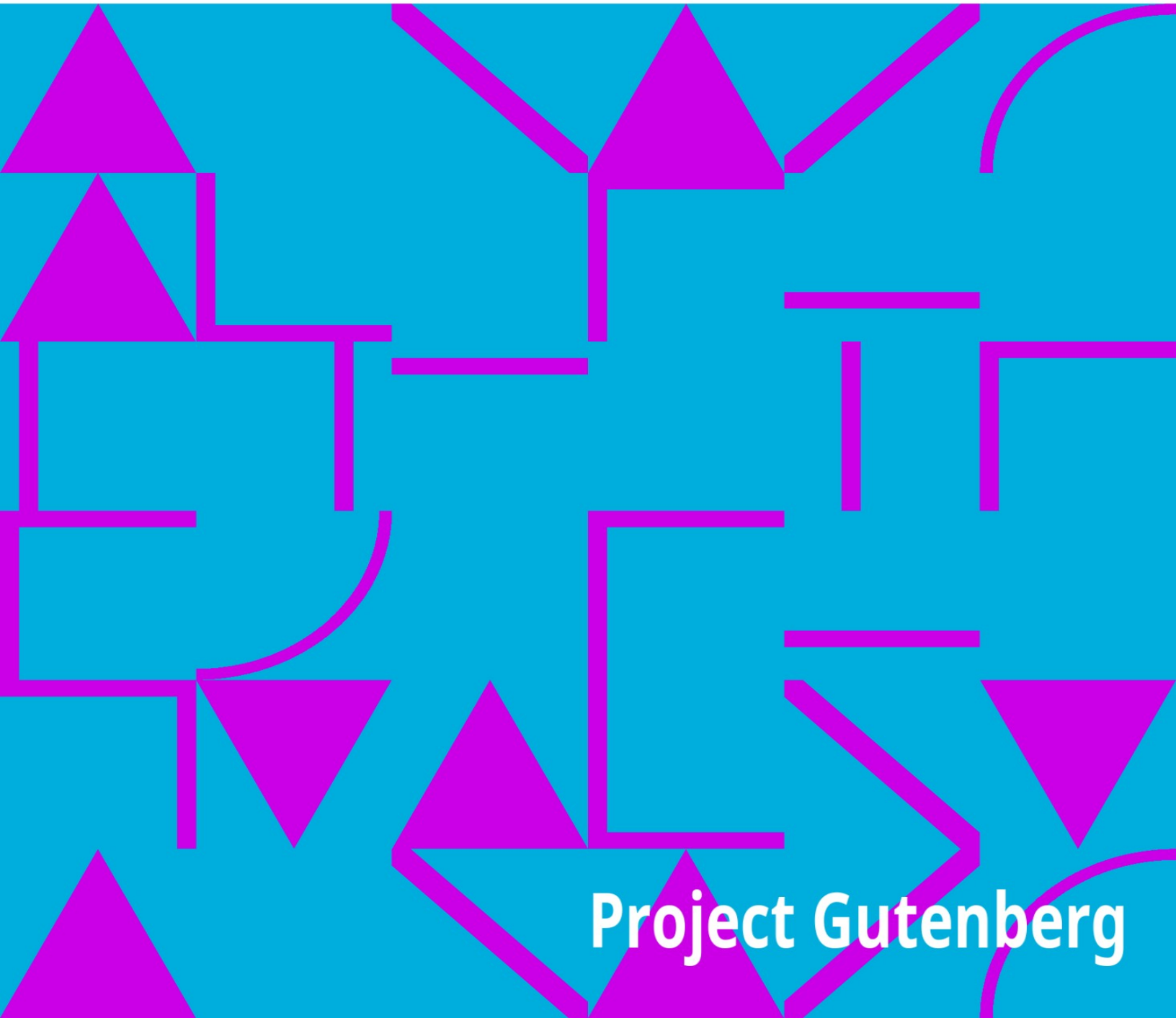
A manual of the book of Psalms

or, The subject-contents of all the Psalms

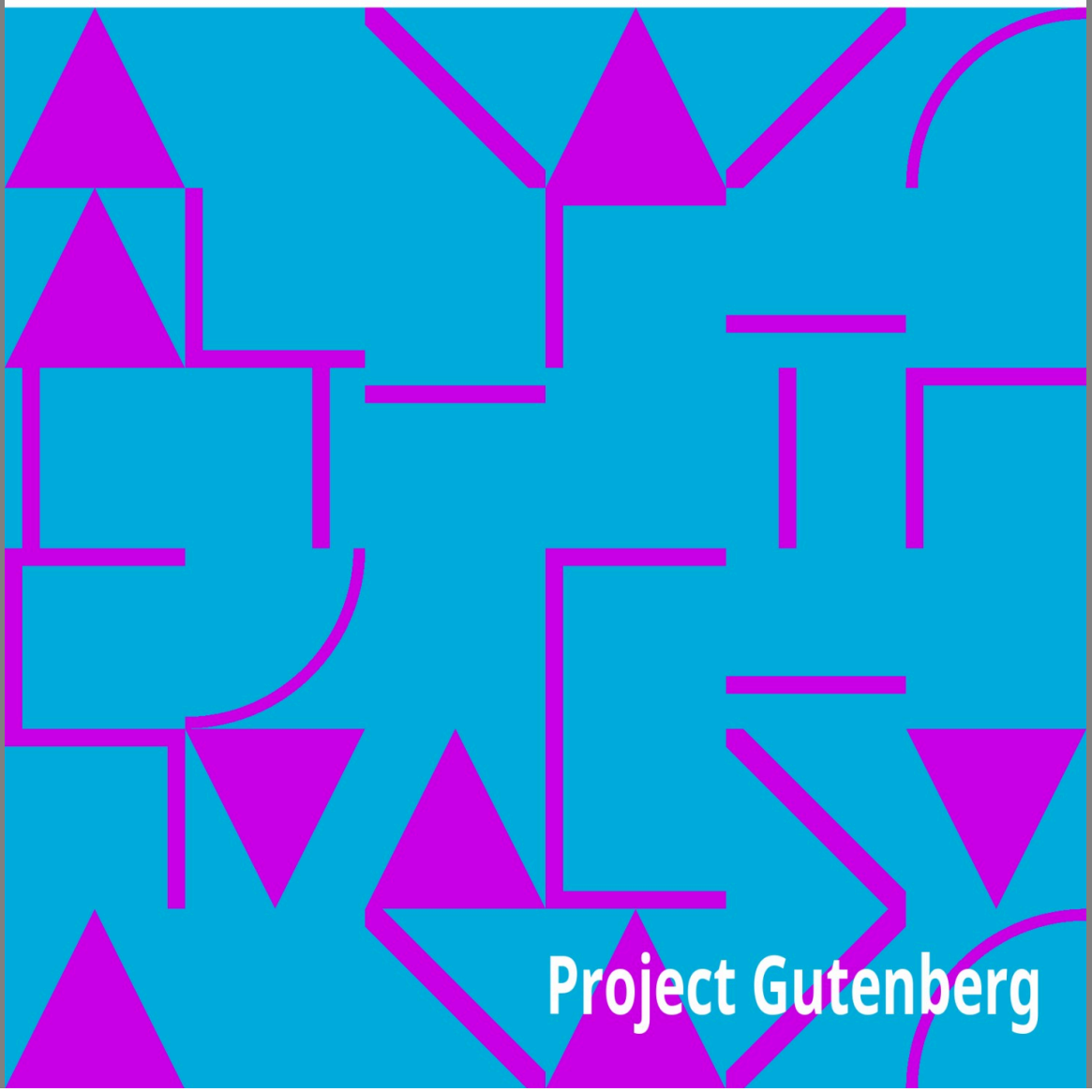
Martin Luther



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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A MANUAL OF THE BOOK OF PSALMS ***

A MANUAL

OF

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

OR, THE

SUBJECT-CONTENTS OF ALL THE PSALMS

BY

MARTIN LUTHER

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY THE REV. HENRY COLE,

LATE OF CLARE-HALL, CAMBRIDGE;
TRANSLATOR OF “SELECT WORKS” OF LUTHER, &C.

**PUBLISHED BY R. B. SEELEY AND W. BURNSIDE
AND SOLD BY L. AND G. SEELEY,
FLEET STREET, LONDON.
MDCCCXXXVII.**

TRANSLATOR’S PREFACE.

The assurance that the following production of the immortal and beloved reformer, Luther, would be acceptable and beneficial to every lover of divine and experimental truth, was the motive that led the Translator to present it, in an English version, to the British church of Christ.

No commendatory remarks are needed: the work itself will at once speak its own worth. The translator would only observe, that in the following MANUAL COMMENTARY on the Book of Psalms, Luther has most divinely, experimentally, and beautifully opened up—the vanity and delusion of all forms (even a gospel "form") of godliness, without the known and possessed "power" thereof;—the opposition and malicious persecution which the real disciples of Christ ever meet with from the wicked, and, above all, from hypocrites in religion;—the true and only grounds of a Christian man's hope, peace, and salvation; which are, a trust and rest alone in the grace, righteousness, and atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ;—the blessedness of a nation where the pure word and worship of God guide, and are upheld by, its throne and government; and the sure destruction of a kingdom when its magistrates act against that word and worship;—and finally, the glory of all the creatures of God, the abounding goodness of God in them, and the infinite blessedness of their lawful use.

Luther takes occasion also, from numberless passages in the Psalms, to describe, point out, and distinguish the true church of God in the midst of the earth, and the signs by which she may be known from all other churches;—that she is that company of poor and afflicted people, who are burdened with sins, filled with fears, covered with infirmities, and despised by the world, and considered both by the wicked, and by formal professors of religion, to be the last people likely to be the church of God. He repeatedly shews, however, that such, notwithstanding their rejection by all, are the true people and church of God; and that it is unto such, and such only, that all the promises of grace and mercy in Christ, and of help, provision, and defence in this world, are made; 'For (saith Luther) if you will look through the whole Bible, you will find, that God is not the God of the rich, the proud, the secure, &c. but of the poor, the fearful, the afflicted,

and the helpless; who cannot do without his daily mercy and help, either in the things of this world, or of that which is to come.'

That the great and heavenly things thus opened by the admired Luther may be understood and enjoyed by every reader of the following manual, is the desire and prayer of,

THE TRANSLATOR.

Highbury Place, Islington,
June 8, 1837.

Other invaluable productions of Luther, which have never before been translated into ENGLISH, are in hand, and will duly appear: which, added to the four vols. of "Select Works," the "Bondage of the Will," and the work "on Popery," just published by Messrs. Nisbet, will put the ENGLISH Church of Christ in possession of all the holy Reformer's works which are the most calculated to be of divine benefit to her.

MARTIN LUTHER TO HIS FRIEND.

I am unwilling to acknowledge that you are right in being so industrious to publish abroad my poor productions: I fear you are actuated too much by favour towards me. As to myself, I am wholly dissatisfied with my works on the Psalms: not so much on account of the sense which I have given, which I believe to be true and genuine, as on account of the verbosity,

confusion, and undigested chaos of my commentaries altogether. The Book of Psalms is a book, my Commentaries on which, from want of time and leisure, I am obliged to conceive, digest, arrange, and prepare all at once. For I am overwhelmed with occupation. I have two sermons to preach in a day: I have to meditate on the Psalms: I have to consider over the letters which I receive by the posts (as they are called) and to reply to my enemies: I have to attack the Pope's Bulls in both languages: and I have to defend myself. (To say nothing about the letters of my friends which I have to answer, and various domestic and casual engagements to which I am obliged to attend!)

You do well, therefore, to pray for me; for I am oppressed with many afflictions, and much hindered from the performance of my sacred duties;—my whole life is a cross to me! I have now in hand the xxii. Psalm, "My God, my God, &c.;" and I had hopes of completing a Commentary on the whole Book of Psalms, if Christ should give us a sufficient interval of peace, so that I could devote my whole time and attention to it: but now, I cannot devote a fourth part of my time to such a purpose: nay, the time that I do devote to it, is but a few stolen moments.

You do right in admonishing me of my want of moderation: I feel my deficiency myself; but I find that I have not command over my own mind: I am carried away from myself, as it were, by a certain vehement zeal of spirit, while I am conscious that I wish evil to no one, though all my adversaries press in upon me with such maddened fury: so that, in fact, I have not time to consider who my enemies are, nor what various treatment they require. Pray, therefore, the Lord for me, that I may have wisdom to speak and write that which shall please him and become me, and not what may appear becoming to them. And now, farewell in Christ.

Wittemberg, A.D. 1521.

MARTIN LUTHER'S PREFACE TO THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

Many of the old and godly fathers have highly extolled the Book of Psalms, above all the other books of the Scripture, and have testified their exceeding fondness and partiality for them. And indeed this book, though small, deserves to be recommended above all others, (if a difference may be made): though the Psalms of David do not want the aid of borrowed encomiums, for they carry with them an abundance of self-recommendation; and in them is the old proverb verified, which says 'The work proves the workman.' Therefore, I have not put my hand to this book for the purpose of parading before the world an encomium upon it, since it so amply commends itself; but that I might, according to the best of my ability, present those that fear God with my judgment upon its all-excelling contents.

In the years that are past we have seen an infinity of books handed about in the world, but all most insipid and worthless; which, behind an apparently honest and plausible title, (for they were prefaced with the sentiments and examples of the saints) contained the most nugatory fables, and the most barefaced lies. The world, therefore, was everywhere so filled with writings of this kind, the most foolish, and at the same time the most impious, that the Psalms themselves were disregarded and thrust into darkness, and we had not one Psalm rightly interpreted or understood. And yet, as this sweet book of David continued to be sung in all our churches, and to be chanted over so many thousand times in these incessant rounds and forms of prayer, —even by this frigid use of the Psalms, bad as it was, some small savor of life was diffused abroad among many that were of an honest and good heart; and from these words themselves only, though not understood, those that feared God drank in some little sweetness of the breath of life, and some small taste of consolation, like the faint fragrance which is found in the air that is not far from a bed of roses. Their experience was like also unto a simple man passing through a flowery and sweet-smelling meadow, who, though he knew not the peculiar nature and properties of the flowers and herbs, yet found his senses regaled with the general fragrance.

I would say what I think of the Psalms in a few words thus:—I believe, for my part, that there is no book under heaven, either of histories or examples, to be compared to the Book of Psalms. Wherefore, if it were right to ask of God, and, if such were our soul's desire, that all the greatest excellences and most choice experiences of all the true saints should be gathered and collected from the whole church since it has existed, and should be most briefly and appropriately condensed into the focus of one book; if God, I say, should permit any most spiritual and most gifted man to form and concentrate such a book from all the excellences of the saints, and from the flower of the facts recorded in the whole scripture (which might be done); —such a book would be what the Book of Psalms is, or like unto it. For in the Book of Psalms we have not the life of one of the saints only, but we have the experience of Christ himself, the head of all the saints, for he is set forth in those Psalms: we have, moreover, the feelings and experiences of all the faithful, both under their sorrows and under their joys, both in their adversity and their prosperity: how they conducted themselves towards God, towards their friends, and towards their enemies: how they acted in various perils and afflictions, in the midst of temptations, and under the greatest necessities.

And moreover, in addition to the great and blessed doctrines and instructions in godliness which it embraces, the Book of Psalms ought to be most dearly and highly prized by us on this account;—because it contains such clear prophecies concerning the death and resurrection of Christ, and holds forth such great and gracious promises concerning the kingdom of Christ, the spread of the Gospel, and the state of the whole church. So that you may truly call the Book of Psalms, a little Bible; for in it all things that are contained in the whole Bible are given to us in the most wonderfully brief and sweet manner, and condensed into a most beautiful manual.

If God should himself hand down a book out of heaven and commend it to us with a divine voice, how highly would you prize and value it, how greedily would you seize it? Be assured then that the Holy Spirit himself has written and handed down to us this Book of Psalms, as a form of prayer, in the same way as a father would give a book to his children. He himself has drawn up this manual for his disciples; having collected together, as it were, the lives, groans, and experiences of many thousands, whose hearts

he alone sees and knows. If, therefore, thou canst not read the whole Bible, behold! thou mayest, by reading the Book of Psalms only, have not only a summary of all godliness, but all godly excellences, and the most spiritual experiences.

And again, another great excellency of the Book of Psalms is this. In other scriptures and histories, for the most part the works and bodily exercises only of the saints are described: you have very few histories which give you the words, expressions, and sighs of the saints, which are the indexes of the state of their minds. But it is in these things that the Book of Psalms may be a feast of delight for the meditations of the godly. In these respects, therefore, the reading of a Psalm is peculiarly sweet; because you have therein, not only the works and acts of the saints, but their very words and expressions, nay, their sighs and groans to God, and the utterance in which they conversed with him during their temptations; and all these are recorded in such a lively and descriptive manner, that those saints, though now dead, seem still to live and speak in the Psalms.

Thus all other histories and lives of the saints, which describe their acts and works only, when compared to the Book of Psalms, set forth to us nothing more than dumb saints; and every thing that is recorded of them is dull and lifeless. But in the Psalms, where the very expressions of those that prayed in faith are recorded, all things live, all things breathe, and living characters are set before us in the most lively colours: the saints are represented to us as standing supported by their faith, even in the midst of afflictions and tribulations. A dumb man, indeed, is rather a lifeless post than a man; for man is distinguished from the brute creation by nothing more than by the power of speech. A stone even, under the hand of the artificer, may represent the figure of a man. And, as to eating and drinking, all dumb animals can do those things as well as he: they can use the organs of sense as well as he: and indeed, as to strength of body, they have greatly the advantage of him. Hence, it is the power of speech that so distinguishes man from, and raises him above, the brute creation: and that speech is the index of, and the mirror that reflects, the mind.

As, therefore, the Psalms describe the words and expressions of the saints, they give us an exact picture of their minds. For the Psalms record not those

common and everywhere-heard expressions of the saints, but those ardent and pathetic utterances, by which, in real earnest, and under the very pressure of temptations, and in the very wrestlings of their souls, they poured out their hearts like Jacob, not before man, but before God! The Psalms give us, therefore, not only the works and words of the saints, but the very hidden treasure of their hearts' feelings—the very inmost sensations and motions of their soul.

Wouldst thou see, then, the face and countenance of David, which he carried under all those perils and sorrows with which the Lord exercised him?—then read the Psalms; and they will give thee not only the outward David, but, more expressively still, the inner David; and that more descriptively than he could do it himself, if he were to talk with you face to face. What then are all other histories, which band about the singular works, and I know not what miracles of the saints? I can see all the works and the miracles of the saints in these everywhere-to-be-had records, but I can see nothing of the feelings and sensations of their hearts.

As, therefore, I had much rather hear David or any such eminent saint speak, than merely see the works or exercises of his body; so, much rather would I know the inmost thoughts of David's heart, and the inward conflicts and struggles of his faith. With this knowledge the Psalms furnish us most satisfactorily; so that from them we can know what he felt and what all the saints felt, under their temptations, from the ardent expressions and effusions which are uttered. For the human heart is like a ship in the midst of the sea, which is exposed to the perils of the winds and the waves on every side, and made as it were their sport. For as the ship is suddenly assaulted, so trouble, and the fear of future evil, like a sudden tempest, assaults and disarms our minds: and then flow in cowardice of spirit, and sorrow of heart, which, like the waves, run over us and threaten to overwhelm us every moment. By and by, again, the confidence inspired by prosperity carries us up to heaven in full sail; and then, security under our present prospects dashes unexpectedly our ship against a rock. These, I say, and the numberless other evils and perils of this life, tend to arouse and stir up the saints, and teach and bring them to sigh and groan from the recesses within, to pour out their whole hearts, and to cry with their whole souls unto heaven. The complaints of those who thus grieve and groan in truth, are far

more ardent than theirs' who only feign sorrows and straits of mind: just as the man, who feels joyful and glad in reality, discovers a far greater gladness, hilarity, and exultation in his countenance, expressions, and whole appearance, than he who only smoothes his brows with a feigned rejoicing.

The expressions contained in the Psalms, then, as I have said, are uttered under the true and real feelings of the heart; and the greater part of them contain the pathetic and ardent utterances of the heart under every kind of affliction and temptation. But wherever the feelings of joy are described, you will never find the sensations of a heart, filled with gladness and exultation, more significantly and expressively described, than in the Psalms of thanksgiving, or the Psalms of praise. There you may look into the hearts of the saints, as into paradise, or into the opened heaven; and may see, in the greatest variety, all the beautiful and flourishing flowers, or the most brilliant stars, as it were, of their upspringing affections towards God for his benefits and blessings.

On the other hand, you will never find the straits, the sorrows, and the pains of a distressed mind any where described in a more expressive manner than in the Psalms of temptations, or of complaints; as in Psalm vi. and the like; where you see all dark and gloomy, all full of anguish and distress, under a sight and sense of divine wrath, and the working of despair.

And so again, where the Psalms are speaking of hope or fear, they so describe those feelings in their true and native colours, that no Demosthenes or Cicero could ever equal them in liveliness, or descriptiveness of expression. For, as I have before observed, the Psalms have this peculiarity of excellence above all other books of description,—that the saints, whose feelings and sensations are therein set forth, did not speak to the wind, under those their exercises and conflicts, nor to an earthly friend, but unto, and before, God himself, and in the sight of God. And it is this that above all things gives a seriousness, and reality to the feelings,—it is this that affects, as it were, the very bones and the marrow,—when a creature feels itself speaking in the very sight and presence of its God! But when we are speaking otherwise, and complaining to a friend, or to a man only, our necessities are not so keenly and really felt; our feelings are not so ardent, real, and poignant.

The Book of Psalms, therefore, as it contains these real feelings of the saints, is a book so universally adapted and useful to all Christians, that whatever one that truly fears God may be suffering, or under what temptation soever he may be, he may find, in the Psalms, feelings and expressions exactly suited to his case; just as much so as if the Psalms had been indited and composed from his own personal afflictions.

It ought, therefore, godly soul, to be a great consolation to thee when the Psalms truly suit and delight thee. There is a saying of Quinctilian left on record, who says, ‘He that is truly delighted with Cicero may be assured that he has made a good progress:’ which I may not unappropriately turn thus,—‘He that is really delighted with, and receives consolation from, the Psalms of David, may be assured that he has arrived at some knowledge and experience in divine things.’ For when thou findest thyself under the same feelings that David was; when the chords and strings of his harp are really re-echoed by the feelings and sensations of thy heart; thou mayest assure thyself that thou art in the congregation of the elect of God; seeing that thou art afflicted in the same manner as they were afflicted, and that thou prayest with the same faith, sensations, and affections as they prayed. Whereas, to a cold and frigid reader, destitute of faith, all these Psalms are insipid and unengaging.

Again, the Psalms are those parts of the lives of the saints, which you may most safely copy and imitate. Other lives and histories, which do not set forth the words and expressions, but certain works of the saints, contain many things of the saints which we cannot imitate, such as certain signs and wonders, and demonstrations of divine power. And indeed some of the recorded works of those who are considered to have been saints, are such that you cannot imitate them without eminent peril; being such works as cause sects and heresies, and draw us away from the unity of the Spirit; of which we have abundant proof in monkery. But the Psalms call us away from all sects and divisions, to the unity of the Spirit. They teach us to maintain fear in prosperity, and not to cast away our hope in adversity; and thus to be of the same mind, to have the same desires, and to have the same feelings and sensations with all the saints.

In a word, if you desire to see the Christian church painted forth, as it were, in a most beautiful picture, and in the most lively and descriptive colours, then take the Psalms into thy hands; this will be as an all-clear mirror, which will represent to thee the whole church in its true features; and if thou be one that fears God it will present to thee a true picture of thyself: so that, according to the maxim of the philosopher of old, γνωθι σεαυτον, thou wilt, by this book, come to a true knowledge of thyself, nay, and also of God and all creatures.

Let us therefore watch over our hearts, and see that we be thankful in this our day for this revelation of the word, for this unspeakable gift of God. Let us use these precious gifts to the glory of God, and the good of our neighbour, lest we be made to suffer the deserved punishment of our ingratitude. For not many years ago, during that barbarous blindness and ignorance, what a treasure should we have had, if we had possessed one Psalm only, really and truly understood and set forth; but we had not so much as one! And now we are blessed with such an abundance of revelation —"Blessed therefore are the eyes which see the things that we see, and the ears which hear the things that we hear." But how do I fear lest, like the Israelites in the desert, we should at length nauseate this manna and say, "Our souls loathe this light food." But however, the despisers of the word shall bear their judgment, whoever they are, even as the Israelites bore the awful judgments wherewith God punished them. But may the Father of all mercies and the God of all consolation, keep and increase in us the knowledge of his word, for Jesus Christ our Lord's sake: to whom, for this Book of Psalms, and for all the excellent gifts which he has richly bestowed upon us, be praise and glory, for ever and ever! Amen!

MARTIN LUTHER'S INTRODUCTORY ADMONITION.

Before I commence my SUMMARIES, or SUBJECT-CONTENTS of the Psalms, I would desire the reader to bear in mind that the Psalms contained in this Book of David are of five different kinds.

1. Some Psalms are Prophecies concerning Christ, the church, the different states of the church, and the various afflictions of the saints, &c. To this class belong all those Psalms which contain promises and threatenings,—promises concerning the deliverances and salvation of the godly; and threatenings concerning the destruction of the wicked.

2. There are some Psalms which teach us what we ought to do, and what we ought not to do, according to the law of God. To this kind belong all those Psalms which condemn human doctrines, and extol the majesty and authority of the word of God.

3. There are Psalms of consolation; which comfort and lift up the hearts of those who are distressed, tempted, and afflicted by Satan and the world: and which, on the other hand, rebuke and terrify tyrants. To this class belong all those Psalms which minister consolation to the godly, and threaten the oppressors with the judgments of God.

4. There are supplicatory Psalms, wherein the prophet and others in their afflictions call upon God in prayer and implore his help. To this class belong all those Psalms which complain of persecutions from the wicked.

5. There are also Psalms of thanksgiving; wherein thanks are rendered to God for all his mercies and benefits, and for his deliverance in various times of need. To this class belong all those Psalms which celebrate the praises of God and laud him for his works. These are the principal Psalms in the whole Book; and these peculiarly come under the denomination of Psalms: for the whole Book was expressly written to praise God and to worship him according to the First Commandment. Hence, in the Hebrew, the Book is called SEPHER IL CHILLIM: that is, the Book of Praises and Thanksgivings.

The reader, however, is to bear in mind also, that the Psalms are not to be understood in a superstitious manner. He is not to suppose that every Psalm must be divided into these five particulars in certain verses; for some

Psalms contain two of these particulars, some three, and some all five of them: for, very often, the same Psalm contains prophecy, doctrine, consolation, supplication and thanksgiving. But I have just made these remarks, that the reader may know that the Psalms contain these five particulars; for knowing that, is of great help, not only to the understanding of them, but to the perceiving of their order, to the bearing of them in memory, and to the perfect knowledge of them.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

PSALM I.

The happiness of the godly.—The unhappiness of the ungodly.

Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

This first is a Psalm of consolation; by which the hearts of the godly are encouraged and stirred up to magnify above all things the word of God, in

which the whole of true life and salvation stands; and to hear, read, weigh, and meditate on it with a willingness of mind. For this Psalm shows, that those only are truly blessed, prosperous in all things, and enjoy a firm, sure, and eternal consolation both in prosperity and adversity, who are enabled to learn and know, from his word, the will and the works of God.

Thus, as a tall palm-tree by the water-side continually grows upwards higher and higher against all the violence of storms, retains its strength against all the weights that man can put upon it, and, by a secret growth, becomes daily more and more flourishing, and brings forth its fruits in its season; so, saith this Psalm, do the saints increase and grow continually by the Spirit and word; so are they rendered more and more firm and constant, and invincible against every evil; so do they daily become more fortified against all the calamities of life.

This Psalm denies, on the other hand, that any knowledge of God or any true consolation can be derived from human doctrines, how fair a show soever they may make. The wicked, (saith it,) and hypocrites, are like the chaff that is scattered by the wind: that is, the wicked are utterly destroyed by afflictions, at least in death; they endure not in temptation, but by and by separate themselves from the assembly of the righteous, and at length come to nought.

God looks upon those alone who worship him by hearing, learning, and declaring his word; and these are they whom this Psalm pronounces “blessed.” He disregards all the rest, who are hypocrites and pharisaical worshippers; he despises all their good works and worshippings, and leaves them to perish in their blindness.

This Psalm flows from the Third Commandment, and has respect unto that which is there written: “Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day;” that is, that thou hear, read, meditate on, and ponder the word of God. And the sum of this Psalm is comprehended in the Lord’s Prayer, in the second and third petitions, where we pray, that the kingdom of God may increase and be edified by his word, and at length be revealed in its perfection, and that his will may be done: and both of these petitions are answered, when the word of God, which abideth for ever, is purely taught and learnt, and seriously and diligently used and pondered.

PSALM II.

The kingdom of Christ.—Kings are exhorted to accept it.

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his Anointed, *saying*,

Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

This Psalm is a remarkable prophecy concerning Christ: it is cited by the apostles in the Acts, chapter iv.: it predicted that Christ should suffer, be crucified, and glorified, and that he should be King and Lord of all creatures; that to him should be given all power both in heaven and in earth, and that his name should be above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.

This Psalm contains also a description of the kingdom of Christ and the terrible threatenings of God against the kings, the princes, the wise, and the powerful of the world; that they shall all perish, who, being carried away with the pride of human reason and carnal wisdom, do not acknowledge this King, Christ, nor obey his gospel; but who oppose his kingdom, and endeavour to blot out his name.

On the other hand, this Psalm contains most consoling promises, namely, that he that sitteth in the heavens, (in comparison of whom all the kings of the earth are mere worms,) holds in derision, and in a moment defeats, all their counsels and all their crafty devices against his word and this kingdom of Christ; and that he ever powerfully and miraculously saves, preserves, delivers, and prospers believers, and the whole church throughout the world, in the midst of the kingdom of the devil, and against all the powers and the gates of hell.

This Psalm flows from the First Commandment; where God declares that he alone will be our God, to save us and deliver us from all afflictions. Thus, it was he alone that delivered us, through Christ, from sin, from death, from the power of the devil, and from hell, and gave unto us eternal life. This pertains to the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy kingdom come.”

