus is your blessing. He will bless you by turning you from your iniquities. You are to see the salvation of our God; you are to enjoy every grace and blessing of the same; his whole heart is to be opened unto you; the bowels of his mercy are to be exercised on you; the unsearchable riches of him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, are to be set before you. As it will be so, express yourselves thus: *make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.* These expressions denote an exuberance of holy and spiritual joy.

V. 5. *Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.*

In the public worship of God at Jerusalem, at offering the burnt offering, the song of the Lord began, and trumpets sounded, harps, flutes, cymbals, and cornets were played, and all which could excite proper sentiments concerning Christ, as expressed in the Psalm used, together with the most complete harmony of vocal music, was done to make the Lord's praise glorious. In reference to all this, the Old Testament calls on the New Testament church, to

express herself to the very uttermost, in giving Christ glorious praise.

V. 6. *With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.*

This is a continuation of the former call, to shew how intent Old Testament saints were, that Christ should be praised and magnified by his believing people amongst the Gentiles. There was subject matter set before them which demanded all this; free and full, present and everlasting salvation; his complete conquest, triumphs, and victories. The saints who thus express themselves would have all this done, as in the presence of Christ. And with the utmost elevation of heart and voice, make a joyful noise unto the Lord, the King. When we enter into the praises of Christ, we know not where to stop. It is so here. It had been said, and others had been called for, saying to them; *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a Psalm. With trumpets and sound of a cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.* Yet not being perfectly satisfied with this, an address is made to the sea, the world, to them that dwell therein, to the floods, to the hills, to join in one grand concert to be joyful in the Lord, and praise him. It was just the same, and almost in the same words, in the three last verses of the 96th Psalm.

V. 7. *Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*

There is in the roaring of the sea, that which is most solemnly awful and majestic. The fulness of the sea hath an immensity in it. The world as a globe, and stored with inhabitants who are on the surface of it, in all these the wisdom, the power, the goodness, the continual sustentation of these, are so many proofs of Christ's essential power and Godhead. Let these bow, adore, and according to their manner express their homage to him, as the universal Lord, and King of the whole creation.

V. 8. *Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together.*

Let these clap palms, a token of joy and victory; let the hills join in one grand act of joyful acknowledgment of praise to the Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledging, in their way, him as the Creator and sustainer of them.

V. 9. *Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.*

In this very expressive joyful way and manner all creatures, all things, animate and inanimate, are called upon to express their joy before the Lord. Who by sending his gospel throughout the universal globe, and filling its inhabitants with the glorious light and knowledge of the same, it will produce an universal change, such as will call for perpetual praise. Then it will be sung as it ought, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power : for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created,* Rev. iv. 11. Thus I end my explanation of this Psalm.

PSALM THE NINETY-NINTH.

In this Psalm we have the kingdom of Christ as the subject matter of it. His gracious presence with his church is very particularly noticed. He dwelleth between the cherubims to protect his people, and to oppose his enemies. This he does by his greatness and holiness. The church is called upon to worship at his footstool, which is holy : he is the most holy. Saints are called upon to exalt him, as their forefathers had done.

V. 1. *The Lord reigneth ; let the people tremble : he sitteth between the cherubims ; let the earth be moved.*

This is the last Psalm which begins thus, *The Lord reigneth.* It is a good motto on all occasions for the church and people of God. It hath been, it is, it will be sufficient to bear up the mind under all sorts of trials which may come on the saints of the Most High from outward persecutions. It is all-sufficient when the judgments of God are visibly to be seen by the tokens of his wrath on the inhabitants on the earth. When the vials of Christ's wrath are poured out on Antichrist, and all the kingdoms which belong to him, it will be the consolation of saints, that *The Lord reigneth.* When it shall be pronounced, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ,* it will be added, *And he shall reign for ever and ever.* Yea, he is to be worshipped by his church, who will say, *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come ; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great ; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth,* Rev. xi.

17, 18. So that the enemies of Christ, sinners and ungodly men, may well tremble at his reign. He being omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent: he sitteth between the cherubims, whose wings, stretched out, formed an alcove, between which the Man in God, the Second in the Essence, shone forth in his personal glory. Here he dwelt; here he reigned. So that saints at the time this Psalm was written might well say, He that sitteth on the cherubims reigneth. This was the glory of the church; this was its security. The whole respecting this is so fully expressed by the prophet *Ezekiel*, that I will quote it, although I have heretofore, as this is the last Psalm in which we shall have any occasion for it. *And above the firmament that was over their heads (he is speaking of the cherubims) was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, Ezek. i. 26—28.* Compare this with what I expressed, and it will cast light thereon.

