

the then present generation of saints might not be taken away in the midst of those days; but be continued in a time-state; and be admitted to live, to see, and to enjoy the blessed accomplishment of the Lord's grace, which would so gloriously shine forth, and be displayed, in the person and incarnation of the ever-blessed Messiah, the Lord of glory, the glory Jehovah; at which time, and as connected with that event, he would build up Zion, and appear in his glory. This could not but be desirable to the prophet, and the whole church which he personated, to see and enjoy the glory of the Lord, as it would shine forth, and be openly manifested and displayed, in bringing home his church from Babylon; and in his afterwards gathering nations and kingdoms at Jerusalem to serve the Lord. Or, in other words, his gathering his elect out of nations and kingdoms, and forming them for his praise. Now as the prophet had a view of all this, as set forth in prophecy, it could not be but he must, and the whole church with him, be very desirous to be partakers of this glorious grace. He might therefore well express himself thus: *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days.* O let me live to see the accomplishment of thy promise. O let me see, and live to be a witness of thy great goodness to thy people. Thou hast been with them; thou art before them, their all in all. *Thy years are throughout all generations.* Our Lord Jesus Christ said to the Jews, in the days of his flesh, *Verily, verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am,* John viii. 58. He was with Adam in Paradise before and after the fall; he was in the days of Noah; he appeared to Abram, Isaac and Jacob; he was in the burning bush at Horeb; he was with the church in the wilderness; he is the beginning and ending, the first and the last; he was before the world: his years are throughout all generations; he is the creator and upholder of all things. So it follows:

V. 25. *Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth. and the heavens are the work of thy hands.*

The former words, *Thy years are throughout all generations,* with these, fully prove Christ was the person addressed all throughout this Psalm. He had been worshipped by his incommunicable name, Jehovah, nine times. Which name belongs to none but the holy Ones, who exist coequal and coeternal in the infinite self-existing Essence. Christ, as the Son of the living God, existed in the one eternal God-head from of old, from everlasting; before he laid the foundation of the earth; before the heavens were stretched out. These are the works of his hands; he was before them;

the earth on which we dwell, the heavens above us, and which surround us, were all made by him. He speaks of these as incontestible proofs of his Godhead, saying, *I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded*, Isai. xlv. 12. Jehovah the Son of God was before all things. He laid the foundation of the earth, and the corner-stone of the universe; he stretched out the vast expanse of the heavens, and formed all in them.

*V. 26. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.*

He who made the earth and the heavens governs them. When the end for which they were made is fully accomplished they will grow old, fade, and die; as all things in our world do. Yet this cannot be but by the will and power of God who created them. This is here wholly attributed to Christ: to whom the following incommunicable perfection is attributed, immutability.

*V. 27. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*

Thus our Lord Jesus Christ is confessed to be Jehovah. Thus his Godhead is adored; his eternity declared; his immutability acknowledged. He is here by the Psalmist professed and confessed to be Jehovah, the creator of the earth and the heavens. As such he was the rock, the strength, the saviour, the hope of the church, and of the prophets also. His faith in him as God led him to leave himself, and all the concerns of the church, with him. Christ hath universal empire; all power both in heaven and earth is his; he is Lord-God omnipotent. The Apostle quotes these words, contained in the 25th, 26th, and 27th verses, and applies them to Christ. *And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail*, Hebrews i. 10—12. The Apostle quotes this, as a most glorious testimony, concerning the Godhead and immutability of our Lord Jesus Christ; which reflects light, glory, greatness, and majesty on the whole Psalm. It also reflects some glorious beams of life and light from Christ himself on believing minds.

*V. 28. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.*

The church of Christ will be continued upon earth until

day and night come to an end. There will be saints, in every succeeding age and period of time, who will be found in Zion, the church of the living God. They will endure so long as Christ doth, for they are in him, and because he liveth, they shall live also; he is their life, their glory, their defence; he is their life, and their life is in him; the gates of hell can never so prevail as to exterminate the church of Christ. No, it cannot be; it is wholly impossible. The prayer in this Psalm now closes, with faith exercised on the person of Christ; with a view of the continuation of the church of Christ, until his second coming. At which season he, the great God and Saviour, who is immutably and unchangeably the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, will admit his whole church, complete in himself, into the state of unchangeable bliss, and be their glory, their all in all for ever. Thus ends this Psalm. May the Lord bless the same to us. Amen.

### PSALM THE HUNDRED AND THIRD.

In this most sacred hymn, which is entitled, *Of David*, we have the Lord Jesus Christ praised and blessed for his mercies. Several of these are very particularly enumerated. It begins with blessing the Lord. It ends with the same.

V. 1. *Of David.*—*Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*

The title, *Of David*, or the beloved, expresseth the design of this portion of sacred writ. It is to celebrate the praise due to Messiah, for the mercies and blessings he is pleased to bestow on his church and people; who being saved and redeemed by his most precious bloodshedding, and brought to the knowledge of him from his word, and by his Spirit, have the greatest cause to love, worship, praise, bless, and adore him. To bless the Lord is beyond praising him. It is the highest act of worship in heaven; it is beyond prayer or praise; it consists in being heartily well pleased that Jehovah our Jesus is what he is, most truly blessed in himself; that there can be no addition to his essential, personal, mediatorial blessedness; nor to him as our head and Saviour can blessedness be added; he is exalted above all blessing and praise; it is good to have all our mental faculties engaged and exercised in worshipping him. The Psalmist addresses his own soul on this subject; he calls on all the faculties of his mind to be thus engaged, and thus employed. Saying, *Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is*

*within me, bless his holy name.* Jehovah is the fountain of essence and blessedness. *The name of Jehovah* is a person in the incomprehensible Essence, even the Son of the living God; who became incarnate for us, and for our salvation; he hath finished it; he is here praised for it. And the whole mind of a believer is here set before us, when he is thus engaged. *Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.* When a real saint is set to bless the Lord Jesus Christ, he knows not where to begin nor when to end.

V. 2. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*

It is very good in every act of spiritual and divine worship to have the proper subject before us. The Psalmist had called on his soul to bless the Lord; he had used the words three times by way of excitement to himself, to proceed with this most delightful employment. He then calls up his memory into act and exercise, to consider the benefits the Lord had bestowed on him; he wants to have such a view, sense, and remembrance of Jehovah's benefits, as may lead him to make such particular acknowledgments of the same, as might inance in his mind the worth and greatness of them. He therefore gives an account of some of them in the following verses.

V. 3. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases.*

Forgiveness of sins is the fruit of Christ's most precious bloodshedding. Health and cure for all our sinful wounds are in his stripes and death; the whole of our sinful disease and maladies are healed by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. And we being brought to believe the everlasting virtue and perfection of the same, may well sing of his pardoning grace.

V. 4. *Who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies.*

The knowledge of Christ makes way for the entrance of these blessings into our minds. These are all most regularly stated here. We are first brought to know Christ and his salvation; then we are led by the Holy Spirit to believe in Christ for life and salvation; afterwards to enjoy Christ and his salvation; and then we are led to know our sins are forgiven; our souls made pure and righteous in Christ; that his blood cleanseth us from all sin; that his righteousness delivereth from death; that we have eternal redemption, and are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation;

that his love is our feast; that he crowneth us with his lovingkindnesses and tender mercies; that we have every blessing in him. And whilst we are blessing him for these, we are favoured with an increasing view and apprehension of them.

V. 5. *Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

Christ is the bread of life; he feeds and nourisheth up our souls unto everlasting life; he gives us soul-satiety, in the nourishment he communicates unto us, out of his infinite fulness; he invigorates us; he renews us; he makes and keeps us alive to him; he fulfils his promise, which runs thus: *But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.* It is said the eagle casts her feathers yearly, and new ones come in their place, so that she seemeth young: she also flieth high, and liveth long. The Psalmist enters now on a new subject, which he continues to the close of verse 14. It is a very interesting one.

V. 6. *The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.*

Jehovah-Jesus is the friend of his people; the Father of his people; the defender of his people; the judge of his people; they have their oppressions, and their oppressors. These are sin, Satan, the world, and others who seek to destroy them. Yet it is all in vain; because their great Advocate pleads the causes of their souls. He knows their cases most exactly; he knows the oppressions they labour under; he is most justly fitted to apprehend the case of their oppressors, as he also knows their oppressions; he executeth righteousness and judgment towards his church, in every case; he does this for all that are oppressed; he is truth itself; he is wisdom itself; he is faithfulness itself. Therefore his saints may well leave their cases with him, and rejoice before him.

V. 7. *He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.*

He proclaimed himself to, and caused his goodness and glory to pass before Moses; he proved himself to be the Lord God of Israel; he delivered them out of the hand of their oppressors; he gave them proof upon proof of his compassion towards them, and that he was a sin-pardoning God; he fed them; he clothed them; he guided them; he made known his ways, his statutes and ordinances to Moses, his acts of grace and power unto the children of Israel.

V. 8. *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*

This is what the Lord is to his church and people. This is what the Lord declared himself to be, when he proclaimed his name to Moses. We read, *And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, &c.* Exodus xxxiv. 5—7. This was God's manifesto of himself; this was the anchor-sheet which Old Testament saints took hold of. Our Lord Jesus Christ is all this; he is *merciful and gracious*; he is *slow to anger*; he is *plenteous in mercy*. All this is to his praise; all this is our glory; it gives us reason to shout his praise; the true knowledge of it affords us everlasting consolation. As we live in the belief of his being merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, we get on heaven-ward with an high hand.

V. 9. *He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.*

Thus the believer goes on, from recording one gracious act of Christ's after another, with a view to give him glorious praise. It was one part of his gracious dealings with his people, his executing righteousness and judgment for the oppressed. It was one of the royal acts of his goodness to make known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. It was beyond all this, it being the original thereof, that Jesus is Jehovah, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. The fruits of it are very acceptable to a gracious mind. *He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever.* No; though he cause grief, yet he will turn again, and have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

V. 10. *He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*

Which is a proof of the former assertion. As the believer enters upon such subjects as these, he knows not where to end. Past mercies; present mercies; what the Lord hath done for him, what the Lord hath done in him, what the Lord is unto him, what he sees the Lord to be in himself, as the fountain of grace, mercy, and salvation, draws out his mind, enlarges his heart, engages his will, and opens his mouth with enlargement on these great acts of God. We were never dealt with according to our sin, and

sinfulness; no, not in any one single instance. We who are believers in Jesus may well join with heart and voice to bless his holy name for this. He hath not, no, nor never will deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities. Holy Ghost, set and seal home this truth on our hearts, that we may give thee fresh praise for the same.

V. 11. *For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*

His mercies spring from his own bowels; they are inherent in him; they are the mercies of Godhead; so that we can no more comprehend them than we can the height of heaven. According to the height of heaven, so great is the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ towards them that fear him; that is, towards such as believe on him. What depth in the expression! how glorious and exalted the conception! It is real blessedness to have the conception of it in our minds.

V. 12. *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

Christ, the antitypical scape-goat, had all our sins laid on him; he bore them in his own body on the tree; he removed them from us, and out of the sight of law and justice by the sacrifice of himself; it was his own incommunicable act; they can never return to us again. The distance of the east to the west cannot be measured. We can never have the sins the Father laid on Christ brought back and laid to our charge. No; it is everlastingly impossible; the Lord hath laid on Christ the iniquity of us all; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. May we live and die in the full belief of this.

V. 13. *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*

Christ is a father to his church; he loves his own in every state and case; he exercises the bowels and compassions of all contained in that relation unto them. If they were not what they are, he could not exercise his pity towards them; he is most exactly suited to them, and so are they to him; their sins, wants, corruption, and miseries, draw out his pity into act and exercise towards them; if they were not his children, it would not be so; but because they are his children, it cannot but be so. He said, *Surely they are my children. So he became their Saviour, Isai. lxiii. 8.*

V. 14. *For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ comprehends the whole of us; he

knoweth all our frames ; all our feelings ; our constitutions ; the organization of our bodies ; what our feelings, conceptions, and perceptions are ; he takes the whole into view ; he remembereth we are dust, and very easily affected ; and exerciseth his pity on us accordingly. This may well be to us a very blessed consideration. And thus ends the second subject of this Psalm. The next contains a lecture on mortality.