PSALM III.

The security of God's protection.

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

LORD, how are they increased that trouble me? many *are* they that rise up against me.

Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is* no help for him in God. Selah.

But thou O LORD, *art* a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the LORD sustained me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.

Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek-bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

This Psalm is a prayer of David in the time of his greatest affliction, and under the severest trial he ever experienced. And here we have set before us

a signal example of this greatest and most spiritual of men—David; how he, in the time of Absalom, when all Israel revolted from him and went over to Absalom; how this eminent saint, I say, who was now an exile, forsaken by all, betrayed by those of his own household, and in the midst of the most appalling peril of his own life and salvation; how, when sinking under this heavy calamity, and struggling in this agony, he prayed unto God in faith; and what a fervency of heart there was in these his cries unto him.

In a word,—in this Psalm, David, with a wonderful feeling of mind, and a signal experience of faith, extols, in the highest strains, the greatness of the long-suffering and goodness of God, when he says, “Salvation is of the Lord!” As if he had said, The Lord is he alone who has all salvation in his hand, and all the issues of life and death. He sets up and changes kingdoms in a moment, just as he wills. No peril is so great, no death so instant, from which he cannot deliver his own, if they but call upon him in true faith, and flee unto him alone.

This Psalm has reference to the First Commandment, wherein it is said, “I am the Lord thy God;” and it is comprehended in the seventh petition of the Lord’s Prayer, where we pray, “Deliver us from evil.”

PSALM IV.

David prayeth for audience.—He reproveth and exhorteth his enemies.—Man’s happiness is in God’s favour.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth. A Psalm of David.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

O ye sons of men, how long *will ye turn* my glory into shame? *how long* will ye love vanity, *and* seek after leasing? Selah.

But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.

Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

There be many that say, Who will shew us *any* good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

This is a Psalm of consolation: yet it at the same time teaches us to bear afflictions patiently, to expect the help of God, and to trust in him in all adversities. For that greatest of all wisdom, true and real Christian wisdom, is unknown to the world: which wisdom is, to learn and to know, by daily temptations and by various trials of faith, that God exercises his people in all these afflictions, to the end that they may understand his will; and that his design in exposing them to the all-bitter hatred of the world and the devil, is, that he might save, deliver, comfort, strengthen, and glorify them in a wonderful manner, in the midst of perils, and even in death itself; and that he might make known his conflicting church as being invincible, through faith and the word, in the midst of the kingdom of the devil, against all the storms of the world, and under all the clouds, darkness, and tempests of temptations of every kind.

This Psalm also most severely strikes at all hypocrites and wicked men of every description, who, before the eyes of the world, would have us believe

that they are the only true saints and the people of God; who even say that they worship God, while they know nothing of him; for in the time of affliction, they tremble with cowardly fear, and impatiently mutter in their hearts against God and his holy will; they soon forget his words and his works, and, wickedly forsaking him who alone is able to comfort them, cease from expecting his aid, hate the cross, and seek for human consolation: whereas, there is no sure consolation to be obtained either from friends or from all the resources of human help; for in God alone is sure consolation; and that is all-sure, and eternal; which no creature can take away, either in this world or in that which is to come.

This peace and consolation of God, however, is not like the peace of the world. For, “Know ye, (saith David) that the Lord dealeth wonderfully with his saints:” he casts them down, that he may raise them up; he afflicts them that he may minister consolation unto them; he humbles them that he may exalt them; he makes them sorrowful that he may make them glad: in a word, he kills them that he may make them alive.

The agonizing struggles of the godly, therefore, in this life against sin, and the devil who unceasingly assaults them, and desires to sift them as wheat, are their exercises of faith and patience: from which exercises those that fear God learn more satisfactorily to know his presence;—that he is ever present with them; and that he will never leave nor forsake those that believe in him, but will ever marvellously deliver, save and rescue them from all their deaths and destructions.

But the wicked and hypocrites, how much soever they may talk about God with their lips, yet hate God, and hate this his will in the afflictions of his saints; as it is written in the first commandment—“Unto them that hate me.” And again, as Paul saith—“Whose God is their belly.” These characters wish first, and above all things, that all theirs,—their fortunes, their property, their friends, should be safe; and they trust in their riches and possessions. All such, therefore, deride this doctrine of faith: and if any one should preach to such this patience, and this word of the cross, they would laugh at it, and would boast of their holiness and religion in opposition to those who truly fear God. They would say, ‘What! are we to be taught what

is right by such a fool as you? Are you to teach us what is good, and what the true worship of God is?'

This Psalm also pertains to the First Commandment. It teaches us to trust in God both in prosperity and adversity, and patiently to wait for his help, calling upon him with earnestness and constancy. The subject matter of this Psalm is contained in the third and seventh petition of the Lord's Prayer —"Thy will be done," and "Deliver us from evil:" and also in the fourth, where we pray, "that there may be given us our daily bread:" that is, peace, and all those things that are required unto the sustaining of this life, against all the various evils of poverty, hunger, and want; with which things the devil, in an especial manner, exercises the church of God in this world.

PSALM V.

David prayeth, and professeth his study in prayer.—God favoureth not the wicked.—David, professing his faith, prayeth unto God to guide him—and to preserve the godly.

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth. A Psalm of David.

Give ear to my words, O LORD; consider my meditation.

Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.

For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with thee.

The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; *and* in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

For *there is* no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part *is* very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels: cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield.

This Psalm is an earnest prayer against that most destructive pestilence in the church—false teachers: and all ages, from Cain, the first man that was born, the first hypocrite after the creation of Adam, and the first “man of blood,” have had their Cainish saints, their false prophets, their false apostles, and their fanatic spirits; who have taught their own human dreams, and their own traditions for the word of God, and resolutely contended for their own Cainish holiness, ever burning with an insatiable thirst to drink the blood of the Abels, the true saints: and these Christ has called, in his gospel, “vipers.”

It is at the blasphemies of these against God, and their cruelty towards men, that this Psalm strikes; and openly exposes the persons themselves as most virulent hypocrites, in whose doctrine and works there is nothing but outside daubing, nothing but doubting and disquietude, and a whole slaughter-house of consciences. These characters suppress the true word, the doctrine of faith, and the true worship of God; namely, the worship required by the First Commandment: and there is no end to their rage against those that fear God: they cause horrid devastations in the church, and load her with an infinity of injuries.

Against the destructive influence of these, therefore, David prays in this Psalm;—that it would please God to prevent the persecuting and Cain-like counsels of such hypocrites, and all crafty and blood-thirsty characters of the kind, and, amid all this bitter and furious hatred of the world and the devil, and such an infinity of cruelty in all their adversaries, to defend, comfort, prop up, and protect the godly; to confound the hypocrisy of the wicked, to root out all false worship; to cause the true word and the true worship of God to spread and flourish, and to glorify the true church in the face of the false one, under all the outward daubing and show of the latter.

In the last verse, David appends a most glorious promise;—that, although those who truly fear God are cruelly treated by those hypocrites, it shall yet come to pass that the godly shall at length rejoice that their prayers are heard, and shall see the judgments of God openly fall upon the hypocrites and fanatics, and the true church defended and preserved.

This Psalm has reference to the Second and Third Commandments of the Decalogue, and to the first and second petitions of the Lord’s Prayer; where we pray “that the name of the Lord may be sanctified and glorified,” against the pride and gloryings of such hypocrites.

PSALM VI.

David's complaint in his sickness.—By faith he triumpheth over his enemies.

To the chief Musician, on Neginoth upon Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I *am* weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.

Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly.

This Psalm is a prayer full of those mental exercises that are felt under the deepest and most secret temptations which can only be known by experience, because no words can describe them; for they are those feelings

under which the saints agonize in those bitter and unutterable conflicts which are wholly unknown to the world: they are those feelings, I say, under which they agonize when struggling with sin, the law, and the wrath and judgment of God: all which are experienced in the hours of darkness, while the devil is horribly tempting and pressing in upon them.

These internal fears and terrors, under which all the godly agonize and sweat, will, of necessity, one day wholly swallow up the hypocrites who are destitute of the word. Here it is, that in the godly, there is an unspeakable conflict of justice with sin; the law, and wrath of God, with a confidence in his mercy; and faith and hope, with desperation and despair; though the godly are at length delivered and saved. These terrors the scripture calls in other places, and especially in the Psalms, “the pains of hell,” and, “the snares of death.”

But this Psalm expressly shews in the end, that the sighs and groans of the godly under these agonizing conflicts, these pains, and these straits of soul, shall surely be heard. This Psalm, therefore, and others like it, open to us a view of the heart of David, and afford the greatest consolation to the godly. For they shew, that, although the saints thus deeply agonize under these straits, and under these terrible and open views of the wrath of God, yet, that these temptations which appear to be infinite and endless, shall surely have an end, and that God will never forsake those who fear him, in their terrors and conflicts with death and hell.

On the other hand, the prophet, in this Psalm, with a wonderful zeal of spirit, and with the most cutting sharpness and severity, strikes at all the wicked of the world: and, above all, he condemns all secure hypocrites and pharisaical ministers; calling them, notwithstanding their outward appearance of being saints,—“workers of iniquity;” who persecute all afflicted and true Christians with the bitterness of Cain, and cease not to hate them with all the virulence of Satan; adding grief to their grief, and affliction to their affliction.

‘Away with ye,’ saith he, ‘ye hypocrites. I have learnt that I have a God to go to; but ye are ignorant both of God and of his works. Ye know not what an awful weight the wrath of God is, and how great and soul-refreshing a thing the remission of sins, the knowledge of eternal life, and the

experience of grace, are. Ye worship God with your mouths and with your lips; ye trust in your own righteousnesses and works, not knowing what God and what sin are; and therefore ye are most cruel and most bitter enemies to the word and true worship of God; in which worship, the greatest and most acceptable sacrifice is a spirit thus pressed into straits and afflicted.'

This Psalm has reference to the First and Second Commandment; it contains the agonizing conflict of faith, and calls upon God against the force of sin and death. And it refers also to the first petition of the Lord's Prayer; as do also the other supplicatory Psalms. For, to supplicate and pray, is to sanctify and call upon the name of the Lord.

PSALM VII.

David prayeth against the malice of his enemies, professing his innocency.—By faith he seeth his defence, and the destruction of his enemies.

Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.

O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me;

Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending *it* in pieces, while *there is* none to deliver.

O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy;)

Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take *it;* yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.

Arise, O LORD, in thine anger; lift up thyself, because of the rage of mine enemies; and awake for me *to* the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.

So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes, therefore, return thou on high.

The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity *that is* in me.

Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

My defence *is* of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow and made it ready.

He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

This is a prayer against that common and usual blasphemy with which the world accuses the prophets, apostles, and all others who fear God, as being seditious persons, who destroy the peace and general tranquility of the state: as Shimei bitterly upbraided David, when under that heavy affliction in the time of Absalom, calling him a bloody man, and saying that he had invaded the kingdom of Saul, &c. In the same way the Jews accused Christ before Pilate. And in the same way also now do certain hypocrites,—bishops and other enemies, against all conscience, brand the professors of the gospel with the appellation of ‘seditious persons.’

Against all trials of this kind, which are indeed most bitter to bear, the prophet fights by prayer unto God, calling upon God to bear witness to his innocency. And then, to encourage and comfort all that fear God, he shews, that all who thus pray are heard; and he sets forth himself as an example.

Lastly, he threatens a horrid, sudden, and momentary judgment to those hypocrites and tyrants, who thus rage against the godly with the most bitter hatred: and he signifies that all such shall in the end perish like Absalom, who was cut off and died in a new, sudden, and dreadful way, in the midst of his furious career, before he could accomplish that which he had planned.

This Psalm refers to the second precept in the Decalogue, and to the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM VIII.

God’s glory is magnified by his works, and by his love to man.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith. A Psalm of David.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What *is* man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

This is a prophecy concerning Christ,—concerning his passion, his resurrection, and his dominion over all creatures; and it is thus that the apostle cites it, Ephes. i. with reference to the kingdom of Christ: where he foretels, that the power and might of his kingdom will be invincible against all enemies, how violent soever they may be in their determination to wreak their vengeance:—that is, that he will be victoriously mighty against all the wise and the powerful of the world, and against all hypocrites and pharisaical saints:—that he will be invincible and victorious, I say, not by arms, nor by mighty forces of horse and foot, but by the word of his gospel; which shall be preached by “babes and sucklings,” (that is, by humble men,

men who are weak and contemptible in the sight of the world,) and believed in by his church of poor, afflicted, crying, and complaining creatures:—that this word of the gospel, I repeat, preached and believed in by such poor creatures, shall nevertheless confound all the wisdom of the world, and break and crush under it all the strength of the world, and that no creature power whatever shall impede it in its work and course, but that it shall stand firmer than the heaven, or the sun, or the moon, and shall endure for evermore!

This Psalm pertains to the First Commandment, where God declares that he will be our God: and also to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer, as I have before observed under Psalm II.

PSALM IX.

David praiseth God for executing of judgment.—He inciteth others to praise him.—He prayeth that he may have cause to praise him.

To the chief Musician upon Muthlabben. A Psalm of David.

I will praise *thee*, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High.

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

O thou enemy! destructions are come to a perpetual end; and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment;

And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.

Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble *which I suffer* of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

The LORD is known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God.

For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall *not* perish for ever.

Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail; let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

Put them in fear, O LORD; *that* the nations may know themselves *to be but* men. Selah.

This Psalm is a prophecy: its title is “concerning the beautiful youth:” that is, concerning the children that are born anew in Christ, the people of God and the church of God. For the people and sons of God, and his new-born children by faith in Christ, must be conformed to the image of God’s dear Son, Jesus Christ.

Christians and the true sons of God are variously afflicted in the world; and the blood of the innocents is daily shed by the fury and cruelty of Satan, raging against the word and the works of God. These are the flourishing and undefiled youth, the sons and children of God, of whom the title of the Psalm speaks; who are blameless, without rebuke, and babes in the midst of wolves, and among a perverse generation.

This Psalm has its striking descriptions of persons: and the prophecy which it contains is written in the manner of a thanksgiving: and therefore it may be numbered among the consolatory Psalms. For, (as is generally the case with these spiritual canticles and songs,) the Prophet here speaks in his own person, and in that of all the saints also who are afflicted for the word of God’s sake: all of whom give thanks with wonderful sensations of heart, that God does not forsake his own. But God requires, at times, the tears and the blood of the saints: though he preserves and saves his Church, and renders her invincible against sword or fire, and against all the power of enemies temporal or spiritual, nay, in the midst of blood and death; and he raises her up, as it were, from the blood, slaughter, and ashes of the saints, and makes her flourish again and increase the more, in a wonderful manner, in this and that part of the world: so that many, even of the most bitter enemies, have been converted to the faith, and even a Saul has been made a

Paul; and sometimes also the judgments of God have fallen on the wicked, and they have perished before the eyes of the godly.

This Psalm has reference to the First Commandment of the Decalogue, and to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer, as we have observed concerning the preceding Psalm.

PSALM X.

David complaineth to God of the outrage of the wicked.—He prayeth for remedy.—He professeth his confidence.

Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? *Why* hidest thou *thyself* in times of trouble?

The wicked in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, *whom* the Lord abhorreth.

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after God:* God *is* not in all his thoughts.

His ways are always grievous; thy judgments *are* far above out of his sight: *as for* all his enemies, he puffeth at them.

He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for *I shall* never *be* in adversity.

His mouth is full of cursing, and deceit, and fraud: under his tongue *is* mischief and vanity.

He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily laid against the poor.

He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

He croucheth, *and* humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.

He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see *it*.

Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.

Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require *it*.

Thou hast seen *it;* for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite *it* with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil *man:* seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

The LORD *is* King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.

LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.

This Psalm is a fervent prayer, and contains complaints of the deepest concern against Antichrist, that most atrocious enemy of God and the gospel, who will ever assail and lay waste the church, not by force and tyranny only, but with all the πανѳργία of Satan, all his frauds and impostures, and with an infinite variety of outside deception and hypocrisy.

This “Man of Sin” is descriptively pourtrayed in the present Psalm;—that he really rages against the body with the sword, ruins and destroys souls by his all-crafty and infinite hypocrisy, and with his sweet poison of false doctrines, and imposing forms of worship; but that he has no concern whatever about teaching any one kindly and with gentleness, nor instructing them seriously unto godliness or true comfort, but has his mouth ever full of cursing and deceit.

This we have manifested in the kingdom of the Pope, and in the tyranny of the Romish-church. All those fulminating and thundering excommunications are mere execrations and *cursing*, by which he has wished to make himself, and has succeeded in making himself, formidable even to kings, under the false pretence of the apostolic name, and divine authority. And his ‘*craft*’ and lies are all that infinite and inexplicable variety of hypocrisy and traditions of men; together with all that outward whitewash of holiness, and those deceptive forms of worship, by means of which, and his delusions of masses at one time, and of indulgences at another, this Antichrist ceases not to turn to wicked lucre all things human and divine, under the blasphemous cover and pretext of the name of God.

In the end of the Psalm we have a consolation; which declares that such an abomination shall, in the end of the world, be revealed, and, having been made openly manifest by the sudden judgment of God, shall be rooted out.

This Psalm has reference to the Second Commandment, and to the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer; as have all the Psalms of supplication.

PSALM XI.

David encourageth himself in God against his enemies.—The providence and justice of God.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, flee *as* a bird to your mountain?

For, lo, the wicked bend *their* bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: *this shall be* the portion of their cup.

For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

This Psalm is a complaint against erroneous and fanatical spirits: of which kind are all those who in the present day draw men astray from the pure and true doctrine of faith, and from the true worship of God, (which stands in true faith and the fear of God in the heart,) to hypocrisy, which has always an outward show of something great and wonderful:—these, I say, are the erroneous and fanatics, who thus draw away men like so many birds, and make them fly over to their mountains: that is, make them turn easily over to hypocrisy, and white-wash holiness, which, in outward show, appears to

be something great and wonderful, and a firm rock, whereas it is all a thing of nought.

David ascribes to these characters that which is the peculiar characteristic of hypocrites,—that they arrogantly, proudly, and with high looks, despise and deride the truly godly. What, say they, can that righteous one, that fine fellow of a Christian, that poor miserable creature, do?

In the end we have a consolation that God will certainly hear, and regard the afflicted; that he will be present with them, and show them by manifest tokens of his hand that he will not forsake them, and that he will, by horrible judgment, take vengeance on scoffers of this kind; on these pharisees and other enemies of David.

This Psalm has reference to the Second precept of the Decalogue, and to the first petition of the Lord's Prayer.

PSALM XII.

David, destitute of human comfort, craveth help of God.—He comforteth himself with God's judgments on the wicked, and confidence in God's tried promises.

To the chief Musician upon Sheminith, a Psalm of David.

Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with* flattering lips *and* with a double heart do they speak.

The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaketh proud things;

Who have said, with our tongue will we prevail; our lips *are* our own: who *is* lord over us?

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* puffeth at him.

The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.

This is a prayer containing a heavy complaint against them, who, introduce human doctrines instead of the word of God, and who, afterwards, by various new traditions and forms of worship disturb the church, and fill all things with a white-wash show of religion, and with the outward daubing of pharisaism and hypocrisy, so that wicked men and hypocrites reign on every side, as the last verse complains. For when human doctrines have once invaded the church, they go on to rage far and wide, and spread in all directions like a cancer; there is no end to their corruption and destructive influence; they take possession of all things and wonderfully vex and torment consciences: so that the number of the true saints and of those that truly fear God is few and small indeed: of this the infinite variety of papistical hypocrisy affords a manifest example.

But we are consoled and comforted under all these afflictions by the consideration that God always raises up in his church, sometimes in this place and sometimes in that, his salvation; that is, his word and gospel; which, while the prophets, apostles, and other ministers throughout the world, boldly and plainly teach against all heresy, they detect and bring to

light false doctrines, and overturn all false worship; for where the salvation of God is, (that is, the saving word of Christ and his gospel) it burns up and consumes, like a suddenly-kindled fire, all the chaff and straw of human traditions, and delivers oppressed consciences.

This, however, never takes place without afflictions, and the cross in various forms. But as gold and silver are proved by the fire, so the true knowledge and purity of the word is not preserved in the church but by means of the truly spiritual and godly, who for the word's sake are exercised without and within by Satan, with various temptations: for these, like gold, are proved in the fire, and thus grow daily and flourish in the knowledge of the gospel, and the great things of God.

This Psalm refers to the second and third precept of the Decalogue, and to the first and second petition of the Lord's Prayer.

PSALM XIII.

David complaineth of delay in help.—He prayeth for preventing grace.—He boasteth of divine mercy.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

How long shall I take counsel in my soul, *having* sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God; lighten mine eyes lest I sleep the *sleep* of death;

Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; *and* those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

This is a prayer full of the sighings and groanings of an afflicted heart in the hour of darkness, and almost overwhelmed, under that darkness, with the extreme of grief and sorrow, and driven to the greatest strait of mind. Of which sorrow the spirit of sadness himself, the devil, is the author, who casts the unwary into these temptations and perturbations in a moment, when he finds them unarmed with the sword of the Spirit, the word of God; which unarmed state he himself causes by turning away our eyes from the promises and the word of God, to look at the incredible ingratitude and iniquity of the world, at the perplexed variety of offences, and at the greatness of the perils which must be undergone for the sake of God's word and of his holy name. For it cannot be but that even a man of a sound mind must be thrown into tribulation when he considers with what infernal arts, with what stratagems of deceit, and with what bitter and Cainish hatred, Satan and wicked men oppose themselves to the word of God; and then, what fallings away and what monstrous instances of ingratitude there are among those who pretend to be with us; all which offences Satan raises up through the instrumentality of those who are unwilling to appear not to be followers of godliness.

But the prayer of the church has great power; it breaks through and victoriously overcomes all hatred, all perils, and all snares, how craftily soever they may be laid; and faith is more powerful than any violence or storm of temptation. "This (saith John) is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." And this Psalm gives us an example of that faith which enables us to stand fast in the midst of death, and not to doubt that God is able, and will deliver us from our terrible straits, and comfort us after all our fears; and which teaches to believe that we shall struggle through all our distress victoriously, though it may appear to be endless, if we do but turn ourselves away from all dark and dismal appearances of

things, lay hold of that which is true and real, and lift ourselves up against the weight that lays upon us, by resting in the consolation of the word of the Lord: as James saith, “Is any afflicted, let him pray.”

This Psalm also refers to the second precept, and to the first and last petition of the Lord’s Prayer; where we pray “Hallowed be thy name,” and “Deliver us from evil.”

PSALM XIV.

David describeth the corruption of a natural man.—He convinceth the wicked by the light of their conscience.—He glorieth in the salvation of God.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

The fool hath said in his heart, *There* is no God. They are corrupt; they have done abominable works; *there is* none that doeth good.

The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God.

They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.

There were they in great fear: for God *is* in the generation of the righteous.

> Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD is his refuge.
>
> Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

This Psalm is a prophecy; and it also teaches us, that all human doctrines and works without faith are an abomination in the sight of God; and that the God of all such hypocrites (of which kind are the pope and his papists) is their belly; for they serve their belly, not God or Christ, and devour widow's houses.

But such hypocrites, although they have always in their mouth the name of God, and boast of the law and the works of the law, know not what the true worship of God is, but always hate and persecute the name and word of God, but the true doctrine, concerning faith and the fear of God, they will not hear.

Against such characters as these we must fight by prayer; which prayer will certainly be heard, as is intimated in the last verse of this Psalm, which promises the kingdom and dominion of Christ. For this Psalm especially strikes at those seemingly holy pharisees, those teachers of the law, who, before the coming of Christ, by enforcing works and the righteousness of the law, were cruel torturers, and tormented men's consciences. And this Psalm promises that wished-for day of Christ, and the redemption that should be wrought by his coming. For the gospel was revealed from Zion, and the Spirit was poured out upon the apostles at Jerusalem.

This Psalm has reference to the First and Second Commandment: for it gloriously exalts the word of God and promises the day of salvation, that is, of Christ: but it rebukes hypocrites who despise the true worship of God, and his faith and fear, and who serve not God but their own belly. And it refers also to the first and second petition of the Lord's Prayer: where we pray, "Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come."

PSALM XV.

David describeth a citizen of Zion.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not.

He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.

This Psalm strikes at the hypocrites who say that holiness stands in the pretended works of the law of God, or in the vain and foolish works of human invention and tradition; and it teaches us how to understand the law of God rightly, and to live godly and righteously. It shows us that we are to walk in the spirit and to mortify the desires of the flesh. For the sum of all godliness is this;—to love and worship God with a pure heart by faith, and then, to direct our lives for the good of our neighbour; and to avoid all those things which militate against these two; that is, to shun all hypocrisy and

pretended holiness, which militates against both faith and love: for such an one is ignorant of the true worship of God, and neglects all truly good works, which should be done for the benefit of his neighbour.

It has reference to the Third Commandment of the Decalogue, concerning keeping holy the sabbath day, which is done when we hear and learn the word. And it refers also to the third petition of the Lord's Prayer.

PSALM XVI.

David, in distrust of merits, and hatred of idolatry, fleeth to God for preservation.—He sheweth the hope of his calling, of the resurrection, and life everlasting.

Michtam of David.

Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.

O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my Lord: my goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

But to the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent, in whom *is* all my delight.

Their sorrows shall be multiplied *that* hasten *after* another *god;* their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

The LORD *is* the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places;* yea, I have a goodly heritage.

I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons.

I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

This is a prophecy concerning the passion and resurrection of Christ; and the apostles quote it, Acts ii. and xiii. as having a striking reference to Christ.

This is a glorious Psalm and a precious jewel among all the Psalms on this account,—because it shows forth in clear words that all that splendid and magnificent worship of the law of Moses, its sacrifices, its sabbath worship, its circumcision, in all which the Jews so unceasingly boasted, is done away with by the gospel; for in the fourth verse, David plainly says, that those who follow works and the righteousness of the law, follow strange gods and idols: and he shows that the Jews, although a sacred people, should be rejected, and another people chosen, even a people who should believe in Christ, who were the true elect, inheritance, and peculiar people of God.

This Psalm also has reference to the First, Second, and Third Commandments; for it foretels a new glory of God, a new work and word, and that new kind of worship which was to be revealed to the world: and it refers also to the first and second petitions of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XVII.

David, in confidence of his integrity, craveth defence of God against his enemies.—He sheweth their pride, craft, and eagerness.—He prayeth against them in confidence of his hope.

A Prayer of David.

Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* not out of feigned lips.

Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited *me* in the night; thou hast tried me, *and* shalt find nothing; I am purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress.

Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept *me from* the paths of the destroyer.

Hold up my goings in thy paths, *that* my footsteps slip not.

I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and hear* my speech.

Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee*, from those that rise up *against them*.

Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.

From the wicked that oppress me, *from* my deadly enemies, *who* compass me about.

They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.

They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

Like as a lion *that* is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.

Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down; deliver my soul from the wicked, *which is* thy sword:

From men *which are* thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, *which have* their portion in *this* life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid *treasure* they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness.

This Psalm is a prayer against false teachers, and those very delicate saints, that is, hypocrites, who by their human doctrines, call men off from the word of God, and hate and persecute the truly godly teachers. These are the characters whom Paul also calls “enemies of the cross of Christ:” for they are not willing to suffer anything for God’s sake, but shun the cross; but make a pretext of the name and worship of God, and under all the artifices of their hypocrisy, seek nothing else than earthly advantages, honors, wealth, the favour of men, and the pleasures and gratifications of the world. Hence David calls them, in the last verse but one, ‘men of this world,’ and ‘men of this life.’ Of this kind also are all those animals of the belly in monasteries, those cumberers of the earth, the monks, and lazy priests.

This Psalm also has reference to the Second and Third Commandments, and to the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, where we pray "Hallowed be thy name."

PSALM XVIII.

David praiseth God for his manifold and marvellous blessings.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David, the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said,

I will love thee, O LORD, my strength.

The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower.

I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness *was* under his feet.

And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.

At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail *stones* and coals of fire.

The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail *stones* and coals of fire.

Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings and discomfited them.

Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.

He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.

They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

For all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.

Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.

For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.

For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.

As for God, his way *is* perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he *is* a buckler to all those that trust in him.

For who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?

It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

He maketh my feet like hinds' *feet* and setteth me upon my high places.

He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.

Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.

I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them; neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.

Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.

They cried, but *there was* none to save *them: even* unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; *and* thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.

The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.

The LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people unto me.

> He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.
>
> Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.
>
> Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, in which David gives thanks to God (as the title of the Psalm shows) because of his deliverance from all his enemies. And this Psalm I should divide into four parts, for David had combatted with four kinds of enemies—King Saul, the neighbouring nations, his son Absalom, and his seditious subjects.

At the beginning of the Psalm, in the first six verses, David describes the greatness of his perils, his distresses and his straits in the midst of so many and great afflictions, out of which the Lord delivered him, “The sorrows of hell (saith he) compassed me about, &c.”

Then in the seventh verse, after the manner of the prophets, he alludes in his song of praise to the deliverance out of Egypt, and to those mighty works at Mount Sinai and in the Red Sea; intimating, that as God then powerfully delivered his people from the midst of death, so, he also more than once had been delivered by the powerful arm and the high hand of God, again, as it were from the hand of Pharaoh, and from the midst of surrounding death.

And then again, when he says verses 16, and 17, “He delivered me from my strong enemies and from them that were mightier than I,” he alludes to King Saul, who had persecuted him with hostile hatred and bitterness for the word of God’s sake, because he was chosen from on high to be King and to be his successor.

At verse 28, he celebrates the goodness of God who stands by the humble and those who are despised by the world and defends them against the

proud and the mighty: as he did in giving David the victory over Goliah, the Philistines, the Amalekites, and other nations.

At verse 34, he intimates something respecting his third and domestic adversary his son Absalom, who, on that account, was by far the more dreadful and atrocious enemy.

Then at verse 42, he gives thanks to God who so wonderfully stood by him against the crafty counsels and snares of the seditious, of which kind was Siba and, in the time of Absalom almost the whole of Israel. For this most excellent and most godly king had many national and domestic enemies, and seditious citizens; so much so, that, as he himself here says, many gentile nations were far more kind and obedient to him than his own people.