V. 2. *The Lord is great in Zion; and he is high above all people.*

He is great in his church; he dwelleth in his church; he is too strong for all her enemies; he will stir up his wrath against them, should they stir up themselves against him and his saints; he is the head of his church; the defender of it.

V. 3. *Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.*

The sanctuary or temple was holy, it being the seat of God's worship, and a memorial of Christ. The place where the ark, with its mercy-seat and cherubims of glory was placed, was called the Holy of Holies. Here was the residence of the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Such therefore as worshipped him, who is the Most Holy, should under proper views of him praise his great and terrible, or glorious name, for it is holy. As God is strong in wrath to punish his enemies, so he is strong in power to defend his church. So it follows in the next words:

V. 4. *The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost*

establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

The Lord who reigneth, before whom the people, his enemies, may well tremble. He who sitteth between the cherubims, before whose glorious appearance and majesty the earth, and the dwellers on it, may well be moved: even the self-existing Essence, who in the person of Christ God-man, is great in Zion, and high above all the people; before whom it well becomes all who worship him to praise his great and terrible name, which is holy; he is everlasting strength. He loveth his people; he loveth to exercise his truth and judgments towards them; he loveth to establish equity towards, and amongst them; he loveth to execute judgment and righteousness in Jacob, on their behalf, for their benefit; to shew his goodness unto them, and his displeasure against their enemies. This he doth as their king; this is one of the blessings of his reign. It is in consequence of this they may well rejoice in saying, *The Lord reigneth.*

V. 5. *Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he [or, it] is holy.*

The Lord's footstool, when this Psalm was written, was the mercy-seat. He was above it; he shone forth between the cherubims; his very footstool was holy; therefore such as approached him were to consider this. Whilst none entered the sanctuary or temple but priests, nor any entered the Holiest of All but the high priest, yet all the people worshipped, looking toward this west end, where the divine Majesty took up his residence. Hence the propriety of the expression, *Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.* The holy Three in Jesus Christ is the Lord our God. To exalt the Lord our God, is to glorify him with our bodies and souls, which are his. To give the Three in Jehovah the whole glory, for all the grace expressed in election, salvation, effectual calling, final perseverance, and eternal glorification. This cannot be better performed than at God's footstool, under proper apprehensions of what was designed by the Lord himself by the ark, the propitiatory, and cherubim, which contained the whole gospel of the blessed God. And we only by the true knowledge of the mysteries contained in these figures and symbols can worship the Lord, and exalt him as the Lord our God.

V. 6. *Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them.*

These persons were very particularly engaged on some

very special occasion in calling on the Lord in prayer on the behalf of the people of Israel, and were answered. *Moses* and *Aaron* were principal men among the priests who called on the Lord. *Moses* was of the tribe of Levi, and officiated as a priest when *Aaron* and his sons were invested into the priesthood. *Aaron* and his sons ministered in the sanctuary. These prayed for the people; they likewise blessed them. But though *Moses* and *Aaron* are here spoken of as among the priests, the principal men, and *Samuel* amongst the prophets, as peculiar in their calling on the Lord in prayer, whom he heard and answered; yet the particular reference seems to be to *Moses* and *Samuel*, who both became intercessors on the behalf of Israel, and the Lord heard them. *Moses* prayed for the people, when they sinned in the idolatry of the calf, Exodus xxxii. 11. He also prayed for them, when they murmured on account of the false report the spies gave concerning the land of promise. See Numbers xiv. *Moses* and *Aaron* both prayed for the people. See Numbers xvi. 22. *Samuel* prayed for the people. See 1 Sam. vii. 9. chap. xii. 19—23. *Moses* and *Samuel* are noted for their intercession with God. See Jer. xv. 1. *These called on the Lord, and he heard them.* Therefore the prophet, from these examples, would encourage the church to do the same.

V. 7. *He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them.*

The Lord himself was in the cloudy pillar. He spake to *Moses* and *Aaron* out of it. What he commanded them, they attended unto; they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them; they prayed, and were heard; they called on the Lord, and he answered them.

V. 8. *Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.*

The people for whom *Moses* prayed, as recorded in Exodus xxxii. 14, &c. And in Numbers xiv. 20, &c. Yet God brake forth in wrath against them. So *Moses* and *Aaron*, though priests and saints of the Most High, and high in God's favour and esteem, yet they both died in the wilderness. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them,* Numbers xx. 12. Thus the Lord heard, and answered, *Moses, Aaron, Samuel*; but he put up with no one sin of theirs, so as to connive, or wink at it; either in them, or others. Yet he acted towards them as a

mighty God; as a sin-forgiving God; he took away their sin; he took away the curse due to their sin. Still he so corrected for it, and visited, as to take vengeance on their inventions, though not so as to express his wrath on their persons; but on their sinful inventions. I conceive the words most particularly belong to the Israelites, who sinned at Horeb, and afterwards in the wilderness. That though they had been prayed for, and prayer was heard and answered on their behalf, it did not extend itself any further than some prolongation of their chastisement, for their carcasses fell in the wilderness.