V. 15. *As for man, his days are as grass : as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.*

Man's days are few, and transitory ; always uncertain ; ever coming to an end ; very short at best ; sometimes they make a fair shew. Hence the comparison before us. As for man, his days are as grass ; which is very green ; which is beautiful, and flourishing for a season. But that is very short ; as a flower of the field, such are man's days ; he flourisheth just as a flower of the field doth, very short. He is soon cut down ; which is very expressively set forth in the next words :

V. 16. *For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more.*

Death comes on the body ; it does its office ; and the man is no longer in his body ; nor in our world. Like as wind carries loose grass or hay before it, so as it cannot be gathered again, so man is carried off by death, and the place he hath quitted will know him again no more for ever. In this brief, yet comprehensive and figurative manner, the prophet teaches mortality unto us. Then he leads us to more sublime subjects.

V. 17. *But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.*

The mercy of Jehovah is an essential perfection of his nature. It is exercised in a covenant way in Christ, and through his mediation in a sovereign way, on all the vessels of mercy. It is from everlasting to everlasting, unchangeably the same ; it is upon them that know Christ, that believe on him, and have communion with him ; it is a part of the whole subject for which Christ hath been celebrated throughout this Psalm. And it is here brought in, after the account had been given of man's mortality. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. It does not cease at death. No ; the vessels of mercy removed out of a time-state will enjoy the blessing of the covenant mercy of the Three in Jehovah to all eternity. It will also be continued and displayed upon them that belong to the election of grace, who will fear the Lord, and express it by their be-



lieving on the name of the only begotten Son of God, from age to age. And the righteousness of Christ, which is everlasting, will be preached unto children's children. That is, the gospel of the blessed God will continue in the church of Christ down to the very close of time; which will be a proof of Jehovah's faithfulness.

V. 18. *To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.*

This is descriptive of the saints of Christ in this our world. They are such as fear the Lord. They will be succeeded in one age after another, so as that children's children, the mercy of the Lord, which is from everlasting to everlasting, being evidently made known to them, and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ being revealed in, and unto them; these, their successors, will keep the holy covenant of the Trinity in remembrance; and remember the ordinances, the commandments of their Lord and Saviour, and do them. They will worship him in their observance of them.

V. 19. *The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.*

The Lord Jesus Christ hath universal empire over all things, visible and invisible. But I conceive he is here worshipped as the Saviour and Mediator of his church and people. His throne here is his mediatorial throne; he hath prepared it, and is on it, to dispense grace and mercy to his whole church; and his mediatorial kingdom ruleth over all; nothing can take place in the kingdom of men without him; and he being head over all things, for the good of his church, nothing can therefore take place which shall ever be of any real injury to his church. This is matter for great praise to him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

V. 20. *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.*

When real saints have done their utmost to bless the Lord, they fall far short of attaining their own desire. Hence here, and elsewhere, those blessed and intellectual ones, who surround the throne in heaven, are called upon to join the church on earth to bless Jehovah. They are the Lord's; his ministering servants; they are wholly incorporeal and intellectual; they are bright, and shining; they excel in strength; they know of no decay; they obey the divine commands; they are always hearkening unto the voice of Jehovah's words.

V. 21. *Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.*

All the angels in heaven are Jehovah's hosts, so are all the luminaries in the heavens. Sun, moon, stars, planets, comets, &c. He bringeth out their host by number, he calleth them all by names. Isai. xl. 26. The ministers of the gospel are Christ's; they do his pleasure. All these are called upon to bless Jehovah.

V. 22. *Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.*

Thus the Psalmist calls upon all in heaven, all on earth, all throughout the whole creation, on all God's works, in all places of his dominion, to bless the Lord. He closes with the very same words with which he began this Psalm, saying, *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* May the Lord the Spirit help us to say Amen to all these expressions. They are repeated not less than six times. When the whole are expressed in their utmost perfection, it will be true, Thy name is exalted above all blessing and praise.

## PSALM THE HUNDRED AND FOURTH.

The subject of this Psalm is a most spiritual meditation on the mighty power of Godhead displayed in creation and providence. The first part of it is a celebration of the works of creation, to the close of the 9th verse. Jehovah made, and he supports the whole creation. He gave the breath of life, and food, and he continues the same. His Providence is a continuation of his creating power, wisdom, and goodness. This seems to be taken up, and entered upon at the 10th verse; and continued to verse 23. The prophet breaks forth into solemn adoration of the Lord, and admiration at the acts of creation and Providence, ver. 24. After which he enters afresh on the subjects before him, which he diversifies. He takes notice of the agency of nature by which the earth is renewed at every returning spring; he declares the glory of the Lord is eternal. The prophet concludes with blessing the Lord, and praising him. This is the outline of it.

V. 1. *Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.*

The Psalmist is here entering on a most glorious subject, but he understands it well, and begins and ends it in a very suitable and blessed manner. It is the misery with many of us, we do not comprehend properly and particularly what

is contained in such and such discourses. Hence we generally leave them wholly as we find them, without entering on them, so as to unfold and explain them. This is not the case here. Whilst the subject is immensely great, and full of sublime grandeur and majesty, the prophet is quite correct in all his ideas on it, and throughout it. He sets himself to speak of God's works, in creation and providence. He must have made the same the matter of his study and utmost devotion, or he could never have written so correctly on the same. He begins with calling on his soul to bless the Lord. He then addresses God, as his God. He then expresses the greatness, the honour and majesty of God, with which he is clothed. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* Thus he enters on the subject before him. He then addresses the divine Majesty, saying, *O Lord my God, thou art very great.* The word Jehovah is expressive of all in God. It being a word which implies necessary, or self-existence; or, existence by necessity of nature. The word *God* being plural, contains in it the Trinity of persons in the infinite Essence. The expressions, *O Lord my God,* shews the Psalmist knew the Three in Jehovah to be coequal and co-eternal, the eternal Three, who engaged by an everlasting covenant before the world was to save from sin, curse, and damnation, an innumerable company of Adam's posterity by the person, incarnation, life and sacrifice of the ever blessed Immanuel. *O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.* The Lord God is great; in his being, life, blessedness, glory, and immortality. His greatness shines forth in, and throughout, every part of the visible creation. His being clothed with majesty and honour is expressive of his dwelling in the heaven of heavens. In light inaccessible; to which no mortal eye can approach, whom no man hath seen, or can see. To whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. The majesty of God, the greatness and immensity of God, the life, honour, and power of God are subjects well suited to the spiritual mind, when it engages in contemplations on the works of God. And whilst neither the Godhead, nor the persons in Godhead, should ever be contemplated out of Christ God-man; yet as conceived of in him, who is the image of God, we are gainers thereby, as it helps us to proper scriptural views and apprehensions of the same, and fills us with holy admiration of Jehovah.

V. 2. *Who coverest thyself with light, as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.*

The mind having been prepared, it being filled with a

deep and profound sense of God, and having blessed him, and confessed him to be Jehovah-God—his greatness, honour and majesty, having been most devoutly and solemnly confessed—the prophet proceeds with the subject now before him. This he does in a devout address to him, in which he acknowledges the immensity, greatness, power and glory of God, which hath been manifested in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and fountains of water. None but God alone could give an account of the creation; he hath in the first chapter of Genesis: the Psalm before us is a comment on it. Many solemn interrogatives are put by Jehovah, who spoke out of a whirlwind to Job concerning it. He is challenged to shew, if he can by all God's works, God that is over all, to whom glory and honour is due: *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.—Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?* chap. xxxviii. 4, 6, 7. It was the Lord alone who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth. Which in its mass, and rude unshapen state, was earth and water floating together; it was without form; it was empty. *The Spirit of God moved upon the face [or, edge] of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and so it was.* This is referred unto in these words, *Who coverest thyself with light, as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.* Air and light are two of the great agents in nature. God is light; he is the father of lights; he dwelleth in the light which is inaccessible; he commands the light to shine out of darkness. Some say every particle of matter is covered with it. He stretched out the heavens as a tent, as a canopy or curtain. This was the work of the first day of the creation.

V. 3. *Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind.*

The clouds are the upper regions of the air; they are as chambers; they being in the heavens, over or above our heads; these are filled with waters; these God bindeth in the thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. This was the work of the second day. *And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was*

so, Gen. i. 6, 7. This act the psalmist celebrates Jehovah's praises for, thus: *Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind.* It is expressive of the majesty and omnipotence, and sovereignty of the Lord God. All created nature depends on him; it is under his own immediate will and authority; he brought it all out of nothing, into being; he upholds and governs it. No one thing throughout his vast dominions can exist one single moment, but by his will and power.

V. 4. *Who maketh his angels spirits: his ministers a flaming fire.*

These words are quoted by the apostle, and considered by him as belonging to elect angels. He had spoken concerning Christ, as God-man, that he made the worlds, that he upheld all things: that he was constituted and appointed by heirship, to be more excellent than the angels; he having a name beyond any of them; he being essentially the Son of God. Therefore, as God-man, as man in personal union with the Son of God, he was so called. He asks the question: *To which of the angels said he [i. e. God the Father] —Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. And again, when he bringeth in his first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.* Now, says he, the Essential Word, who is the same with our Christ, is the creator of angels; and of him it is written, *Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.* Read the first chapter of the Hebrews, to the close of the 7th verse. They are intellectual incorporeal spirits; the excellency of whose nature is set forth by the expressions of *spirits, and a flame of fire.* They differ from Christ; he is no made, or created spirit, but the maker of all things. They also differ from men, made of flesh and blood: they were made in and together with the heavens, and in one of them, on the first day of the creation: they have glorious forms, and are distinguished one from the other. The words in the Psalm have reference to the agents in nature, fire, light, and air, or wind in motion. The learned Ainsworth, says, the original word, rendered *spirits*, signifieth *winds.* So some translate it thus: *He maketh the winds his messengers, and his angels flaming fire.* One says, "the constituent parts of the heavens are, 1. The darkness: 2. The spirit: 3. The light: 4. The luminaries and their fluxes: 5. The fire: 6. The density. He says, Moses makes no express mention of it. He adds, for what reason he omits it I know

not, unless it be supposed to be included under the word *expansion*, or *firmament*." He adds, "but there is a place which speaks of the power of the fire upon the heavens themselves, 2 Pet. iii. 11: *The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat*. Now if we consider the properties and power of fire, the effects it produceth upon the heavens and the earth; we shall see sufficient reason to conclude, that it is in itself no other than that vehement friction of the several parts of the æther, which dissolves and melts the grosser parts of the heavens, and makes them become fire; that friction which tears the masses or denser parts to pieces, and dissolves them into loose atoms." I quote this from Mr. Samuel Pike, on the Principles of Natural Philosophy, extracted from Divine Revelation.

V 5. *Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.*

It was the work of Jehovah alone to form the earth; to lay its foundations; to fix its pillars; to settle its form; to give it motion; to appoint its course. The foundations of the earth are the waters, over which it is stretched out as an arch. We thus read: *When he prepared the heavens, I was there: When he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: When he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: When he appointed the foundation of the earth*, Proverbs viii. 27—29. These are all so closely connected with the Lord's appointing the foundations of the earth to have the waters for its foundation: *Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever*. In reading this Psalm it should be observed, some parts of it concern the creation, and some refer more immediately to the deluge. This and the following verses, to the 9th inclusive, seem to me to contain subjects which are applicable both to the creation and reformation of the globe after the deluge. I will aim to give some account of the same, under these ideas thereof; first of the one, and next of the other; which if it cast light on the passages before us, I shall be most heartily pleased.

V. 6. *Thou coverest it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.*

This was originally the case at the creation, and before the world was formed into a globe. The earth, or earthy parts of it, were under water; swallowed up and covered in it. This is precisely what Moses says: *In the beginning*

God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, Gen. i. 1, 2. It was also so at the deluge: it was covered at the creation with the waters, as a body is covered with a garment. At the deluge the waters covered all the mountains under the whole heaven; see Gen. vii. 19, 20. The waters stood above the mountains. It was by God's almighty voice, who said, *Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so*, that the earth was separated from the waters; see v. 9. And this was the work on the third day of the creation.