Therefore any afflicted one, especially if in magisterial office, may use this Psalm in giving thanks to God for his deliverance out of various perils and distresses which fall upon those who govern the state, or who are set over the Church.

And if any one wishes to understand the Psalm allegorically, David signifies here Christ; Saul signifies the Jews; the nations that persecuted David, the tyrants of the world who set themselves against the Gospel; Absalom, heretics who proceed out from us but are not of us; the seditious subjects, outside-show-Christians who sound forth Christ with their mouth, but in their heart are far from him: from all which this afflicted David, that is, Christ and those who are Christians, are at length delivered.

This Psalm belongs to the second precept of the Decalogue, and to the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XIX.

The creatures show God's glory.—The word his grace.—David prayeth for grace.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language *where* their voice is not heard.

Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun;

Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple:

The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes:

The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

More to be desired *are they* than gold; yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb.

Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

Who can understand *his* errors! cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins:* let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.

This is a prophecy concerning the preaching of the Gospel to every creature under the whole heaven wherever the wide earth extends. “Day unto day, (saith David) uttereth the word;” that is, ‘from day to day;’ or, day and night shall the Gospel be propagated by the voice of the apostles and the ministers of the word, farther and farther; and that, not only in Judea but every where in all the earth, and in all languages throughout the world.—And says David, as by the life-giving light of the Sun, all things in nature are illuminated, recreated, and cherished: so this new light, this voice of the Gospel shall illumine the world, and, by communicating the Spirit, shall revive and purify the hearts of men, and shall lift up and comfort distressed consciences.

Here also David intimates, that the old law which was the ministration of death was to be done away with; and that the Gospel was to succeed, which should be the ministration of life and of the Spirit; and which should be a word sweet and lovely, illumining the eyes and purifying the heart.

This Psalm belongs to the Third Commandment; for it shews us what is the true Sabbath, namely, the day or time, in which the Gospel should be preached throughout the whole world and received by those who should believe it.

PSALM XX.

The Church blesseth the King in his exploits.—Her confidence in God's succour.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.

Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.

Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice. Selah.

Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed: he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

They are brought down and fallen; but we are risen and stand upright.

Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

This is a prayer for kings, rulers, magistrates, and all who sustain that most heavy burthen of governing the state:—that God, in such momentous

concerns, to which all human diligence and wisdom are unequal (as even heathen rulers have confessed from their own experience), would stand by magistrates when exposed to the hatred of all, to their secret councils and plans of deceit; and would keep all subjects in their duty, and give his blessing in the preservation of a good and happy constitution, and public peace; especially when Satan with horrible hatred against God and the works of God, is endeavouring to destroy the constitutions of kingdoms, and to confound all things with slaughter and blood-shed.

Those great and eminently spiritual men who produced this and the like Psalms, plainly saw that such great and important matters could not be managed and governed by any human wisdom or human counsels; and therefore they wished to pen forms of prayer of this kind for the safety of magistrates and transmit them to posterity. For such prayers as these were especially necessary for the people of God at that time, when David and other godly rulers after him, were continually exercised with new enemies and new afflictions, and those the most severely distressing.—Therefore all Kings and Rulers are fools who do not seek for, and expect, the happy government and the success of their affairs from heaven.

This Psalm belongs to the second commandment, as do all the other supplicatory Psalms; for it contains a calling upon the name of the Lord. And it belongs also to the third petition of the Lord's Prayer, where we pray that the will of God, not of the devil, may be done.

PSALM XXI.

A thanksgiving for victory.—Confidence of further success.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord: and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!

Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

He asked life of thee, *and* thou gavest *it* him, *even* length of days for ever and ever.

His glory *is* great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

For the king trusteth in the LORD; and, through the mercy of the Most High, he shall not be moved.

Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies; thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

For they intended evil against thee; they imagined a mischievous device, *which* they are not able *to perform:*

Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, *when* thou shalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy strings against the face of them.

Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: *so* will we sing and praise thy power.

This is a prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ;—that his kingdom shall be temporal and eternal. The beginning of the Psalm gloriously predicts that it shall come to pass that this king and this people shall rejoice in this kingdom, and that the glory of it shall be great. But you must understand that all this will be, not before the world or according to the flesh, but in God. For Christ entered into glory through the flesh and by the cross.

This Psalm foretels also that this kingdom, that is, the Church of Christ, although afflicted before the world, shall be enriched with spiritual blessings and glorified; and that this word of grace and the remission of sins, this joyful and all-sweet Gospel shall be diffused abroad among all nations, and that the godly and those that believe, shall rejoice and be glad, and exult in it with a full and perfect joy, which no creature shall be able to destroy or to take away.

On the other hand, David shews that the Jews who opposed this counsel of God, and the whole of their kingdom should be destroyed by the awful judgment of God, “Thou shalt make them (says he) to turn their back;” that is, because that people opposed themselves to the Gospel, and crucified Christ, thou shalt afflict them with heavy calamities; and, having rejected the people destroyed their kingdom, and having done away with, and abrogated the whole of their law and worship for which they so furiously fight, thou shalt reduce them to a miserable slavery, so that they shall be oppressed under a foreign yoke and laws, and shall thus suffer the punishment due to their sins.

This Psalm belongs to the first commandment, and to the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer: for it foretells of a people that should not be under the law of Moses, but in a kingdom of rejoicing and thanksgiving, and it speaks of a new manner of worship.

PSALM XXII.

David complaineth in great discouragement.—He prayeth in great distress.—He praiseth God.

To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so* far from helping me, *and from* the words of my roaring?

O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the night-season, and am not silent.

But thou *art* holy, O *thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

They cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,

He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

Be not far from me, for trouble *is* near; for *there* is none to help.

Many bulls have compassed me: strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

They gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

But be not thou far from me, O LORD; O my strength, haste thee to help me.

Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

Save me from the lion’s mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Ye that fear the LORD, praise him: all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.

All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the LORD; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

For the kingdom *is* the LORD'S; and he *is* the governor among the nations.

All *they that be* fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him and none can keep alive his own soul.

A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the LORD for a generation.

They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

This Psalm is a kind of gem among the Psalms that contain prophecies concerning Christ and his kingdom, and it is peculiarly excellent and remarkable. For here, if anywhere, it may be said that David does not seem to be delivering a prophecy of the future, but a history of the past; a history of circumstances that took place within his own sight and knowledge; for his expressions concerning Christ are not at all more obscure than those of Peter or Paul, or any other of the Apostles: and he speaks of Christ being nailed to the tree, and of the piercing of his hands and his feet, as if the whole had taken place before his own natural sight.

This Psalm contains those deep, sublime, and heavy sufferings of Christ, when agonizing in the midst of the terrors and pangs of divine wrath and death, which surpass all human thought and comprehension. And I know not whether any Psalm throughout the whole Book contains matter more

weighty, or from which the hearts of the godly can so truly perceive those sighs and groans, inexpressible by man, which their Lord and head Jesus Christ uttered when conflicting for us in the midst of death, and in the midst of the pains and terrors of hell. Wherefore this Psalm ought to be most highly prized by all who have any acquaintance with these temptations of faith, and these spiritual conflicts.

Let Epicureans despise these things: examples of this kind will be more precious to the truly godly and spiritual, whether they be found in Christ himself, or (as St. Peter saith,) in our brethren that are in the world, than all the treasures and riches of which the world can boast.

David as I said, describes most clearly and expressively the sufferings of Christ, so much so, that you seem to see the circumstances to take place before your eyes. And as he so clearly pourtrays the forerunning sufferings of Christ, so does he with equal plainness set forth the glories which followed them; for in the end of the Psalm he shows that Christ should be delivered from the mouth of the lion and of the dog, and from the midst of death and sufferings, and should, through his resurrection wrought by divine power, be glorified; that his Gospel should be preached, not only among that people and in that kingdom, such narrow limits, but throughout all the nations and kingdoms of the world; that the fat ones of the earth, that is the rich and powerful of this world, and the poor also, should be converted unto Christ; that his Church should be eternal, and his posterity infinite; and that as King he should be adored throughout the whole world, that his name should be praised and celebrated throughout all ages, and his kingdom endure for ever, and remain invincible against all the kingdoms of the world, and against all creatures.

The Psalm belongs to the first commandment of the Decalogue, for it foretels a new worship of God; and it has reference to the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XXIII.

David's confidence in God's grace.

A Psalm of David.

The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

This Psalm is a remarkable offering of thanks to God for the gift and reception of the word: and it contains the description of a godly heart acknowledging how incomparable and unspeakable a blessing and gift of God the knowledge of his word is. It also gloriously declares and extols the greatness of the goodness and mercy of God in leading us in the right way, and in lifting us up and consoling us under every temptation, while hypocrites are left to walk in their own crooked ways.

Under a beautiful similitude he compares himself to a sheep, in seeking, (if perchance it has strayed) saving, defending and feeding which, the faithful

shepherd spares no labour nor anxiety. And as, under a good and watchful shepherd, the sheep have fattening pastures, and wholesome brooks and fountains; so do the godly find all these same pastures for their hearts in the word which God has provided for them.

David alludes in this Psalm to the table and shew bread, and to the balsam and the oil of gladness. For God will feed and comfort the Ministers of the word, and the hearers, and will gladden them with his cup though they are made sorrowful by the world.

He calls the word of God a shepherd's staff, refreshing waters, green pastures, that by all such similitudes he may show that true salvation, settled peace, and sure and eternal consolation are established in men's consciences by the word of God only.

This Psalm belongs to the Third Commandment, and to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer.

PSALM XXIV.

God's lordship in the world.—The citizens of his spiritual kingdom.—An exhortation to receive him.

A Psalm of David.

The earth *is* the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

This *is* the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of glory shall come in.

Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

This Psalm is a prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ to be spread and extended throughout the whole world by the Gospel.

By a striking apostrophe David turns himself to the kings, princes, and wise ones of the earth, and the men of power and authority, whom he calls after the genius of the Hebrew language, the ‘gates of the world.’ Remember, (saith he to such,) that the earth is the Lord’s, he is Lord of all. It was he that gave you your kingdoms. He has set up his Christ as King over all, whom if ye adore and acknowledge not, ye shall perish together with your kingdoms, and shall be dashed in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

He exhorts such to acknowledge themselves sinners: for these powerful ones, these pharisees and these wise ones of the world, being blinded with a

conceited opinion of human wisdom and righteousness, are above all others enfuriated against the Gospel: for when the kingdom of grace and of the remission of sins is preached; when this Christ is declared and proclaimed by the Gospel to be the only King of eternal peace, the only victorious King over sin, death, and the devil; then these tyrants and powerful ones of the world immediately burst out with their cry of pride “Who is this King of Glory? Who?” As if they should say, what! Shall those poor abject fishermen, those dross of the earth teach us? Shall they, instead of the law of Moses, and instead of the religion which we received from our forefathers, force upon us this new worship of God, and this King of theirs who was hanged upon the cross? Shall they persuade us to believe such dreams as these?

This Psalm, therefore, at the same time intimates that this kingdom of Christ should not be corporeal or earthly, nor of such a kind as should destroy political governments: but a kingdom in which the preachers of it should bring into subjection unto Christ the world and the kingdoms of the world by the word and the Gospel.

To this kingdom (says David) kings and rulers shall oppose themselves and shall crucify the King and Lord of Glory, and shall persecute the Apostles and Ministers of the word: but he nevertheless shall break through all kingdoms, and in defiance of every opposer shall enter into the world and reign by the Gospel in the midst of his enemies: he shall give to his Apostles a mouth and wisdom which none of their adversaries shall be able to gainsay or resist: and while the mightiest kingdoms of the earth, as Daniel saith, shall be moved and destroyed, this eternal king shall endure for ever and be truly manifested to be the Lord of victory and of glory.

It has reference to the First Commandment of the Decalogue, and to the first, second, and third petitions of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XXV.

David's confidence in prayer.—He prayeth for remission of sins, and for help in affliction.

A Psalm of David.

Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed; let not mine enemies triumph over me.

Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies, and thy loving-kindnesses; for they *have been* ever of old.

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

Good and upright *is* the LORD; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way.

All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it *is* great.

What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose;

His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.

Mine eyes *are* ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I *am* desolate and afflicted.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

Look upon mine affliction, and my pain: and forgive all my sins.

Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.

O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

This is a prayer in which the prophet prays, with wonderful fervency of heart, to be strengthened in the faith and in the love of the Word, although he should have on this account great and bitter enemies in the world: that is, that he may not be broken down in mind by the afflictions, nor by the greatness and multiplicity of his own encompassing infirmities when he saw that Epicurean hypocrites despised the true religion and the true word with so much confidence and secure presumption, as if they were things in which it was a disgrace for men of a sound mind and a liberal education to be in the least engaged.

Ah Lord (saith David) preserve and glorify thy name and thy word. Let us (saith he) who are thus derided, spit upon, and, for thy sake, well nigh overwhelmed in the midst of so many afflictions and so many offences, not be confounded, but let us expect thy consolations. Let those haughty hypocrites and despisers be confounded both before God and men, who, on account of their carnal wisdom and powers, and riches, and other things of this world which they admire and value, so despise thy word and thy worship, that they deem it a disgrace to have such things in their thoughts. Our eyes (saith he) are unto thee O Lord? Do thou, if there be any infirmity in us, pardon it. Keep us in the knowledge of thy holy word and of that mystery of thine which is hidden from the world, and stand by us in our great straits and perils.

This Psalm belongs to the Second Commandment, and to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer.

PSALM XXVI.

David resorteth unto God in confidence of his integrity.

A Psalm of David.

Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* I shall not slide.

Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

For thy loving-kindness *is* before mine eyes; and I have walked in thy truth.

I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

I have hated the congregation of evil-doers; and will not sit with the wicked.

I will wash mine hands in innocency; so will I compass thine altar, O LORD?

That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men;

In whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.

But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.

My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

This is a prayer unto God, containing a complaint against hypocrites who want to be justified by the works of the law, and who always persecute the true doctrine of faith and condemn its supporters for heretics. David calls these characters dissemblers, heretics, bloody men, wicked persons. For although they boast of great sanctity, yet their hearts are full of hatred and bitterness against God, and craft and iniquity against their neighbour: as Christ says of all such pharisees when he rebukes them by Luke, “Ye are they who justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts.” For such worship God with their lips, but their heart is far from him: they worship him not in truth, but do all for gain.

In a word they serve not God but Mammon and their own belly: as Paul saith to the Philippians. And this Psalm saith, “And their right hand is full of bribes.” Yet their hypocrisy has a wonderful outside appearance. And

indeed the false church who has power and dominion on her side, has always a more wonderful and showy appearance than the true, which lies hidden under the various forms of the cross.

Therefore we have need to pray in no slothful manner that God would preserve us in his true Church, and would not suffer us to be mingled and carried away with these characters, lest we have our portion with such hypocrites, whose end, though they may for a time make a show before the world, shall be destruction, and whose glory shall be turned into confusion: as we have seen it exemplified in the Pope and his kingdom.

This Psalm belongs to the Third Commandment, and to the first and second petitions of the Lord's Prayer: for it speaks of the true worship and kingdom of God.

PSALM XXVII.

David sustaineth his faith by the power of God, by his love to the service of God, by prayer.

A Psalm of David.

The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this *will* I be confident.

One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me upon a rock.

And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in this tabernacle sacrifices of joy: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

When thou saidst, seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help: leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

This Psalm is a thanksgiving, containing also a prayer and consolation against false teachers.

David having been taught and exercised by such great afflictions, by so many perils and sorrows, and by such fiery conflicts, for the word's sake, and having been supported therein against the devil, and the world, now finds a greater truth and reliance on God, and is more encouraged and fortified against all his enemies.

The Lord (saith he) is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? That is, the Lord hath so often and so wonderfully comforted me under, and so powerfully delivered me from, various darknesses and storms of temptations, that he will not leave nor forsake me in time to come. If God, then, be for me, who can be against me? If God uphold me, what power or violence of the enemy can cast me down, or who can destroy me?

I will not fear thousands of enemies (says he) though they should raise up war against me. All that I am anxious about is this one thing;—that I may remain and dwell in the house of the Lord; that is, in the true church, and among those where the word of God is purely and sincerely taught and learned. If I can hold fast this jewel I am rich. For if I hold fast the word of God, no terrors, how great soever they may be, nor even death itself, can destroy my light and my life; that is, my sure and eternal consolation. But if I love not the word, no human consolations, how great soever they may be, will be able to afford me that light and life.

David directs the whole of this Psalm against hypocrites and false teachers, who are so soon carried away from the word, and who teach human things and seduce men's consciences. Here he calls these characters false witnesses; that is, such as nothing can shame, and who know not how to blush. The audacity of these inexperienced characters is prodigious, who, without any calling, and without the word, boastingly make use of the name of God and seduce men, and do infinite damage both to the state and to the church. For we generally find it to be the case, that the more inexperienced such characters are, and the more devoid of spiritual things, the more easily they rush forth to teach: and such as these are those fanatical spirits who afterwards raise up divisions and sects against the truly godly.

This Psalm belongs to the First and Second Commandments, and to the first and second petitions of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XXVIII.

David prayeth earnestly against his enemies.—He blesseth God.—He prayeth for the people.

A Psalm of David.

Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, *if* thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.

Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief *is* in their hearts.

Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours; give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.

Blessed *be* the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

The LORD *is* my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

The LORD *is* their strength, and he *is* the saving strength of his anointed.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

This is a prayer of David, which in his time he used against Saul, and others like him; but especially against all those Cainish hypocrites who in word pretended to desire peace, but burned with secret hatred in their hearts. Such a viper as this was Absalom, his son, against him; and such an one also was Joab against Amasa and Abner, 2 Kings iii. David, therefore, fearing lest the same things should be laid to his charge, prays, “Draw me not away with the wicked, nor with the workers of iniquity.”

We may use the Psalm against tyrants and fanatical spirits; for in this way are tyrants and persecutors of the word wont to pretend peace in word, and yet secretly plan counsels of slaughter and murder all the while. And so also fanatical spirits and all false prophets boast with ‘big swelling words’ of the word of God, and tumultuously cry out that they seek the glory and the worship of God, and promise nothing but divine and heavenly things, and yet seek all the while their own advantage and their own glory, destroying souls, and walking about in sheep’s clothing, while they are inwardly nothing but ravening wolves.

This Psalm belongs to the second and third precept, and to the first and second petition of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XXIX.

David exhorteth princes to give glory to God, by reason of his power, and protection of his people.

A Psalm of David.

Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters.

The voice of the LORD *is* powerful; the voice of the LORD *is* full of majesty.

The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire.

The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of *his* glory.

The LORD sitteth upon the flood: yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

This is a prophecy concerning the spread of the gospel throughout the whole world, and concerning the preaching of the name of Christ before

kings and nations, and the children of Israel.

“Give unto the Lord, ye mighty;” that is, ye kings, ye rulers, and ye wise and rich ones of the world, ye Pharisees and rabbi, acknowledge your wisdom, righteousness, and all your excellent political virtues, your works of the law, and all that is high and excellent before men, to be abomination in the sight of God; repent ye and believe the gospel, that ye may quit yourselves under that one King and Lord, Christ, and his church and kingdom, and, by faith and the wisdom of God, acknowledge Christ, this son of God, to be God; for God, by a manifest work of his power, in the beginning sent a flood upon the whole world, and destroyed all flesh; and the same God, by his gospel and by baptism, will drown and mortify the flesh, that is, the old fleshly Adam, by a new and spiritual baptism: that as many as are baptized into Christ, being crucified according to the old Adam, may be raised up together with the second Adam, and become new men and new creatures.

He calls, by a figure, the kingdoms, nations, and powerful cities of this world, forests; the wilderness of Kadesh, confused places of many waters, places for hinds to calve, &c. These confused places the Lord has revealed and discovered, and brought to the light of the gospel.

This Psalm refers to the third precept, and to the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XXX.

David praiseth God for his deliverance.—He exhorteth others to praise him by example of God’s dealing with him.

A Psalm and Song at the dedication of the House of David.

I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

For his anger *endureth but* a moment; in his favour *is* life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy *cometh* in the morning.

And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, *and* I was troubled.

I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.

What profit *is there* in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness:

To the end that *my* glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

This is a remarkable Psalm, and truly Davidical. Here, with a wonderful fervency of heart, he gives thanks unto God for having delivered him from spiritual temptations and unspeakable conflicts with Satan, and for having refreshed and comforted his heart when brought down to such a state of weakness, when broken with such views of misery, terror, and wrath, and

when almost overwhelmed with the greatness of his temptations. “Thou hast (saith he) brought my soul up from hell:” that is, thou hast enabled me to overcome the violence and fury of Satan, which never could be overcome by any human power.

This Psalm contains, as you see, those sublime and heavenly feelings of one rejoicing in the Holy Ghost, because God has turned such deep distress, such overwhelming terrors and fears, so many tears and sighs from the very belly of hell, into a joy that has refreshed and healed the soul that was just before burning with the fiery darts of the devil, and with the very flames of hell.

The Psalm contains also a most sweet consolation: “His anger (says David) endureth but for a moment: in his favour is life;” that is, God, although he exercises the godly in these deep temptations, and these intense agonizings of soul, yet he does not so try them with the intent to slay them; nor does he afflict, in order to destroy his people; nor is he the God of misery, of terror, and of death, but the God of peace and of life, the God of joy and of consolation.

This Psalm belongs to the third precept and to the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer.

PSALM XXXI.

David, shewing his confidence in God, craveth his help.—He rejoiceth in his mercy.—He prayeth in his calamity.—He praiseth God for his goodness.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.

Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.

For thou *art* my rock and my fortress: therefore, for thy name's sake, lead me and guide me.

Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me; for thou *art* my strength.

Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.

I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities;

And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my foot in a large room.

Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; mine eye is consumed with grief, *yea,* my soul and my belly.

For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.

I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind; I am like a broken vessel.

For I have heard the slander of many: fear *was* on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my God.

My times *are* in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.

Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, *and* let them be silent in the grave.

Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

Oh how great *is* thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

Blessed *be* the Lord; for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city.

For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications, when I cried unto thee.

O love the LORD, all ye his saints: *for* the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

This Psalm is a thanksgiving, and contains also prayers and consolations. And the way to arrive at a right understanding of the deep feelings and

circumstances contained in this Psalm, is to know that this Psalm is the general and continual cry of Christ and his members, groaning and sighing under the cross and various afflictions. For the Church is a congregation of afflicted, poor, and tried persons. The wicked men of the world, the rich, the despisers of all religion, and the atheistical Epicureans have, as Christ saith, their consolation; while the godly, the spiritual, and those that believe, being exposed to the horrible hatred and envy of the devil, are exercised and distressed through all their life, inwardly with fears and terrors in their hearts, and outwardly by persecutions, blasphemies, and contempt for the word of God's sake; and yet, from all these they are delivered: for, as St. Paul saith, "Where afflictions abound, there consolations abound also."

This Psalm belongs to the second and third precept, and to the first and third petition of the Lord's Prayer.

ADMONITORY OBSERVATIONS.

And here I will cease to show, like a schoolmaster, to which precept of the Decalogue, and to which member of the Lord's Prayer each Psalm belongs; for from what I have already said upon these points, my seriously-disposed readers will be enabled to observe and judge for themselves. All the supplicatory Psalms belong to the second precept and to the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, for they honour and sanctify the name of the Lord. And the Psalms which teach, console, and give thanks for deliverance, belong to the second and third precepts of the Decalogue, and also to the first and third petitions of the Lord's Prayer: for they teach us how, in truth, to keep holy the Sabbath day, how to worship God with the true and highest worship, and how to offer the most acceptable sacrifice; namely, the sacrifice of praise. And most of the Psalms refer to all those three precepts of the Decalogue, and to all those petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

My reason for giving these hints respecting the commandments, and petitions of the Lord's Prayer, to which the different Psalms belong, in this my brief summary of the contents of the Psalms, is this: to show that the whole Scripture flows from the Decalogue as from a fountain; and that in the Ten Commandments and in the Lord's Prayer are contained the sum and substance of all theology or divinity; and that nothing can be taught in the Church more sublime or more excellent than these two parts of Divine revelation. For we see how the greatest prophets and Moses himself, drew their great and divine discourses from the first, the second, and the third Commandments; and, in a word, from the whole of the Decalogue; how diligently they weighed every thing and made it harmonize with this; and how they continually delivered new things, yet all with reference to this great general Decalogue. Hence indeed it was that Moses, that most eminent man of God, gave this precept, "These words (says he,) thou shalt meditate, when thou standest up and when thou liest down; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children," &c.

In all their discourses and writings, therefore, the prophets and apostles allude and refer to the Decalogue or Ten Commandments. From these Ten Commandments flow all the doctrines, and all the godly living of the saints: for there is no holiness or godliness of life or true religion, apart from the Ten Commandments: because they are the never-failing inexhaustible fountain of all wisdom, righteousness, and of all perfection in the saints. Nor is there any of the complaints uttered by the Prophets or Apostles, nor will you find any other in all their discourses, but that against false prophets, hypocrites and false teachers, who, disregarding, nay, totally despising and spitting upon, the true and highest worship of God, (which is that of the first Commandment, that requires faith and the fear of God,) teach their own human dreams, which have nothing whatever to do with the Decalogue, and do not at all belong to it.

Against these characters it is, (as we see in Moses himself, in Isaiah, in Jeremiah, and in the epistles of Paul and Peter,) that the Prophets and Apostles complain bitterly, and that with tears; against these it is that they cry aloud and wage war with all their powers; that they might preserve this true and highest worship of God, and might destroy from among men, hypocrisy and all human doctrines and fanatical dreams.

PSALM XXXII.

Blessedness consisteth in remission of sins.—Confession of sins giveth ease to the conscience. —God's promises bring joy.

A Psalm of David, Maschil.

Blessed *is he whose* transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.

Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

Thou *art* my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are* upright in heart.

This Psalm is a very remarkable and valuable one. St. Paul quotes it in that profound discussion of his, Rom. iv. where he teaches us what sin is, and how we obtain the remission of sins, and, in a word, how we are justified before God: for it is in this matter that all hypocrites so deeply err: because human reason cannot imagine that sin is accompanied with such great and such infinite guilt before God, and with a guilt that no human powers nor works can wash away. In a word, it knows not what sin is, and thinks that it can be washed off, and taken away by works.

Whereas David here plainly says, “For this shall every one that is godly pray:” and he says also, that no one can be justified or sanctified before God, unless he acknowledge himself to be a sinner, and know that he is to obtain the remission of sins without any works and merits, by the mere mercy of God, and by a free and gratuitous imputation. In a word, our righteousness is not placed in us, or in our works; but is such, that the remission of our sins is truly and rightly called the free REMISSION of our sins: and also that our sins are truly said ‘*not to be imputed*,’ but ‘*to be covered*.’ ‘Blessed (says David) are they (that is, such are accepted before God, and are truly righteous and reconciled to God) whose transgressions are forgiven and whose sins are covered.’

Here David says, in plain words, that all the saints are, and still remain, sinners; and that they are justified and sanctified in no other way than this;—God of his free mercy, for Christ’s sake, is pleased not to impute their sins unto them, nor to judge them, but, in mercy, to forgive them, and cover over their sins, and forget them. And although in many other respects there

is a great difference between the saints and the wicked, yet, in this point there is no difference,—they are all equally sinners, and all equally sin every day. But the sins of the saints are not imputed unto them: they are covered and forgiven on account of their faith in the promise of free grace. Whereas the sins of the wicked are imputed unto them, and they are exposed to the eye and to the awful judgment of God. The wounds of the latter are not bound up: but the wounds of the former are bound up, and are cured with healing plasters and oil: and yet they are both truly wounded and truly sinners! But of this, more in its place; and I have said much upon it in others of my writings.

PSALM XXXIII.

God is to be praised for his goodness, for his power, and for his providence.—Confidence is to be placed in God.

Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: *for* praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery, and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the LORD *is* right: and all his works *are done* in truth.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

For he spake, and it was *done;* he commanded, and it stood fast.

The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

An horse *is* a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by his great strength.

Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy:

To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he *is* our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

This Psalm is a remarkable thanksgiving, where the prophet calls upon all the saints, and those that fear God, to rejoice and give thanks unto God for his preserving the church so wonderfully in the midst of the world, in the midst of the kingdom of the devil, and exposed to so many evils and perils on every side,—to give thanks unto God, I say, who never forsakes the godly, and those that fear him, when tossed to and fro on such waves of temptation, nor suffers them to be overwhelmed, nor to perish, though conflicting in so perilous a manner.

God, says David, created the heaven and this whole universe of things by his word. “He spake, and they were made:” therefore he is omnipotent, and nothing is difficult to him: and hence he can deliver his own from the midst of death, and from the midst of hell. And then, again, his goodness and his truth are exceedingly great and infinite. He regardeth and heareth the afflicted, he is ever present with them in the hour of temptation: and, as David says in another Psalm, “The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart.”

Therefore God is not only willing to help and succour the godly, but to succour them even as a father would his children; even as that gracious promise which is comprehended in the First Commandment, declares “I am the Lord thy God:” that is, I will be the Lord thy God: I will be thy life, thy salvation, thy shield, thy defence, thy eternal strength, thy eternal salvation, and consolation; thy eternal and infinite good, against all the evils that can come upon thee:—For this is to be God!

In the first place, therefore, David proclaims with great fulness of expression this unequalled wisdom and power of God,—that God has in his hand all the hearts and thoughts of all men, kings, rulers and potentates throughout the whole world; that he turns them and orders them just as he will; that he governs and overrules all their deliberations and counsels, and directs them all according to his own mind and pleasure. “The Lord (saith David) bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought:” that is, he wonderfully breaks off and disappoints the counsels of the wise, of the

kings, of the potentates of this world: and suddenly defeats all the attacks of the enemies against his people and his church, how sure soever of success they may appear, and he turns all their destruction upon the heads of the enemies themselves, so that they cannot perform their enterprises nor accomplish the devices which they plot against the righteous, but they fall themselves into the pits which they have digged, and there perish and rot.