V. 9. *Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy.*

Thus the prophet having set forth the reign, the kingdom, and power of Christ; how great he is in Zion; how high above all the people; that his name is great and terrible; that he is holy; that his strength is exercised on the behalf of his people, he calls on them to exalt the Lord their God, to worship at his footstool, it being holy. He then mentions how profitable this is for themselves, and others; setting before them the persons of *Moses, Aaron, and Samuel*, who called on the Lord, and were heard, and answered by him; that he spake to *Moses and Aaron out of the cloudy pillar*; and to *Samuel*, it is probable, the Lord spake by an audible voice; that these kept his testimonies, and the law which he gave them. To which is added, that he answered them as the Lord our God; he stood in the same relation to them he does to us; he forgave them; yet he took vengeance on the people for their inventions. He then concludes the whole of this subject with the same words which had been before expressed in the 5th verse. *Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy.* Thus ends this Psalm—in exhorting saints to follow the example of their believing predecessors to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, and to worship him as Jehovah our God, under a full sense and conviction that he the Lord our God is holy.

PSALM THE HUNDREDTH.

A Psalm of Praise. Thus it is entitled.

In this most divine hymn an exhortation is given, and the whole church of Christ, both Jews and Gentiles, who know and believe on him, are called upon to praise him. There is motive sufficient for all this in his greatness and goodness,

and truth. This in an especial manner is to be done in the great congregation. We are called upon to consider the relation he stands in to us; he is the Lord God that hath made us; he is our Shepherd; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture; we are under these considerations called upon to praise him most cheerfully. This is the outline of the subject.

V. 1. A psalm of praise.—*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*

The Old Testament saints were so used, in their public worship, to express their thanksgivings with all the powers of vocal and instrumental music, and this so very loud and sonorous, to express hereby their deep and grateful sense of God's love of them in Christ, and of their gratitude to him for his salvation, that when they here, and elsewhere, call upon others to sing the Lord's song, they frequently express the same by making a loud sound, a loud noise, or a joyful noise. Confess ye unto the Lord: exercise your minds on the revelation Jehovah has made of all his persons, in the plan of salvation: express your gratitude to *Jah* the Saviour: O join with us in his high praises.

V. 2. *Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*

He has removed all our sins; he is our everlasting life, perfection, and blessedness; it is in him we are beloved, accepted, and shall be glorified. There is nothing but gladness of heart for all that know him, and have communion with him. Serve him therefore with us; let it be with gladness of heart; for his service is the most perfect freedom; you may come before him most freely; with holy boldness; you may by faith enter into the Holiest of All; you may present your persons in his most immediate presence; you may do this with singing, and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.

V. 3. *Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*

This is a truth absolutely necessary for us to have the knowledge of, that the Lord he is God; that he is the Lord our God; that he is our maker; our preserver; our upholder; that he made us by creation, which was his own act; it was a sovereign act; that we did not come into being and existence but by the Lord alone; he made us; we did not make ourselves; he formed the body of the first man out of the dust of the ground, and we received our perso-

nalities and bodies from him, through the channel of generation; the soul, the inhabitant of the body, is created in it. One speaking of it says, "It is created by God; infused by him into the body; of nothing made something; and what something, but an excellent work, befitting such an excellent workman?" We were made by the Lord God in Adam; we are anew created by the Lord God, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Hereby we are manifested to be the Lord's by our high, noble, new, and spiritual birth; we are his people; loved by him in Christ from everlasting; he was set up as our Shepherd from the days of eternity; he became our Shepherd, and laid down his life for us; he calls us by name; he brings us nigh by his blood; he works a new creation within us; he makes known himself to us; he makes us acquainted with, so that we know ourselves, that we are the sheep of his pasture. Under these blessed views and apprehensions of the subject, the prophet invites and calls for a full congregation to come, and make a joyful noise before the Lord; to come and serve the Lord with gladness; to come into his immediate presence, to worship him, with singing.