V. 7. *At thy rebuke they fled: at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.*

It is conceivable from these expressions, that thunder and an earthquake shook the waters, and separated them from the earth, and broke up that immense channel, large and capacious enough to contain the immense deep. And it is here thus expressed by the Psalmist, to enhance Jehovah's majesty, honour, greatness, wisdom and power, for the same; *At thy rebuke they fled: at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.* Jehovah himself asks Job the following questions: *Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it. And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors. And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed*, chap. xxxviii. 8—11. The majesty and greatness of God were greatly evidenced in these wonderful acts; and they were all effected by his almighty word of command. Let it be so, and so it was.

V. 8. *They go up by the mountains: they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.*

On the waters going off the earth, the dry land appeared: the mountains shewed themselves on high: the waters of the deep were gathered into the channels of the sea. Or, it may be understood thus: they, (i. e. the waters) went up to the mounts, and down the dales, when they were parted from the dry land: they went down unto the place Jehovah had founded for them. So that they must have been, and are the foundation of the earth.

V. 9. *Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over: that they turn not again to cover the earth.*

God's decree concerning its limits is the boundary thereof.

So is the feeble sand; which the Lord hath placed as the outward visible boundary of it. Some of these divine acts are also applicable to what took place at the flood. The earth is filled with water. In the very centre of it is the great abyss, which supplies all the seas, lakes, rivers, gulphs, fountains, springs, &c. At the flood this was let loose, by which means the world was drowned. We read that *the fountains of the great deep were broken up*, Gen. vii. 11. The great deep is no other than this vast collection of waters in the bowels of the earth. These were caused by the will and power of God, in a miraculous way, to come out and overflow the whole globe. While the flood lasted, the earth and waters were reduced to the same situation as they were in at the creation, just before the waters were ordered to unite, and to let the dry land appear, Gen. i. 9. And that the earth was placed thus between the waters at first; i. e. that by God's command on the third day of the creation, the waters which covered the earth, and prevented the appearance of the dry ground, are ordered to be gathered together into one place, i. e. to unite with the other waters, so that both should be together, and one place hold them both; see Gen. i. 9. So when these waters which lay upon the surface were removed, they went into the earth, and joined with the other waters there, which are called the waters above the firmament. This agrees exactly with the words of the apostle: *By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water. Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished*, 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6. We are called upon, in the following words, to admire two great acts of God. His fixing the waters within their bounds at the creation: and his causing them to come out at the flood: *Behold he withholdeth the waters and they dry up; also he sendeth them out and they overturn the earth*, Job xii. 15. The Lord's making them keep their bounds, is by Job thus expressed: *He compasseth the waters with bounds, until day and night come to an end*, chap. xxvi. 10. Jehovah laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. This seems more properly to refer to what took place since the deluge; seeing at the flood the foundations of the earth were removed. But since that time, these foundations are never to be shaken, till the dissolution of all things. Here I would just shew how what the psalmist hath expressed, suits the reformation of the earth after the flood, as well as at the creation of it. Jehovah covered the deep as a garment; this was done by the flood. Then the waters stood



above the mountains: then at his rebuke they fled, and with a great noise and confusion, at the voice of his thunder they hasted away: then the waters went up by the mountains, and descended by the vallies, unto the place he had founded for them. It follows: *Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over: that they turn not again to cover the earth:* and thus the foundations of the earth were laid afresh. For all these acts Jehovah is celebrated, and that with the utmost intensity of mind. *Bless the Lord, O my soul: O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty.* As these words begin this Psalm, so they should, I conceive, be carried into each of the following verses, and close the ninth, in which the subject of creation ends. After which a fresh subject begins, which expresses the wonderful providence of the eternal Three in the one Jehovah, over the whole visible creation.

V. 10. *He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.*

All things are of God; he created the world and all things in it; he formed the earth and made it; he hath established it; he created it not in vain; he formed it to be an habitable globe: all the creatures in it, are for the use and benefit of man; wells, springs, fountains, and rivers, which run among the hills, are for the advantage of creatures; for birds and beasts, cattle, and creeping things, and for the earth itself, and for the sons of men. So it follows:

V. 11. *They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.*

As every creature was made for man, so every thing is so suited to every creature, that all are most wisely cared and provided for, by their allwise and bountiful Creator. Every reptile, beast, bird, and fish, is suited according to its nature given it by the Lord to receive some pleasure and satisfaction, and all necessary for its sustentation is provided for it. This was the work of the fourth day of the creation. *And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good, Gen. i. 11, 12.* The creatures were not made until the fifth day. But proper food, drink, and habitation, were provided for them on the fourth day from the beginning of the creation of God; which is very expressive of his care and providence towards them.

V. 12. *By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.*

Thus the beasts of the field, the wild asses, the fowls of the heaven, were all plentifully provided for, by the Lord's goodness, care and providence; they were all his creatures. As he thought fit to give them being and existence, they were not as creatures below his notice. And they all do, in their various ways, acknowledge their dependence on, and obligations unto him. Not that it falls under our observation; yet this is not the less a truth because we perceive it not.

V. 13. *He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.*

All Jehovah's works and creatures in this our world, are so connected, as that they depend one upon another. Our world upon the heavens: dew and rain descend from them: so do fire, light, and air. The earth is naturally barren; yet our all as to the subsistence of our bodies, must come out of it. Were the earth not made fruitful by God's blessing, we must starve on it: the earth is made fruitful by the Lord. The apostle says to the people at Lyconia, concerning God, *Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness,* Acts xiv. 17. God's chambers are the clouds. The watering the hills from his chambers, is by sending and pouring on the earth showers of rain, by which the earth becomes fruitful. All which is to be ascribed unto him; as it here is: *the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.* It yields her increase, which satisfies creatures: there is good reason why they should be satisfied. Our not being so, does not set aside this truth; no, it does not. It may prove our own ingratitude; if it does, that is to our shame.

V. 14. *He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth.*

Which is very expressive of the abundant goodness of the Lord, in his care and providence which he exerciseth over the earth, and the creatures on it, and man whom he most specially regards and is mindful of, as appears from the next words:

V. 15. *And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.*

This all flows from the abundant and superabundant goodness of our God: it is all the effect of his special care

and mindfulness of man: he framed the world for him: he created every creature and thing in it for him; every tree, herb, and vegetable, was for him. He upholds the world and man in it: he governs the world, and orders all things in it: he watereth the hills from his chambers, he makes the earth fruitful: *He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man:* he bringeth forth food out of the earth, and wine to make glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread to strengthen his heart. Thus the bountifulness of Jehovah towards all his creatures, and more especially toward man, is expressed. We have had, as I may say, some of all the creatures named, and these for all the rest; the beasts of the field, the wild asses, the fowls of the heaven, the cattle; all of whom were made on the fifth day of the creation; see Gen. i. 24, 25, with the refreshment and provision made for them, with man their lord, for whose use and convenience, pleasure and delight, they were brought forth and set before us. And next the psalmist proceeds to consider some other wonderful acts of Jehovah's goodness and providence.

V. 16. *The trees of the Lord are full of sap: the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted.*

The trees of the Lord are the trees which the Lord hath created; these are full of sap; which ascending by the influence of the air, rain and sun, from the root into the branches, express their life, vigour, and strength, by their buds, blossoms, leaves, and fruits, according to their various kinds. The cedars of Lebanon are of the Lord's planting: and were they not full of sap, they would not be so tall and stately as they are.

V. 17. *Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir-trees are her house.*

The stork is a bird somewhat like a crane. It is said the young of these birds will feed their dams when they are old. Every kind of bird hath its particular quality and taste. Some delight to build in one place, bush, hedge, tree, and some in others. As their various and natural instinct is from the Lord, so they are influenced by his providence to choose where to build, to lay, and hatch their young, as is congenial to their nature.

V. 18. *The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies.*

Wild goats, or roes, are named from climbing rocks; they haunt high hills and rocks, and are thereby safe from dogs which hunt them. The conies make their houses in

the rock. Thus there is no creature but God hath provided for; all of them have their various abodes; their meat, their drink, their uses. God's goodness to them, as creatures produced by him, is admirable.

V. 19. *He appointeth the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.*

It was on the fourth day of the creation, the sun, moon, and stars were created. *And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night: and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also, Gen. i. 14—16.* This was on the fourth day of the creation. The sun is the glory of our system; it is the fountain of all light, warmth, and fructification, in our world. The moon is also of great benefit to us. They are appointed by the Lord, the one for the day, the other for the night. The moon hath its appointed seasons; it does not always shine; it waxes and wanes. The sun hath its appointed course; it hath its time and place to set and rise. Jehovah puts this question to Job: *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days? and caused the day-spring to know his place, that it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?* chap. xxxviii. 12, 13.

V. 20. *Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.*

Darkness is air in a state of stagnation: it is not the bare absence of light, but it is real and proper matter, as much as light or spirit; for we read of darkness in Egypt which may be felt, Exodus x. 21; which certainly intimates, that the æther was then in such a state of extraordinary stagnation and inactivity, as to become an object of the sense of feeling: it was really palpable: *Thou makest darkness, and it is night.* So says Jehovah himself, *I form the light, and create darkness, Isai. xlv. 7.* Day and night have both their distinct uses; the one is for man to labour in, the other is for man to rest and be refreshed. The psalmist is contemplating the providence of God over that part of the creation, the beasts of prey—such as lions, leopards, tigers, &c. &c. These are restrained in the day from going forth; so that hereby man is wonderfully preserved from their rage. At night, the time appointed for man to rest, then these go forth; all of them creep forth as though they were afraid to be seen by man.

V. 21. *The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.*

They are provided for by their Creator; it is he who provides food for them; they roar; so that by this means, persons who may be at a distance from them, and unseen by them, are forewarned, and may escape from them: they seek their meat from God. Though they have not reason, they have instinct according and altogether suitable to their nature, and in a way peculiar to them acknowledge their dependance, and seek their meat from God.

V. 22. *The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.*

They have their particular and proper places to retire and rest in; they go in troops; they retire at the rising of the sun, they lay them down in their dens; which is a manifest proof of the goodness of the Lord to man. *And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered, Gen. ix. 1, 2.*

V. 23. *Man goeth forth unto his work, and to his labour until the evening.*

In perfect peace and safety; no wild beasts disturb him. All which is owing to the divine care and providence of the Lord towards him.

Thus the subject taken up at verse 10, concerning the providence of the Lord, and his exercise of it over all his creatures, in the vegetable, animal, and rational world, is continued down to this verse now before us. By which is clearly evidenced that he is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. And here ends this part of the subject; which having been taken into the prophet's mind, and the glorious display of Godhead in the subject, causes the prophet to break forth in the following divine rapture:

V. 24. *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.*

In creation, in the creatures, in the act and exercise of Jehovah's will and care concerning them: in the heaven over our heads; in the sun, moon, and stars: in the formation and constitution of man, both as it respects his body and mind: in the rotation of the globe round its own axis: in the regular succession of day and night; there is a most wonderful display of Jehovah, in his wisdom, which shines forth in all his works; they are manifold; they were all

made in wisdom. Look where, or on what part of the creation we may, the earth is full of his riches, or full of his possessions; he possesseth as he fills all in all.

V. 25. *So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.*

Here the prophet begins a fresh part of the subject before him, which he diversifies from the former. The sea is vast; it is great and wide; it encompasses our world; it is as the wall of it; it is a most wonderful evidence of the power of God; in it are creeping things; they are for number innumerable; they are both great and small. Some conceive there is no creature on the land, but its likeness is to be found, by way of resemblance, to some one or other in the sea. In it are what we call sea monsters. It may be on account of such, there are said to be in it both small and great beasts. Jehovah puts this question to Job: *Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?*

V. 26. *There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.*

Some understand the whale, others the sea-dragon. Moses says, *And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good,* Gen. i. 20, 21. This was on the fifth day of the creation. It is the Lord's prerogative to make a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. It must be from him alone the art of navigation ever entered into the human mind. It is very easy to conceive it originated from Noah's ark, and deluge. The sea must in some parts of it be immensely deep, or leviathan, the whale, which is of enormous size, could not live and play in it. There is a wonderful description given of him by the Lord himself, in Job xli. 22. Read the whole of it. This wonderful creature is said to play therein; that is, in the great and wide sea. The same is said of the behemoth, and other beasts: *Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play,* Job xl. 20.