This is no small consolation to those that fear God, amidst all that bitterness and Satanic cruelty which the tyrants of this world execute against the godly, when they fearfully threaten that they will fill all things with blood if they do not deny Christ and his gospel. These make no end of their threats, because they are as if they would terrify God himself, and hurl Christ down from the throne of his majesty. Whereas God, all the while, holds in his power the thoughts and imaginations of every one of them, and also their life and the breath that is in their nostrils: and therefore such are subverted and destroyed in a moment before they have accomplished their designs. Only meditate upon all the examples of this since the beginning of the world. What became of all the counsels of the people of Sodom against Lot? Where is that great monarch and terror of the world, Sennacherib? What (to come to our own times) has become of Pope Leo X. and all the other bitter enemies of the word?

PSALM XXXIV.

David praiseth God, and exhorteth others thereto by his experience.—They are blessed that trust in God.—He exhorteth to the fear of God.—The privileges of the righteous.

A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad.

O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

They looked unto him, and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed.

This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.

O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is* no want to them that fear him.

The young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

Come, ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

What man *is he that* desireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, that he may see good?

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Depart from evil, and do good, seek peace, and pursue it.

The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

Evil shall slay the wicked; and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

This Psalm is a remarkable thanksgiving, and is nearly of the same import with the preceding, as the title of the Psalm, and the sixth verse show: for David here sets forth himself as an example and proof before all the godly, to show, that God always hears the prayers and supplications of the godly, and them that believe, and does not despise the sighings of the afflicted.

David here, after a majestic opening of the Psalm, promises that he will set forth the sum of all godliness. “What man is he (saith the Psalmist) that desireth life, and loveth many days. Keep thy tongue from evil, &c.” Here, he requires before all things, the fear of the Lord, and the worship of the First Commandment: that, cleaving closely to the word, we might avoid hypocrisy and lying doctrines, and that we might truly trust in God, endure his will, and not rebel or murmur against him. And then, that we should live

in peace with our neighbour, not rendering evil for evil, but blessing even our adversaries and our enemies, and, as much as in us lies, living in peace with all men, whether they be good or evil.

For thus does the counsel of God stand, which cannot be changed or altered, —that the saints should live in affliction in this life. Wherefore, if thou wilt be a godly man, if thou wilt cleave unto God, prepare thy soul (as David here saith) to temptations, to the cross, and to afflictions: for thus it is immutably decreed of God, (as he says again afterwards) “Many are the afflictions of the righteous.” And again, this firm and eternal counsel of God stands also immutably fixed,—that it is God’s will to deliver the saints from all these evils, and so wholly and faithfully so, that not even the least bone of them shall perish: nay, in the resurrection, and in glorification, every bone shall return to the body with greater perfection than ever; as Christ says in his Gospel, “Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”

What then is this light and momentary tribulation, in comparison with that eternal weight of glory, which shall be revealed in us? For although the bones and members of the saints are, above all others, cruelly scattered and broken, burnt in the fire, and left to rot in graves; yet, even though they be thus sown in ignominy, they shall be raised in glory: they shall be quickened again with all their limbs and bodies; and all their bones shall be restored; and the just shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father. For that maddened and insatiable fury of the devil, shall not be able to mangle the bones of the saints, or so to extinguish the church as that it shall be annihilated altogether. The death, and the cruel bruising of the bones of the saints, shall be temporary only: but their glorification in God, shall be for ever and ever.

And observe, how remarkably this Psalm speaks of the resurrection, and also concerning angels. For this is the first Psalm which we have yet treated on, that speaks of angels. This Psalm shows that they are ministers and helpers to the saints, being sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation. David shows that they are not only present with us, but that they most diligently and unceasingly watch over us, and stand up for our defence; that they encamp round about us, and fight for us perpetually, as if in open battle, that they may defend us against the horrible violence,

and infinite snares of Satan and his members. All which things are the greatest consolation to the godly, and them that believe.

This is all confirmed by the example of the prophet Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 16. when he said concerning the ministration of angels, “Fear not, for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them.” The prophet makes an allusion here, after the manner of the prophets, who drew all their matter from Moses, as it were from a fountain. Moses says of Jacob, Gen. xxxii. when he feared the cruelty and rage of his brother Esau, “And the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, this is God’s host.” So it is said, that angels came to Elisha, and encamped round about him; as we have it in the present Psalm.

PSALM XXXV.

David prayeth for his own safety, and his enemies’ confusion.—He complaineth of their wrongful dealing.—Thereby he inciteth God against them.

A Psalm of David.

Plead *my cause,* O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.

Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

Draw out also the spear, and stop *the way* against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.

Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase *them*.

Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

For without cause have they hid for me their net *in* a pit, *which* without cause they have digged for my soul.

Let destruction come upon him at unawares, and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction, let him fall.

And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

All my bones shall say, LORD, who *is* like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge *things* that I knew not.

They rewarded me evil for good *to* the spoiling of my soul.

But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

I behaved myself as though *he had been* my friend *or* brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth *for his* mother.

But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: *yea*, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew *it* not; they did tear *me*, and ceased not:

With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

LORD, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.

I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.

Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: *neither* let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against *them that are* quiet in the land.

Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, *and* said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen *it*.

This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O LORD, be not far from me.

Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cause, my God and my Lord.

Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.

Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify *themselves* against me.

Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

This is a prayer wherein David complains bitterly against those worst of all men who are found about palaces, and who flatter kings and rulers, and, for their own gain and advantage, tickle their ears with adulation in order to please them; and at the same time, speak evil of the innocent, enflame the powerful against the preachers and professors of the word of God, endeavour to suppress the truth, and cause awful injuries both to churches and to states. Thus such characters as these traduced David before king Saul, though they were men to whom David had rendered the greatest services, for whom he had often most fervently prayed, and in endeavouring to save and protect whom he had brought upon himself much misery and distress.

The matter of this Psalm may be a great consolation to us when we see the doctrines of truth and the gospel of God to be hated and traduced before kings and rulers, with the most impudent lies, and the most virulent speeches of the enemies of true piety, nay of every thing that is honest and becoming man. Thus, a certain man, remarkable for the fear of God, once told me that, at the tenth year of the August Assembly, by the impudent and malicious report of some present, nothing was talked about in the pope's palace concerning Luther, but, 'that he denied the Lord Christ, that he despised the Virgin Mary, and contemptuously set aside baptism, the sacraments, and all religion; and that he winked at theft, adultery, and other open sins, and permitted them to pass by with impunity.' These forgers, however, of this manifest lie were put to shame openly when Charles V. himself was present and heard me when I made a confession of my doctrine; and then also, the devil, the father and fountain of lies, was himself confuted. Thus are these wretches wont to traduce the godly in this malicious manner, and to defame them, while they themselves in the mean time enjoy all the secular benefits of the gospel. Of this stamp there are thousands before us in our day.

Hypocritical (or halting) mockers (saith David), who halt between two desires,—who want to serve both God and men,—conspire together against me. For these when they have been raised at the expense and loss of the godly, and have golden riches and honours, trample those very godly ones under their feet. Such ungrateful wretches as these are all hypocrites and fanatical spirits, who serve not the Lord or Christ but their own belly. And

just such now are all those who enjoy and squander all our property, and persecute us into the bargain.

In a word, as it happened to Christ our head, so it is now with the church and all who fear God. He that eateth my bread, saith Christ, trampleth me under foot, and that for the hire of thirty pieces of silver. These are those hypocrites who consider their own belly above every thing else, whose unbounded and insatiable cruelty is ever raging against those that fear God; as David here complains.

PSALM XXXVI.

The grievous estate of the wicked.—The excellency of God's mercy.—David prayeth for favour to God's children.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord.

The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, *that there is* no fear of God before his eyes.

For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.

The words of his mouth *are* iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good.

He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way *that is* not good; he abhorreth not evil.

Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens; *and* thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds.

Thy righteousness *is* like the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

How excellent *is* thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

O continue thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

This is a Psalm containing a very necessary doctrine, and marks whereby heretics, false-teachers, and fanatical spirits may be discovered. And in the end he begs of God with a wonderful fervency that he may be guarded against all these pestilences. And after he had at the beginning of the Psalm exactly described these characters in their own colours, he takes courage, in the middle, himself, and comforts all those that fear God; and tells them, that, although Satan by his instruments roars and rages against the church, yet, that the word of God shall remain and the kingdom of God stand unmoved, against all the violence of Satan, and against the power of all the kingdoms of the world.

“Thy righteousness (says David) is like the great mountains: and thy judgments are a great deep;” that is, as the rocks and mountains which God has fixed, no power can overthrow;—and as the great deeps of the sea are inexhaustible, so, thy word O Lord stands firm, and no human power can overthrow or subvert the truth: and although all the gates of hell and all the

attempts of men and devils should set themselves against thy word and will, yet with thee is the fountain of life; that is, in thy house, where thou dwellest by the word in the midst of enemies: that fountain and river of life will still remain; that is, this word of thine, whereby afflicted consciences will be raised up and revived.

And here, if any where, the prophet expressively describes those false teachers. He *first* of all breaks out against such, with the most fervent zeal at the beginning of the Psalm. ‘Certainly, (saith he) if there be any set of men, evil men, these are of all the worst: for they are men of an abandoned impudence, virulent, and destitute of the fear of God, and of faith in him; they are secure despisers of God and religion; they are proud, arrogant, precipitate, audacious, and prepared for every thing that is bad.’

In the *next* place, they approve and commend no one but themselves. They hate all others most bitterly, and traduce and defame them: they excel in this one thing only,—in adorning and setting off themselves, in using boasted self-praising words, in contemptuously despising others, and in arrogating to themselves only the spirit and worship of God, and the appellation of the true church.

In the *third* place, their doctrines are most pernicious, and filled with lies: for they fight against the doctrine of faith and of grace, and deceive men by their outside daubing, and their hypocrisy.

In the *fourth* place, they are rashly precipitate, and will endure no monitor; for they are harder than any iron or any adamant: and if you do not applaud all they say and all they do, they immediately rage and make a tumult with all the fury of Satan.

In the *fifth* place, they go out and diffuse their doctrines as widely as possible; and their speech, as Paul saith, eateth like a canker. For, for the most part, such men have an audacity above all sincere and good men, and a determinate spirit to accomplish all their own purposes; and they are restless, vehement, hot-headed, and so furiously and wickedly aim at the accomplishment of their own purposes, that you would think they would overturn everything else.

And *lastly*, they hostilely persecute all those who do not subscribe to their creed. And all these enormities they perpetrate with a wonderfully unconcerned and insensible security; as if they were all the time pleasing God and doing him service.

PSALM XXXVII.

David persuadeth to patience and confidence in God, by the different estate of the godly and the wicked.

A Psalm of David.

Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

Trust in the LORD, and do good: *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him, and he shall bring *it* to pass.

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day.

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

For evil-doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

For yet a little while, and the wicked *shall* not *be;* yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it *shall* not *be*.

But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

The LORD shall laugh at him; for he seeth that his day is coming.

The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, *and* to slay such as be of upright conversation.

Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

A little that a righteous man hath *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

The LORD knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be for ever.

They shall not be ashamed in the evil time; and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD *shall be* as the fat of Lambs: they shall consume, into smoke shall they consume away.

The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

For *such as be* blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be* cursed of him shall be cut off.

The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD; and he delighteth in his way.

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him with* his hand.

I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed *is* blessed.

Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein for ever.

The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

The law of his God *is* in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.

Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it*.

I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree.

Yet he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace.

But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

But the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD; *he is* their strength in the time of trouble.

And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them; he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

This is a Psalm of consolation, which exhorts us to patience in the world; and shews us that we should not be angry with, nor mutter against God, when we see it to be well with evil men, and evilly with the good. This indeed is often a cutting offence, and exceedingly galls the weak ones; concerning which also Habakkuk complains, chap. i. For when the saints think that all things turn out prosperously and successfully to the wicked, and all things adversely and unsuccessfully to those that fear God, they appear, as to human judgment, to be dealt hardly with indeed.

We see an infinity of malice and ingratitude in the world, and an extreme contempt of religion; a contempt of all good learning, and of all virtue and honesty. Of this we have examples sufficiently manifest, in our time, among the powerful and noble of this world, and also among citizens and peasants, who all wish to have the liberty of doing what suits their pleasure. To these impious despisers of the word of God all things turn out prosperously: they

abound in riches, and they are raised to honours: while those that fear God are afflicted with hunger and nakedness, and are despised, derided, and contemned. And moreover, they endure the most bitter hatred of the devil and the world for the word's sake; they can scarcely breathe under their afflictions, and they are often bound with fetters and imprisoned. Here, not to give way to anger and indignation; here, not to turn epicureans and deny God, is a wisdom beyond all that is human: is a wisdom that is altogether spiritual and divine.

The sum therefore of this Psalm is,—suffer; that is, learn patience. Every evil must be overcome by bearing it with patience. Cast thy cares upon the Lord. Do not murmur; be not angry; wish no ill to the wicked. Leave the management and government of all to God: he is a righteous judge.—This is the all-necessary doctrine that is delivered to us in this Psalm: a doctrine wholly unknown to the wise of this world. And here the Holy Spirit comforts the godly in a various, and at the same time, most fatherly and affectionate way; and that with the most great and gracious promises. And then, as an example, David himself says, "I have been young, and now am old, yet saw I never the righteous forsaken." And then he concludes with threatenings against the wicked. But to show forth this patience in the midst of so much malice and perverseness of the world, is the power and operation of the Holy Spirit only, and is found only in spiritual men: for all human reason, and all the wise ones of the world, cannot judge otherwise, than that it is unworthy of God, and unjust, that it should be well with the evil, and ill with the good.

PSALM XXXVIII.

David moveth God to take compassion of his pitiful case.

A Psalm of David to bring to remembrance.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.

There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither *is there any* rest in my bones because of my sin.

For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

My wounds stink *and* are corrupt because of my foolishness.

I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.

For my loins are filled with a loathsome *disease:* and *there is* no soundness in my flesh.

I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

LORD, all my desire *is* before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.

My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.

My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.

They also that seek after my life lay snares *for me:* and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.

But I, as a deaf *man*, heard not; and *I was* as a dumb man *that* openeth not his mouth.

Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth *are* no reproofs.

For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O LORD my God.

For I said, *Hear me;* lest *otherwise* they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify *themselves* against me.

For I *am* ready to halt, and my sorrow *is* continually before me.

For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.

But mine enemies *are* lively, *and* they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow *the thing that* good *is*.

Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me.

Make haste to help me, O LORD my salvation.

This is a fervent prayer to God, in which David complains with wonderful groanings, that he is stricken and bruised with the sense of his sin; that he is distressed and straitened in spirit under the deepest sorrow; and that he can see nothing and feel nothing but wrath from heaven, and the terrible lightnings, arrows, and threatenings of God; and in a word, death, and hell itself; and that this great distress exhausts not only all the moisture, all the strength, all the blood, and all the marrow of his frame, but fills him with an unspeakable alarm and perturbation, and makes him pant and sweat with agony; so that the intenseness of his feelings, destroys the natural colour and appearance of his face, and affects his whole body. For to feel in reality the burthen of the conscience under a sense of sin, is a distress and terror exceeding all other distresses and terrors. And these deep temptations of the godly are greatly increased by those wicked ones without, who cease not to call them heretics, seditious persons, and murderers. For these hypocrites, while they boast in the teeth of the godly that they are the true saints, and the true church, and the real people of God, (and God in the meantime, which is often the case, not bringing in help and consolation) the godly are deeply grieved and afflicted, as if God was their enemy because of their sins.

But this Psalm teaches us constantly to hope for, and expect the help and consolation of God, and still to fight against all such hypocrites by prayer. And the prophet, in the midst of the agonizing conflict of this temptation, sustains and lifts up himself by taking courage from the divine promise. And here he maintains his cause, (which is not the cause of men but of God,) as a strong fortress against Satan and his cause, and here again flows in the consolation of faith, &c. And so also we ought to pray always, and in no temptation yield to sorrow of mind, even though we are sinners, and though Satan shakes us with the horrible terrors of sin: for grace is stronger than sin!

PSALM XXXIX.

David's care of his thoughts.—The consideration of the brevity and vanity of life, the reverence of God's judgments, and prayer, are his bridles of impatience.

To the chief Musician, *even* to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

I was dumb with silence: I held my peace, *even* from good; and my sorrow was stirred.

My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue,

LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is; that* I may know how frail I *am*.

Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth, and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

Surely every man walketh in a vain shew; surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up *riches*, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

And now, LORD, what wait I for? my hope *is* in thee.

Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish.

I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst *it*.

Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.

When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I *am* a stranger with thee, *and* a sojourner, as all my fathers *were*.

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

This is a consolatory Psalm, containing also a prayer of the prophet, in which he prays that his mouth may be bridled, that he might not break out into blasphemy and murmuring when he sees the wicked to prosper in the world, and most proudly to despise God and his word, and to think of nothing but amassing riches, &c.; and when he sees, on the contrary, that the godly are afflicted with various temptations without and within, and conflicting both with the world and with the devil.

Rather (says he) teach me, O Lord, to know mine end; that is, that there will be an end to my life at length; that is, teach me to magnify the future, which does not yet appear. Guard me from that perilous security of the wicked in which they give themselves up wholly to this world, and devote themselves to coveting the things thereof, and to pride and ambition, as if they should live here for ever. For it is often a great vexation to the godly, and indeed the prophets themselves complain of it,—that the wicked and the evil abound in every kind of luxury, wallow in all the pleasures of wine and feasting, and live their whole lives in security, strangers to trouble and affliction, while the godly are afflicted, and tempted, and distressed both from without and from within.

But the end shows that the godly are happy; and the wicked, with all their perishable happiness, truly miserable. Hence the prophet saith, “And now, Lord, what is my expectation, (or what wait I for?)” As if he had said, shall I be always thus afflicted! Shall I be utterly overwhelmed? Will these temptations continue to return upon us for ever? No! (says he) the Lord is

my expectation: that is, I shall find in the end, after all these temptations and death, an eternal life, a reconciled God, the pardon of all my sins, and even in this world, I shall not be forsaken. But the wicked, after their short life, will find nothing but death,—death eternal!

PSALM XL.

The benefit of confidence in God.—Obedience is the best sacrifice.—The sense of David's evils inflameth his prayer.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings.

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

Blessed *is* that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me;

I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart.

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

For innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward, and put to shame, that wish me evil.

Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame, that say unto me, Aha, aha!

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, the Lord be magnified.

But I *am* poor and needy: *yet* the LORD thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

This Psalm is a prophecy, and the voice of Christ himself; where Christ himself says, that he was heard in the midst of his sufferings, when crying and groaning in the midst of the agony of death. And it is also a beautiful example and consolation for the whole church, and for all the members of

Christ,—that God will never forsake any of those that believe in him, when agonizing in the same manner, if they cry unto him, and call upon him in the midst of the horrible pit and terrors of death.

The great prophet David, and others like him, published forth Psalms of this kind, concerning the greatest and most important things of Christ's kingdom and people: for the expectation of the Messiah and of Christ, was a very important matter among the people of God, and therefore David makes the person of Christ himself speaking.

Christ here plainly says, that he is the one and only person who fulfils the law, and does the will of God. Here he excludes all others and their works. "In the volume of the book (says he) it is written of me." That is, the promise of blessing and grace, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and that in the seed of Abraham all the nations of the earth should be blessed, were concerning me, &c. Thus he rejects and abrogates the whole law, with all works, sacrifices, and forms of worship; because, by them, the will of God is not fulfilled.

All our works and sacrifices, therefore, are rejected. Christ here saith, that he is the sole and only one who pleases God, and fulfils his will. By these words, therefore, he promises the New Testament; where there is no righteousness of the law, but the righteousness of faith, preached in the great congregation: that is, in the whole world, in all nations. There is no preaching of the righteousness of the law, which only makes men proud pharisees and hypocrites, who have not their hope fixed in God, or in the promise of grace, but in their own righteousness, false holiness, and legal hypocrisy.

PSALM XLI.

God's care of the poor.—David complaineth of his enemies' treachery.—He fleeth to God for succour.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

Blessed *is* he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

Mine enemies speak evil of me; when shall he die, and his name perish?

And if he come to see *me*, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; *when* he goeth abroad, he telleth *it*.

All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.

An evil disease, *say they*, cleaveth fast unto him: and *now* that he lieth, he shall rise up no more.

Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up *his* heel against me.

But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.

Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

This Psalm is a prophecy; where, after the manner of the Psalms, Christ himself speaks, and with a wonderful feeling, complains of his domestic traitor Judas, and of those cruel dogs which vented their fury on the poor; by which dogs, he means those that crucified him. He prays that God would judge his cause, and set him before his face: that is, that God his father would comfort him in his suffering, and raise him from the dead; that, being exalted, through the cross and death, to the right hand of God, he might be glorified with eternal life and victory.

This is a great and unspeakable consolation to all the godly; where, in the fourth verse, the Son saith, “heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.” He confesses himself to be a sinner before God his Father, whereas he was without sin, and no guile was found in his mouth. Here, therefore, he stands as our priest, as a victim and sacrifice for sin, bearing and suffering for our sins, as if they were his; and he bore the guilt of them.

In the beginning of the Psalm he comprehends the sum of the whole matter, in a very powerful expression. “Blessed (saith he) are they who consider the poor and needy:” that is, blessed, yea, eternally blessed are they, who are not offended at the once weak, crucified, and condemned Christ, but who believe the Gospel. For the preaching of the cross is to the Gentiles foolishness, and to the Jews a stumbling-block. And it is the greatest of all offences to the world to preach, teach, or confess, that the once poor, crucified, and condemned Christ, now sits at the right hand of the divine Majesty, and that he is on high, the Lord of all, both in this world, and that which is to come. For with this Christ, that people of the Jews were so offended, and they so ran upon and stumbled on this rock of offence, that,

to this day, they remain cast out and scattered, and wander about over all the face of the earth, without a priesthood, and without a kingdom!

PSALM XLII.

David's zeal to serve God in the temple.—He encourageth his soul to trust in God.

To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah.

As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where *is* thy God?

When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And *why* art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him *for* the help of his countenance.

O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.

Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

Yet the LORD will command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night his song *shall be* with me, *and* my prayer unto the God of my life.

I will say unto God my rock, why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, where *is* thy God?

Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me; hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance and my God.

This is an ardent prayer to God; evincing an exceeding greatness of spiritual feeling, and an unutterable groaning of the Spirit. Under this similitude of a hart, at the beginning of the Psalm, the Psalmist describes his feelings in the hour of temptation, when he was wholly immersed in the extreme of distress, and absorbed in tears. For in that hour of darkness, the God of life, and peace, and light, and consolation, is not seen; but the sun of all comfort is hidden as it were behind a cloud. Then the hearts of the thus tempted feel nothing but an angry God, and a cruel avenger; and Satan increases these dismal views of misery to a wonderful extent. To these things, moreover, are often added the blasphemies of those who make derision of the afflicted, and assail them with the taunt, “Where is now thy God!”—For the world and the ungodly cannot contain themselves, when they see the saints in calamities; they cannot refrain from taunting and deriding them; from aggravating the distresses of these godly ones, and from exclaiming, in their bitterly-cutting triumph, ‘They hoped in God that he would deliver them. Where is now their delivering God? Where is now their Christ they talk so much about? This is just how such heretics ought to be served.’ For these wicked creatures judge according to the flesh and blind reason; and imagine, that affliction is a certain sign of divine anger against the saints.

On the other hand, they boast of their own afflictions, or any slight adversities which they may meet with, as sufferings for the Lord's name sake, and as martyrdoms and sorrows endured for their apostolic innocence. For those perverse and virulent wretches, those blind leaders of the blind, though they know, yet will not know, that God thus chastens his saints, that he may afterwards comfort them; but not that he may forsake, destroy, or condemn them.

The Psalmist desires, with the greatest fervency of heart, to come unto the house of the Lord, and into the congregation of those that sing and rejoice; to keep holy the sabbath, to celebrate the name of the Lord, and to see the face of the Lord; that is, he has an ardent desire to hear the word of the Lord, that he might thereby be lifted up and refreshed; being well nigh consumed in such a fiery heat of temptation and distress. The house of the Lord is where the word of God, and the promise of grace are preached. And by "the face of God," he means the presence of God; where God, by his word, reveals himself, and his will, and grace, and gives the knowledge of them unto men. This he calls in another place 'God's turning, (not his back but) his face towards us.'

PSALM XLIII.

David praying to be restored to the temple, promiseth to serve God joyfully.—He encourageth his soul to trust in God.

Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.

For thou *art* the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

This Psalm is of the same purport as the preceding; and David uses almost the same expressions. He desires to go into the house of God in the light and truth of God: that is, he desires to be comforted, under his distress and temptation, by the word of God.

PSALM XLIV.

The church, in memory of former favours, complaineth of their present evils.—Professing her integrity, she fervently prayeth for succour.

To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, *what* work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.

In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.

But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.

Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy; and they which hate us spoil for themselves.

Thou hast given us like sheep *appointed* for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen.

Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase *thy wealth* by their price.

Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.

My confusion *is* continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,

For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger.

All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.

Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way;

Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands, to a strange God;

Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

Awake, why sleepest thou, O LORD? arise, cast *us* not off for ever.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face, *and* forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

This is a prayer of the whole people of God; and it is offered up in the person of all the saints; especially of those under the New Testament, whom you here find to be complaining that they are cruelly slaughtered and slain by the wicked nations, by the ungodly men, and by tyrants. For God delivers his saints into the hands of men, as if he had rejected them, or utterly forgotten them. Whereas, he glorified the patriarchs of old, and all those his people from the beginning, by mighty works and miracles in the sight of the nations that opposed them. And indeed all the saints maintain, not their own cause, but God's; and seek, not their own glory, but his: and yet for this very just and holy cause, and for no other reason, nor any other

crime, they are thus torn and slaughtered by exile, by the spoiling of their goods, and, in a word, by death; and are as cruelly treated in the world, as if they were the most wicked of all men, and a mere set of vagabonds and murderers.

In a word, this Psalm is a sighing and groaning of spirit against the weakness of the flesh; which flesh, even in the saints, murmurs against God, because he governs the world with such an appearance of injustice; and is in appearance, an unjust judge, permitting the saints to be afflicted whom he ought to support and comfort, and promoting and exalting the wicked whom he ought to overthrow.

PSALM XLV.

The majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom.—The duty of the church, and the benefits thereof.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil. A Song of Loves.

My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, O *most* mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness *and* righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

Thine arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee.

Thy throne, O God, *is* for and ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.

Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he *is* thy Lord; and worship thou him.

And the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* with a gift; *even* the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.

The king's daughter *is* all glorious within: her clothing *is* of wrought gold.

She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.

I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

This is a prophecy concerning the gospel and kingdom of Christ; and it describes, in many rich and sweet figures and expressions, the spouse of Christ, the church. It describes also Christ, going forth in all his regal pomp; having all royal gifts, a manly and regal form, suavity and grace of speech, a warrior's armour, the splendour of regal dress, and success in war against his enemies, &c.; and also as possessing all kingly virtues,—righteousness, clemency, &c.

And moreover that he may set the kingdom of Christ before our eyes in its sweetest appearance, the Psalmist describes him as having palaces and houses of ivory; a queen, and her attendant virgins; and sons and daughters. All these things are to be understood of the spiritual kingdom of Christ and the church, where Christ is a King, powerful, wise, just, gracious, and victorious; and moreover, a conqueror triumphant; and also rejoicing, preserving, comforting and enriching his own, against sin, the law, and death, &c.

And David here clearly foretels that the law of the Old Testament should be abrogated. "Hearken (says he) O daughter, and incline thine ear, forget also thy father's house: (here he seems to glance at the synagogue): so shall the King have pleasure in thy beauty, and thou shalt worship him;" showing, that there is no true God out of Christ; and ascribing unto Christ truly divine honour; namely, that of the first and great precept,—that is, adoration. And in the sixth and seventh verses, he plainly calls him God: thus making him an eternal king, the foundation of whose throne is in righteousness: who justifies all that believe in him, and takes away sin, and destroys death and hell. And no one can be an eternal king that dies not, but he that is truly and naturally God!—of which we have spoken at large elsewhere, in our more full commentary on the 45th Psalm.

PSALM XLVI.

The confidence which the church hath in God.—An exhortation to behold it.

To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah. A song upon Alamoth.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Though the waters thereof roar, *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacle of the most high.

God *is* in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, *and that* right early.

The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

This is a thanksgiving which the people of Israel sang, at that time, for their divine blessings, and miraculous deliverances, because God had powerfully defended Jerusalem, situated in the midst of hostile nations and enemies, and guarded it against all opposing kings, and against all the snares and hostile attempts of the surrounding nations; and had preserved it in peace against all the furious counsels of war and bloodshed. Hence, after the manner of the scriptures, David calls all that present flourishing state of his kingdom's affairs, the river of God, whose streams should never be dry; which was but a small rivulet, in comparison of the great streams and torrents of the sea by which he was surrounded, (that is, by those immense kingdoms and islands of the nations, and Gentile kings,) which although they were great, would yet, one day, dry up and disappear, while the river of God should endure for ever.

We sing this Psalm to the praise of God, because God is with us, and powerfully and miraculously preserves and defends his church and his word, against all fanatical spirits, against the gates of hell, against the implacable hatred of the devil, and against all the assaults of the world, the flesh, and sin. So that our little river remains a living fountain; whilst so many heresies, so many tyrants and their doctrines, as so many stinking sewers and sinks, are dispersed, like broken cisterns, and disappear, and are lost for ever.

PSALM XLVII.

The nations are exhorted cheerfully to entertain the kingdom of Christ.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

O clap your hands all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

For the LORD most high *is* terrible; *he is* a great King over all the earth.

He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom he loved. Selah.

God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

For God *is* the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

The princes of the people are gathered together, *even* the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth *belong* unto God: he is greatly exalted.

This is a prophecy concerning Christ; describing the manner of his ascension on high, and showing that he should be King over all. “Sing praises, sing praises unto our King,” (saith he); thereby shewing, that this kingdom of Christ should not be one of that kind that stands in the power of arms, but in the word of praise, and in the singing of thanksgivings. As if he had said, This king, by the word of the gospel only, which is the word of praise and thanksgiving, shall destroy all the power of the adversaries,—the world, and Satan; as the walls of Jericho fell down by the sound of trumpets only, without sword or arms!