V. 4. *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*

As the Lord's beloved, as the sheep of Christ's pasture, as washed in his blood, as clothed in his righteousness, as supplied out of his fulness, as fed by his bounty, on himself, the bread of God, the bread of life, the bread of heaven, come before him in public worship, and freely and fully acknowledge all this. Enter into his courts with thanksgiving; and into his gates with praise. It well becomes you so to do; the gates are set open for you; the courts are ready to receive you: *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.* You can never be sufficiently thankful for what he is to us; for what he hath done for you, nor what he hath done in you. Be thankful to him; he is the author of all the good in you. All within you of your own, is sin and hell. Bless his name for his relation to you; for his care of you; for all the blessings he has most graciously, freely, and fully bestowed on you.

V. 5. *For the Lord is good: his mercy is everlasting: and his truth endureth to all generations.*

The Lord Jesus Christ is good to his people; his mercy is everlasting; his truth expressed in the everlasting gospel will never be nullified; he remaineth the same for ever.

His church may well at all times, and in all places, and especially in the public worship of his name, be full of his praise. May it be even so with us. Amen.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND FIRST.

A Psalm of David.

It describes the true David, our Lord Jesus Christ, in his dedication of himself to the Lord, and his service. How he would conduct himself in his house the church. He would shew his prudence in the government of his church, both toward saint and sinner. In the issue he would most effectually root out the wicked.

V. 1. *A Psalm of David. I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing.*

Our most adorable Lord is here addressing the divine Father, giving an account of the administration of his government and office. It required a dispensation of mercy and of judgment. He was qualified for this exercise by the divine Father who had appointed him, and given all judgment unto him: *That all men should honour the Son, even as the Father, John v. 25.* To shew how much the Mediator delighted in doing the will of him that appointed him, he says, *I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing.* He then professeth his dedication of himself to the Lord.

V. 2. *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way: O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*

He had in the everlasting covenant given up himself entirely to the Father's will, and engaged to become the Father's servant: he was devoted in body and soul, in heart and will, to the observance of all this; he sets about it with the most cheerful alacrity. The way in which he was to walk was a perfect one; he was to behave himself wisely in it; he breathes out his mind after communion with the Lord whilst he was walking in this way; he professes his stedfastness in his determination to walk in this way: *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way: O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.* Who could ever speak thus but the Lord Jesus Christ, who was perfection? Surely none. His church was his house; he attended to all the concerns of it; he, from the divine Father, appointed all the ordinances of it; he walked up to the utmost of all contained in his Father's

divine will; it was with a perfect heart. There was nothing commanded, or implied in the will of him that sent him, but he most closely, personally, and particularly attended unto.

V. 3. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

Christ was perfectly pure; he had no sin in him; he set no wicked thing before him; his eyes were never tainted with the least impurity: he had inherent in his mind, a perfect hatred of all sin, of every sort and kind; he hated the work of them which turned aside from the paths of purity, holiness and obedience; no such evils as these did by any means, or in the least measure, cleave to him; no, he was holy, harmless and undefiled; he was all this in heart, lip, life; he was all this inherently, practically and perseveringly.

V. 4. A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.

No. He was separated from sinners; he was higher than the heavens; he was in every sense, in church and state, in every relation in which he stood, a mirror of perfection; an ensample for his church. He here makes a profession of his integrity before Jehovah, before whom he walked, that we hereby might take into our minds the purity of his heart; the righteousness of his life; the integrity of his will; his hatred of all sin; his reproof for it; his own carriage in his church; he connives at no one sin, be it in saints or sinners, either in professors or profane.

V. 5. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look, and a proud heart, will not I suffer.

A backbiter, or calumniator, is a great sinner. The Hebrew doctors say, such an one hath a threefold tongue; he hurteth three therewith. 1. Himself, by his sin: 2. His neighbour, whom he corrupteth: 3. The receiver of the tale, who is also corrupted thereby. I conceive the words are predictive of Judas Iscariot: he had a froward heart; he was a wicked person; he acted a deceitful part; he privily slandered his neighbour; he had an high look; he had a proud heart; he was cut off, and cast out of the visible pale of the church, and that by Christ himself. Who uttered these words of excommunication concerning him: *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned,* John xv. 6. Christ would not suffer his continuance in the church any longer.

V. 6. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that

They may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

Christ's eyes are as flames of fire: he searcheth the heart, he trieth the reins. The faithful in the land of Judea, who cleaved to him in his incarnate state, were his peculiar care; he protected them, he kept his eyes on them; he was their rock, their shadow, their defence; they dwelt in him, and he dwelt in them; they walked in him, they walked before him, by faith. He had bestowed on them a believing heart. They knew and acknowledged themselves to be his servants, and they walked in the way which he had prescribed for them. He was their way; he was their end; he was their all. To distinguish the true disciples from the false, and from Judas the traitor, it is here said by Messiah, *he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me*; which is a promise of perseverance.