V. 27. *These wait all upon thee: that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.*

All the innumerable things in the sea, both the great and small, with Leviathan, the greatest in the element of waters, these wait all upon thee; they are sustained by thee; they

depend wholly on thee for sustentation; these wait on thee with their hungry appetites, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

V. 28. *That thou givest them, they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.*

Jehovah provides for them all; they are all fed, they are all filled: and according to their various sorts and kinds, it is with what is very acceptable unto them; they are filled with good. Herein is a wonderful dispensation of God's most kind and gracious dealings even with the fishes of the sea. Yet these must all die; it is natural for them to grow old, and decay.

V. 29. *Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.*

If God frown on the irrational creature, by thunders, lightnings, storms, earthquakes, or by violent agitations in the earth or seas, they seem to be troubled, and fear his rebuke; they cannot exist but by their Creator's will: he withdraws his power from them; he taketh away their breath; they on this instantly die, by which they turn again to their dust; so do all created things in our world, when the Lord withdraws his power. It is in his hand is the breath of every living thing: yet creatures grow old and die: nature withers: creation is blasted: seasons change: and all to make way for fresh displays of the mighty power of God. The prophet having spoken of the universal death of all the irrational creatures, here ends this subject and begins a new one.

V. 30. *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.*

New creatures come in the place of the old: the estate of things decayed is restored; this is the case every returning spring: nature is afresh invigorated: the world is renewed: the spring is a new resurrection to all in it; so that we have by it a new world; it is like a new creation: most certainly it is a resurrection; it is the act of God upon it: *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created*; the creatures receive new life and being; *and thou renewest the face of the earth*: it is Jehovah's act; it is here ascribed unto him; it is equal to an act of creation; it is effected by the Holy Spirit; his personality is evidenced hereby; he is a person in Jehovah; he is the Spirit Jehovah: his being sent, is agreeable with the economy of the eternal Three in the settlements of grace; he performs the same part in the exercise of his grace office; he renews his church; he makes his people new creatures in Christ Jesus; he revives them;

he invigorates them, and often makes his church to bloom and bud, and to blossom as the rose: when he breathes on it, he makes it like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness are found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

V. 31. *The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.*

Jehovah's glory is essential; this shall endure for ever. His manifestative glory, which shines forth and is reflected by the creation and creatures on our minds, consists in the order, variety, regularity, beauty, and perfection of these works of his hands, and in his holy will in the ends and designs for which he created them. The world, and all the creatures in it, are ruined and corrupted by the fall, but the glory of God, in his end and will respecting the creation, is not affected thereby; no, it is impossible it should. *The glory of the Lord* [in creation and providence] *shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.* This will be the case indeed, when he shall create new heavens and a new earth, and He which sitteth on the throne, in the new Jerusalem state of the church, shall say, *Behold, I make all things new*, Rev. xxi. 5.

V. 32. *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.*

This is expressive of the majesty of Jehovah, and of his power and authority over all created nature. For which reason it well becomes creatures to fear, and stand in awe of him. He who made the world, can most easily dissolve it: he hath once done it by a deluge of water; he will one day do it by a deluge of fire, which will first begin in the heavens, and then break out from the bowels of the earth: *wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.* So says the apostle.

V. 33. *I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God, while I have my being.*

He found sufficient matter for this in the Lord himself; in his works, in his providences he had been speaking of; as also what Jehovah in all his persons, perfections, love and covenant, was to him: he would praise the Lord so long as he lived out of heaven: and when admitted into it, he would praise him so long as he should be continued in being, which would be for ever.

V. 34. *My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.*

It will be sweet and delightful unto me; it will be acceptable unto God also; I find it is most blessed employ-



ment; it yields me holy gladness, and unspeakable joy; such as contains a blessed pledge and foretaste of heaven, glory, and a blessed immortality.

V. 35. *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more: bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord.*

Sinners will one day be consumed out of the earth. The words are a prophecy. Antichrist, the man of sin, and all who love and cleave to him, will one day be finally destroyed. It must be so, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; then the wicked shall be no more. This calls for holy admiration. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the promise concerning this. *Praise ye the Lord. Hallelujah.* This is the first place in the Bible this word is used. And it follows these expressions, *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more.* To which is added, *Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise the Lord.* And the first time it is mentioned in the New Testament is, Rev. xix. 1, when the destruction of Antichrist, and all his adherents, are completely overthrown at the battle of Armageddon. There *the voice of much people, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, will shout, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,* ver. 6. May the Lord give his own blessing to what is written. Amen.

## PSALM THE HUNDRED AND FIFTH.

The subject of this Psalm is as follows. It begins with an exhortation to give thanks unto the Lord. The first of it is the same which David appointed to be sung, when the ark of the Lord was brought from the house of Obedom to Jerusalem. He then gave a part of this Psalm, from the first to verse fifteen, to be sung in the worship of the Lord. In it there is a solemn recital of the providence of God over his saints and church, from Abraham's time down to Joseph's, Jacob's, and Moses's; and some very peculiar providences exercised over and towards them. Then follows an account of the judgments with which the Lord visited the Egyptians, for the hatred and cruelty exercised by them towards the Israelites. Then he sets forth the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and their being brought into the land of Canaan, and settled there. A period of 460 years is contained in this short narrative of the Lord's mercies to the Israelites. No wonder therefore the Psalmist begins with,

*O give thanks unto the Lord; and ends with, Praise ye the Lord.*

V. 1. *O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.*

This is the introduction. It is expressed by way of excitement to others, that they would unite with the prophet to celebrate Jehovah's name with thanksgiving. He is ever worthy to be praised for his love; for his providence; for his care; for his mercy; for his mindfulness of his church, and his various acts of grace towards his people. *O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.* Christ is the name of the Lord. He is the acting person in the Godhead. The Father willed and planned all. Christ executes all. The Holy Spirit reveals and makes known all. And the acts and deeds of Christ should be made known, and declared among the people. It is one great end and design of the everlasting gospel. The reading and preaching it, are the means of accomplishing this end.

V. 2. *Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.*

The way in which the Lord was to be worshipped is here expressed. It was to be by singing unto him psalms of glorious praise; by talking together of all his wondrous acts; how his Godhead was declared in creation; his grace in salvation; his mercy in his gracious dealings towards the elect sons of men. When the first part was sung, it was shouting with the sound of a cornet and trumpets, and with cymbals, with psalteries and harps, 1 Chron. xv. 28.

V. 3. *Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.*

There is cause and matter sufficient in the revelation made of Christ, in the scriptures of truth, for saints to glory and bless themselves in him. Moses says of him to Israel, *He is thy praise, and he is thy God*, Deut. x. 21. It well becomes the Lord's people to glory in Christ; his person, his name is holy; he is the Holy of Holies; he is the *Most Holy*, Dan. ix. 24. Such whose minds he has shone on, and whose hearts he has drawn by the cords of his love to see him, may well rejoice in him. Such are exhorted to give thanks to him; to seek out, and to declare his works, his glory, excellencies, beauties, and perfections; to sing to him; to repeat it; to talk of him, and his great salvation.

V. 4. *Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore.*

Which as it stands here, means in the first place the ark of the Lord. It was a most solemn memorial of Christ. He dwelt between the cherubim of glory, over the mercy-seat. This was the place from whence he spake, and gave forth his royal commands. It is styled here, *his strength*, to express his being the everlasting strength of his people. Here he appeared, and his face was seen by the high priest on the day of atonement, when he entered the Holiest of All. So that the words before us were a solemn call to the people of God, under the dispensation under which this Psalm was written, to look to Jehovah their Saviour and King, to seek in instituted worship and ordinances, for his presence and blessing, and to persevere therein. The face of Christ is the favour of Christ; which when he gives us the sense and enjoyment of, we find it life everlasting.

V. 5. *Remember his marvellous works that he hath done: his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.*

This contains the prophet's address to the Israelites. His marvellous works which they are called upon to remember were his acts, his goodness to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. His wonders in delivering them from Egypt, his judgments are the statutes and ordinances the Lord God had given them; they are further excited to this in the following words:

V. 6. *O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.*

Abraham was chosen out, as of him Messiah should be according to the flesh. In the appearance and promise of the Lord to him, Christ was contained. He was the first, and great patriarch of the Jewish people; he was the Lord's servant; he testified his faith and obedience to the divine Majesty, in offering up his only begotten son. The promise given first to Abraham concerning Christ was renewed unto Isaac; and afterwards to *Jacob*, who is here called *the Lord's chosen*.

V. 7. *He is the Lord our God: his judgments are in all the earth.*

This was the relation the Three in Jehovah stood in to the election of grace then. He stands in the same relation to all the elect now, and will to the end of time, and to the ages of eternity; he stood in relation to the Jewish people by a national covenant, which he and they entered into at Mount Sinai; his judgment and statutes which he gave them were reported far and wide. Moses exhorting them to attend to these, says, *For this is your wisdom and your understanding in*

*the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people, Deut. iv. 6.*

V. 8. *He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.*

God's remembrance of his covenant implies his careful attention to act in every tittle according to it. His covenant is for ever; the will and transactions of the eternal Three are the foundation of it; the same is revealed in the word, and set before us therein; the promises of it are so many expressions of the love, mercy, and grace of the Holy Ones towards us; it cannot be broken; it is an everlasting one; it is by Jehovah *commanded to a thousand generations*. Which words are expressive of the certainty and duration of the same, and all the blessings and benefits contained therein.

V. 9. *Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac.*

This is leading back to the original appearances of Christ to Abraham, as recorded in Gen. xvii. 2. The Lord appeared to him, and said, *I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly*. And Gen. xxii. 26, &c. &c. The angel of the Lord called out of heaven, and said, *By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, &c.* This was the oath which he swore unto Isaac, and which is expressed thus by Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. *To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, Luke i. 72, 73.* The Lord Christ appeared also to Isaac, and renewed the same promise, for the substance of it, Gen. xxvi. 1—3. There the Lord expressly saith he will perform the oath which he swore unto Abraham. It may therefore be the Psalmist says, *Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac*. When it is thus expressed, I understand the Lord made known his everlasting covenant, under such a form of administration, whereby the faith of these saints was kept alive unto him, in the certain expectation of his fulfilment of it in the fulness of time, by the incarnation of Christ.

V. 10. *And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.*

When the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and gave them the law fifty days after on Mount Horeb, he then confirmed the covenant which he made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by taking that people into covenant with himself. The stipulations between God and them were ratified

the day after the law was given, and the covenant between them and God confirmed and sealed by the blood and deaths of sacrifices. Thus you may read Exodus 24th chapter. All which was to Israel for an everlasting covenant, which was to continue until Messiah's coming and death.

V. 11. *Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.*

This land God promised Abraham to give unto his seed. The same was repeated to Isaac, and also to Jacob. The children of Israel were brought out of Egypt by Moses, that they might inherit it. They were introduced into it by Joshua. It was the lot of their inheritance; it was in the Lesser Asia; it had the great Sea, westward; the river Jordan, Syria, and Arabia, eastward; the Wilderness on the south, and the mountains of Lebanon on the north; it was the glory of all lands; it flowed with milk and honey; it had many rivers, and fountains of water; it had corn, wine, and oil in abundance; it had mines; its mountains and valleys were watered with the rain of heaven. The first promise given concerning it is recorded in Gen. xii. 6, 7, which was 430 years from its commencement to the Exodus. The Israelites were 40 years in the wilderness; which make the number 470 years. Joshua was at least seven years before he completed his conquest of the land, and then, before it could be properly divided and each tribe settled comfortably, two or three years must be granted. So that we cannot have a less period of time run over in the Psalm before us than 480 years. Yet in and throughout all this time, the Lord remembered his covenant. *He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac. And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant. Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.* From hence an account is given concerning the providence of God over Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, when they dwelt as sojourners in the land of Canaan.

V. 12. *When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.*

They were for some years very soon to be numbered. Abraham had but one son, who was heir to the land of Canaan; he had servants born in his house 318, and several other domestics; yet not so many, but he needed always to be on his guard, because the Canaanite was then in the land. It was the same with Isaac; he had but one son, who was in his posterity to inherit the land of promise.

**Jacob** had twelve sons, and they were all in their descendants to possess it. Yet for 215 years, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles. When they went down into Egypt, they were but seventy persons. Whilst Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were few in number, and were strangers and pilgrims in the land of Egypt, they had many removings to and fro; yet the eye of the Lord was on them for good.