PSALM XLVIII.

The ornaments and privileges of the church.

A Song and Psalm for the sons of Korah.

Great *is* the LORD and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, *in* the mountain of his holiness.

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion; *on* the sides of the north the city of the great king.

God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

They saw *it*, *and* so they marvelled; they were troubled, *and* hasted away.

Fear took hold upon them there, *and* pain, as of a woman in travail.

Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

According to thy name, O God, so *is* thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following.

For this God *is* our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide *even* unto death.

This is a thanksgiving almost like Psalm xlvi. For the Psalmist praises God, and magnifies and extols his works, because he had so marvellously defended the city of Jerusalem against the neighbouring nations, and against kings and tyrants; and because he had often delivered it when besieged by the most bitter and the most powerful enemies; while those enemies themselves were driven back in a wonderful manner, and put to open shame; and because he had saved it from infinite perils and destructions, in defiance of the very gates of hell; and had preserved the city, the temple, the word, and the worship of God.

But, more especially, David is here celebrating the truth of God;—that God faithfully fulfils his promise; ‘According to thy name, (saith he) so is thy glory, and so are thy works unto the ends of the earth:’ that is, according as thou hast promised us, “I will be your God,” and accordingly as we have believed that word, so hast thou given us to experience the fulfilment of it;—thou hast been with us, and delivered and defended us; our city and our temple stand in the midst of enemies, as if in the midst of flames, preserved and unhurt.

We sing this Psalm, because God is pleased to preserve his church and gospel against the roaring and hatred of kings and princes; who cease not from attacking them by violence and craft with all their might: and yet, they shall perish and be confounded, and covered with shame, while the gospel shall remain as it was before, unhurt and unhindered.

PSALM XLIX.

An earnest persuasion to build the faith of resurrection, not on worldly power, but on God.—Worldly prosperity is not to be admired.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

Hear this, all *ye* people; give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world.

Both low and high, rich and poor together.

My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

I will incline mine ear to a parable; I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, *when* the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches.

None *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.

(For the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever.)

That he should still live for ever, *and* not see corruption.

For he seeth *that* wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

Their inward thought *is*, *that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling-places to all generations: they call *their* lands after their own names.

Nevertheless, man *being* in honour, abideth not: he is like the beasts *that* perish.

This their way *is* their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.

Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning: and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me. Selah.

Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased.

For, when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him.

Though, while he lived, he blessed his soul: (and men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself.)

He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

Man *that is* in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts *that* perish.

This is a Psalm that instructs us unto faith, and teaches us to trust in God against that great god of this world, who is called Mammon. David here gives a long and striking introduction to the Psalm, that he may excite and wholly arrest our attention. He here sharply rebukes all who trust in the riches and wealth of this world; concerning whom Christ also severely says, “Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation.” Luke vi. 24.

“The love of money, (saith Paul,) is the root of all evil;” and yet the whole world leave the true God and worship this idol; and are actuated more and

more with the furious desire of getting wealth. All men, from the least to the greatest, except those that fear God, are in pursuit of money. Hence it is, that all the prophets exclaim, “For from the least of them, even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness,” Jeremiah vi. 13. And hence also have arisen all those proverbs and trite sayings of the poets among the Greeks and Latins. ‘All things give way to money,’—‘money is the first thing to be sought after; virtue is a secondary consideration.’

But all such admirers of, and slaves to riches are pointed at and exposed in this Psalm; as are also all those who trust in their wealth, nothing of which they can take with them when they die. And here also true faith is highly extolled; by which we trust in God, who can deliver us from death, and give us eternal life and salvation. And death is the time when not only gold, but all creatures put together, cannot save and deliver a man!

PSALM L.

The majesty of God in the church.—His order to gather saints.—The pleasure of God is not in ceremonies, but in sincerity of obedience.

A Psalm of Asaph.

The mighty God, *even* the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God *is* judge himself. Selah.

Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I *am* God, *even* thy God.

I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, *to have been* continually before me.

I will take no bullock out of thy house, *nor* he-goats out of thy folds.

For every beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field *are* mine.

If I were hungry I would not tell thee: for the world *is* mine, and the fulness thereof.

Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most high.

And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or *that* thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.

Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother: thou slanderest thine own mother's son.

These *things* hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether *such an one* as thyself: *but* I will reprove thee, and set *them* in order before thine eyes.

Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear *you* in pieces, and *there be* none to deliver.

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I shew the salvation of God.

This Psalm teaches us, in the teeth of all hypocrites and all the worship of hypocrites, what is true worship, and which are acceptable sacrifices in the sight of God. For hypocrites consider their works, and merits, and sacrifices as of such high value, that they think GOD ought to acknowledge the benefit of their services; and they imagine that he has need of them. Whereas, on the contrary, the Holy Spirit declares with a loud voice by the prophets, what the true worship of God is; namely, that of the First Commandment: which is, to worship God, and adore him; and to acknowledge that we receive all things from his hand, and that all glory is due to him!

Observe, therefore,—there is here clearly expressed, in the plainest words, what is the highest worship of God; and what sacrifice is the most acceptable to him. And we are here briefly told, that the true way and road to God is, to call upon him in the day of trouble, and give him thanks for the infinite benefits which we receive from him; (as the last verse here sings;) for this is truly to "pay our vows unto God, and to offer unto him thanksgiving," (as the 14th verse saith.) These are not those foolish monastic vows, and the like; but that highest of all vows, which the

Decalogue and the First Commandment require; where it saith, “To-day have ye vowed unto the Lord your God: he will be your God:” that is, ye are made the people of God, that ye may have him for your God; and that ye may truly believe in him, call upon him, and cleave unto him alone. Of this those foolish hypocrites and self-imagined saints know nothing whatever.

PSALM LI.

David prayeth for remission of sins, whereof he maketh a deep confession.—He prayeth for sanctification.—God delighteth not in sacrifice but in sincerity.—He prayeth for the church.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

O LORD, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it:* thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

This, among all the Psalms, is a signal and golden one. It contains experiences and feelings truly Davidical; and teaches us what sin is, what the origin of sin is, and how great and awful an evil the fall of Adam was. And also, (which is an excellent part of it indeed,) it shows us how we obtain the remission of sins. For in this Psalm, we have it clearly expressed, that sin is a great and innate evil, and an awful depravation and corruption of nature, in all the powers both of soul and body. Unless, therefore, we are born again by faith in Christ, and are renewed in spirit and made new creatures of God, the sense of the loss of God and of eternal life and salvation is so heavy a burthen, and the power of sin and the sting of death so great, that the conscience is shaken with unspeakable distress and terror; and the anguish that takes hold on it drinks up the very marrow, and bruises and breaks the very inmost bones, until the word of grace and of the Spirit again raises us up and refreshes us; as David here says, “That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.”

But in hearts that are purified and renewed by the Spirit, there is a new light shining; there are new motions and spiritual affections; a sure rest and peace of conscience; a true and full assurance of salvation; a fervent and lively joy of spirit; a rejoicing in God and a peace with him; a heart full of thanksgiving, and a patience under afflictions. Hence those that fear God, those that are born again, if they are at a point concerning the good will of God towards them, are those who can rightly teach and instruct others unto godliness. “Then (says David) will I teach transgressors thy ways;” then will I teach them to call upon and praise the name of the Lord, and to give thanks unto him; and in a word, to worship and adore God truly and aright, to bear patiently the cross and afflictions, and to offer great and glorious sacrifices; (for that is the way in which he here expresses himself, calling “a broken and a contrite heart” the favourite sacrifice of God;) for that is the highest and most excellent worship of God: and he rejects, in plain words, all sacrifices which are offered by hypocrites without *that* sacrifice; which sacrifices of theirs they consider to be the highest acts of worship.

In concluding the Psalm, David begs of God that he would be pleased to build and preserve the city of Jerusalem; that is, the place of the word and

the true worship of God. In the same manner, *we* ought also to pray. “Do good unto Zion, O Lord:” that is, ‘O Lord, thou seest the virulent hatred of hypocrites: Do thou, O Lord, preserve the true church, and the true worship of God in it;’ that is, the worship of the First Commandment. Confound all those who boast of their good works and sacrifices, and who neglect faith towards God, and trample under foot the First Commandment. But preserve and comfort those who adore thee in truth, serve thee, and sacrifice unto thee in the spirit.

PSALM LII.

David, condemning the spitefulness of Doeg, prophesieth his destruction.—The righteous shall rejoice at it.—David, upon his confidence in God’s mercy, giveth thanks.

To the chief Musician, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God *endureth* continually.

Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs, like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

Thou lovest evil more than good, *and* lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.

Thou lovest all devouring words, O *thou* deceitful tongue.

God shall likewise destroy thee for ever: he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of *thy* dwelling-place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

The righteous also shall see, and fear and shall laugh at him:

Lo, *this is* the man *that* made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* strengthened himself in his wickedness.

But I *am* like a green olive-tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done *it:* and I will wait on thy name; for *it is* good before thy saints.

This is a Psalm of consolation; and the title of it shows plainly what are its contents. David is here complaining of Doeg who betrayed him, and who was the cause of much hurt and bloodshed. 1 Sam. xxii.

This Doeg furnishes a type of all those betrayers and blood-shedding hypocrites who are in the halls of kings and princes; and who lyingly, and with hatred, traduce the word of God and the doctrine of truth: of which stamp there are now numbers rising up on every side, who irritate and urge on kings and princes to slay the sincere ministers of the word: such as those in our time, who kill many good men on account of the sacraments and marriage, and make no end of shedding the blood of God’s Abels.

Against the furious cruelty of these men, therefore, this Psalm comforts the godly; and promises them, that such shall not go unpunished, but shall fall under those awful curses mentioned in Deut. xxviii:—that they shall be rooted out of the earth; that their houses shall be destroyed; and that they shall lose both their bodies and their estates; but, that those who fear God shall be preserved; that they shall remain in the house of the Lord; and that they shall persevere in teaching and hearing the word of God, in defiance of the devil and all the wicked.

PSALM LIII.

David describeth the corruption of a natural man.—He convinceth the wicked by the light of their own conscience.—He glorieth in the salvation of God.

To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil. *A Psalm* of David.

The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: *there is* none that doeth good.

God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did seek God.

Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

There were they in great fear *where* no fear was; for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth *against* thee: thou hast put *them* to shame, because God hath despised them.

Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

This Psalm is a prophecy like that of Psalm xiv; and it is a Psalm of instruction. The two Psalms are of the same purport, and contain almost the same words and expressions. In a word, they both cut at hypocrites and self-justifiers, who persecute the sound doctrine and its preachers; and at the close they give a prophetic declaration concerning the gospel, and the kingdom of Christ which should proceed out of Zion.

PSALM LIV.

David, complaining of the Ziphims, prayeth for salvation.—Upon his confidence in God's help he promiseth sacrifice.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us.

Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.

Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

Behold, God *is* mine helper: the LORD *is* with them that uphold my soul.

He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth.

I will freely sacrifice unto thee; I will praise thy name, O LORD, for *it is* good.

For he hath delivered me out of all trouble; and mine eye hath seen *his desire* upon mine enemies.

This is a fervent prayer against the persecutors of the word, who lay plots against the lives of the good, and those that fear God, for the word of God's sake; just like king Saul and the people of Ziph, who lay in wait for the life

of David, on account of the name and word of God, by which Saul was to be dethroned and David made king in his stead. David, therefore, prays, that the vengeance of God might overtake such cruelty and malice.

PSALM LV.

David in his prayer complaineth of his fearful case.—He prayeth against his enemies, of whose wickedness and treachery he complaineth.—He comforteth himself in God's preservation of him, and confusion of his enemies.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil. *A Psalm* of David.

Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

My heart is sore pained within me; and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away and be at rest.

Lo *then* would I wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness. Selah.

I would hasten my escape from the windy storm *and* tempest.

Destroy, O LORD, *and* divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof; mischief also and sorrow *are* in the midst of it.

Wickedness *is* in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

For *it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me: then I could have borne *it:* neither *was it* he that hated me *that* did magnify *himself* against me; then I would have hid myself from him;

But *it was* thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

We took sweet counsel together, *and* walked unto the house of God in company.

Let death seize upon them, *and* let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness *is* in their dwellings, *and* among them.

As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice.

He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: for there were many with me.

God shall hear and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him; he hath broken his covenant.

The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war *was* in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet *were* they drawn swords.

> Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.
>
> But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

This Psalm is a prayer: and although it may in the 10th and 11th verses, be understood of Christ himself, praying against his betrayer Judas, when he says, “If it had been mine enemy that reproached me,” &c. yet, it is manifest to me, that it is a general prayer of the godly against all the craft of insidious and deceitful men, and against the artful Italian flattery of some persons, who are friends as far as their tongue goes, but who have one thing on their tongue and another in their heart, and consider craft and dissimulation in all things to be the highest wisdom; as if they could deceive God also!

They know how to promise, and do promise all things to your face: so that David justly describes them thus, “Their words are smoother than oil:” but when you have turned your back, they blacken your character; and their mouth is more destructive than arrows and coals of fire; and their tongue is a sharp sword, and a drawn dagger. And this is what David complains of in verse 12;—that they deceive effectually with their countenance, their look, and their eyes, and cover, under these fox-like arts, Satanic bitterness and virulence. They eat and drink with you, and pretend to be your friends and intimates, (as Judas did with Christ;) they keep holy days and go to the house of God with you.

This is the reason, therefore, that David so utterly execrates them, and says, “Let them be taken out of the way suddenly, and let them descend into hell alive.” For virulent, outside-show hypocrites, like these, distress the hearts of those that fear God in a manner that is beyond description.

This very judgment which David threatens in this Psalm we see executed, in our day, upon many tyrants and originators of sects; who are taken off in a moment. For this execration is prophetic; foretelling the end of all

hypocrites, who will not listen to those that admonish them in a godly manner, nor regard their advice; as it is expressed in verse 19, “But they (says David) will not regard; they are not changed; nor will they fear God; they go on in their course, till they are taken out of the way suddenly.”

PSALM LVI.

David, praying to God in confidence of his word, complaineth of his enemies.—He professeth his confidence in God’s word, and promiseth to praise him.

To the chief Musician upon Jonathelem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath.

Be merciful unto me, O God; for man would swallow me up: he fighting daily oppresseth me.

Mine enemies would daily swallow *me* up: for *they be* many that fight against me, O thou Most High.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

In God I will praise his word; in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts *are* against me for evil.

They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

Shall they escape by iniquity? in *thine* anger cast down the people, O God.

Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: *are they* not in thy book?

When I cry *unto thee,* then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God *is* for me.

In God I will praise *his* word; in the LORD will I praise *his* word.

In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

Thy vows *are* upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

For thou hast delivered my soul from death; *wilt* not *thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

This is a fervent prayer; in which David complains of Saul and the men of his party, because he was obliged to flee out of the land to the Philistines. So bitterly and hostilely did Saul and the men of his conspiracy persecute David, and plot against his life, that he could be in safety no where. He encourages and supports himself, however, with a constant and undaunted faith. ‘I will glory (says he) in the word of God: for I have a command, a declaration, and a promise of God in my favour: he has declared that Saul shall be dethroned, and that I shall be king. I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Let them gainsay: let Saul and the Saulites oppose and fight against me. Let them say, and say again, that I shall not be king. If God be for me what can man do against me?’

We ought also to pray, after the manner of this Psalm, against tyrants; who unceasingly persecute the word of God and us, and will never suffer us to be at rest. We, however, have that strong and Davidical consolation,—that the word of God is for us, though they unceasingly attack that in us, and

corrupt, pervert, and reproach it; crying out that we are heretics; and arrogating to themselves only, the appellation of the church.

PSALM LVII.

David in prayer fleeing unto God, complaineth of his dangerous case.—He encourageth himself to praise God.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave.

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusted in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until *these* calamities be overpast.

I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth *all things* for me.

He shall send from heaven, and save me *from* the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

My soul *is* among lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are set on fire, *even* the sons of men, whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.

Awake up, my glory; awake psaltery and harp; I *myself* will awake early.

I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people; I will sing unto thee among the nations:

For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

This Psalm is a prayer; in which David again complains concerning Saul, and those around him; on account of whose plots and snares, he was compelled to flee into a cave. It is nearly of the same purport as the Psalm preceding.

We ought to make use of this Psalm also against tyrants, and against sycophants, and certain powerful ones, about the palaces of kings and princes; who persecute us on account of the word and name of God, and persecute our doctrine also; interpreting every thing that we do in the worst sense; and traducing and hating all that fear God.

And David here paints forth the cruelty of these characters; “Their teeth (says he) are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.” Thanks be to God therefore, that he does not forsake his people, but makes their enemies fall into the pit which they themselves have made; so that they are utterly subverted and taken in their own craftiness!

PSALM LVIII.

David reproveth wicked judges, describeth the nature of the wicked, devoteth them to God's judgments, whereat the righteous shall rejoice.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David.

Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

Their poison *is* like the poison of a serpent; *they* are like the deaf adder *that* stoppeth her ear;

Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth; break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

Let them melt away as waters *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to shoot* his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* pass away: *like* the untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun.

Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living and in *his* wrath.

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

So that a man shall say, verily *there is* a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

This is a Psalm of consolation against those hardened heretics, and enthusiastic spirits, who pertinaciously defend their own errors, and stop their ears; and who are so blinded and taken captive, that they can hear no one; but pursue, with headlong precipitation, their own designs, and rush on to the accomplishment of them, like a horse at full speed. And these, as if they would devour the godly, cease not to threaten them in the most terrifying manner.—David, however, here makes use of five beautiful similitudes: under which, he represents their vain attempts, and shows, that those very plots which they lay for others, fall upon their own heads.

1. The sudden inundation with which they make their attack, rushes with such violence and roaring, that it seems as if it would tear up and carry away every thing before it: and yet it flows by, and suddenly disappears!

2. Their arrow, fixed on the bow, threatens certain destruction: but, in a moment, the bow and arrows are broken together, and the deadly weapon accomplishes nothing!

3. The snail puts forth his horns from his shell, as if he were just going to do some deadly and mighty injury: but those horns prove to be soft and ineffectual; they do nothing: nor have the power of doing any hurt whatever.

4. An imperfect conception, disengaged by abortion, makes the womb of the mother to extend, as if there were a perfect conception, and as if something great would at length come forth: but before it is brought forth, it perishes, and never sees the sun.

5. You may see a branch of buck-thorn, (which is the most prickly kind of thorn,) filled with young sharp points and prickles, and seeming as if it would one day tear many in pieces at once, and maim persons on every side of it; but, before the prickles are fully ripe and strong, the whole bush is, perhaps, cut down by the woodman, and he burns it in the fire, and reduces it to ashes!

So, just according to these similitudes, those enemies of God and truth, plan, plot, and breathe out dreadful things; but like a mighty flame, where there is no more fuel left to feed it, their fury ends in nothing!

PSALM LIX.

David prayeth to be delivered from his enemies.—He complaineth of their cruelty.—He trusteth in God.—He prayeth against them.—He praiseth God.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.

Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul; the mighty are gathered against me; not *for* my transgression, nor *for* my sin, O LORD.

They run and prepare themselves without *my* fault: awake to help me, and behold.

Thou, therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

Behold, they belch out with their mouth; swords *are* in their lips; for who, *say they*, doth hear?

But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them: thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God *is* my defence.

The God of my mercy shall prevent me; God shall let me see *my desire* upon my enemies.

Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O LORD our shield.

For the sin of their mouth, *and* the words of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride; and for cursing and lying *which* they speak.

Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them*, that they *may* not *be;* and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.

And at evening let them return, *and* let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge, if they be not satisfied.

But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Unto thee, O my strength, I will sing: for God *is* my defence, *and* the God of my mercy.

This Psalm is a prayer; and may be very properly understood as offered up in the person of Christ, complaining of, and prophecying concerning the Jews; on whom, on account of their denial of Christ, and their rejection of the gospel, the awful judgments of God should fall; but yet, not so as to

destroy the whole nation entirely; but, in such a manner, as to make of them an example to all future nations;—that they should be scattered abroad as exiles, and left vagabonds among all nations; and should be punished by being given up to blindness, and maddened fury; so as not to be able to teach anything, or say anything, but blasphemies against Christ. And this we see fulfilled in them in reality: for all their books and commentaries are replete with the most bitter reproaches and blasphemies against Christ and his gospel. And, for this their wickedness, they suffer dreadful and unceasing punishments: for they ‘go about the city like hungry dogs,’ seeking food, and finding it not.

The meaning of this prophecy is, therefore, that at the end, after the times of the apostles, the Jews should be left as exiles, should be banished from their own land, should wander about as outcasts, should be oppressed under foreign jurisdictions, should be driven out from one country to another, and should be cast out without any certain dwelling-place; and that they should seek out any corner of the world, where they might collect together again the wrecks and remains of their kingdom, and endeavour to find out another one to lead them, but should be frustrated in every attempt. And their exile and dispersion shall remain unfinished until the end appointed: till then, they shall remain and waste away like famished dogs, and run and smell about round the cities, and gape like dogs, but shall not be filled: and they shall perish without a king, and without a kingdom.

But with respect to the history of this Psalm, it may rightly be understood as referring to David, praying against the heirs of Saul and the Saulites; who, being at length stripped of their kingdom, wandered about like yawning and hungry dogs, ejected from their kingdom, and forsaken and held in contempt, until they all utterly perished. For God declared that the house of Saul should not be raised up; though the posterity of Saul greatly desired his kingdom.

PSALM LX.

David, complaining to God of former judgment,—now, upon better hope, prayeth for deliverance.—Comforting himself in God's promises, he craveth that help whereon he trusteth.

To the chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.

O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.

Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.

That thy beloved may be delivered; save *with* thy right hand and hear me.

God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

Gilead *is* mine, and Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; Judah *is* my lawgiver;

Moab *is* my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.

Who will bring me *into* the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

Wilt not thou, O God, *which* hadst cast us off? and *thou*, O God, *which* didst not go out with our armies?

Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the help of man.

Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

This is a signal thanksgiving. David gives thanks for the happy state of his kingdom, in which religion and political government flourished and prospered; for, in these two things, well-ordered, consist all things divine and human. Before the time of David, in the days of Saul, all things were in disorder, and the kingdom was in a declining state; as the former verses of the Psalm show. The Philistines had greatly afflicted the Israelites: so much so that even the ark of the Lord was despised and profaned.

Again, in the reign of Saul, all things were carried on with injury, oppression, and wickedness: which is always the case, when God forsakes magistrates, and suffers them to go on in their own ways. And the example of David, who was obliged to have recourse to such various, wise, and cautious means for safety, shows that the palace of Saul was full of Ahithophels, and of all such pests of religion and good government.

But, says David, “Thou, O Lord, hast given a sign to them that feared thee, that they may display it, and may believe and be assured, that thou art present with them.” For God had given to his own a sign, and had left it to them; by which, all those that believed in the grace of God, might be comforted; namely, the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat; which God had delivered, by signal miracles, out of the hand of the Philistines. For God had promised and declared, that he would hear all those that called upon him before this ark, and this mercy-seat; and that he would there vouchsafe his presence.

At the end of the Psalm, he enumerates all his countries and his people; and, in a very striking and eminent way, extols the true worship of God, the true religion. “God (saith he) speaks in his holiness (or sanctuary); I will

rejoice:” that is, God is present in my kingdom by his word, which is there preached: in this I will rejoice.

He enumerates, in order, these countries: Succoth, Shechem, Gilead, Manasseh, Ephraim, Judah, Moab, Philistia. And, at the end, he confesses, that, to defend and protect all these, by a good government, and to ensure them victory against all their enemies,—against Edom and Philistia, (that is to carry on war and to extend dominions, successfully,) is not in the power of human wisdom or human strength; “For vain (saith he) is the help of man. All successful valour and victory are from God.” Why he does not mention by name more countries than these nine, it belongs to a full commentary to explain; the narrow limits, therefore, of our present summary, will not allow us to enter upon that explanation.

We may sing this Psalm to the honour of God also, because in the church of Christ, God is continually making new orchards and gardens; and daily increasing the number of its churches and parishes; in which the word of God is preached; in which the sacraments are administered in a godly manner; and in which there are various gifts of the Holy Spirit.

PSALM LXI.

David fleeth to God upon his former experience.—He voweth perpetual service unto him, because of his promises.

To the chief Musician upon Neginah. A Psalm of David.

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock *that* is higher than I.

For thou hast been a shelter for me, *and* a strong tower from the enemy.

I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* the heritage of those that fear thy name.

Thou wilt prolong the king's life; *and* his years as many generations.

He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, *which* may preserve him.

So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

This is a prayer against the enemies of the people of God, and especially also for magistrates, and for the king—that God would increase faith in him, and further him in the knowledge of his holy name and word; that he may walk in faith and in the fear of God; that his government may be happy and endure; and that religion and good government may not be injured and distracted by seditions and wars. For Solomon, in his Proverbs, says, "That for the sins of the people, God changes kings and kingdoms." But where there are many kings, there, (according to the manner of all human vicissitudes,) what one builds up, another casts down: as the proverb goes, "A new king, a new law,"—all changes in a state are dangerous: happy is that kingdom, therefore, which, being once well constituted, is long preserved in the same state.

PSALM LXII.

David professing his confidence in God discourageth his enemies.—In the same confidence he encourageth the godly.—No trust is to be put in worldly things.—Power and mercy belong to God.

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him *cometh* my salvation.

He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *he is* my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall *shall ye be, and as* a tottering fence.

They only consult to cast *him* down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.

My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation *is* from him.

He only *is* my rock and my salvation: *he is* my defence; I shall not be moved.

In God *is* my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God.

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah.

Surely men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* men of high degree *are* a lie: to be laid in the balance, they *are* altogether *lighter* than vanity.

Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them*.

God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power *belongeth* unto God.

Also unto thee, O LORD, *belongeth* mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

This Psalm contains most excellent doctrine: it greatly exalts the dignity of faith, showing how firm a safeguard faith in God is, and what a strong defence it is against all the evils of life. On the other hand, the Psalmist shows the vanity of all confidence in men;—that nothing is more vain, or more fallacious than to trust in man. ‘God (says he) is my rock, my strength, and my defence: God is my hope, my salvation, my strength, my glory, my life, and my trust. God is my safe protection. God is my faithful helper; who never deceives me. Therefore, vain are the sons of men. The sons of men are all liars:’ that is, all human things are deceiving, uncertain, and cannot be held fast.

Many are to be found, who trust in the favour of kings and princes; and on that account, they are puffed up with pride and insolence, and oppress others with the more confidence; and especially if they see their wall bowing down and giving way; that is, if they see a man declining in his affairs, who was once in prosperity; or if they see him not protected by wealth and influence against injury: such an one as this, they endeavour to overthrow wholly; and to that end, ingratiate themselves with the powerful, and wind themselves into their affections, on whose favour they depend; as on a propitious deity.

But such see not how fallacious the favour of men is, and how variable and uncertain their wills are; in a word, they see not that “vain is the help of man!” Nor will they believe it to be vain, until they find it out by experience, and are brought to lament their error; as Cicero and many other wise men have done. Cicero exclaims with respect to Octavius, ‘O how vain was all my reputation for being a wise man, &c.! O how far was I from being wise indeed; though I sometimes evinced that wisdom which was esteemed to be such; but in vain!’ Thus writes he in his epistle to Octavius. —Therefore the sum of all religion is ‘Trust in God and injure not thy neighbour!’ So shalt thou rightly conduct thyself before both God and men!

PSALM LXIII.

David's thirst for God.—His manner of blessing God.—His confidence of his enemies' destruction, and his own safety.

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O God, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

To see thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

Because thy loving-kindness *is* better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.

My soul shall be satisfied as *with* marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful lips:

When I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night* watches.

Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.

But those *that* seek my soul, to destroy *it*, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.

But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

This is a prayer containing the deep feelings of an afflicted heart, thirsting after the word of God, which is the word of consolation! David called thus upon God, when he fled from the face of Saul, and lay hid in the wilderness of Judah. “My soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee, that I may see thee in thy sanctuary.” O how fervently does he desire to be present in

the tabernacle, and before the mercy-seat in the sanctuary! And to hear the word of God, in the assembly of those who there truly worshipped him? He complains, also, bitterly against the Saulites; who so hostilely lay in wait for his life, that he could be in safety no where; and was compelled to be away from the place of the worship of God; even away from the sanctuary. —Notwithstanding all this, however, he raises himself up with a holy firmness, and magnanimity, and glories in being king, depending on the choice and promise of God; by which he comforts and sustains himself during the time of that most miserable flight and calamity.

This Psalm may be used by those who are under the oppression of tyrants, who feel a hungering and thirsting after the word of God, and who can, under their calamity, glory in being the sons and heirs of God, because they have the knowledge of Christ, and love the word; and who can persevere in this confidence, until the impious Saul be destroyed, and David exalted; that is, until God raise up and comfort those that fear him.

PSALM LXIV.

David prayeth for deliverance, complaining of his enemies.—He promiseth himself to see such an evident destruction of his enemies, as the righteous shall rejoice at it.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity.

Who whet their tongue like a sword, *and* bend *their bows to shoot* their arrows, *even* bitter words;

That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

They encourage themselves *in* an evil matter; they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart, *is* deep.

But God shall shoot at them *with* an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves; all that see them shall flee away.

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God: for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

This is a most ardent prayer, full of the feelings of a heart under great straits, by reason of the unceasing and infinite malice of the devil, the perfidy of men, and the ingratitude of the world.

David here cries unto God, on account of having experienced so much treachery, even from those of his own household, (as always is the case, in the cause of religion). He cries to the Lord against his betrayers and his most virulent slanderers,—those vipers, who, by wicked speeches, and all the arts of perfidy and malice, did not cease to plot against him. Of this base gang were his own son Absalom, Ahithophel, and others like them; and especially many in the court of Saul; Doeg, &c.

He continues, however, perseveringly to comfort and console himself;—that, by the just judgment of God, these same enemies shall bring evil upon their own heads; and that those very base and viperous tongues, which now cannot rest nor cease to slander, shall only wound themselves; as, in the end, it happened unto Absalom, Ahithophel, and Doeg.