V. 7. *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lie shall not tarry in my sight.*

I consider all this, in a very special manner, as belonging to Judas the apostate; he was a deceiver, he worked deceit; for a season he was in Christ's house; the villain was a thief—a liar. These words, and the former, may be compared with what Christ spoke concerning him, as recorded by John: *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve*, chap. vi. 70, 71.—*Ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him, therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me. Jesus when he had dipped the sop, gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop, Satan entered into him. He then having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night. Therefore when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him*, chap. xiii. 10, 18, 26, 30, 31. I think these scriptures combine to cast light on the Psalm, and the interpretation given of it.

V. 8. *I will early destroy all the wicked of the land: that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.*

I look on these words as a prophecy of what would come on the Jewish enemies of Christ, after his resurrection from the dead. They were destroyed and cut off, and cast out of the land of Judea, and from Jerusalem the city of the Lord; and it was in vindictive wrath; and this wrath was

executed upon them by Christ; it was suddenly and irresistibly done. The event took place about forty years after Christ's ascension. Thus the will of Christ, the word of Christ, and the judgments of Christ towards his enemies, are immutable; and are executed, because not a word spoken by him can fall to the ground. The Lord teach us to profit hereby. Amen. So be it, O Lord.

PSALM THE HUNDRED AND SECOND.

A Prayer of the afflicted, [or, as one renders it, For him who was responsible for iniquity,] when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.

This is a very instructive and important title. It seems to have been endited, and written under the special influence of the Holy Spirit, and designed to set forth the case and state of the church of Christ during the Babylonish captivity. The prophet utters himself in a very importunate and complaining manner: he taketh comfort in the eternity of God: the mercies of the Lord are recorded: the faith of the church is sustained by the contemplation of the unchangeableness of Jehovah. This is a general outline of it. Some say the Psalm belongs to Christ. I do not think so. Christ is the person in Jehovah who is here addressed. His Godhead and eternity are fully expressed in it. He, as the creator of heaven and earth—his immutability—his folding up the heavens like a worn-out garment—the heavens and the earth perishing at his second coming:—when his seed, his church, shall dwell with him in bliss for ever—are most assuredly subjects treated of in this most sacred portion of the word. The apostle quotes the 25th, 26th, and 27th verses of this Psalm, and applies the same to Christ, Hebrews i. 10—12; and by it proves Jesus to be Jehovah, and unchangeable.

V. 1. *A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee.*

It seems this Psalm was designed as the Prayer of Habakkuk, recorded in his third chapter, to be of use and service to the whole church of God, to convey instruction unto them, and teach them how to express themselves before the Lord, when afflicted and overwhelmed in sorrow and distress. The church of God cannot be conceived to have ever been in greater distress, than when under the

Babylonish captivity. It being then that they were absolutely without all the ordinances of divine worship; their temple being burnt, and its sacrifices discontinued. So that the faithful in Christ Jesus, might well have their case, feelings, and sorrows, personified, as they are here before us, one speaking in the name of, and for them all. They were afflicted; they were overwhelmed: so was Christ their head and surety, when he, as by his suretyship engagements on their behalf, stood up as the one responsible for their iniquity, and made his soul an offering for sin. He was afflicted in body and mind; he was overwhelmed with all the sorrows contained in the curse and wrath of God due to sin; he poured out his complaint before the Lord. So that I do not say but many parts of this Psalm may be applied unto him; yet I do not see how the whole suits him, The church was in her captivity, afflicted, and overwhelmed with grief and sorrow; she poureth out her complaint before the Lord. You and I may be in various cases of affliction; we may at times be overwhelmed with the same: it will be well with us if we act as the prophet here doth. I never in the whole of my life got any good by carrying my affliction, or speaking when overwhelmed with sorrow, to any one; no, let it be a saint of ever so great a degree in the school of Christ. When I have poured out my complaint before the Lord, I have. Blessed be his name for it. These words, *Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee*, are the introductory part of the prayer, and so are the words contained in the next verse. Jehovah in the person of the Son, is the object of worship: it is he who is here addressed. This will most evidently appear when we come to the 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th verses.

V. 2. *Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble, incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call, answer me speedily.*

There is vast importunity expressed in this, as also in the former verse. Audience with the Lord, the ear of the Lord, his attention to the cry of the petitioner, are very importunately called for: that he would not hide his face, nor reject the church in her present trouble; that he would be all ear, and speedily answer; this is the subject of these two first verses. We see from hence, the church always prays best when most afflicted, and overwhelmed in distress, sorrow, and affliction.