V. 13. *When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people.*

They went up and down the land of Canaan, where were seven mighty nations. They went from one nation to another. Abraham went down into Egypt in consequence of a famine in the land of Canaan; his wife was taken from him; yet the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of this, and she is restored to her husband. Many years after, Abraham went into the country of the Philistines with his wife and family. Here he is in very trying circumstances. Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent and took Sarah from him. God came to him in a dream, and reproving him for the same, commanded she should be delivered up immediately upon pain of death; which was done. Isaac, in a time of famine, went unto Abimelech, king of the Philistines to Gerar, where his father had been before him. Here he fell into his father's sin of prevarication, which had been almost fatal to him respecting his wife, yet the Lord appeared unto him, and protected them both. Jacob, to avoid his father-in-law, dealt deceitfully with him, yet the Lord blessed him; he went from one part of the land of Canaan, and at last went down into Egypt. The Lord was with him, as he had been with his grand-father, and father.

V. 14. *He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes.*

Pharaoh was plagued; Abimelech was threatened; Laban was rebuked; the Lord would not suffer any man to do them wrong, but he would appear on their behalf, and avenge the wrongs, injuries, and insults done them. It was for their sakes, such was his love for them, he exercised his royal and sovereign prerogative over others, so that no man did them wrong; even kings, if they but attempted so to do, were reprov'd for their sakes.

V. 15. *Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*

Touch not men, consecrated unto me, by the oil of the

Spirit. I conceive the whole beauty of this part of the Psalm will best shine forth, by uniting all the verses together which belong to this paragraph, verse 12 to the 15th inclusive. *When there were but few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it; (i. e. in the land of Canaan,) when they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; he suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.* Thus these anointed ones were preserved; they were protected; they were secured; none were to touch them; none were to do them any harm; it would be at the peril to any who should in any measure insult or injure them. Thus the account of God's special care over these patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, respecting their sojourning in the land of Canaan, ends. The next subjects touched on concern Joseph and the Israelites.

V. 16. *Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.*

It was the Lord's act. There was a famine in the days of Abraham; another in the days of Isaac; another in the days of Jacob, which was more severe than the former. Hence it is said, *He brake the whole staff of bread*; which is attributed to the Lord God. Nothing can be without his will. As his essence and personalities, his perfections and designs towards his people are incomprehensible, so are his providential dealings and dispensations towards his church, and those amongst whom his people dwell; all are naked and opened before the Lord; whilst in his vast mind all his purposes are but one thought. Yet in the display of the same, the causes and effects are various as they respect us. The Lord Jesus Christ called for a famine upon the land of Canaan; he withheld the influence of the heavens from the earth, by which means the seasons became unfruitful. Thus he destroyed and brake the whole staff of bread. His vast designs must be accomplished; his word could not be broken; his church must be for a season in Egypt; or, they could not come forth from thence. Yet none of the church at the same time understood this; yet it was revealed, and had been spoken out by the Lord himself to Abraham. See Gen. xv 13—16.

V. 17. *He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant.*

He was a noble man; he was a wise man; he was a type of Christ; he went into Egypt before the church; he went thither to be the saviour of the church. Yet at that time

he knew not ; his brethren dealt deceitfully and cruelly towards him ; they sold him for twenty pieces of silver ; so lightly did they esteem him : those who bought him carried him down to Egypt, and sold him to an officer there. The Lord was with him ; the Lord blessed him ; every thing prospered in his hand ; his master most highly esteemed him. Yet he met with some very sore distresses notwithstanding all this.

V. 18. *Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron.*

He being falsely accused was cast into prison. In the rage of malice and anger his feet were fettered, so as to be hurt ; he was laid in iron, that by no means he might escape. This was for a long season.

V. 19. *Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him.*

Whilst in prison he had interpreted the dreams of the chief butler, and the chief baker of the king of Egypt, which fell out most completely ; yet all this was lost and forgotten. Then three years after the king of Egypt dreamed, and none could interpret the same. The man who had been in prison with Joseph begins to think on him ; he speaks of him to the king. Thus for a season, Christ, the word of the Lord, tried the faith of this his servant ; to whom he revealed himself by dreams, when he was in his father's house. No accomplishment of the same had hitherto taken place. He had been sold by his brethren ; sold by the Ishmaelites and Midianites, sold to Potiphar ; he had cast him into prison ; there the Lord was with him ; he there interpreted the dream of the butler, who was in prison with him ; he requested his remembrance of him, and to mention him and his case to the king. Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him. Thus the word of the Lord tried him, by the expectation of deliverance from him alone.

V. 20. *The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free.*

After the word of the Lord, which had been shewed Joseph in a dream concerning his advancement, had been fulfilled by the king's sending to fetch him out of prison, and his having by his command loosed him from fetters and iron, he made him free, and appointed him governor over all the land of Egypt. This was a most surprising change in his state and circumstances.

V. 21. *He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance.*



He was viceroy of all Egypt; the king committed all to his care and management; he was chief ruler of the land; he was next to the king himself; he was so set up, as

V. 22. *To bind his princes at his pleasure: and teach his senators wisdom.*

Without him no man was to act, throughout the land of Egypt: he was, by the king's will and pleasure, to teach his senator's wisdom; to instruct them in wisdom and virtue, in which he greatly excelled. Thus the Lord's providence towards Joseph in Egypt, is set forth, from verse 17 to the close of the 22d verse. After which, in the next verses, the Lord's providence towards Jacob is set forth.

In many circumstances concerning Joseph—in his being beloved of his father—in his being hated of his brethren—in his sufferings and deep abasement—in his being brought out of prison—in his advancement and exaltation—in his wisdom and prudence—in his providing for his father's family—in his free forgiveness of the injuries he had sustained from his brethren—it may be truly said, we have Christ delineated therein, and set forth thereby, in type, figure, and representatively. But I have nothing to do with this here; I only give this hint to the reader.

V. 23. *Israel also came into Egypt: and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.*

He was sent for by Pharaoh, and the Lord appeared unto him, and encouraged him to go thither. *And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob: and he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes, Gen. xlv. 1—4.*

V. 24. *And he increased his people greatly: and made them stronger than their enemies.*

The Israelites were in Egypt (styled the land of Ham) about 215 years. Here God's promises respecting their multiplication, and their having a vast and numerous progeny, were fulfilled. They bred like fishes; they were strong and robust; they waxed mighty, and the land was filled with them; their increase is here ascribed to the Lord; so is their strength also.

V. 25. *He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.*

Pharaoh and his princes, fretting at Israel's prosperity,

thought to work wisely with them, when they plotted their destruction. Yet God overruled all their designs to accomplish his own glorious purposes, and their complete destruction.

V. 26. *He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen.*

Aaron was a mouth to Moses, and a prophet to Pharaoh, Exod. vii. 1, 2. These both came before Pharaoh, and demanded, in the name of Jehovah, the deliverance of the people; but he peremptorily and blasphemously refused. This made way for these servants of the Lord to act as follows:

V. 27. *They shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.*

At the Lord's command, the rod of Moses was lifted up, sometimes by him, and at other times by Aaron, and plagues were brought on the Egyptians and their country. All which were awful signs and wonders of God's sore wrath and displeasure against them for their sins, and oppression of his people.

V. 28. *He sent darkness, and made it dark: and they rebelled not against his word.*

The plagues of Egypt are not here recited in the same order in which they took place. There was thick darkness, such as might be felt, in all the land of Egypt for three days. It was for number, the ninth plague; it extended throughout all the land for this space of time; yet all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings; it served as a fit season for them to attend to the observance of the ordinance of circumcision; they do so. This is thus expressed: *He [i. e. the Lord] sent darkness, and made it dark: and they rebelled not against his word,* of command, but set about the complete observance of it, which it seems they had neglected. It is easy to conceive the Israelites were called upon by Moses and Aaron to this, it being absolutely necessary to be attended unto, as the Passover was soon to be instituted and observed, and no uncircumcised person might partake thereof.

V. 29. *He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.*

A most righteous retaliation of the cruelty of the Egyptians; they had cast the male children of the Israelites into the Nile: now the Lord turns the waters of it into blood; so that they could neither drink of it, nor the fish live in it. This was the first plague, according to the order in which they are related in Exodus.

V. 30. *Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.*

Neither the king, princes, nobles, or any of the Egyptians, escaped any of these miseries. This was the second of the ten plagues, according to the order in which they are reckoned in Exodus.

V. 31. *He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts.*

Swarms of flies, or a mixture of noisome beasts, was the fourth plague. The lice were the third plague. These plagues are somewhat differently expressed and arranged in the seventy-eighth Psalm.

V. 32. *He gave them hail for rain: and flaming fire in their land.*

This was a most tremendous expression of God's wrath upon the Egyptians and their land. It was the seventh plague.

V. 33. *He smote their vines also and their fig-trees: and brake the trees of their coasts.*

The flaming fire, or flashes of lightning, and the hail, scorched and blasted the fruits and trees of the field, which must have brought great distress on the Egyptians. Thus one expression of wrath followed one on the back of another.

34. *He spake, and the locusts came: and caterpillars, and that without number.*

This was the eighth plague. It was all by the Lord's command.

V. 35. *And did eat up all the herbs in their land; and devoured the fruit of their ground.*

Thus the Lord displayed his eternal power and Godhead by all these creatures, and in and throughout and over every element: darkness, fire, light, water, were all obedient to his will: fish, frogs, beasts, insects, were all let loose as the messengers of his wrath, upon the land of Ham: on the king, his princes, his people, and on his land. The locusts were the eighth plague.

V. 36. *He smote also all the firstborn in their land: the chief of all their strength.*

This was the tenth plague: it was also the most tremendous. What a theatre of God's wrath must Egypt have been. It is conceived these plagues lasted about two months. Thus the deliverance of the Israelites by Moses was obtained, and thus the arm of the Lord was gloriously displayed, in the signs and wonders which he shewed in the land of Ham; when he sent darkness, and it was dark;

when he turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish; when their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings; when the Lord commanded divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts; when he gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land; when he smote their vines, and their fig-trees, and destroyed, or brake the trees of their coasts; when he brought up the locusts, and caterpillers innumerable, which devoured the fruit of their ground; when he smote all the firstborn of man and beast, throughout the whole kingdom—surely it must have been most solemnly awful—the Lord's hand was in all this. It is here ascribed wholly to the Lord, whilst Moses and Aaron were his ministers in the business. The psalmist now begins another subject; which respects the Lord's goodness towards the Israelites brought out of Egypt. He took them under his own care and protection; he fed and provided for them in the wilderness; he brought them into the land of Canaan; he planted them there; he fulfilled his holy promise in all this. All which, when we rightly read and view it spiritually, serves to confirm our faith and hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

V. 37. *He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.*

Thus the promise made to Abraham concerning the Exodus of his posterity out of Egypt, was most punctually accomplished—*Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance,* Gen. xv. 13, 14. And most marvellous it was, that in an army of 600,000 men, there should not be one single feeble person. It was a most amazing evidence of the Lord's goodness to the Israelites.

V. 38. *Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.*

They were so afraid of death, that they forced them out altogether, saying, *We be all dead men,* Exodus xii. 33. They also gave them whatsoever they asked; so that they spoiled the Egyptians.

V. 39. *He spread a cloud for a covering: and fire to give light in the night.*

By this means they might travel night and day toward the promised land. Thus they were taken under the Lord's immediate care and protection.

V. 40. *The people asked, and he brought quails: and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.*

The Psalmist here omits their murmurings, and that these quails were sent in wrath. He calls manna here, the bread of heaven; and says the Lord satisfied them with it.

V. 41. *He opened the rock [of stone,] and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.*

There were two rocks the Lord opened for them, and gave them waters which gushed out, and ran in the dry places like a river; so that they and their beasts might drink. The one was at Rephidim: this was before they came to Sinai. The other was at Kadesh, in the wilderness, the last year they were in the wilderness. The Lord in allusion to it says, *The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen,* Isaiah xliii. 20.

V. 42. *For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.*

The Lord's covenant is holy; his promise is holy; he is said to remember his holy promise, when he fulfilled it; he remembered Abraham his servant in his fulfilment of it; because it was made good to the Israelites who were his seed, and to whom the promise had respect.

V. 43. *And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness.*

Surely it must have been so: they could not but sing and joy in God: they could not but be filled with spiritual gladness, when they came out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt.

V. 44. *And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people.*

The seven Canaanitish nations were destroyed before them; they possessed their cities and houses, and dwelt in them; they inherited and enjoyed their labour; it was all the Lord's gift unto them.