In the same way also, we ought to pray against all those vipers, our enemies, in the halls of kings, bishops, and princes: who attack us with satanic craft and hatred, and with all the arts of wickedness. But they shall fall themselves into the snares which they have laid, (as we have seen it exemplified in numberless instances;) and they shall only plan mischief which shall fall upon their own heads; that men may openly behold and see the works of God, and acknowledge that God himself has visited them.

PSALM LXV.

David praiseth God for his grace.—The blessedness of God's chosen by reason of benefits.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm and Song of David.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

Iniquities prevail against me: *as for* our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.

By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; *who art* the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off *upon* the sea:

Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; *being* girded with power:

Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.

They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid of thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, *which is* full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

They drop *upon* the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills rejoice on every side.

The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn: they shout for joy, they also sing.

This is a remarkable Psalm of thanksgiving; (and all productions of this kind were formed by the prophet out of the First Commandment,) wherein thanks are rendered unto God, because he preserves among his people (to whom he has given his word against Satan, heretics, and all adversaries) the true religion, and the true worship of God; and because he preserves also political peace, and guards the state from all seditions, wars and tumults; and dispels all the storms of the counsels of war, slaughter and bloodshed.

For war is nothing less than a horrible storm and tempest, which hurls into confusion all things divine and human; and throws them into a perturbation, like as when the waves of the sea rage with violence.

The Psalmist gives thanks to God that he preserves peace;—(in which one thing are contained all the treasures of good;) that he gives rain from heaven and fruitful seasons; and that he crowns the year with his goodness: that is, that during the revolution of the year, he accomplishes and performs, as it were, a certain round of divine blessing and goodness. For, in the spring, there first appear the blossoms; and then, shortly after, the strawberries and cherries; and then, ere long, plums, apples, and berries of various juice and virtue; (to say nothing about the perpetual verdure of the herbs which flourishes all the while, and is continually revived with fresh supplies of dew). To these we are to add, the infinite variety of herbs and odours. And then, at the time of harvest, our barns are filled with wheat, rye, barley, and corn, and grain of every kind. In the autumn, our presses overflow with wine of an infinite variety of taste and fragrance, and our vats are filled to the brim. Thus the Lord fills the whole revolution of the year, and every part of it, with his overflowing and infinite goodness: and indeed every single fruit is, as it were, a fund, and a world of the goodness of God.

But how few are there, in general, who think about these numberless and valuable blessings, and render thanks unto God for them? Alas! we have innumerable examples of the impious manner in which the noble, the powerful, and the rich, have abused the saving doctrine of faith and Christian liberty, and also that peace which God has hitherto miraculously preserved to us:—we have numberless examples, I say, of the manner in which they have abused these great blessings, to their own lusts, as Sodom and Gomorrah did:—but they shall be visited with Sodom and Gomorrah’s judgment.

You see, therefore, that those in the kingdom of David, and among the people of Israel who composed these Psalms, were excellent and great men. For these are spiritual and truly divine poems. No poems ever equalled these. No poets, not even Homer himself, ever equalled these poets, who thus speak of God, his works, and his creatures. These Psalms contain the greatest and most weighty things, in a marvellous brevity of expression!

PSALM LXVI.

David exhorteth to praise God, to observe his great works, to bless him for his gracious benefits.—He voweth for himself religious service to God.—He declareth God's special goodness to himself.

To the chief Musician, a Song *or* Psalm.

Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

Sing forth the honour of his name; make his praise glorious.

Say unto God, How terrible *art thou in* thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.

Come and see the works of God *he is* terrible *in his* doing toward the children of men.

He turned the sea into *dry land:* they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard;

Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads: we went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy *place*.

I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings; I will pay thee my vows,

Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

I will offer unto thee burnt-sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams: I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear *me:*

But verily God hath heard *me;* he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

Blessed *be* God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

This is a general thanksgiving, for God's having rescued and delivered his people so often out of the hands of their enemies, and out of the very jaws of death itself; as he did at the Red Sea. The Books of Judges and Kings are full of these deliverances.

These deliverances are no less great and wonderful, at this day, in the church, when God delivers those that fear him out of temptations, both

internal and external. For Satan, of whom that earthly Pharaoh was so especial a type, being inflamed with so horrible a desire of distressing and destroying, daily persecutes the church: and he would, if he could, so harm every single one of the godly, and so beset them on every side, that they should see nothing but death, and an angry God: out of all these things, however, God delivers his own.

PSALM LXVII.

A prayer for the enlargement of God's kingdom, to the joy of the people, and the increase of God's blessings.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, a Psalm *or* Song.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine upon us. Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, even our God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

This is a prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ; foretelling, that it should be a spiritual kingdom, in which grace and the remission of sins should be proclaimed, not only in Judea, but throughout all nations. “Let the people praise thee, O God, yea let all the people praise thee; for thou judgest the people righteously, &c.” That is, thou reignest, by the Gospel, throughout all nations: thou judgest all: (that is, all sinners in the hypocrisy of nature,) that they may be brought to give thanks unto thee for thy mercy, and may rejoice, and praise the blessings of the gospel.

This sacrifice of praise, this offering of thanks, is the highest worship of God, and is a sacrifice truly acceptable unto him, (as we have continually observed;) for David does not here say, ‘The nations shall become proselytes, and shall be circumcised, and shall flock to Jerusalem:’ but “The nations shall remain uncircumcised, and shall, nevertheless, sing praises unto God, and shall laud and magnify him:” that is, the gospel shall be preached among all nations, and the kingdom of Christ shall arise, the kingdom of grace and of the mercy of God.

PSALM LXVIII.

A prayer at the removing of the ark.—An exhortation to praise God for his mercies, for his care of the church, for his great works.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm *or* Song of David.

Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.

As smoke is driven away, *so* drive *them* away: as wax melteth before the fire, *so* let the wicked perish in the presence of God.

But let the righteous be glad: let them rejoice before God; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, *is* God in his holy habitation.

God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains; but the rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.

O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: *even* Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

The LORD gave the word: great *was* the company of those that published it.

Kings of armies did flee apace; and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

Though ye have lien among the pots, *yet shall ye be as* the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was *white* as snow in Salmon.

The hill of God *is as* the hill of Bashan; an high hill, *as* the hill of Bashan.

Why leap ye, ye high hills? *this is* the hill *which* God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever.

The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*.

Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*.

Blessed *be* the LORD, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits, even* the God of our salvation. Selah.

He that is our God *is* the God of salvation; and unto God the LORD *belong* the issues from death.

But God shall wound the head of his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

The LORD said, I will bring again from Bashan; I will bring *my people* again from the depths of the sea:

That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of *thine* enemies, *and* the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

They have seen thy goings, O GOD; *even* the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

The singers went before, the players on instruments *followed* after; among *them were* the damsels playing with timbrels.

Bless ye God in the congregations, *even* the LORD from the fountain of Israel.

There *is* little Benjamin *with* their ruler, the princes of Judah *and* their council, the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali.

Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.

Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till every one* submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people *that* delight in war.

Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the LORD; Selah:

To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens *which were* of old: lo, he doth send out his voice, *and that* a mighty voice.

Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency *is* over Israel, and his strength *is* in the clouds.

O God, *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel *is* he that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. Blessed *be* God.

This Psalm is, in the Latin, most obscurely translated; so much so, that this one Psalm may well put us in remembrance of what we are indebted unto God, for the great light which he has given us in this our day; in having blessed us with the study of languages, and with good books and instructors. Yet, in return for this universal, great, and unspeakable gift, through the unceasing revilings of Satan, God hears nothing but, ‘O this Lutheran poison! O this Lutheran heresy!’—The world shall suffer heavy punishment for the contempt of the blessing of this great and merciful light!

In the former Latin translation of this Psalm there were the most monstrous renderings; such as ‘*Rex vir tutum dilecti dilecti.—Speciei domus dividere*

spolia.—Si dormiatis inter medios cleros.—Nives dealbabuntur in Salmon. —Mons Dei, mons pinguis, mons coœquatus.—Arundinis increpa feras. Congregatio taurorum in vaccis populorum,' &c.

And how much of the same obscurity was there in Hosea, and the like difficult books? What, then, have *they* profited the church, who, by a sort of madness, and from a hatred of, and longing desire to, suppress the light of the gospel, have all along condemned not only all pious studies, but all useful learning and godliness! But how easy is it to sit down and condemn all things, and, as it were, to spit at the sun that enlightens all things! The truly learned and godly know, however, how arduous it is to imitate the laborious endeavours of those who engage in the work of translations. But let us proceed to speak upon the Psalm.—

This Psalm is a signal prophecy concerning Christ; a prophecy more animated and exalted, than usual, in fervency of spirit; and, as it were, exulting in the Holy Ghost; setting before us a view of the church, and those things which are to take place under the New Testament; and all this is done with a representation so clear and expressive, and with every thing depicted in that exact order, that it seems to be, not a prediction of things to come, but a description of things passing before our eyes. The Holy Ghost foretels the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the revelation of the Holy Spirit from heaven, and the mission of the Apostles: he describes, I say, the whole of this spiritual kingdom: this kingdom of grace and remission of sins, in which Christ should be preached as the true God, and as the Saviour and deliverer from death.

He shows also, that the kingdom and priesthood of the Jews was to be abolished, and that a new and spiritual kingdom was to be erected; which should stand, not in human strength, nor in many thousands of horse and foot, but in the ministry and power of the word!—that it should be a kingdom, in which the Lord should give the word unto those who should preach it, in much power; by which the grace of Christ, and the remission of sins by Christ, should be preached, and not the law of Moses.

He calls the apostles, "kings and heads of armies;" because, by the gospel and the ministry of the word, they continually attack the kingdom of the devil and the gates of hell. For what are all the sermons and exhortations of

the apostles, but the most terrible battles and conflicts against sin, death, the devil, hell, and all the righteousness and wisdom of the world?

He also calls them “high hills, rich hills, and the inheritance of God;” and “chariots of the Lord of many thousands;” and also, “the multitude of them that preach good tidings, and sing, and play upon instruments;” because, the apostles and ministers of the word, by preaching the joyful gospel and the word of grace, continually praise, sing of, and celebrate the immense benefits of Christ, and the mercy of God. Thus, throughout the whole Psalm, the fervent prophet exulting in the Holy Ghost, describes, in a most sweet song, the whole kingdom of Christ!

In the end, he prays that God would be pleased to render the church more flourishing, and to give his blessing and a happy success to this kingdom. And indeed, the prophet felt his heart moved, and was peculiarly uplifted and fervent in spirit, when he composed this divine and heavenly psalm concerning the kingdom of Christ.

PSALM LXIX.

David complaineth of his affliction.—He prayeth for deliverance.—He devoteth his enemies to destruction.—He praiseth God with thanksgiving.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim. A Psalm of David.

Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

I sink in deep mire, where *there is* no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away.

O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.

Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

When I wept, *and chastened* my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.

They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I *was* the song of the drunkards.

But as for me, my prayer *is* unto thee, O LORD, *in* an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me: in the truth of thy salvation,

Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

Hear me, O LORD; for thy loving-kindness *is* good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble; hear me speedily.

Draw nigh unto my soul, *and* redeem it: deliver me, because of mine enemies.

Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries *are* all before thee.

Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness: and I looked *for some* to take pity, but *there was* none; and for comforters, but I found none.

They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Let their table become a snare before them: and *that which should have been* for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap.

Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

Let their habitation be desolate; *and* let none dwell in their tents.

For they persecute *him* whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.

Add iniquity unto their iniquity; and let them not come into thy righteousness.

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

But I *am* poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

This also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

The humble shall see *this, and* be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.

Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein:

For God will save Sion, and will build the cities of Judah; that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

The seed also of his servants shall inherit it; and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

This Psalm is a prayer full of those most deep and spiritual feelings that were experienced in the person of Christ our Lord. In the beginning of the Psalm, in the first three verses, with what a fervency and weight of words does the Psalmist describe those great terrors of death and hell which Christ undertook and endured, for our sins. “Save me now, O Lord,” saith he, “for the waters overflow me, I sink into the depth of the mire: I have now no where to stand, nothing whereon to set my foot, I sink into the abyss of the sea, and the floods overflow me.” By all which figures and expressions he shadows forth, with all his powers, that unspeakable agony of Christ, which

he endured for our sins, when groaning under the infinite weight of the wrath of God.

In the 7th verse Christ confesses himself as bearing our sins, and complains of the Jews, who crucify him. “They gave me,” saith he, “gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink:” so expressively and circumstantially does the prophet foretel the sufferings of Christ! And then he speaks, with the same clearness, concerning the Jews who should be blinded, and their kingdom and priesthood which should be destroyed, as also it was fulfilled; so that now we see the accomplishment of these things, and experience has set them plainly before our eyes.

In the end of the Psalm the prophet shows that the law should be abolished, and that a new worship should be instituted without the law and circumcision: “I will praise the name of the Lord,” saith he, “with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.” By these words he shews that the law should be abrogated with the whole of that splendidly ceremonious worship, the boasted pride of circumcision, the sabbaths, and the sacrifices; and that the worship of the New Testament should be established in its stead; namely, the sacrifice of praise and the preaching of the gospel; for it is by faith in Christ, and obedience to the gospel that we attain unto the true knowledge of God, and it is by truly keeping the first commandment that God is truly worshipped; which, as it is written, (Mark xii. 33.) is “more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

PSALM LXX.

David soliciteth God to the speedy destruction of the wicked, and preservation of the godly.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.

Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.

Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

But I *am* poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

This Psalm is a prayer against the persecutors and enemies of the church and of the godly: for such instruments of the devil cease not to plot against the good, and those that fear God, with all possible machinations of craft, and with all the bitterness of Cain; and, like Satan himself, they burn with an insatiable desire and determination to destroy the church; nay, more than this, they insult the miseries and calamities of the saints.

PSALM LXXI.

David, in confidence of faith, and experience of God's favour, prayeth both for himself, and against the enemies of his soul.—He promiseth constancy.—He prayeth for perseverance.—He praiseth God, and promiseth to do it cheerfully.

In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou *art* my rock and my fortress.

Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

For thou *art* my hope, O Lord GOD: *thou art* my trust from my youth.

By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise *shall be* continually of thee.

I am as a wonder unto many: but thou *art* my strong refuge.

Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praise *and with* thy honour all the day.

Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.

For mine enemies speak against me; and they that lay wait for my soul take counsel together,

Saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for *there is* none to deliver *him*.

O God, be not far from me; O my God, make haste for my help.

Let them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

But I will hope continually, and yet will praise thee more and more.

My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers *thereof*.

I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.

O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that* is to come.

Thy righteousness also, O God, *is* very high, who hast done great things: O God, who *is* like unto thee!

Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

I will also praise thee with the psaltery, *even* thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.

My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

This Psalm is a general prayer; which, I think, may be very properly used in the person of the whole church against all her enemies and persecutors who are now or ever shall be, unto the end. “Forsake me not,” saith he, “in the time of mine old age,” &c. and although this may more especially apply to the prophet himself, as praying for divine protection under his infinite temptations; yet the words may be appropriately applied to the last times, and to the close of the church militant before the last day. For the church has her old age also: and Christ himself and his apostles have foretold, “That in the latter days perilous times shall come:” as Daniel also

prophesied, that the truth should be persecuted and iniquity should abound: and this we have experienced under Mahomet, and the Pope, to our infinite peril and sorrow.

Hence, in verses 15–17, the prophet foretells the justice and righteousness of God. “My mouth (saith he) shall show forth thy righteousness. O God thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also, when I am old and grey-headed, &c.” This prophecy may be of singular use to us, and apply to us very appropriately: because God has, as it were, brought us back out of hell, and from the depths of the earth, and has made the light of his word to shine again, by which our consciences have a firm and eternal consolation. These our times are like the times of Elias and Enoch: for they commonly say of us, ‘These men will subvert antichrist, and restore all things!’

PSALM LXXII.

David, praying for Solomon, sheweth the goodness and glory of his, in type, and in truth, of Christ’s kingdom.—He blesseth God.

A Psalm for Solomon.

Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king’s son.

He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers *that* water the earth.

In his days shall the righteous flourish: and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper.

He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually: *and* daily shall he be praised.

There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and *men* shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

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 prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

This is a most remarkable prophecy concerning Christ and his kingdom, to be spread throughout the whole world, over all kingdoms, and the isles of the sea: which should not be a kingdom of death, sin, and judgment, but a kingdom of grace, righteousness, peace, and joy.—But the life, the victory, the peace, and the glory of the church shall be hidden; they shall be hidden in God; and the saints in this world shall endure the most bitter hatred of the world, and its persecutions; they shall shed their blood for Christ; nevertheless, that blood shall be precious in the sight of the Lord, and he shall require it.

This Psalm also, verse 15, declares that the old worship of the law of Moses should be abrogated, and a new worship set up, which should consist in prayer and the giving of thanks. “Prayer shall be made unto him (saith he) continually, and daily shall he be praised.” For the sacrifice of praise and the preaching of the gospel, is the daily sacrifice, and the highest worship of the New Testament. Here you hear nothing of circumcision, or the law of Moses, as that which the nations should receive. It saith that the kings of nations and nations themselves shall endure and shall praise this king. Therefore, this king, Christ, is truly and properly God. For prayer is the worship of the first and greatest commandment, and is due to God alone; for he alone can deliver from death and every affliction.

PSALM LXXIII.

The prophet, prevailing in a temptation, sheweth the occasion thereof, the prosperity of the wicked.—The wound given thereby, diffidence.—The victory over it, knowledge of God's purpose, in destroying of the wicked, and sustaining the righteous.

A Psalm of Asaph.

Truly God *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are of a clean heart.

But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

For *there are* no bands in their death; but their strength *is* firm.

They *are* not in trouble *as other* men; neither are they plagued like *other* men.

Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them *as* a garment.

Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.

They are corrupt, and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression: they speak loftily.

They set their mouth against the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth.

Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them:

And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?

Behold, these *are* the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches.

Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children.

When I thought to know this, it *was* too painful for me,

Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I their end.

Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment? they are utterly consumed with terrors.

As a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O LORD, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

So foolish *was* I and ignorant; I was *as* a beast before thee.

Nevertheless, I *am* continually with thee; thou hast holden *me* by my right hand.

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory.

Whom have I heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee.

My flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish; thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

But *it is* good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

This is a Psalm that instructs us against that great offence and stumbling-block concerning which all the prophets have complained; namely, that the wicked flourish in the world, enjoy prosperity, and increase in abundance, while the godly suffer cold and hunger, and are afflicted, and spit upon, and despised, and condemned; and that God seems to be against and to neglect the latter, and to regard, support and give success to the former. And this outside appearance of the false church has, moreover, a great influence with, and excites the admiration of, the world around. Whatever these hypocrites do or say, they boast with great confidence, is pious, holy and divine: on the other hand, they consider the lives of the godly to be ungodly, and their doctrine erroneous. This offence has existed, and has exercised and vexed the godly from the very beginning of the church.

“So foolish was I,” saith Asaph, (v. 22.) that is, I was accounted ungodly, a heretic, and a despiser of God. But these temptations, saith he, remain until I cast away all my own cogitations about this offence, and go into the sanctuary: that is, until I hear or read the word, and find what God saith concerning the ungodly; and until I look into the histories and behold the judgments of God, which have been since the foundation of the world. There I find what God threatens in his First Commandment: and how he has fulfilled this judgment and executed it, even from Cain; by which all the

ungodly are overthrown and overwhelmed on a sudden: for they build upon slippery places and upon the sand, but the godly build upon a rock.

PSALM LXXIV.

The prophet complaineth of the desolation of the sanctuary.—He moveth God to help in consideration of his power, of his reproachful enemies, of his children, and of his covenant.

Maschil of Asaph.

O God, why hast thou cast *us* off for ever? *why* doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?

Remember thy congregation, *which* thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, *which* thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; *even* all *that* the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns *for* signs.

A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.

They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled *by casting down* the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.

We see not our signs: *there is* no more any prophet: neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck *it* out of thy bosom.

For God *is* my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.

Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, *and* gavest him *to be* meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers.

The day *is* thine, the night also *is* thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.

Remember this, *that* the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and *that* the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude *of the wicked:* forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.

Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.

Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually.

This is a prayer against the enemies who were then laying waste Jerusalem, the sanctuary, all the holy places of assembly and of the worship of God in the land, and even the national cities themselves; uttering at the same time blasphemies against God, as if he were not able to succour and defend his people.

It seems also to be a prophecy of the future, and a prayer against that future devastation which was wrought by those cruel enemies, the Chaldeans, and by Antiochus Epiphanes; for it was on these two occasions only that the temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed, with such cruelty as is here depicted.

We also use this Psalm against the Turk and Mahomet; and also against our Antiochus, the pope; who destroys daily the true church and the preaching of the word of God, daily despoils and scatters all sacred and divine things, and every where stirs up and diffuses abroad the poison of the devil and every abomination.

PSALM LXXV.

The prophet praiseth God.—He promiseth to judge uprightly.—He rebuketh the proud by consideration of God's providence.—He praiseth God, and promiseth to execute justice.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, a Psalm *or* Song of Asaph.

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* do we give thanks; for *that* thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.

The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.

I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn:

Lift not up your horn on high: speak *not with* a stiff neck.

For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.

But God *is* the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

For in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red: it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring *them* out, *and* drink *them*.

But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; *but* the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

This is a Psalm of consolation against all turbulent and hardened hypocrites, who boast of their church and their name, and despise alike all threatenings, and all exhortations; ever speaking like those arrogant hypocrites in Psalm xii: “Who shall teach us?” “Who is Lord over us?” As if they should say, the power is ours, and the authority is ours, and he that does not listen to, and obey us, let him be accursed.

In like manner also now, our bishops are secure; and, from the ‘Council of Worms’ to this day, are deaf to all entreaties, and insensible to all tears. And equally deaf also are most kings and princes and fanatical spirits; who are so confident in themselves and in their own imaginations, that they seem to think that God himself could not overthrow them or cast them down.

This Psalm admonishes us, the people of God, to know and acknowledge, that there is a God who will surely judge all iniquity, if we do but wait his time. For he is the Lord who maketh the mountains to tremble, and who appeared on Mount Sinai with such terrible majesty. He, according to the word of his First Commandment, visits the wicked in his own appointed time, and yet preserves the pillars of the earth; that is, the godly and the righteous; who bear up and sustain this world upon their shoulders as it were: in the same way as the Apostle Paul calls the church the “pillar and ground of the truth.” Thus, God preserved the righteous and innocent Lot when he overthrew Sodom: and thus he preserved also the believing Jews and the Apostles when he destroyed Jerusalem, and overthrew the whole nation and kingdom: for he knows, when he destroys any nation, how to preserve his own.

PSALM LXXVI.

A declaration of God’s majesty in the church.—An exhortation to serve him reverently.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth. A Psalm *or* Song of Asaph.

In Judah *is* God known; his name *is* great in Israel.

In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

Thou *art* more glorious *and* excellent than the mountains of prey.

The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.

Thou, *even* thou, *art* to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,

When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

He shall cut off the spirit of princes: *he is* terrible to the kings of the earth.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, and of the same subject-matter as Psalm xlvi. It gives thanks unto God for preserving his word and worship in Jerusalem; and shows that it is he who, by marvellous deeds and wonders, protects and defends his people against all kings and tyrants; such as Sennacherib. For the Lord, the Divine Majesty, is a wonderful “Man of war”; who has the hearts and spirits of kings in his hand, and who can fill the enemies with fear, and break their minds and spirits, whenever he pleases, with a single nod of his will.

In this manner does God fight for his church against tyrants and erroneous enemies. In the very midst of the course of their fury and their hostile roaring, he brings down and breaks their spirits with fear: and it is a terrible thing to kick and fight against him, who can, in a moment, take away that which is the chief thing in battle—the spirit of a man! Satan himself, who makes war against the righteous with such unceasing rage, with such horrible desire to destroy, and with such confidence in his might, is cast down in his spirit, in a moment, by a repulse of the shield of faith, and falls back and is undone: how much more then shall a mortal man!

This verse, therefore, wherein the Psalmist says, “He shall cut off the spirit of princes,” ought greatly to comfort us; for thereby we may know, that we cannot be conquered or oppressed, but as God wills; seeing we have that Warrior for our Captain, who holds in his hand the hearts and spirits of our enemies; and who, without any arms or weapons of men, can lay our adversaries prostrate in a moment, by striking their spirits with fear!

PSALM LXXVII.

The psalmist sheweth what fierce combat he had with diffidence.—The victory which he had by consideration of God’s great and gracious works.

To the chief Musician to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

I cried unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

In the day of my trouble I sought the LORD: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.

I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

Will the LORD cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?

Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth *his* promise fail for evermore?

Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

And I said, This *is* my infirmity: *but I will remember* the years of the right hand of the Most High.

I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

Thy way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary: who *is so* great a God as *our* God!

Thou *art* the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

Thou hast with *thine* arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee: they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.

> The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.
>
> Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.
>
> Thou leddest thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

This Psalm contains a blessed doctrine: the Psalmist puts forth himself as an example: and the whole is for the consolation of the godly: for the Psalmist describes the unspeakable anguish and sorrow of a heart alarmed at the wrath of God and sin: and he says, verse 4, that he was so overwhelmed with these terrors and sorrows, that he could neither sleep nor speak. And in verses 7–10, he, as it were, repeats all these his feelings of sorrow and dread, saying, “Will God forget to be merciful? Doth his promise fail for evermore”?

But here, as the Psalm saith, lies the greatest and best of all consolations,—you will at once find comfort and deliverance if, casting away from your mind (if you can by any means do it,) all these apprehensions of evils and sorrows, (by which indeed you are distressed in vain,) you turn to the word and works of God, and to the histories of God’s doings and dealings from the beginning of the world: for you will there find that the works and doings of God from the beginning have been these,—to be merciful to and to save and help the sorrowful, the distressed, the destitute, and the afflicted; and to visit, in vengeance, the secure, the proud, the despisers, and the wicked, in the same way as he delivered the Israelites, and destroyed the Egyptians. Hence it is that David says, “Thy way, O God, is in the deep,” and “in the sea:” for God saves in the midst of death and of destruction, when despair is on every side.

Learn this, my Christian brother! This Psalm thus sets forth to us God and the ways of God: that is, how he works, and what he does, in his church and in the saints: and all this is thus written, that we should not despair in perils and afflictions, when we are beyond the reach of all human help: but that rather, casting away all our own apprehensions and distressing thoughts, we

should, at, and from that time, begin to trust in God, and to trust in him more and more, waiting for his help.

PSALM LXXVIII.

An exhortation both to learn and to preach the law of God.—The story of God's wrath against the incredulous and disobedient.—The Israelites being rejected, God chose Judah, Zion, and David.

Maschil of Asaph.

Give ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old;

Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children;

That the generation to come might know *them, even* the children *which* should be born, *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God; but keep his commandments:

And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

The children of Ephraim, *being* armed, *and* carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

And forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, *in* the field of Zoan.

He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

In the day-time also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as *out of* the great depths.

He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

And they sinned yet more against him, by provoking the Most High in the wilderness.

And they tempted God in their heart, by asking meat for their lust.

Yea, they spake against God: they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?

Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

Therefore the LORD heard *this*, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel.

Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation;

Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,

And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven; and by his power he brought in the south wind.

He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea;

And he let *it* fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

So they did eat and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;

They were not estranged from their lust: but while their meat *was* yet in their mouths,

The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen *men* of Israel.

For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.

Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God:

And they remembered that God *was* their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer.

Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues:

For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

But he, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath:

For he remembered that they *were but* flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert!

Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

They remembered not his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them from the enemy:

How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan:

And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.

He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.

He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust.

He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore-trees with frost.

He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts.

He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels *among them*.

He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence;

And smote all the first-born in Egypt; the chief of *their* strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.

And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, *even to* this mountain, *which* his right hand had purchased.

He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:

But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

When God heard *this*, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:

So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men;

And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand.

He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage.

Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.

Then the LORD awaked as one out of sleep, *and* like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

And he smote his enemies in the hinder part: he put them to a perpetual reproach.

Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

And he built his sanctuary like high *palaces*, like the earth which he hath established for ever.

He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds:

From following the ewes great with young he brought him, to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

This Psalm, by a glorious instruction, in a long recital of the acts of the children of Israel as examples, from the departure out of Egypt down to David, teaches us to believe and trust in God: showing us, how “very present” God always was to those who believed in him, in all their perils,

and even in the midst of death. And, on the other hand, it shows us, how surely and terribly God always visited those who despised his word and departed from him.

For, according to the words of the first commandment, God has, from the beginning, wrought, not only in his own people, but in the Gentiles also; and so he will work down to the world's end; showing mercy to those that love him, and visiting in judgment those that hate him.

And although the world despises, more unconcernedly than all things else, the threatenings of God and his promises also; yet, nevertheless, God still goes on working, according to the words of his first commandment; and that commandment still prevails over all the kingdoms of the earth; laying prostrate kings, overturning kingdoms, uprooting families, and blotting out mighty names. And, on the other hand, the same commandment still and ever goes on, preserving those in the church of God who love him; lifting up them that are down; succouring the oppressed; feeding the poor, the captives, and the exiles; loosing those that are in prison; raising the dead; and bringing salvation.

The hardened and unbelieving world do not believe God: nevertheless, this first commandment goes on thus according to the word which it contains, to accomplish God's will, in things private, and in things public, in this present age, and throughout all the ages to come.

PSALM LXXIX.

The psalmist complaineth of the desolation of Jerusalem.—He prayeth for deliverance, and promiseth thankfulness.

A Psalm of Asaph.

O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

The dead bodies of thy servants have they given *to be* meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.

Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and *there was* none to bury *them*.

We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling-place.

O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us; for we are brought very low.

Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.

Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight, *by* the revenging of the blood of thy servants *which is* shed.

Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die:

And render unto our neighbours seven-fold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O LORD.

So we thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever; we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.