V. 3. *For my days are consumed like smoke: and my bones are burnt as an hearth.*

Thus the prophet expresseth the case and distress of the church; this is the reason he is so full of prayer on her behalf; it is on this account he is so bold and importunate on her behalf. Smoke is a vapour which proceedeth from fire, and it vanisheth into air. The hearth on which the fire consumeth the wood or fuel cast on it, is generally very black. So the saints and church of Christ, at the time this prayer was offered up for them, were such as no words could fully express. Their days were gone speedily; nothing but sorrow and confusion in their minds; their bodies and minds were so swallowed up in views of their affliction, and overwhelming distress, they knew of no better metaphors to express the same by.

V. 4. *My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.*

This is a further expression of the overwhelming distress of the mind. A view and apprehension of the sorrowful, suffering, and afflicted state and case of the church of Christ, so swallowed up the prophet's mind, that his heart was sorely smitten with grief. His very flesh withered, just as grass doth when scorched by the sun. Such impressions had grief made on his mind, he forgot his daily food; he had no heart to take it; yea, Christ the bread of life, he did not at times, and now at these distressing ones with which he was exercised, he forgot him, so as that he did not constantly feed on him. He found this was the truth of his present case and experience.

V. 5. *By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.*

The distress of an afflicted mind when overwhelmed with grief, is most pathetically expressed and spoken out here. The church was in trouble; the prophet personates her; she is afflicted, he describes the same; she is overwhelmed, he sets it forth: she betakes herself to the Lord, and pours out her heart before him; the prophet records the same; he speaks it out for her. Her days are consumed; they are comparable to smoke; her bones are burned as black as an hearth: her heart is smitten; she is withered in body and mind; she is like scorched grass: she can not attend to food either for body or mind: no voice or sound is heard from her but that of groaning; she is skin and bones: she is all grief; she is nothing but grief. When or where shall we find such a doleful account of the church of Christ as this, elsewhere in all the bible, except in the lamentations of Jeremiah? Does it not therefore clearly appear, it is to

point out the tremendous sorrows, and overwhelming griefs of mind, the real saints under that dispensation were the subjects of? I think so.

V. 6. *I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.*

As the former verses expressed the afflictions and overwhelming sorrows of the mind, this and the following are expressive of the lonely and solitary state and case of the church, during this period in Babylon. The pelican is a bird which dwelleth in the wilderness, in desolate places; it vomiteth up shell fishes which it before devoured. The owl dwelleth in deserts, it maketh a doleful noise; it flieth not right forth, but thwart-wise; it flies in the twilight, or dark evening. The church compares herself, and sorrowful lonely state, to these.

V. 7. *I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top.*

A bird well known by us; it will sit alone upon the house-top; it hath a black throat, and brown temples. It seems they were ordinary food among the Jews, and were sold two for a farthing, or five for two farthings; see Matt. x. 29; Luke xii. 6. To mark an afflicted state, the Psalmist says here, *I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top.* Solitary and alone in my condition and misery, sorrow and distress.

V. 8. *Mine enemies reproach me all the day: and they that are mad against me, are sworn against me.*

This was a sore affliction to the church; to be reproached by her enemies all the day; to bear and endure the insults of her adversaries; for they to cast it in her teeth, and ask her, *Where is now thy God?* For these who were mad with rage against her, to be in sworn confederacy against her, to root up if possible the remembrance of her from the earth.

V. 9. *For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.*

A further expression of the very distressed state of the church. She was now conformed to her great Lord and head in her afflictions. So that many parts of this Psalm will bear a resemblance to our Lord's sorrows and distresses. How the church came into this state, and the cause why she was left for a season in it, are confessed by the prophet in the next words.

V. 10. *Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.*

I have frequently observed in commenting on the Psalms, that some expressions in them must be confined to the

Jewish church, and the outward state that it was in. It ~~was~~ be so here. It was national sin and national idolatry ~~were~~ the cause of their captivity. The real saints of the most high God suffered, and were carried into captivity as well as others of the Jewish people. It was the fruit of God's indignation, for the neglect and contempt cast on his holy laws, worship, and ordinances, that they were visited. Because of thine indignation and thy wrath against the nation on whom thy name is called, and amongst whom thou hast planted thy church and ordinances, it is that I am in my present state and circumstances. *For thou hast lifted me up; made me as thy church, the very glory and defence of the people of the Jews; and in thy most righteous indignation, thou hast cast me down; and I cannot be lower.*

V. 11. *My days are like a shadow that declineth: and I am withered like grass.*

As the shadow of the sun when it is near down, which, though it seem long, soon passeth away, so are my days; they quickly pass; I am in body and mind shrivelled up; I am the subject of sorrow and misery; I am overwhelmed in it; I am overwhelmed with it. None, O Jehovah, can help or succour me, but thou only. Whilst I have been speaking out my griefs before thee, and pouring out my prayer unto thee, and thereby have emptied myself by expressing my complaints, yet even this hath not afforded me relief; no. I must get above all this, by remembering who and what thou art: my case is as I have expressed it before thy divine majesty; nor can I alter it; nor can I raise myself above it; nor will my present complaints relieve me: no, I must enter on another subject; I must contemplate thy eternity and mercy.