V. 45. *That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the Lord.*

This was the end of God in all his dealings and dispensations towards his people of old—that they might, being brought into the land of Canaan, and settled therein, observe his statutes, keep his laws, honour his sabbaths, and reverence his sanctuary: he chose them for his own peculiar people; he distinguished them by covenant mercies; he revealed himself to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, long before they were in bondage in Egypt; he had fulfilled his promise in redeeming them from the house of bondage; he had wrought miracles before their eyes forty years in

the wilderness; he had settled them in the promised land; he had conferred all these favours upon them to this end, that they might cleave to him in love, as the Lord their God, that they might keep his statutes, and observe his laws. The Psalmist having laid all these subjects before them, ends the same with the word *Hallelujah*; *Praise ye the Lord*; Praise ye Jah, praise ye Jehovah—the Saviour—even our Jesus. In going over it, may the Lord the Spirit give us such views of Christ, in his goodness and mercies towards his Jewish church, saints, and people, as may encourage our faith and hope in him, and draw out our whole souls to praise and magnify him. Amen.

### PSALM THE HUNDRED AND SIXTH.

It begins with the word *Hallelujah*, and it is the first of those we entitle *Hallelujah* Psalms. It begins with an exhortation of praise to Jehovah. The prophet speaks in his own person, and at other times in the names of the people, as personating them. He gives an account of the sinfulness of Israel, and of God's manifold mercies exercised towards them. So that their sinfulness, and God's mercies towards them, are so set together, that we might be filled with surprising awe and admiration at the greatness of God's mercy in the displays of it on so provoking a people. Several acts of rebellion are particularly noticed; such as at the Red Sea; their murmuring for want of flesh; their conspiracy against Moses and Aaron; their worshipping the calf at Horeb; their despising the land of Canaan when the spies brought up a bad report against it; their idolatry in the land of Moab in worshipping Baalpeor; their rebellion at Meribah, and also at Kadesh; their sins after they came into Canaan are recited. There they did not what the Lord had commanded them; no, so far were they from destroying the heathen, that they mingled among them; they learned to act as these idolaters did; they worshipped their idols; they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils. As their transgressions are enumerated, so the various acts of God's mercies, and his divine interposition on their behalf, are very particularly recited. And his compassion bears down, and far surpasseth all their transgressions. The prophet concludeth his subject with prayer and praise; he blesseth the Lord God of Israel; and concludes with the word *Hallelujah*. The first time we had this word, was in the last verse of the 104th Psalm; it is the last word in it.

The next time is in the 105th Psalm, and there also it is the last word. In this 106th Psalm, which is now before us, it is the first and the last word in it.

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

It seems strange, a Psalm filled up with an account of the sins and rebellions of the Israelites, should thus begin and end. It may be to rejoice in God's mercies, which exceeded all their transgressions. We should ever keep in remembrance, such accounts as are here given us of the rebellions of God's professing people, have nothing to do with the church of the living God, whose persons are in Christ, and whose names are written in heaven. The record given in this and other Psalms, concerning God's dealings with his outward visible church, and nominal professors in it, hath its use. We see and learn thereby that all numbered and received into church fellowship, are not the Lord's peculiar treasure and portion. Yet the Lord will have some of all sorts of persons in. And some of these being left to the carnality of their own will, and their own self-emptiness, shall be guilty of the foulest crimes. Which shall be a means of proving, to the utmost demonstration, the infinity of evil, guilt, and corruption of our nature by the fall. The Psalmist calls for praise to be given to Jehovah: *Praise ye the Lord*. He calls also on those whom he here addresses to give thanks; he gives a full reason why they should. It is on account of Jehovah's goodness to his church: his mercy towards it endureth for ever: *Praise ye Jehovah*, in all his persons and perfections: the essential Three in the incomprehensible Essence, is the fountain of goodness: the utmost expression is given of it in the Father's everlasting love of the persons of the elect in Christ: the Son's love is fully evidenced in the relation he stands in to them: the love of the Spirit is displayed fully and gloriously in his office of grace towards them, in his inward influences and operations within their minds, and in all his covenant acts of grace towards them. Whilst the church remains here, the most special act of God towards them consists in displays of mercy. This therefore is here particularly mentioned: *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever*. It may be, if the word *endureth* be left out, it will read better: *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy for ever*. This Psalm is a solemn memorial of the truth of this—that Jehovah, the Essence existing in the Three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is good, essentially, mani-

festatively, and communicatively good. There is therefore cause for giving praise and thanks to him, *for his mercy for ever.*

V. 2. *Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can shew forth all his praise?*

None; no; not one in heaven above, nor on earth beneath. Even the works and acts of Christ which he performed in our world, in the days of his flesh, were such, that the apostle *John* says, *I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen. chap. xxi. 25.*

V. 3. *Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.*

These words are spoken by way of discrimination, to distinguish real saints from mere professors. It is only such as are born again, and enlightened with the light of everlasting light, who can apprehend the glory, the grace, the wisdom, the goodness of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ: such only can keep the idea and remembrance of the same in their minds; it is only as the Holy Spirit brings Christ to their remembrance they do so. Yet they are blessed when it is thus with them. It is only as it is thus with a believer, that he acts as one who is righteous in Christ; and outwardly proves to others the truth of the Apostle's words; *He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.* As a believer is righteous in Christ, so when he acts in the full belief of this, he keepeth judgment, and doeth righteousness at all times; and he is most truly blessed.

V. 4. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation.*

The prayer is most inestimably precious, important, and divine. To be remembered of the Lord, in an inward, spiritual, and gracious way, is blessedness which cannot be expressed. Here the prophet speaks on his own behalf. He approaches Jehovah in all his persons, and prays to be remembered. He speaks most simply and important. *Remember me, O Lord.* He here presents himself in Christ, and requests to be remembered with the favour the Three in Jehovah have and bear to the elect. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation.* The love of God in Christ, which he beareth towards their persons in him: this, when the divine Father is pleased to make it known, by shedding abroad a sense of it in the heart of any saint, by the Holy Ghost, is the highest expression God can give in a manifestative way,



which he can give this side of heaven. This saint before us is here requesting this; for the divine Majesty in the person of the Father to remember him; to look on him; to behold him in the God-man. To remember his antient and everlasting love to him in Christ; to break forth in the heavenly beams and influences of it on his mind; to visit him with his salvation in the grace, glory, blessings, and fulness thereof. The end to be answered by granting this request follows in the next verse.

V. 5. *That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.*

To see, perceive, and apprehend wherein the goodness of God to his people consists, is most truly desirable to a spiritual mind. The essence of it consists in the Lord's favour to them. This is his own love, in his own vast mind; from it flows down all his blessings upon them. To have an intuitive apprehension of this formed in our hearts from the word, and by the Spirit, is life everlasting. It leads to rejoice in Christ, and God in him; it leads to rejoice in the gladness and prosperity of the Lord's saints, that holy nation, that peculiar people, which he hath chosen for himself, which he possesses as his inheritance. And here the prayer ends.

What follows concerns the whole visible church. A solemn recital is given of various sins and rebellions committed by the people of Israel in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and various other places. And a record is made of the Lord's dealings with these in wrath, judgment, and mercy.

V. 6. *We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.*

The prophet here changes the singular for the plural number. He before spake in prayer on his own behalf, he here prays for the whole church. He knew that all and each member of the same, with himself, had to confess and be ashamed of their own sins and sinfulness. He therefore, by way of preface to all which follows, says, *We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.* This was agreeable to the will of God, and to the examples of saints under that dispensation. The Lord God had said, *If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and*

also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Jeremiah prayed on this foundation for them, chap. iii. 25, and very similar to the words before us. So doth *Daniel*, in his ninth chapter. The church cannot but lament before the Lord, and confess the iniquity, sins, and wickedness of her apostate members.

V. 7. *Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea.*

Such was the infidelity of mind of many of the Israelites who were in Egypt, and had evidence of the Lord's putting forth his omnipotent power on every element, on every animal, and striking dead all the first-born in the land of Egypt, that they did not understand why the Lord had done thus. They neither understood the wonders God had wrought; they remembered not the multitude of his mercies he had shewed and manifested towards them, in bringing them out of the cruel bondage under which they groaned, but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea. This was by distrusting God; they murmured there against Moses; yet there the Lord saved them. In Exodus xiv. you read, *the children cried out unto the Lord. And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness,* verses 10, 11, 12. All this is the language of unbelief, complaint, and murmuring.

V. 8. *Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.*

It was a most glorious evidence of the exercise of God's grace and mercy, in its freeness and sovereignty, that he most gloriously would exercise it at this time, when they were in such open exercise of their unbelief and contempt of him. He saved them at this time; he saved them for his name's sake; he saved them so, as the whole glory must redound unto him; he saved them that he might make his mighty power to be known; and hereby give them full evidence, that their extremity was his opportunity.

V. 9. *He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths as through the wilderness.*

The Lord powerfully restrained the waters; they were congealed, and formed walls; the Israelites went safely

through; the waters were a wall unto them, on the right hand and on the left. Thus they were led through the depths as through the wilderness; it was as though they were treading on dry ground; they trod on dry ground when they marched the wilderness of Arabia. Yet they were not more secure, nor their feet more firmly fixed, than when they walked on dry land in the midst of the sea.

V. 10. *And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.*

Pharaoh and his host, who pursued after them, were destroyed; whilst the Israelites were most safely secured, and saved.

V. 11. *And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.*

A most marvellous act wrought by Jehovah for them, even at the very time when they were acting very sinfully against the divine Majesty. They were full of unbelief; they were unmindful of all he had done for them in Egypt, and of his wonderful display of his sore judgments on their enemies. All this was out of sight, and out of mind; they were full of unbelief; they were full of murmurings against the very dispensations of the Lord towards them. Nevertheless, he is going on in working on their behalf. He dried up the Red Sea; he led them safely through it; he saved them from the hand of the enemy; the waters covered them; not one of them was left. *Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.* Exodus xiv. 30, 31.

V. 12. *Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.*

The song is recorded in Exodus, chapter xv. It is most glorious, noble, and sublime. This is the first part of the Psalmist's confession of Israel's sin. He begins thus. *Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt, they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies, but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea. Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known. He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths as through the wilderness. And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left. Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.*

The Psalmist proceeds to an enumeration of more and fur-

ther sins committed by Israel. Such as lusting after sensual gratifications; in mutinying against the Lord's ministers, Moses and Aaron; in worshipping the golden calf; in expressing their contempt of the promised land; in uniting with Moabites and Midianites in the worship of Baal-Peor; in quarrelling with Moses at Kadesh. And after all this, when they were actually introduced by Joshua into the land of Canaan even then, they incorporated themselves with the Canaanites; they practised their idolatrous and cruel customs. To proceed with the Psalm before us.

V. 13. *They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel.*

As their former sins before mentioned, which were the fruit of their not understanding the Lord's wonders in Egypt which were wrought on their behalf, and to make way for their deliverance from thence, together with their insensibility and non-remembrance of the multitude of Jehovah's mercies towards them, were the origin and cause of all their unbelief, murmuring, and other sins which they fell into, and they are placed to this account; so the words which are a preface to all their sins, which are to be enumerated, are here ascribed to the same cause. They forgot God; they forgot his works; his leading them through the Red Sea; his sweetening the bitter waters; his giving them bread from heaven; his giving them water out of the rock at Horeb; his being all-sufficient to counsel and direct them in every part of the journey they were entered upon; alas! alas! it was altogether out of their minds. Neither did they like to be wholly dependant on Christ for every thing. He was in the midst of them; in the tabernacle which was so placed as to be centre of all the camps; and by the cloud in which he the Lord of glory was, and out of which he spake; but being removed to Sinai, where they remained twelve months, wanting ten days, and being come into the wilderness of Paran, they fell a murmuring and lusting for flesh. You may read the account of it in Numbers, chap. xi. And it is here referred unto by the Psalmist:

V. 14. *But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.*

This was a grievous sin. When we are going over these accounts, I would again take the necessary caution of reminding you, these murmurers were not the true Israel of God. They were in the same church-state; they had the same outward privileges and ordinances of the Lord; they had the same gospel preached to them; yet they were not the Lord's by eternal election; they were ensamples and

memorials of God's dealing with such as sin willingly and wilfully, openly and scandalously, against Christ and his church, who are numbered with the Lord's people, and enjoy the Lord's ordinances, and yet are destitute of regeneration, and the Spirit of God dwelling in them.