This Psalm is a prayer to God against that future national destruction, which was wrought by the Chaldeans and Antiochus Epiphanes; it is of the same subject-matter as Psalm lxxiv, and therefore it may be set forth by the explication there given. Isaiah has the same prayer against future devastations, chap. 63.

PSALM LXXX.

The psalmist in his prayer complaineth of the miseries of the church.—God's former favours are turned into judgments.—He prayeth for deliverance.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim-Eduth, A Psalm of Asaph.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, shine forth.

Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come *and* save us.

Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?

Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours; and our enemies laugh among themselves.

Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

Thou preparedst *room* before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof *were like* the goodly cedars.

She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

Why hast thou *then* broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts, look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch *that* thou madest strong for thyself.

It is burned with fire; *it is* cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself.

So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts; cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

This is a prayer against those most bitter and daily enemies, the neighbouring Philistines, Syrians, Moabites, Edomites, &c.: for Jerusalem was situated in the midst of these nations, all enemies, on every side.

This Psalm is appropriate for *us* against bishops, and monks, and priests, who hate us more bitterly than any Edomite or any Cain. The fathers used this Psalm (such was the state of the church then) against her error-broaching enemies.

PSALM LXXXI.

An exhortation to a solemn praising of God.—God challengeth that duty by reason of his benefits.—God exhorting to obedience; complaineth of their disobedience, which proveth their own hurt.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, a Psalm of Asaph.

Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

For this *was* a statute for Israel, *and* a law of the God of Jacob.

This he ordained in Joseph *for* a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: *where* I heard a language *that* I understood not.

I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.

Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah.

Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;

There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

I *am* the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.

So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: *and* they walked in their own counsels.

Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, *and* Israel had walked in my ways!

I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.

He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

This is the form of a prayer and a solemn song for the people of the Jews, which was sung yearly at the feast of tabernacles, to admonish that people, and to keep them in the true worship of God; namely, that of the first commandment. This Psalm, therefore, like the prophets, in all their great instructions, holds forth and enforces the very words of the first commandment, “I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt have none other gods but me:” that is, thou shalt hold me as thy God, thou shalt cleave unto me, thou shalt trust alone in me; thou shalt not worship, thou shalt not call upon, any other God.

But here the whole world lieth in wickedness, the whole is unclean, the whole is the kingdom of the devil. Not only were the people of the Jews in this state of transgression against the first commandment, but all nations, and all religions, and all worshippers, from the beginning of the world; and they will be the same down to the end of the world. The Israelites were indeed the people of God; they had the prophets, and the godly priests and Levites, continually enforcing on them this great and highest worship of the first commandment in all their preachings: and yet they fell away from this worship. Their mouth ought to have been full of God and the praise of God, but it was full of idolatry, and of idolatrous doctrines and abominations.

Here is the perverseness of the world: they will admire, they will take up with, they will profess, all other kinds of worship, all other forms and kinds of religions and hypocrisies, and they will multiply and adorn them: but they will trample that very glorious worship of the first commandment under foot: *that* worship the devil cannot bear; *that* worship he works to extinguish by all the ways and means in his power.

And in the church of God, under the New Testament, this Psalm teaches us the righteousness of faith and of Christ; that we ought to set Christ and his righteousness before and above all works: for our mouth ought to be full of Christ. But we, like the Jews, turn aside to other gods, embracing sometimes these and sometimes those sayings and traditions, each one following the idol imaginations and thoughts of his own heart.

PSALM LXXXII.

The psalmist having exhorted the judges, and reproved their negligence, prayeth God to judge.

A Psalm of Asaph.

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty: he judgeth among the gods.

How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Deliver the poor and needy: rid *them* out of the hand of the wicked.

They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the Most High.

But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

This is a Psalm of consolation against tyrants, and wicked kings and magistrates, who oppressed the destitute, the fatherless, and the widows. I have given a full commentary on this Psalm, which is now in public; therefore I need not say more upon it here.

PSALM LXXXIII.

A complaint to God of the enemies' conspiracies.—A prayer against them that oppress the church.

A Song or Psalm of Asaph.

Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult; and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.

They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

For they have consulted together with one consent; they are confederate against thee:

The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab and the Hagarenes;

Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines, with the inhabitants of Tyre;

Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah.

Do unto them as *unto* the Midianites; as *to* Sisera, as *to* Jabin, at the brook of Kison;

Which perished at En-dor: they became *as* dung for the earth.

Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb; yea, all their princes as Zebah and as Zalmunna:

Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind.

As fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire,

So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:

That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* the Most High over all the earth.

This Psalm is a prayer of the same nature as Psalm lxxx. as the same mentioned names of the same nation show, who were bitter enemies unto Israel. The same explanation, therefore, will suffice.

PSALM LXXXIV.

The prophet longing for the communion of the sanctuary, sheweth how blessed they are that dwell therein.—He prayeth to be restored unto it.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, a Psalm for the sons of Korah.

How amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee; in whose heart *are* the ways *of them:*

Who passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well: the rain also filleth the pools.

They go from strength to strength; *every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God.

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

O LORD of hosts, blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

This is a Psalm of consolation, which breaks forth into the most sweet and powerful expressions, in praise and love of the ministry of the word. “Blessed are they (says David) that dwell in thy house:” that is, they alone are truly blessed, and rest on a sure and eternal consolation, who dwell in thy house and in thy tabernacle: that is, in the place where thy word is taught and heard. For such, as the Apostle saith, (1 Cor. i.) “are increased in all good, and enriched in all wisdom and all knowledge, and with every good gift, so that they can want nothing.” They have all riches.

Wherefore let the world have their rich ones, their powerful ones, and their wise ones, and their consolations in this world; let them trust and glory in their wisdom, their might, their wealth, and their possessions,—my heart triumphs in the living God; that is, I rejoice, and triumph, and glory, with all my heart, that I know God in his word, and that I am of his true church. And I would rather cleave and hold to this poor despised flock of God’s people, to his church of poor afflicted ones, who call upon God in truth; I would rather cleave to them, and hover over them, as a bird over her young in the nest, than live in the most splendid palace of all earthly kings. I had rather sit at the door of the house of the Lord; that is, occupy the lowest place

among the people of God, despised and disregarded by the world, than be loaded with all the dainties and riches of the universe, and not belong to the assembly of them that hear, and love, and know the word of God.

This Psalm, therefore, exhorts us rather to suffer ourselves to be torn away from all the riches, honours, consolations and pleasures of the world, than from the house of God. For no riches, nor even kingdoms, can deliver us from sin or death, or from the kingdom of the devil; nor can they overcome, in our hearts, the terrors of hell or of the judgment of God. But God gives, by his word, grace and victory over all these. “He is a sun and a shield” that is, in all darkness and in all afflictions, of every kind, the word of God is a joyful light, a sure consolation, a firm bulwark, and an invincible armour against the violent assault of the devil and of sin: neither of which can the riches or the wisdom of this world vanquish. He, therefore, that hath the word of God hath every thing: he that hath not the word of God hath nothing. O blessed, eternally blessed are they, who thus love and value the word of God! but where are they! how few such are there to be found! for the world is full of mockers and despisers!

PSALM LXXXV.

The Psalmist, out of the experience of former mercies, prayeth for the continuance thereof.—He promiseth to wait thereon, out of confidence of God’s goodness.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm to the sons of Korah.

LORD, thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.

Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger towards us to cease.

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

Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

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

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

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

Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

Yea, the LORD shall give *that which is* good: and our land shall yield her increase.

Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set *us* in the way of his steps.

This Psalm is a prayer containing the feelings of a heart that fears God; and it persuades, in the most impressive words, such an one, not to dread God's anger. For those who fear God, are not like the despisers and Epicureans, who are secure and care for nothing that happens; but when calamities fall upon godly men, their first and main concern is to turn to God that smites them, and to make anew their peace with him.

The anger wherewith God chastised his people, at this time, was this: he had taken away from them, for a time, the word; he had diminished the number of those that preached it in truth, and had made few the true prophets, priests and Levites. In addition to which, the peace of the nation was broken by seditions; and many evils prevailed in the state and among the rulers thereof. And this was not all: there came on also the dread and expectation of war, and the want of the necessary provisions of life: for these calamities generally follow, one after the other, when God, according to the first commandment, visits the iniquities of a people.

The Psalmist, therefore, prays that God would be pleased again to preserve the church, and also the nation; again to restore the real ministers of the word, who preached it in truth, and by whom alone God truly speaks unto men.

The Psalmist, therefore, breaks forth with a wonderful burden of heart, as if he had said, ‘O that I might again hear the Lord truly speaking! O that the word of God were again truly preached, lest even the godly should be “turned to folly”’ (or ignorance; that is, lest they should be so broken down and utterly worn out, by the greatness of their afflictions, as not to know what to do.) ‘O that both the worship of God, and the prosperity of our nation, may be restored, and that peace, and concord, and truth, and justice, may flourish among us! that the fruits of the earth, and the produce of the fields and of the vineyards may be blessed; that we may lead a godly life in this our day, and, as St. Paul saith, may “look for the glorious appearing of the great God!”’

PSALM LXXXVI.

David strengtheneth his prayer by the conscience of his religion,—by the goodness and power of God.—He desireth the continuance of former grace.—Complaining of the proud he craveth some token of God’s goodness.

A Prayer of David.

Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me; for I *am* poor and needy.

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

Be merciful unto me, O LORD: for I cry unto thee daily.

Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

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

Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

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

All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O LORD; and shall glorify thy name.

For thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things, thou *art* God alone.

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

I will praise thee, O LORD my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

For great *is* thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.

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

But thou, O LORD, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious; long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

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

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

This Psalm is a supplication, and, as the title shows, a prayer of David: and here you may see that prayer is the highest exercise of faith, and the highest worship of God. Every one knows with what destroying calamities that great man David, that "man after God's own heart," was surrounded; and yet you may see, in the book of Kings, that, in his deepest straits and most calamitous afflictions, he calls upon God with all the ardour of his heart against his enemies, Saul, his son Absalom, &c. those instruments of the devil, who so heavily afflicted him.

Behold what an example of prayer for us to follow, this great, this most spiritual man, gives us in the 6th, 9th, 10th and 11th verses. See how fixedly he has before his eyes the first commandment. "O God," saith he, "who is like unto thee among the gods?" who doeth works like unto thy works? "Thou art great and doest wonderful works; thou art God alone. Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion and gracious, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy and in truth, unto all that call upon thee."

Behold here how he calls up and sharpens, as it were, his faith, at a view of the mercy of God! so that, apprehending that mercy and the promise, he goes forth on the assurance, that God is not only powerful and great, and invincible against all the assaults of the devil and of the world, and against all creatures; but that he is also ever present unto the godly, and ever merciful to those that call upon him, and believe in him. And thus, *we* also ought to apprehend the word of the divine promise of mercy, and cast out of

our hearts all doubt, that we may be enabled to call upon him without misgiving.

At the end David prays, “Show me a token for good.” God sometimes permits the wicked to glory for a while, as if they certainly should soon devour the saints, and those that fear him. But God never finally forsakes his people: for here, in the church below, he often delivers the godly, who fear him, out of the greatest perils; yea, out of the very jaws of death; and plainly proves that he is ever present and near his own: for their deliverances plainly show the hand of God. It is for such a token, or sign, as this, that David here prays.

PSALM LXXXVII.

The nature and glory of the church.—The increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof.

A Psalm or Song for the sons of Korah.

His foundation *is* in the holy mountains.

The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

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

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

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

> The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, *that* this *man* was born there. Selah.
>
> As well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there:* all my springs *are* in thee.

This is a prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ and the church, in times to come. The Psalmist, after the manner of the prophets, sets before us the future Jerusalem and the future Zion, as if represented in a painting before our eyes: the boundaries of which should be those of the world itself, reaching from east to west, and from north to south; and in which church there should be born men of every nation, kingdom, tribe, and tongue,—Ethiopians, Egyptians, Babylonians, Tyrians, Philistines, &c. and that these should be born in this church, not by a natural birth, but by the word of the gospel.

"Great, excellent, and glorious things shall be spoken and preached in thee, O city of God!" For the gospel is a great and glorious doctrine, the highest of all doctrines, even the word of salvation; hence, as Paul saith, (Phil. i. 10.) the gospel contains, in comparison with the law, "the things that are excellent." For by the gospel is given to us the knowledge of the counsel and will of God; in what manner God is pacified; how we are delivered from sin, from the power of the devil, and from eternal death; which things neither the law, nor any human philosophy, could teach.

In the last verse also, the Psalm most beautifully sets forth what the highest worship, under the New Testament, should be. "There shall be in thee, (saith the Psalmist,) as the harmonious concert of those playing on instruments;" that is, it is not Moses, or the law, that shall be taught in that city; but the sweet and joyful message of the gospel shall be preached by the ministry of the word, even grace and the remission of sins by Jesus Christ.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

A prayer containing a grievous complaint.

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

O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day *and* night before thee.

Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man *that hath* no strength:

Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.

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

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

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

Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee; I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

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

Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulness in destruction?

Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

But unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

LORD, why castest thou off my soul? *why* hidest thou thy face from me?

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

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

They came round about me daily like water, they compassed me about together.

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

This is a prayer, as in the person of Christ and of all the saints. It contains those mighty feelings and conflicts of heart, which no mortals but those who experience them, can either describe or conceive; I mean those pangs and pains, and that heavy sorrow of spirit, (above all natural distress of body or of mind, and above all natural fear and dread,) when the heart is filled with a sense of the majesty and anger of God, and is alarmed at the nature and end of sin; while God also, as yet, holds off all consolation; and the soul is shaken in the midst of darkness and terror, and, as Christ saith himself, “sifted by the devil like wheat in a sieve;” while the malicious Satan craftily augments the soul’s views of the anger of God, and drives out of sight all hope of mercy and grace.

David here calls these unspeakable terrors of soul, “hell,” “darkness,” “the shadow of death.” “Thou hast cast me (saith he) into the lowest pit, into darkness and the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me; and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.” And rightly does David describe these pains and terrors by the terms, “death,” “hell,” &c. because this anguish of soul is of the very nature, and power, and poison, and sting of hell and death; for no sooner is the darkness dispersed, by some shining in of divine consolation, than death is no longer death, but we die gladly. And indeed, where such fears and terrors of mind abound and continue, they extend to the body, bring on a paleness and emaciation, and affect the whole man. Paul calls them the “buffetting of Satan,” and “thorns in the flesh;” which has reference to a custom in certain nations of punishing criminals by transfixing their bodies with a certain sharp pointed conical instrument, in the shape of a thorn; and mocking and deriding them in their suffering. And just thus it is that the nations of the world contemptuously call Christ ‘that crucified fellow,’ and the Jews, ‘That fellow that was hanged.’ For the world, in their malice, not only persecute Christ, but also deride and mock his sufferings, and the sufferings of his members. And hence it is David complains thus in this Psalm, “Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.”

PSALM LXXXIX.

The psalmist praiseth God for his covenant, for his wonderful power, for the care of his church, for his favour to the kingdom of David.—Then complaining of contrary events, he expostulateth, prayeth, and blesseth God.

Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

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

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,

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

And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

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

O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For the LORD *is* our defence; and the Holy One of Israel *is* our king.

Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people.

I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

With whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him.

The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

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

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

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

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

Also I will make him *my* first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.

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

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

If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

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

Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

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

Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David.

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

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

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

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

Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.

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

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

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

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

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

How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?

Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain!

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

LORD, where *are* thy former loving-kindnesses, *which* thou swarest unto David in thy truth?

Remember, LORD, the reproach of thy servants; *how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people;

Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.

Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and amen.

This is a remarkable prophecy concerning Christ and his kingdom; he speaks of the church or kingdom of Christ, as a “kingdom in the heavens;” in the same manner as Christ himself calls it “the kingdom of heaven.” And though this spiritual kingdom of Christ is here upon earth, yet the Psalmist gloriously describes it as being “in the heavens.”

The Psalmist, indeed, here apprehends the promise made to David concerning Christ; and, opening that promise in a wonderful manner, he

describes the riches of this spiritual kingdom. He enforces the everlasting firmness and sureness of that promise; and, taking a stand of heavenly meditation therein, he dwells upon the effectual power of that promise against all the violence of sin, and the malice and accusation of the devil; and here the Psalmist takes up his divine abode; here he fixes his standing; as the apostle hath it, “by faith ye stand:” and he says that this truth of God, this his promise was prepared from everlasting, built up in the fulfilment of God’s purpose of mercy, and firm, and “established in the heavens.”

“Thy faithfulness and truth,” (says the Psalmist,) “are established in the heavens;” that is, a heavenly righteousness is preached by the gospel, which is not placed in us, or in any worthiness or merit of ours; but is out of us, and is the righteousness of Christ, and is imputed, for Christ’s sake, unto all that believe in him: and hence, the promised riches of this kingdom are the gift of the Spirit, and the remission of sins, with all other spiritual blessings: all which are not offered unto us on any condition of the law, or of our works or our merit, but are given unto us freely of God. Salvation, therefore, is not a matter conditional on our works, but freely given unto us for Christ’s sake; that thus all doubting and uncertainty may be taken from our souls; and that we may safely rest, entirely and only on the immutable and immoveable certainty of this truth and promise of God.

The temporal kingdom of the Jews was promised to that people, on condition of a law given to them; that, if they kept that law, nationally, as a people, if they were therein good and obedient, they should be preserved and blessed. And, in the same way also, all the kingdoms of the world are given to their people under a like condition of a law, and, as long as they are good and obedient, God preserves them. But the immense and glorious riches of this spiritual kingdom, the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Spirit, victory over death and the devil, &c. are promised and held forth without any condition of a law; and, in a word, the remission of sins is promised, freely, not only to those who have done nothing to deserve it, but to those who have done everything to forfeit it. This is a throne, therefore, not of angry and destroying majesty, but of grace alone; and being founded, not on the basis of our good works and merits, but on the rock of the sure and everlasting truth of God, it affords a great and marvellous consolation to the afflicted consciences of sinners.

After, however, the prophetic Psalmist has described the flower and glory of this kingdom and church of Christ, he deplores, on the other hand, from verse 39, in the most powerful expressions, the desolations and destructions of it: saying, that it shall come to pass that this kingdom, like as the apostle has also foretold, shall be so disturbed and torn to pieces by antichrist, that it shall seem as if God had wholly forgotten his promise unto it; nay, as if, contrary to the word of his promise, he did nothing but show his wrath against this kingdom.

All these things, however, are written for a consolation unto the godly; and especially unto us who, in these last times, have witnessed such abominations of papacy; these things, I say, are written for our comfort and consolation; that we should not be broken-spirited, or terrified, at the multitude and diversity of offences; nor be driven to despair, though wickedness should have the dominion for a time, and though Satan should, as it were, so subvert all things human and divine, that there should seem to be no church of Christ at all, no remains of the kingdom of Christ upon earth. For if you look at the abomination of the Pope, and of Mahomet, which have spread themselves over the whole world, no other appearance is presented than that there is not a vestige of the true church remaining: and yet, it is not wholly blotted or rooted out from the earth; for, under the reign of each abomination and tyranny, there has ever existed a true church of Christ, although greatly despised and greatly oppressed.

PSALM XC.

Moses, setting forth God's providence, complaineth of human fragility, divine chastisements, and brevity of life.—He prayeth for the knowledge and sensible experience of God's good providence.

A prayer of Moses, the Man of God.

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.

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

Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

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

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

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

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

This Psalm contains a very great and important doctrine; in which Moses teaches what is the origin and cause of that death to which the whole human race is subject, and the reason why so horrible a punishment was inflicted on the whole race of mortals: the Psalmist saith, it was on account of sin: and the guilt and desert of sin are greater than can be conceived by the human mind, unless God touch the heart with a knowledge of it; and yet, in this sin and guilt, and under this wrath, all the sons of Adam are born.

Moses here opens widely this punishment of sin, and this horrible misery; setting forth the proof of it in the shortness and uncertainty of human life; which life, in addition to this its shortness and uncertainty, is subject also to all kinds of calamity: and, in verse 11, Moses saith that this very unspeakable misery—death, and all other human calamities, as parts of that death, tend, or should lead us, to seek the grace and mercy of God, who alone can deliver us from all these evils,—sin, the slavery of the devil, and death. Hence all the calamities and afflictions of life, and even death itself, the punishment of sin, work together for good unto the elect, and unto those that fear God; that they may, by all things, be humbled, broken down, and crucified, and so, thirst after grace.

“So teach us that we must die,” says Moses, “that we may become wise:” that is, that we may learn to know God and his will aright; for this is what Moses calls “becoming wise.” The wicked, and fools, who are not exercised with afflictions, who number not their days, nor think of death, nor meditate on the misery of life, but remain unexperienced and ignorant of all spiritual things, and are wrapped up in their own hypocrisy, never rightly know God, nor truly seek his help and mercy.

Moses then closes his Psalm with a divinely concluding prayer, “Let thy work appear unto thy servants,” or “Show us thy work, O Lord.” Here, by the work of God, he means deliverance from sin and death; and, in a word, all that deliverance that our fathers expected from that blessed seed, which we have revealed to us in Christ. And again, saith Moses, “O satisfy us early with thy mercy:” and he twice repeats, “Prosper thou the works of our hands:” that is, for the time that we live, direct and prosper thou our whole life: preserve thy true religion and the good government of our nation: guard us from heresies, errors, wars, seditions, and all such evils. This Psalm, therefore, is a short but a most spiritual prayer.

PSALM XCI.

The state of the godly.—Their safety.—Their habitation.—Their servants.—Their friends; with the effects of them all.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

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

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

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

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

Nor for the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness, *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noon-day.

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

Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked.

Because thou hast made the LORD, *which is* my refuge, *even* the Most High, thy habitation.

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

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

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

Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shall thou trample under feet.

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

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

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

This is a most distinguished jewel among all the Psalms of consolation. The Psalmist highly exalts faith in God, and shews that it is an invincible strength against all evils, and against all the gates of hell.

At the very outset, the Psalmist says, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, abideth under the shadow of the Almighty;” and such an one shall say unto the Lord, “Thou art my confidence, my protection, my fortress and my God,” that is, he that believeth and trusteth in God, and rests in his protection,—he shall find, though shaken on every side, by the devil, by sin, by the world, and by various and endless temptations, that the godly are proof and invincible against all these evils; that God is most high over all; that he is Omnipotent; and, in a word, that “greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.”

Towards the conclusion, this Psalm contains, accumulated together, eight or nine promises of grace, which the Psalmist drew out of the first commandment, as out of a fountain. This Psalm, therefore, ought to be set before afflicted souls. 1. The Psalmist says “Because he hath hoped in me, therefore will I deliver him.” 2. “I will set him on high.” 3. “Because he hath called upon me, I will hear him.” 4. “I will be with him in trouble.” 5. “I will deliver him.” 6. “I will set him on high, or glorify him.” 7. “With long life will I satisfy him.” 8. “I will show him my salvation:” that is, that I am “mighty to save!”

And this also is the second Psalm wherein angels are proclaimed as our watchful guardians and protectors: which is a truth very greatly consoling to the really godly, who know with what fury Satan unceasingly assaults the church, and all the saints. This Psalm enumerates four kinds of evils and afflictions, which are to be endured by the saints and those that fear God:

1. “Mighty fear,”—“terror by night.” The scripture frequently represents temptations and afflictions under the figures of darkness and night; and consolations under the figurative descriptions of light and day. The Psalmist, therefore, here sets forth all those horrible instances

of hatred, that Cain-like purpose to destroy, (which is ever secretly bound up in the hearts of pharisaic religionists) all those malicious threats, those hostile traps and snares, those created perils, those injuries, and all those other terrible oppositions which Satan ever raises up against the word of God, by nightly fear, or “terror by night.”

2. “The arrow that flieth by day.” By which are meant to be described all those open clamours, reproaches, execrations, and blasphemies, by which tyrants and hypocrites openly attack and condemn the word of God, and the doctrine of Christ. Of this kind are the pope’s bulls, (and truly they are bulls!) and also, the edicts of kings and princes, the virulent and blasphemous books of erroneous disputers, and the writings of erroneous and visionary men, such as the anabaptists, and the like.

3. “The pestilence that creepeth (or walketh) in darkness.” These are the deceits, the crafts, and the artifices of the papists; and the leagues, the covert conspiracies, the secret counsels, by which those enemies consult and plan among themselves in their private conclaves: which clandestine machinations they think they can keep hidden, even from the eyes of God himself; and by all which diabolical means, they plot to destroy and root out the godly and all doctrine that is truly good and saving.

4. “The disease (or contagion, or destruction) that wasteth at noon day.” This is the work of open persecution; whereby these holy Cains, in their unheard-of cruelty and tyranny, shed the blood of the Abels, drive into exile the godly, plunder their substance, and slaughter them by every cruelty of torture; thereby attempting to lay the true church utterly waste, and to leave not a vestige of the true word remaining.

This is my view of the Psalm. I know that St. Bernard gives other interpretations. Let others, therefore, if they can, put forth a better explication than I have done: that my view is simple, and agreeable to the mind and spirit of the prophets, is self-manifest, and proved by experience: for we see and experience daily, that the saints of God are attacked and exercised by these four afflictions for the word’s sake, by means of the devil and by the world. The Holy Spirit, therefore, by this Psalm, revives and

strengthens our faith; and by the cluster of promises at the end of the Psalm, the same Holy Spirit quickens and refreshes our hearts with consolation: this Psalm therefore ought to be most acceptable to all the saints.

PSALM XCII.

The prophet exhorteth to praise God, for his great works, for his judgments on the wicked, and for his goodness to the godly.

A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath-day.

It *is a* good *thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High:

To shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,

Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltry; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

O LORD, how great are thy works! *and* thy thoughts are very deep.

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

When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; *it is* that they shall be destroyed for ever:

But thou, LORD, *art most* high for evermore.

For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered;

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

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

The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

To shew that the LORD *is* upright; *he is* my rock, and *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

This is a consolatory Psalm. The first six verses are full of the most sweet experiences of a heart rejoicing and triumphing in that incomparable treasure—a knowledge of the true and sure word of God, and of the promises of grace in Christ. It is the same rejoicing of heart as that of the apostle, when he, exulting in the Spirit, saith, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

At the very opening of the Psalm, the Psalmist saith, “O how excellent, how sweet a thing is it to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High!” that is, O what is sweeter than to know God aright by his word, and by true faith; to acknowledge his infinite mercies; to give thanks unto him joyfully and adoringly, with every cord and string of our hearts; to proclaim and praise him unceasingly with a full heart and a full mouth; to triumph in his goodness; and to offer him the full sacrifice of thanksgiving! in a word, to worship him with that all high and all-true

worship of the first commandment, which requires for its high worship, above all things, true faith, and such joyful exercises of faith as these; as if the Psalmist had said, ‘How precious is that worship of God! How acceptable unto God, how grateful in his sight, and in the sight of angels too, are all such sabbaths, such sacrifices as these! Though we saints, all the while, are said, by the world, to know nothing about worshipping God!’

All these glorious things are pointed by the Psalmist against false saints and hypocrites; who honour God (as they think) with cold hearts and lips, and tread all the while that high worship of the first commandment under foot; and yet make a great show of the name of church among them, and flourish in the sight of the world, and display much wealth and much power and greatness. But though they greatly flourish and prosper thus for a time; yet they at length perish and go to destruction: and, according to the word of Paul, “Their folly is made manifest unto all.”

But the godly and the saints, though thus exercised and broken with afflictions, flourish, nevertheless, like palm-trees, in the house of the Lord, and will flourish for evermore! Neither time, nor age, nor sorrow of mind, nor any afflictions, nor death itself, can root them out, or hurt them! But, both living and dying, and even in death itself, they live and bring forth fruit through the word of God, as Paul saith, “*No creature* can separate them!” But fools, that is, the wicked and epicureans of this world, regard not these things, they will not hear or endure them; and of this sort we may see thousands of atheistical men in our day.

PSALM XCIII.

The majesty, power, and holiness of Christ’s kingdom.

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

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

The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

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

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.

This is a prophecy concerning the spread of the kingdom of Christ, as far and wide as the earth is extended, and its establishment for ever. But against this kingdom, as the Psalmist saith, the “waves” and “mighty waters” will swell and lift up themselves; that is, the kingdoms and peoples of the world will roar against the Lord and against his Anointed; and will rage against the godly with sword and fire; but they shall not prevail: for, as Daniel saith, “this kingdom shall break in pieces all other kingdoms beneath it, and shall stand for ever.”—Daniel ii. 44.

But thy kingdom shall be established in no other way than by the word of the gospel. It shall not stand by the force of arms, nor by external pomp, or glory, before the world; but it shall be husbanded, and shall be increased and adorned, by the ministry of the word of the gospel. This is the “holiness,” (namely the ministry of the word) that shall “become,” or “adorn,” the house of the Lord. For this true and high worship of God which is in the kingdom of Christ, takes the place of all sacrifices and of all oblations, candlesticks, and the like; and the preaching of the word, and the giving of thanks, are instead of all external representations of mercy: hence Paul saith, that the Old Testament is done away by this New Testament worship.

PSALM XCIV.

The prophet, calling for justice, complaineth of tyranny and impiety.—He teacheth God's providence.—He sheweth the blessedness of affliction.—God is the defender of the afflicted.

O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

Lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

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

They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage:

They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard *it*.

Understand, ye brutish among the people; and, *ye* fools, when will ye be wise?

He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

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

The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

Blessed *is* the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

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

For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance:

But judgment shall return unto righteousness; and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers? *or* who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

Unless the LORD *had been* my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.

When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

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

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

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

But the LORD is my defence; and my God *is* the rock of my refuge.

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

This is a general but a most fervent prayer, filled with the feelings of an afflicted and sorrowful heart, grieving that the blood of the Abels should be shed and drank up, with such iniquity and cruelty, by Cainish hypocrites.

The Psalmist complains, (as I consider it,) not of hostile nations, but of those domestic hypocrites and enemies, who will have it to appear that they, yea, that they alone, are the people of God; that is, the Psalmist complains of the wicked kings, and princes, and priests, and prophets, among the people of Israel. It is to these the Psalmist turns, in this apostrophe, "Understand, ye brutish among the people; and, ye fools, when will ye be wise?" He calls these characters "fools;" that is, ignorant and impious despisers of God; because they taught and ruled the people without knowledge, and wickedly.