V. 12. *But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations.*

The consideration of what Jehovah is in his essence, persons, perfections—in his will, love, covenant, word, oath, and promise in Christ, to his church and people, is an all-sufficient foundation to sustain the faith and hope of his people, in every state, case, time, and circumstance they can possibly be in. The eternity of Christ is a blessed support to a spiritual mind: The church had being and existence in him from everlasting; he was the head, the life, the security of his church before the world was. Then says the prophet here, in this I will set up my rest; here is enough in this to lift me up above and beyond all my present distress: *But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations.* All succeeding saints will

and thee to be to them what thou art, as Jehovah their God. It must be so. I will therefore dwell on this; it opens a pleasing prospect to my view; I will no longer dwell on my distressed case; but look forward to the fulfilment of thy purposes and promises concerning me.

V. 13. *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come.*

The seventy years are almost expired; the decree will soon go forth: the church will depart out of Babylon: Jerusalem will be rebuilt: the vessels of the Lord's house will be restored: the temple will be built on its former site: and the worship of God and his ordinances restored also. It must be so. *But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come.* Thus the prophet, from the consideration of Jehovah's eternity and his mercy, begins to speak concerning what the Lord would be to and do for Zion. He would exert himself on her behalf; he would have mercy on her; he would manifest his favour unto her; the time for this was fixed in his own eternal mind; it was certified in the written prophecies when it should be. From comparing scripture with scripture, it was evident to the prophet the set time was come. This carried off the mind of the prophet from all his most doleful complaints, so that he pursues quite a fresh subject.

V. 14. *For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.*

Jerusalem and the temple were one heap of dust and ruins; yet they were places the Lord had sanctified with his presence, and the memorials and ordinances of his grace. It was therefore a pleasure to his saints, upon their restoration from Babylon to Judea, to take pleasure in digging the stones out of the rubbish, and expressing their pleasure in building the house of the Lord. This would be taken notice of by others.

V. 15. *So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord: and all the kings of the earth thy glory.*

This great event would strike terror and awe into the minds of the heathen, so that they should not frustrate this good work. The kings of the earth, such as the kings of Persia—should be friendly to the Jews, and even encourage them to go on in this good work; as Cyrus and Artaxerxes did. I am not going into a full opening of the spiritual glory of these things, I want only to keep to the natural

meaning of these words before us, as my design is to give the outward sense of them.

V. 16. *When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.*

None but Jehovah Father, Son, and Spirit, could build up Zion. When he did this, in the event, and at the time here referred to, he did appear in his glory, in the fulfilment of his promise. It was, if I may so say, a fresh edition of his grace: it was as it were a fresh testimony of his gracious favour to his saints, and a fresh evidence to their faith, that he would send his Christ unto them, who would actually be incarnate before the second temple should be destroyed. All this glory was expressed, and all this glory of the incomprehensible Three in the essential Essence, shone forth, in building up Zion, by the restoration of God's worship at Jerusalem, whether it was apprehended or not.

V. 17. *He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.*

The saints of God are never destitute, in the best of senses. They are, they may be so, in their own views, and also in the view of others. It seems here the expression concerns the very low estate the church of Christ was in when in Babylon, and whilst without the public and instituted worship of the Lord, as a church of Christ. Yet in their destitute state, and whilst under the most severe scourge of the reproachful tongues of their enemies, yet they could not but cry out unto the Lord; they found him near and accessible unto them. This is therefore said for the glory of his name, and for the encouragement of others: *He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.* This is very supporting to a praying mind: this is worthy of being thought on by all saints.

V. 18. *This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord.*

I conceive here a new subject is begun. That these words imply the Psalm contains a prophecy; that a command is here given for writing it, that it might be kept in remembrance for ages to come: to be a memorial of what the Lord is, and ever will be unto his church. Such of his as are anew created in Christ Jesus, and brought into a new state; such of them as may be raised up, and restored from the most low and abject state saints can possibly be in; such as being created in Christ Jesus unto good works; even such as are called out of darkness into his marvellous light, shall all praise the Lord—one generation after another, down to the end of time. What he was in his eter-

nkty and mercy to his church, in all past ages, circumstances, distresses, oppositions and persecutions; —that he will be to all his saints, even down to the end of time. Let this therefore be written and recorded; it is so in the word of God. This is sealed by the joint ratification of the eternal Three in the one incomprehensible Jehovah. Every living saint is a witness of the truth of this.