V. 15. *And he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul.*

Thus their forgetfulness of God's works, their not waiting for his counsel, their lusting exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempting God in the desert, are here recorded against them. As one grand second particular to be confessed before the Lord, and be lamented,

V. 16. *They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.*

This is recorded in Numbers, chap. xvi. It seems it was the design of those who murmured against Moses and Aaron, for the ecclesiastical and political dignity which the Lord himself had conferred on them, to have set up Korah, the son of Levi, in the room of Aaron, and one of the sons of Reuben in the room of Moses. Be this as it may, these people were rebels against the Lord, in their attempts in this. It was a grievous sin, and brought down God's fierce wrath upon them.

V. 17. *The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.*

This was not a common, but it was an extraordinary expression of God's wrath. Moses on that occasion said, *If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.* And it came to pass accordingly. Numbers xvi. 29, 30. See its accomplishment, verse 31.

V. 18. *And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.*

This took place on the same day, when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed up. *And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense,* Numbers xvi. 35. They were of the company of Korah, who wanted to invade and break in upon the priesthood.

V. 19. *They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.*

This seems to exceed all their other sins. Not that these

transgressions followed in order as they are here recited; no, they did not. This was soon after the law was delivered; within forty days of it. God gave them the law; he entered into covenant with them; he admitted Moses up into the mount, and conversed with him forty days and forty nights. Yet whilst he was in the mount with God, they made themselves a golden calf for a god. A most unaccountable act; for they had heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire; and the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the mount in their eyes; yet they sinned, and fell so low as to worship a golden calf.

V. 20. *Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.*

This was most horrible indeed. Thus they changed their God, who was their glory, for a molten image. Just like the heathens; who made a form, structure, type, and image of what they styled God.

V. 21. *They forgot God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt.*

It is ascribed to their forgetfulness of God, who was their Saviour, and of the great things he had done as their Saviour, and of the great things he had done in Egypt, by which he proved himself to be Lord God omnipotent, yet these Israelites were so ignorant of him, so unmindful of him, so forgetful of him, that they had set up an image, a calf, to worship and pay divine honours unto, instead of him.

V. 22. *Wondrous things in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea.*

He brought ten desolating plagues on Egypt; he had wrought wondrous things by means of these on the Egyptians, their cattle, and their land; he did terrible things by the Red sea; when he removed in the cloud which went before the Israelites, and went behind them; and by this means the cloud was darkness to the Egyptians, whilst it gave light to the Israelites, and so prevented, that the one came not near the other all night. It was doing terrible things by the Red sea; when he divided its waters, led his people safely through it, and caused the waters to return, and thus swallowed up Pharaoh and his host; so that they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Yet all this was so far forgotten, that the Israelites changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. This was most abominable in the sight of the Lord.

V. 23. *Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not*

*Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.*

You have the account of this in Exodus, ch. xxxii. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine ownself, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of, will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. Ver. 7—14.*

*Ver. 24. Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word.*

The land of Canaan was a pleasant land, a land to be desired for the pleasures and profits of it above all others; yet this land they refused through unbelief, they refused to take possession of it; see Numb. xiv. 1—9. No, the Lord had said, *Go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged, Deut. i. 21.* They said, No, we will send men to search it out, and see if it be so good as it hath been expressed to be. For it was an act of unbelief, the sending the spies; yet Moses did not perceive it at that time.

*V. 25. But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.*

An account of which is given in the 14th chapter of Numbers. In consequence of which, the Lord swore in his wrath, there should none of that generation enter into Canaan except Caleb and Joshua; and those very men who had

brought up the evil report upon the promised land, died by the plague before the Lord.

V. 26. *Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness.*

They were consumed by divers sicknesses, diseases, and sundry kinds of death; so that the whole host who came out of Egypt were consumed, and not one of them, but Caleb and Joshua, went over Jordan. And it was the effects of the Lord's having lifted up his hand against, to overthrow them in the wilderness.

V. 27. *To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.*

They were continued in the wilderness forty years; they were led out of one wilderness into another; their carcasses fell in the wilderness. This was the punishment of their sin. It came upon them for their disobedience, murmuring, contempt of God's promise, and for their unbelief and contempt of God's word of promise.

V. 28. *They joined themselves also unto Baal-Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.*

This was most infamous; they had before been again and again under the evident signs and tokens of God's wrath. There was scarce any thing the second year of their departure from Egypt but sinning and repenting, and then sinning and repenting over and over, as hath been related in the Psalm before us; and then visited by the Lord with one judgment after another, to correct them for the same, and to reclaim them. This sin of joining themselves with the Moabites and Midianites, in the worship of the filthy idol Baal-Peor, exceeded all their crimes, except their worshipping the golden calf. And it was the most highly aggravated crime, seeing they were now almost at the end of their journey through the wilderness. Balaam had given this cursed counsel to Balak, king of Moab, to entice the Israelites into the sin of idolatry, which was always accompanied with the sin of uncleanness. The women of Moab were made the means of drawing them into this snare. Baal-peor was the idol worshipped by the Moabites and Midianites; to which shameful image, by advice and instruction given by Balaam to these princes, the Israelites were joined. Baal signifieth lord, master, husband. Pethor was the name of a mountain where this dunghill deity was worshipped, and had a temple called Beth-peor, Numb. xxiii. 28; Deut. iii. 39. Baal was a common name, whereby the heathen called their gods; but for the shameful abuse of it, the Lord saith, *Thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more Baali; for I will take away*



*Baalim out of their mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their names, Hosea ii. 16, 17. Ishi signifies my husband; Baali is my Lord. The Prophet says, They went unto Baal-Peor, and separated themselves unto that shame, chap. ix. 19. The Israelites in the wilderness, whilst on the borders of Moab, joined themselves unto Baal-Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. This they did by worshipping a dead image, and also by eating the sacrificial food. You have the account of it, Numb. xxv. 1—3.*

*V. 29. Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.*

*And the people abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-Peor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Stay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor, Numb. xxv. 1—5. At the same time the plague broke out, and carried off 24,000 persons: so tremendous was the fierce wrath of the Lord against the people for these their crimes.*

*V. 30. Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment; and so the plague was stayed.*

*In the history of it we read, And behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman, in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; and he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. Ver. 6—8.*

*V. 31. And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.*

*The act was a good and righteous act: it proceeded from zeal to the Lord, and as expressive of the abomination which had been committed. Jehovah expressed himself on account of it thus: Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore*

*I say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel,* ver. 11—13. Phinehas, in his covenant, was a figure of Christ, who is called the messenger of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1; and hath an everlasting priesthood, after the power of an endless life. Phinehas was to have an everlasting priesthood, which means, it was to continue until Christ, to whom the priesthood of Aaron was to give place. Phinehas himself lived to a good old age, which appears from Judges xx. 28. His sons successively were high priests until the captivity of Babylon, see 1 Chron. vi. 4. And at the return from thence, Ezra, the great priest and scribe, was of this line; see Ezra vii. 1 and 5. Phinehas executing judgment on Zimri and Cozbi, being the means of staying the plague, it is therefore said he made an atonement for the children of Israel. I conceive the following words are founded on this: The Lord saith of Levi, *My covenant was with him of life and peace, and I gave them unto him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity,* Mal. ii. 5, 6. What Phinehas did in slaying these two persons, Zimri and Cozbi, was considered as a righteous act throughout all succeeding generations. The apostle, referring to the tremendous sinings and judgments which were committed and executed at this time, says, *Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.* It seems one thousand were slain by the Judges, see ver. 5, and twenty-five thousand by the hand of God; or, one thousand of the chief were hanged, and the rest slain by the sword.

V. 32. *They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes.*

This is recorded in Numbers xx. It is true something like this is recorded in Exodus xvii. but that was in the first year of their Exodus. This was the beginning of the last year of their being in the wilderness, soon after the death of Miriam. The Lord directed Moses to take the rod, and gather the assembly together, and Aaron, and speak to the rock before or in the sight of the people, with a promise it should yield water, &c. Moses was angered by the people, as he feared the consequence of their murmuring, lest the Lord should break forth in wrath against them. It is called the waters of strife, because of the contentions of the people. Moses was irritated in his spirit, the Lord was angered, so

it appears from the words before us. Moses was displeased; it went ill with him for their sakes.

V. 33. *Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.*

The Lord commanded Moses to speak unto the rock, instead of which he smote it. The Lord had said it should bring forth water sufficient for the congregation and their beasts. Moses seems to doubt this. He was permitted to disbelieve this. His words seem to indicate all this. Instead of speaking, as he was commanded, unto the rock, he spoke to the people, saying, *Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. 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. This is the water of Meribah, [or strife,] because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them, ver. 10—12.* Yet Moses was kept out of the promised land, on account of his speaking at this time unadvisedly with his lips. Here ends the rebellions of the people, from their departure out of Egypt to the close of their pilgrimage through the wilderness. It is not mentioned just as it followed one the other, neither is every circumstance of their murmuring here recorded. But here is enough to prove the truth of what Moses says unto them, *Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you, Deut. ix. 24.* It may not be amiss to number these sins here recorded. 1. They provoked and sinned against the Lord, in not remembering the wonders he had wrought for them in Egypt. 2. They provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea, by their unbelief. 3. They sinned in the wilderness, in lusting after flesh. 4. They sinned against the Lord, when they envied Moses and Aaron for the offices they were appointed over the people. 5. In worshipping the golden calf. 6. In expressing their contempt of the promised land. 7. They sinned in joining with the Moabites and Midianites in the worship of Baal-Peor. 8. They sinned in quarrelling with Moses at Kadesh. How they acted afterwards, when they were in the land of Canaan, is related in the following verses, from the 34th to the 38th inclusive.

V. 34. *They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the Lord commanded them.*

The Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the seven nations, were to be destroyed. The Lord God had commanded

this, *Exod. xxiii. 32, 33.* Yet this was not attended unto, as is very evident from the book of Judges. So far from living in Canaan, as the Lord God had given it unto them for a possession, that *the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites. And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.* This was most awful. As they thus dwelt among them, so they came into the following circumstances. They were not separated from them. No.

V. 35. *But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.*

All of which were contrary to the holy law and will of God, and contrary to the exhortation the Lord God had given them over and over by his servant Moses.

V. 36. *And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them.*

Those wretched dunghill deities, framed in the idea by the devil in the minds of these heathens, which they represented under one figure and another, according as it suited their carnal conceptions, together with a mode of worship the most carnal, brutish, unclean, and despicable Satan himself could devise; even into the very same did many, yea, the bulk of the Israelites, fall, even after they were introduced by Joshua into the land of Canaan. It is true, it was not in his time. The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. There arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he did for Israel. *And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim. And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger, Judges ii. 7, 10, 11, 12.* This is exactly what the Psalmist says.

V. 37. *Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.*

This is beyond all the sins which had been charged on them before. They not only cast off God, but they worshipped the very devils, by sacrificing their sons and their daughters unto them. O the depths of sin and depravity! What is recorded of it in the word of God exceeds our utmost conception.

V. 38. *And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.*

Here are these grievous sins charged upon the Israelites.

after they came into the land of Canaan. They did not destroy the nations; this was an act, and it was a continued act of disobedience in them. The Lord had commanded to destroy them utterly. They did not obey the Lord's command in these respects; they were mingled among the people; they learned their works, they served their idols, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils; they shed innocent blood, the blood of their children; they sacrificed these unto the idols of Canaan, they polluted the land of Canaan with blood. This exceeded and transcended all the sins of their predecessors.

V. 39. *Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.*

With blood, with murder, with idolatry, the book of Judges gives awful evidence to what is here recorded by the Psalmist. The three following verses give an account of the Lord's dealings with them for these abominations.

V. 40. *Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.*

He brought one evil upon them after another, an account of which is very circumstantially given in the book of Judges. The people were sorely distressed, the land very greatly impoverished. Whole troops of foragers entered the land at one time; they destroyed the increase of the earth, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor oxen, nor ass. The Midianites and the Amalekites, and the children of the East, came as grasshoppers for multitude, and their camels were without number, and they entered into the land to destroy it. Thus the wrath of the Lord was expressed towards them.