V. 19. *For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary: from heaven did the Lord behold the earth.*

God's high sanctuary, with his looking down from the height of it, is expressive of his looking down from heaven. You have such words as these expressed in prayer: *Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel,* Deut. xxvi. 15. Jehovah's looking down from the height of his sanctuary, or, his beholding from heaven the earth, is here mentioned as a vast expression of his grace. He had looked down from heaven on his church; she had felt and experienced the blessed effects of this; it was beneficial unto her; it had done her good; it was in answer to the voice of her cry. Jehovah would look down upon his people, again and again: it had been in answer to the voice of her cry; therefore the prophet mentions it; that all succeeding saints, in and throughout all succeeding generations, might celebrate the Lord's name and praises for the same.

V. 20. *To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.*

This was indeed a marvellous expression of Jehovah's grace. Many of the Lord's prisoners in Babylon, were literally prisoners; these were groaning under their sorrows and sufferings; some of them were by their oppressors appointed unto death. This, it may be, they expected, to the very moment they were set at liberty by Cyrus. The following scriptures seem to convey, and confirm such ideas to, and in our minds: the Lord addresses his people in Babylon thus: *Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? There-*

fore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor? Isai. li. 7—13. Many similar passages might be quoted. But these are, I conceive, sufficient to cast light on the verse of the Psalm now before us.

V. 21. *To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem.*

When the people of God, by the state of Christ's church, were so sorely distressed as no words could fully express their griefs; yet even then, contemplations on the eternity and mercy of Christ, the church's head, and her saviour in time of trouble, lifted up the church to him above and beyond the apprehension and experience of the whole she was the subject of. What the Lord would be, and do for Zion, opened to the view of the prophet's mind a most glorious prospect. It gave him an insight into prophecy; from whence he was fully persuaded the Lord would most assuredly raise up his church from her then present low estate. He is fully convinced that Zion's sons and servants would take pleasure in being employed in raising up her broken frame. This leads the prophet to contemplate how he would favour Zion's dust. He considers that the heathen, the elect Gentiles, on this account would fear and dread to be found out of the pale of Christ's church. That on the Lord's building up of Zion, he would appear in his glory; that he would attend unto the prayer of the poor destitute; he would not overlook their prayer; yea, and all this would, and should, be recorded for the benefit of succeeding ages; that the Lord looked down from the height of his sanctuary, from heaven he had beheld the earth; he had heard the groaning of the prisoners; he had been gracious at the voice of their cry; he had delivered them who are appointed unto death out of the hand of the enemy. All which would sufficiently declare and make known the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise at Jerusalem.

V. 22. *When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.*

This gathering the people, both Jews and Gentiles, out-

of all lands into which they had been driven, was a glorious act in God. To join elect Jews and Gentiles, and make them one body in Christ, would be worthy of Jehovah. As when he brought Israel out of Egypt, a mixed people followed them; so we may conceive, when he brought them up from Babylon, others beside their own nation emigrated with them. Yet, says the prophet, I also foresee the Lord will send his Spirit and gospel unto the Gentile nations, and gather out of them a people to his praise, who will also come and worship the Lord in his holy mountain at Jerusalem. At the sight of which I am distressed on account of the rejection of my people the Jews.

V. 23. *He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.*

I felt in myself, on this view of the subject, and it was to me like the sorrowful march of the Israelites, when they were led through the deserts of Arabia. I must most certainly confess, I know whatsoever the Lord doth is well, and wisely done. Yet the rejection of the bulk of the Jewish nation, and the introduction of the elect Gentiles in their room and stead, most solemnly affects me. I must therefore put up the following request on the behalf of the elect Jewish church, and for the continuance of the state of it, as the church of the living God. It is what hath passed in my mind, I will therefore thus express it:

V. 24. *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.*

Do not, O my God, unhinge the present church state amongst us Jews. Let it be continued until Messiah, the glory of thy people Israel, is sent to us; let thy church amongst us be continued until that great event hath taken place; thy will is immutable; with thee there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; thou art immutably, and everlastingly one. *Thy years are throughout all generations.* These words may be compared with the following. *O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy, Hab. iii. 2.* This prayer is offered up on the behalf of the Jewish church. It requests the Lord would revive his work in the midst of the years; and not suffer the whole term of the seventy years captivity to run out without giving his saints in Babylon some evidence of his remembrance of them, and of his promise concerning them. The prophet requests the Lord would revive their expectation respecting their restoration. So I conceive the Psalmist, in the words before us, prays,