V. 41. *And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.*

Sometimes one, and sometimes another. It is expressly said, *Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia*, Judges iii. 8. They were in servitude to him eight years. After this they were kept under by Eglon, king of Moab, eighteen years. After this, the Lord, for their transgressions, sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan. He had nine hundred chariots of iron, and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel. After this, the Lord, for their sins, delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. The Philistines and Ammonites had the Israelites in servitude unto them for a season.

Ver. 42. *Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.*

All this was prophesied of. The Lord had said, *If ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you,* Lev. xxvi. 15—17. Read the book of Judges, and you will there have a full and complete comment of this, as it respects the substance hereof; and, indeed, of all these verses in the Psalm before us, from the 34th to the close of the 42d.

Ver. 43. *Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.*

By Othniel from Cushan-Rishathaim; by Ehud from Eglon; by Shamgar, who slew six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad; by Deborah and Barak, from Jabin and Sisera; by Gideon, from the Midianites; by Jephthah, from the Ammonites; by Samson from the Philistines. *But they provoked him with their counsel.* They relapsed again and again into idolatry, and were brought again and again very low for their iniquity.

V. 44. *Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry.*

When they were shut up and found no helper, then they cried unto the Lord. Such was his goodness, he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry. We have a wonderful proof of this in the following words: *And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, we have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee: deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel,* Judges x. 15, 16. The Psalmist says at the 8th verse, by way of magnifying the mercy of the Lord to the people of Israel, *Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.* Here he also comes in again with his *Nevertheless*, when he is speaking of Jehovah's regarding the affliction, and attending to the cry of his people, in their most deplorable state and condition, even though they had brought it all upon themselves by their manifold sins and transgressions.

V. 45. *And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.*

This points out the ground of the divine procedure, in love and mercy, in wrath and judgments, and in all his dispensations with this people. The covenant made at Horeb could not but be remembered by the Lord; he was a party in it; so were the Israelites, although they brake it. I am speaking of a national covenant. And it contained in it the promise of Christ, who was to be of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. On this account the Israelites were remembered by the Lord, notwithstanding all their transgression. Whensoever they returned to him, he turned to them: he changed the method of his dispensations towards them; he exercised the multitude of his mercies towards them; proving hereby his truth and faithfulness unto them.

V. 46. *He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.*

Such were the aboundings and superaboundings of Jehovah's divine and infinite compassion towards them. His whole plan before him, which concerned them, was his covenant with their ancestors, concerning giving them a numerous seed, in granting them the land of Canaan, in continuing them more or less therein, until the Son of God should be manifested in the flesh. Now as there were always an elect seed, the truly beloved of God amongst them, sometimes a greater, and at other times a less number, so the Lord's remembrance and favour towards the Jewish people and nation were in proportion to this. Were these remarks attended unto, I conceive many passages in this Psalm, and various others, would shine forth with an inexpressible light, glory, majesty, and dignity.

V. 47. *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise.*

The people of Israel were often scattered hither and thither by their enemies, wars, and captivities. The prophet here prays on their behalf, for their national and spiritual salvation; for their being gathered together in one body, in one head, even in Christ. They must be called out of the nations, they must be gathered from among the heathen, or this cannot be. None but the Lord God could save and gather them. Therefore the prophet addresses him on this subject. If the Lord God did thus appear for them, it would be because he was the Lord their God. All depended on this relation of the Lord God unto them: *Save us, O Lord our God.* We can never make too much of our covenant relation to the Lord: it is on this founda-

tion he is the Lord our God: it is true grace to address him in the true knowledge of this. *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen.* It is to be expected from the scriptures of truth, that there will be a great gathering of the Jews from among the heathen; among whom they have been scattered by various captivities and dispersions in the latter day. Then the prayer before us will be completed; and its end also, which is thus expressed: *To give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise.* And most assuredly we cannot read this Psalm under the light and unction of the Holy Ghost, and enter into the subjects treated of in it, but the covenant of the Three in Jehovah—the goodness expressed by them towards the Old Testament saints—the pardon and compassions bestowed on the people and nation of the Jews—must excite us to say, *Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.* As we proceed to survey the sinfulness of the people of Israel, and their various and repeated provocations, at the Red Sea, in Horeb, and all the while they continued in the wilderness, and the Lord's mercies and free pardons, we must be influenced to confess, that as is his majesty such is his mercy; and may well say, *Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.*

When we attend to the account given of the crimes committed by the people of Israel in the land of Canaan, as recorded in this Psalm, and review the various deliverances wrought for them, and the mercy, compassion, and pity exercised by the eternal Three towards them, it may well constrain us to cry out with admiration, *Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry.* It may also well lead us up to the fountain of all this, the covenant which obtained between the Three in Jehovah before all worlds. From whence, as the case the Lord's people were in, who were numbered amongst this people, so Jehovah exercised accordingly the multitude of his mercies towards them. It is said concerning the predecessors of these, *the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them,* Exodus ii. 23—25. We may see the grace of the Psalmist discovered in his conclusion of this solemn memorial of Israel's rebellions, and God's compassions: *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among*



the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise. All the elect of God will one day be gathered, by the drawings of divine and everlasting love, to Shiloh, the Lord Jesus Christ. These words are varied as used by David, on the festival sacrifice, which was kept when the ark was seated in the place which he had appointed for it. *O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise,* 1 Chron. xvi. 34, 35. It will be matter for glorious praise to the Lord our God, and of glorious triumph to saints, when the whole election of grace is completed in effectual calling.

V. 48. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting; and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the Lord.*

This is the doxology with which the Psalm ends. It contains and expresseth beyond what we can possibly apprehend. It is much like the verse which closes the First Book of Psalms, only there is a double Amen, here but one; yet this exceeds it, the word Hallelujah being the last in it. The doxology which closes the Second Book of Psalms, is most divinely exalted and sublime. *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.* The doxology which closes the Third Book of Psalms is, *Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen.* Survey each of these; this which is the closure of the Psalm we have now before us, exceeds each of the former. It calls on all the people to join in this act of blessing Jehovah from everlasting to everlasting, by saying, *Amen*: to which is added, *Praise ye the Lord.* What for? Surely for all the grace and goodness the Lord had exercised towards Israel. They are varied in the chapter which hath been quoted, thus: *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord,* verse 36. May we unite with past generations, with all the elect saints in heaven, both men and angels, and with all saints on earth, or which ever will be, in blessing God from everlasting to everlasting. May we seal it with our Amen.

## THE FIFTH BOOK OF PSALMS.

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It contains for number 44. The subjects they treat of are various. The 107th is very expressive of the providence of Christ, which he is continually exercising towards all sorts and conditions of men, in the Church and out of it. The 108th Psalm is composed of the 57th Psalm, from the 7th verse to the end: and of the 60th Psalm, from the 7th verse to the end. The 109th concerns Judas Iscariot. The 110th contains an account of the eternal priesthood of Christ. In this Book we have all the Hallelujah Psalms but one. This closed the last Book. Take the whole of them together, and they are eight in number, viz. Psalm 105, 111, 112, 113, 146, 148, 149, 150. So that we have seven of these in this Fifth Book. The 111th, with the six following, are called the grand *Hallelujah*. The Jews used to sing them with great solemnity at their three yearly festivals. The 119th Psalm is the longest in the whole collection; it is divided into two-and-twenty parts, according to the letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and contains 176 verses. In it, we have ten several names or terms, by which the revealed will of God is expressed to us. Sometimes it is called the *law of the Lord*: sometimes *his way*: sometimes *his word*: sometimes *his precepts*: sometimes *his commandments*: sometimes *his judgments*: sometimes *his statutes*: sometimes *his promises*: sometimes *his righteousness*: sometimes *his testimonies*. It is by some observed, that there is but one verse, viz. 122, in all this long Psalm, where we may not find one or more of these ten names, or terms. Each part of this Psalm has eight verses beginning with the same letter. There are no less than eight alphabets in it, or the Hebrew alphabet eight times over.

We have in this Fifth Book, fifteen Psalms entitled *Songs of Degrees*. Four of these are entitled *A Song of Degrees of David*, viz. 122, 124, 131, 133. One is entitled, *A Song of Degrees of Solomon*, viz. 127.

Many different opinions are entertained by learned men, concerning these Titles. Some suppose they are entitled *Songs of Degrees*, because they were sung in some high and eminent place. Some conceive it refers to the extension of the voice in singing, the lifting it up, or raising the

tune that it might be the more distinctly heard by the people. Some have thought that they were sung by the priests and Levites, after the form and melody of some esteemed song, beginning with the title. Some think nothing to be meant hereby, but the excellency of these Psalms above the rest, because those places are accounted chiefest, whereunto we do ascend by degrees. Therefore the word is used in the plural number, *Degrees*, as being choice and most excellent songs. The Hebrews used to express the superlative degree or excellency of a thing, by substantives of the plural number. As here—*A Song of Degrees*; i. e. *an excellent Song*. So the *Song of Solomon*, is called the *Song of Songs*; i. e. *most excellent*. So Jehovah is called, *the God of gods*, Deut. x. 18; and *Lord of lords*, Rev. xix. 16: that is, he is without all comparison, above all other gods or lords. So *Daniel* is called *a man greatly beloved*, or a man of desires, chap. ix. 23; that is, to be esteemed, or desired above others. Some other great men think, the Psalms entitled *Songs of Degrees*, were composed as Psalms of thanksgiving, at the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. And as Jerusalem was situated amongst hills, or mountains, so, from whencesoever they came, they must rise or ascend to come to it, as they do that climb up a hill. These songs therefore were appointed to be sung at every ascent, as the places they went up did arise, and for this cause they are called *Psalms of Degrees*.

One understood them to be so called, because they were sung by the priests and Levites, upon the several stairs that went up out of the great court or porch where the people were, into the higher or inner part of the temple, whither none but the priests might come. And in the Book of Nehemiah, mention is made of the stairs whereon the Levites stood on the solemn feasts, crying unto God, &c. See chap. ix. 4.

Solomon in building the temple of Jerusalem, made certain terraces, stairs, or steps, rising one above another; see 2 Chron. ix. 11; by which the priests and Levites went up from that outward great open court, or room adjoining to the temple, 2 Chron. iv. 9; where the people prayed, to which they brought, and where they attended the sacrifice, called in the New Testament *Solomon's porch*, John x. 29; or the court of the people, because it was open to all the people, into an higher room or place in the temple, called *the inner court*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 21; because none but the priests must enter thither. Now upon every feast day, the Levites, or those of them appointed for the Song, sung these

fifteen Psalms, upon each stair one, being in number fifteen, as they went up into the court of the temple, making a pause upon each stair, from whence they had the title of *Psalms of Degrees*. Mr. Romaine says, "these fifteen Psalms are entitled *Songs*, as some are called *Hymns*, and others *Psalms* and *Songs* of ascensions, or *degrees*, describing the goings up of Jesus step by step, to his highest exaltation."

Psalm 135, is one of the Hallelujah ones. The 136th, is a most wonderful celebration of Jehovah's mercies—over all the work of his hands—over his beloved Israel. There are twenty-six everlastings in it. The 137th Psalm seems to have been composed and made use of by the church when she was in Babylon. The 138th concerns Christ. So do the following, to the close of 144. The 145th, and the five following, are all Psalms of praise; the last five of them are Hallelujah ones. There is not one complaint in them; they contain one grand chorus of praise unto the Lord.

Thus I have given you a general outline of this Fifth Book; the particulars of which will be opened, in going through each of the Psalms.

## PSALM THE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH.

The subject of this Psalm is as follows: the redeemed of the Lord are exhorted to praise him: then they are called upon to observe his manifold providences as exercised upon the sons of men, according to their various circumstances, states, cases, and conditions in life; as over and upon travellers; as over captives; as over sick men; as over seamen; and in divers ways, according to the varieties of life in which mankind are placed.

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

This is the introduction of the subject. There is reason at all times, in all places, cases, and circumstances, for the Lord's people to give thanks unto him. They have their being and well being in him and from him; it is the gift of his own sovereign and royal bounty unto them; he is good, essentially so—it is his essence; he is communicatively so, as the God of nature, providence, and grace; he is continually so; *his mercy endureth for ever*. A true sight, sense, experience, and knowledge of it, will naturally and necessarily attract the heart, and excite the Lord's beloved ones to say, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for*