In a word, the Psalmist here directs his word against all who persecuted the true prophets, and their disciples and followers, and slew them with Cainish hatred, and nevertheless boasted all the while in God, and the name of God; who (they said) had given them power, and made, and defended, and protected them, as magistrates and priests; but who did not regard heretics, who seditiously resisted *them* that were the princes and magistrates of the people of God. And many such things they continued to say.

Now, against all such the prophet burns with zeal; and (with a certain zealous mimicry, as it were,) imitates their own words and expressions; saying, (that is, meaning that they say,) "The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it." And it is thus that the papists say, in their security, 'Do you think God regards these heretics! No! he regards us: he has respect unto us, the catholic church, whom we certainly represent in the world.' Against such as these, the prophet burns with the rage of zeal; and against such he prays, and begs of God, that there may be enough to stand forward for the truth.

But, in the 16th verse, the Psalmist, on the other hand, strikes at the perfidious deceitfulness of the world: "Who (saith he) is on my side? Who will rise up for me against the evil doers?" As if he had said, 'I know the world careth nothing about this: the blood of God's Abels is shed, and no one regardeth it. But (continues the holy Psalmist) this is my sure and eternal consolation, that the cause which I love and espouse is the right cause; nay, the cause of God, and not my cause: and I know in whom I have believed.' I am assured, saith the Psalmist, (verse 20,) that the "seat of the scornful," and the "counsel of the ungodly," cleave not, and belong not,

unto thee: that is, I am sure that thou, O God, approvest not any impious or blasphemous doctrine. I am sure that thou requirest and demandest the blood, (and every drop of that blood,) and the tears, of the Abels, at the hands of their persecutors; and that thou wilt keep, and fulfil, and glorify thy word, even in the midst of the death of thy saints; and that thou wilt revenge all blasphemy and wickedness against thee and them.

PSALM XCV.

An exhortation to praise God for his greatness, and for his goodness, and not to tempt him.

O come, let us sing unto the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also.

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

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.

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

> Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, *and* as *in* the day of temptation in the wilderness:
>
> When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.
>
> Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:
>
> Unto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.

This Psalm is a prophecy concerning Christ, and its contents are fully and learnedly explained in the Apostle's epistle to the Hebrews. It prophecies concerning the time of the New Testament, and sets forth the lovely and sweet voice of the gospel. In a word, the Psalmist instructs us in, and allures us to, the knowledge of the riches of the grace of God; which riches were known to our fathers as well as unto us, in the promised seed—Christ.

'Come (saith the Psalmist) and let us rejoice in the Lord. Come ye that are afar off and ye that are near, and let us exult in the Lord; let us triumph in the God of such salvation:' that is, Come and let us rejoice with the whole triumph of our hearts, in that infinite benefit and mercy—the granted grace of Christ! Since we have such promises, let us not neglect such great salvation. For to believe in the promise of grace, contrary to all the objections of conscience, the temptations of Satan, and the fears of the heart, is the true worship of God!

In a word, the Psalmist warns against unbelief. "Harden not your hearts (says he) as ye did at Massah and Meribah in the desert: your fathers, on account of their unbelief, entered not into the holy land of promise."

The whole of this Psalm is to be referred to Christ: for he is that blessed God in whom we ought to rejoice, and whom the Psalmist would have to be known. He is our Shepherd, and we are the sheep of his pasture. He is that God, whom our fathers tempted in the desert, as Paul saith, (1 Cor. x.) It was he who took out of the way the law, and abolished all the ceremonial

worship of the Old Testament. He will no longer have the worship established by Moses; but he will have faith in the gospel, the preaching of the remission of sins, and that one true offering—praise, instead of the whole Levitical worship.

PSALM XCVI.

An exhortation to praise God,—for his greatness,—for his kingdom,—for his general judgment.

O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

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

For all the gods of the nations *are* idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

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

Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

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

O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

Say among the heathen *that* the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved; he shall judge the people righteously.

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

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

Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

This is a prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ, and the spreading of the gospel over the whole world and before every creature; which gospel will be a word of joy and thanksgiving, of peace, of rejoicing, and of a continued sacrifice of praise: as the clear text of the Psalm of itself plainly shows.

Here, commandment is given to all nations, kingdoms, peoples, woods, rivers, fountains, trees, &c. that they should praise and magnify the Lord, and celebrate his name with rejoicing, because he judgeth the world in righteousness and in truth: that is, because, through Christ, the promised seed, he delivers, and will deliver the people from sin, from the power of the devil, from the wrath of God, and from eternal death: and because, instead of the kingdom of death and of darkness, he sets up the kingdom of light, of the remission of sins, and of eternal life, before all men.

This is that most joyful shout of victory, that peculiar song, that most sweet note of the New Testament, concerning the kingdom and grace of Christ; in which kingdom there are born new men and new creatures; not by the law or by the works of Moses, but by faith, by the Spirit of God through Christ, so that each believer is a new creature and a marvellous work of God; and

all believers daily do marvellous works and are marvellous monuments, in that they continue in spiritual life, and are finally conquerors over the mighty powers of sin and the devil; hence it is that David says, verse 1. “Declare his wonders among all people.”

PSALM XCVII.

The majesty of God’s kingdom.—The church rejoiceth at God’s judgments upon idolaters.—An exhortation to godliness and gladness.

The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad *thereof*.

Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: righteousness and judgment *are* the habitation of his throne.

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

His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled.

The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the LORD of the whole earth.

The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

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

Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of thy judgments, O LORD.

For thou, LORD, *art* high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.

Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

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

Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

This also, like the preceding, is a prophecy concerning Christ and his kingdom; and the sum of it is to proclaim, that Christ establishes and strengthens his spiritual kingdom by the gospel; wherein he preaches repentance, and whereby his lightnings and thunders terrify the whole world, and cause the mountains to melt like wax before the fire of his face: that is, by the gospel he condemns, casts down, and humbles all human righteousness, human wisdom, and human patience, throughout the world, and brings down every thing that is high and lifted up; as Isaiah saith, chapter 3, “And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” For Christ alone is our “righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption,” and that by the counsel of God, as it is written, “There is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

Together also with these enemies of the gospel and these mountains of the world, the ceremonial kingdom of the Jews perisheth, and all the outward worship of the law, and, indeed, every thing that is not in Christ. For he (as the apostle Paul saith, Col. i.) “in all things hath the pre-eminence.” And again, “For there is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.” And so also, in Daniel, The stone cut out of the mountain filled the world, and broke in pieces all other kingdoms.

PSALM XCVIII.

The Psalmist exhorteth the Jews, the Gentiles, and all the creatures to praise God.

A Psalm.

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

The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

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

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.

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

Let the floods clap *their* hands; let the hills be joyful together

Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

This again is a prophecy concerning the preaching of Christ and the spread of his kingdom, and it is of the same subject as the two preceding Psalms; it calls upon us to rejoice in God, to triumph, to give thanks, and to praise God for that great salvation: that is, to preach the remission of sins, and those riches of grace which are by Christ Jesus.

In this Psalm you again have set before you what is the highest worship of God, namely, that of the New Testament; which standeth not in the offering of thanks in Jerusalem, but in knowing Christ,—that King who ruleth the people in righteousness; who is himself righteous, and who maketh the people righteous throughout the world; and who alone delivereth them from sin, from death, and from the power of the devil; and doeth it all without any merit of theirs.

PSALM XCIX.

The prophet, setting forth the kingdom of God in Zion,—exhorteth all, by the example of forefathers, to worship God at his holy hill.

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

The LORD *is* great in Zion; and he *is* high above all the people.

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

The king’s strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; *for* he *is* holy.

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

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

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

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

This Psalm is a Psalm of blessed doctrine. It exhorts the people of God to preserve sacredly that true worship of the first commandment, the praising of God alone, and the continuing in the faith of him, although the nations on all sides and the whole world should roar against that people who glory in being the people of God, and who know that God is to be found no where but in this and that corner of the earth, in that tabernacle, in that sanctuary, and at that mercy-seat, where the word and the promise of God are preached. And the Psalm shows that this true people of God are exposed to the most bitter hatred of the world and of the devil, and to afflictions of every kind.

The Psalmist mentions, by name, Moses, and Aaron, and Samuel; those best of men among the people of God, who endured great afflictions, both inward and outward, for the sake of the name and the word of God. The Psalmist shows, however, (as is set forth verses 4 and 5.) and teaches this people of God, that the highest worship of God is not placed in ceremonial sacrifices: therefore he says, “Let them praise thy great and terrible name, for it is holy.” “In this kingdom of God, (says the Psalmist,) justice and judgment are loved.” “Thou justifiest,” says he, “thy people;” that is, thou deliverest from sin and death, and extendest unto them the remission of their sins.

And unto us, who are in and of the church of God, the present Psalm is a glorious prophecy of Christ, who governs and rules this church, the true

Zion, in the Spirit, throughout the whole world, wheresoever she is. The holy Psalmist shews us, that Christ, sitting at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, is there continually as our Sacrificer and our Sacrifice. And he testifies that the whole world rages and roars against this people and church of God, and kills the saints, and loads them with all manner of afflictions, on account of their profession and worship of Christ.

PSALM C.

An exhortation to praise God cheerfully, for his greatness and for his power.

A Psalm of Praise.

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

Serve the LORD with gladness; come before his presence with singing.

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

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

For the LORD *is* good, his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.

This Psalm again is a prophecy concerning Christ. It calls upon all to rejoice, to triumph, and to give thanks; to enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts and sanctuary with praise: because, by the gospel and the

preaching of the remission of sins, that kingdom of Christ is established and strengthened, which shall remain and stand for ever: and for the setting-up of which kingdom thanks are for ever to be given.

PSALM CI.

David maketh a vow and profession of godliness.

A Psalm of David.

I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

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

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

A froward heart shall depart from me; I will not know a wicked *person*.

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

Mine eyes *shall be* upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

> I will early destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

This Psalm contains a most solemn and necessary doctrine: and David puts forth himself, so great a king, as an example. He teaches that impious members and courtiers ought not to be borne with by any godly magistrate or prince. He recounts also the iniquities, by which those who are in the courts of kings and princes, more especially harm the state and the church. He shews that they do the greatest evil when they are given to sin or to false doctrine; and when they injure the causes of good men by their hatred of them.

In the opening of the Psalm David says, “I will sing of mercy and of judgment:” that is as if he had said, ‘I will sing that God most certainly, according to the word of the first commandment, visits the godly with mercy, and the ungodly with judgment, at all times.’ Of this visiting mercy David was himself an example, seeing that he had been so many times delivered from the very claws and jaws of the devil. And of the divine visitations of judgment, Absalom, Ahithophel, Joab, and others, were examples. And every king and magistrate, who sets himself to defend the true religion, and to do good to his nation, is at once exposed to the hatred of all men, even of his own family and court: which is plainly seen in the case of Absalom, Ahithophel, and other persecutors of David.

Hence it is that David, having so often experienced God’s fulfilment of the word of his first commandment, sings in all places and at all times, ‘that God is God over all, exercising mercy and judgment.’ And it is with God alone that a kingdom and commonwealth can be rightly governed: for where God is not, there all things are scattered and in confusion, and neither families are subject to their heads, nor citizens to their rulers.

PSALM CII.

The prophet in his prayer maketh a grievous complaint.—He taketh comfort in the eternity and mercy of God.—The mercies of God are to be recorded.—He sustaineth his weakness by the unchangeableness of God.

A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

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

For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.

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

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

I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert.

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

Mine enemies reproach me all the day; *and* they that are mad against me are sworn against me.

For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping;

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

My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.

But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations.

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

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

So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

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

This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

To hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death;

To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

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

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

Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

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:

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

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

This Psalm is a prayer of an afflicted and tempted heart, miserably sighing and praying for deliverance and the coming of the kingdom of God. And indeed the whole sum and substance of this Psalm is, “Thy kingdom come.”

This Psalm may be used as a general prayer. It was used especially by the fathers under the law: who being most spiritual men, and knowing the infinite weight of sin, and the kingdom of death, longed for the coming and revelation of Christ, the kingdom of grace, and the blessing promised.

“Have mercy upon Zion (saith the Psalmist) for the time to have mercy upon her is come.” For thy servants (saith he) long for her to be built up again, and for the stones and cement to be made ready: that is, they long for that grace and that blessing to be revealed unto all nations, and to be preached in all kingdoms; that those who are captives and in chains under the power of the devil and of sin, and who are the sons of wrath and death, may be delivered; and that there may flow together into the true Zion, the church of God, those out of all nations and kingdoms, who may magnify the name of the Lord, and may preach and hear the gospel, and that all the rigid demands and ceremonies of the law, and the whole of the Old Testament dispensation, may cease. For out of and without Christ there is nothing but the kingdom of sin and death: that is, a continual misery and distress in this life, by various and hard temptations of the devil and the world: and also a shortness of life itself, and that life changeable and uncertain, full of sorrow and full of death; which life the godly consider it a “gain” to have shortened and finished: as the apostle saith, “to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

But amidst all this misery, in Christ is consolation and eternal life; for he is before every creature; he created the heaven and the earth, and by him all things consist; and he also, in the regeneration, will renew the heavens and the earth. Hence he is independent of and above all time and years, and of his years there is no end. He now dies no more, death hath no more dominion over him. For this kingdom of life and of salvation (saith the Psalmist) we pray and long. May this kingdom come. Amen.

PSALM CIII.

An exhortation to bless God for his mercy, and for the constancy thereof.

A Psalm of David.

Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies;

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

The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all *that are* oppressed.

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

The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

He will not alway chide; neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

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

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

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

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

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

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

But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

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

The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* his hosts; *ye* ministers of his that do his pleasure.

Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

This is a glorious Psalm, and full of the most ardent feelings and exercises of faith, and of a believing heart, a heart acknowledging the infinite mercies of God, both temporal and spiritual. “Bless the Lord (saith the Psalmist), O my soul,” &c. The Psalmist embraces, in the first three verses, six kinds of divine mercies and benefits, for which he exhorts all the godly to give praise unto God with their whole heart, and to celebrate his great and holy name.

The first kind of mercy enumerated is the remission of all our sins in Christ, and for Christ’s sake, our only Mediator and High-priest: who by himself sustained the just and infinite wrath of God, which burned against our sins: who offered himself a sacrifice to God for them; by which offering he reconciled unto us the Eternal Father, and now pleads for us with an unceasing and prevailing intercession.

The second kind of mercy is the healing of those manifold, and by no means light infirmities, which shall remain in the flesh of the saints, as long as they live in this world: all which remnant of sins God, for Christ’s sake, imputeth not unto them that believe: nor does he only cover those sins by not imputing them, but he moreover purges them away, by the gift of his Holy Spirit.

The third kind of mercy is a continual and daily protection and defence against all the dangers of death, into numbers of which we continually fall; and into more and greater of which we should fall by fire, by water, by sword, by pestilence, and other means of destruction, and be destroyed by them on account of the deserts of our sins, if God did not in his mercy prevent and save and preserve our lives.

The fourth kind of mercy is a manifold dispensation of the grace of God, wherewith he covers and defends us with a shield, and crowns us, giving us the Holy Spirit, and strengthening our minds with the true doctrine against all doubts, and with true consolation in all perils and evils; and bestowing on the godly many and various gifts.

The fifth kind of mercy is that boldness wherewith by the aid and urgency of the Holy Spirit, we fearlessly preach before the world these great mercies of God toward us: whereby many others also may learn to acknowledge and lay hold of the goodness of God in Christ, and, embracing it themselves in the true faith, may, with us, magnify and call upon God.

The sixth kind of mercy is the restoration of our depraved nature by Christ into the image of God; into which image we being renewed by the Holy Ghost, begin with full purpose of heart to obey God; and so continue, until, being made perfect in the life to come, we may be able to render a full obedience with our whole unimpeded powers.

The Psalmist, therefore, first renders thanks to God for his spiritual benefits; and then he from his heart thanks God for bestowing blessings of every kind,—peace, good magistrates, good laws, good wives, good children, the fruits of the earth, and all needful provision. The Psalmist sets forth God as a most kind Father towards us (who are nothing but a loathsome sore, full of sin) and as not dealing with us according to our sins, but treating and protecting us, according to his infinite grace and mercy, as dear children: yet so that he will have us to keep his covenant and his counsel: that is, to believe in him, to fear him, and to have him for our God. For if we trust in our own works or righteousnesses, we thereby immediately break his covenant, and walk not in his counsel, and follow strange gods, and thus sin against the First Commandment.

Now this fulfilling of the law, and keeping the covenant of God, is in and through Christ alone, who was then promised to the fathers, but now in these last days has been given unto us; and manifested; whose kingdom shall rule over all.

At the end of the Psalm, when the Psalmist calls upon the angels and the hosts of God, the powers and the dominions, to praise and magnify him, he

means Christ and the church and the apostles who cause his word to be heard. For all our salvation is in Christ, and there is no grace out of Christ; who is preached by the angels; that is, by the apostles.

PSALM CIV.

A meditation upon the mighty power, and wonderful providence of God.—God's glory is eternal.—The prophet voweth perpetually to praise God.

Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty:

Who coverest *thyself* with light as *with* a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;

Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind;

Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire;

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

Thou coveredst it with the deep as *with* a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

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

They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys, unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the earth.

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

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

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

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

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;

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

The trees of the LORD are full *of sap:* the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

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

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

He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

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

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

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

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

O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches;

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

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

These wait all upon thee, that them mayest give *them* their meat in due season.

That thou givest them, they gather; thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.

The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.

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

I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the LORD.

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.

This is a most spiritual song and a Psalm of glory to God. It is drawn out of the First Commandment: and with a grand enumeration of all the creatures of God, it sets forth and exalts the whole work of creation. By this recounting of the works of creation the Psalmist's design is to show, that all the creatures, whether those in the heavens, those in the earth, or those in the sea, are monuments of the goodness of God. And what orator or what poet ever has existed, or ever will exist, with an eloquence adequate to describe the infinite use and benefits of even one creature of God. If any one of those creatures were gifted with speech, so as to declare its own nature and value, it would praise God with a thousand tongues. Not only, therefore, the whole of God's works together, as one glorious universe, but each one creature, if you would explain its nature and use, exceeds all the eloquence of men and angels.

What philosopher or sage could even open or utter the extent of the use and blessings of common light, in which we live? What one of them could ever explain what that is which we call light, in which we all breathe, all are nourished, and all live; by which the night and darkness are dispelled in one short moment; by which the whole creation is rendered visible, and as it were, recreated; and by which all creatures, from out of one same obscure darkness, receive each their proper hues and colours?

Who, again, can recount the benefit and blessings of that one creature the sun? and then those of the moon? Who can enumerate the blessings of fire, of water, of fountains and springs? If one creature were deprived for one short hour of the blessings of fire or of water, you would in a moment see the wide and infinite benefit of one of those creatures of God.

But alas! who can even touch one of these creatures with anything like a due comment or reflection! And yet, when heathen men have contemplated the whole universe of creatures so diligently, (as we see it done in Cicero's second book 'De Natura Deorum;') and have thence gathered and concluded that there exists some eternal Deity who created and who governs all these things; it would be a shame in one professing the fear and worship of that God, to be cold and not affected with these same things, and not to meditate and reflect upon them.

This Psalm, therefore, is a Psalm of thanksgiving for all the creatures which God has created, whether in the heavens, in the earth, or in the sea; and a rendering of thanks unto God also, that he hath made a covenant with the day and the night, and hath given laws to the heaven and the earth; laws so certain that they cannot be moved, but continue in their appointed order. The moon, saith the Psalmist, distinguished the seasons; the sun knoweth his going down; the day cometh, and also the night; the summer returns at its appointed time, and the winter also in its season. Thou fillest, saith he, that immense space of the heaven with light: thou stretchest out the heaven itself like a curtain, which resteth not on any beams or columns: and thou suspendest the mighty range of clouds, at thy word, like a glorious canopy. The winds rise, and blow over and blow through all things, having neither wings nor feathers. And the angels whom thou sendest forth, saith he, fulfil their commands like the winds, and like a "flame of fire."

Hence the prophet, as you see, has all these things depicted in his mind, and his faith is kindled by a meditation on this wonderful and ineffable work of creation. But, alas! how few, how very few, are there who thus look into, meditate on, and admire these created things? Here, therefore, with a view to reprove both the indolence and the wickedness of certain characters, I cannot help transcribing the words of Cicero, a heathen, who cites another heathen, Aristotle: 'Aristotle,' says Cicero, 'has most greatly and beautifully spoken thus. "If there could be men, who had lived under the earth in grand and noble habitations; habitations adorned with paintings and works of art, and with all those embellishments which ornament the houses of those who are now accounted wealthy and happy; and if it could so be that such subterranean inhabitants had never been above ground, but had heard by fame and report that there was a certain Deity, and a certain Almighty power of that Deity; and then if it could so be, that, at a certain time, the doors of the earth's surface should be thrown open, and they should come forth from their subterranean abysses into these above-ground regions which we inhabit:—when such men beheld, on a sudden, the earth, the sea, and the heavens; when they saw the expanded grandeur of the clouds, and felt the mighty power of the winds; when they looked up to the sun and beheld his glorious magnitude and his beauty, and knew something of his influence and efficacy in all creation,—that it is he, who, by diffusing his light through the whole heaven, makes the day; and when such mortals,

newly admitted on earth, should see by the departure of the sun the whole creation veiled in the darkness of night, while the whole heaven was studded and bespangled with stars; and when they saw and understood the various degrees of the light of the moon, and the increasings and decreasings of that heavenly body; and the various risings and settings of all the celestial luminaries; and, finally, when such astonished and contemplating strangers on the earth's surface should know the appointed and never-erring and never-varying courses and revolutions of all these glorious creatures,—they would, with one voice, confess that there was a God, and that all these creatures were the works of that God! But our minds, by daily use, become insensible to these things; and as we daily see all these creatures we inquire not their nature, nor wonder at their glory: as if the novelty of such things, and not their greatness and glory, is that which should lead us to meditate on their natures, and the ends of their creation."' Thus far Cicero, the heathen! I shall perhaps be deemed by some a silly man for bringing forth these things out of the books of a heathen! Let those that would fear God, then, remember what is required of them!

PSALM CV.

An exhortation to praise God, and to seek out his works.—The story of God's providence over Abraham,—over Joseph,—over Jacob, in Egypt,—over Moses delivering the Israelites,—over the Israelites brought out of Egypt, fed in the wilderness, and planted in Canaan.

O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

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

Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.

Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

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

He *is* the LORD our God: his judgments *are* in all the earth.

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:

When there were *but* a few men in number: yea, very few, and strangers in it.

When they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people;

He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes;

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

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

He sent a man before them, *even* Joseph, *who* was sold for a servant:

Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron:

Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

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

He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance:

To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.

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

He sent Moses his servant; *and* Aaron whom he had chosen.

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

He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.

He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.

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

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

He gave them hail for rain, *and* flaming fire in their land.

He smote their vines also and their fig-trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.

He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillers, and that without number,

And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

He smote also all the first-born in their land, the chief of all their strength.

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

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

He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

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

He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places *like* a river.

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

And he brought forth his people with joy, *and* his chosen with gladness:

And gave them the lands of the heathen; and they inherited the labour of the people;

That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a Psalm of particular thanksgiving; and a song especially adapted to the people of the Jews; that in the use of this Psalm they might render thanks unto God for all those, his wonderful works, which he wrought from Abraham down to the time when they were led into the promised land of Canaan. And the Psalmist, having recounted all these glorious works in their order, concludes with that word of Moses, (Deut. ix.) “That God did not do all these mighty works on account of any righteousness or merit of theirs, but because of the covenant and the promise which he had made with their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:” for how righteous they were and what they deserved at the hand of God, is sung in the Psalm following.

PSALM CVI.

The Psalmist exhorteth to praise God.—He prayeth for pardon of sin, as God did with the fathers.—The story of the people’s rebellion, and God’s mercy.—He concludeth with prayer and praise.

Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? *who* can shew forth all his praise?

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

Remember me, O LORD, with the favour *that thou bearest unto* thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;

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.

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

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.

They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel:

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

And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

They envied Moses also in the camp, *and* Aaron the saint of the LORD.

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

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

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

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

They forgat God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

Wondrous works in the land of Ham, *and* terrible things by the Red Sea.

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*.

Yea, they despised the pleasant land; they believed not his word;

But murmured in their tents, *and* hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD:

Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

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

They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

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

Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and *so* the plague was stayed.

And that was counted unto him for righteousness, unto all generations for evermore.

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

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

They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

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

And they served their idols; which were a snare unto them.

Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

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.

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

Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.

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

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

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

Nevertheless, he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:

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

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

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.

Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a Psalm of acknowledgment, of confession, and of thanksgiving. The Psalmist confesses all those sins of murmuring and unbelief, and those other numerous transgressions against the first commandment, by which the people of Israel provoked God, and rendered themselves utterly unworthy of all his mercies.

At the conclusion of the Psalm, therefore, the Psalmist proclaims the exceeding greatness of the divine mercy of God; whereby he continued mindful of his counsel and his covenant, and did not pour forth all his wrath, but was merciful to them for his own name's sake. As Moses saith also, (Deut. ix.) "Know ye, that not for your righteousness doth the Lord God give unto you this good land: for ye are a stiff-necked people." Therefore as the Israelites, the whole of that people of God, could glory in nothing, but that they were saved by the mercy and grace of God; so also we cannot glory in any work or merit of our own, but in the mercy of God only!

PSALM CVII.

The psalmist exhorteth the redeemed, in praising God, to observe his manifold providence, over travellers, over captives, over sick men, over seamen, and in divers varieties of life.

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

Let the redeemed of the LORD say *so*, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.

They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he delivered them out of their distresses.

And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *being* bound in affliction and iron;

Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High:

Therefore he brought down their heart with labour: they fell down, and *there was* none to help.

Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saved them out of their distresses.

He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted:

Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble; and he saveth them out of their distresses.

He sent his word and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.

Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.

For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end.

Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground;

A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs.

And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;

And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.

He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

Again, they are minished, and brought low, through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, *where there is* no way.

Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh *him* families like a flock.

The righteous shall see *it*, and rejoice; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

Whoso *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the LORD.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, in general; rendering praise for that infinite and incomparable mercy and goodness of God, wherewith he daily helps and succours all men, both the righteous and the wicked, under the various calamities of life, and defends them against the Devil: preserving also the public peace, giving healthfulness of air and climate, and blessing the earth to the springing of its productions; as Paul saith, 2 Tim. ii. “Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe.”

In the fourth verse, where the Psalmist says, “They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way,” he refers to all kinds of calamities; and especially to the afflictions of those who are oppressed with poverty, who are exiles, and deserted, and wandering without any certain dwelling-place.

In the ninth verse by those “sitting in darkness,” &c. he means those throughout the whole world, who on account of their own crimes, or for other causes, are held in bonds and in prisons, and who are sometimes delivered by the interposition and help of God himself.

Then again, verse 6, he refers to those who live wickedly and fear not God; on whom God sends diseases and distresses to punish them; of whom some, although they call not upon God, are delivered by his pure mercy alone.

In verse 22, he speaks of those who are in perils on the seas, and there enduring storms and shipwrecks; under which calamities God often delivers wicked sailors, and preserves them from shipwreck and death, and from the power of the Devil, by his mere goodness and mercy.

Verse 32 has reference to those fields and vineyards that are visited with barrenness or any other calamity; unto whom God gives rain and

fruitfulness, not according to their merits, but of his abounding mercy, whereby he sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust.

Verse 38 applies to those who are oppressed by the Turk or any other tyrants, or by wars and seditions, and whose all in this world is in peril; unto whom God often, on a sudden, gives peace and quietness, as he calmeth the waves of the sea.

This Psalm, therefore, shows that all salvation is to be sought and expected from God alone; who will never forsake his people, or his church, or those that trust in him; and that he often bestows these benefits on the Turks, and on the openly impious and profane; even when they are seeking all these great blessings from their idols of wood and stone. And we who profess the name of Christ also, not at all unlike the Turks, leave God our true and only Saviour and implore the help of saints. Hence St. Leonard is worshipped as the liberator of the imprisoned; St. Sebastian is invoked by those who are in dread of pestilence; St. George is the protecting saint of military troops of horse and foot; St. Erasmus is said to bless with riches those that call upon him; St. Christopher is openly worshipped as the god of land and sea; and his image is affixed to all doors of temples, and to all prows of ships, and adored by all sailors. And thus we have divided the glory of God and of his saving mercies, which is due to him alone, unto saints set up by idolatrous men; just in the same way as the heathens gave to their gods the attributes and functions which belong to God only. This Psalm, however, rightly ascribes all the glory to God alone.

PSALM CVIII.

David encourageth himself to praise God.—He prayeth for God's assistance according to his promise.—His confidence in God's help.

A Song or Psalm of David.

O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.

Awake, psaltery and harp; I *myself* will awake early.

I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people; and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

For thy mercy is great above the heavens, and thy truth *reacheth* unto the clouds.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; and thy glory above all the earth:

That thy beloved may be delivered, save *with* thy right hand, and answer me.

God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice; I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

Gilead *is* mine; Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; Judah *is* my law-giver;

Moab *is* my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.

Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

Wilt not *thou*, O God, *who* hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?

Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the help of man.

Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving of the same substance, and almost in the same words as Psalm lx.; wherein the Psalmist gives thanks for the happy state of his kingdom, for the establishment of the true religion and good government, and for the increase of his dominions.

The first verses of the Psalm, however, refer to the kingdom of Christ. David prays that God would be pleased to set up this kingdom of Christ in all nations; that thus the kingdom and dominion of David may be extended far and wide throughout all nations, according to the promise. For this temporal kingdom of David was confined within very narrow limits in comparison with the whole world, and was a kingdom not likely to be extended over all the nations and people of the earth; and yet this kingdom God promised to enlarge and extend, as in Isaiah, “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people,” Isa. xi. 10. And again, chapter ix. 7, “Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it for ever.”

PSALM CIX.

David, complaining of his slanderous enemies, under the person of Judas devoteth them.—He sheweth their sin.—Complaining of his own misery, he prayeth for help.—He promiseth thankfulness.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;

For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

For my love they are my adversaries: but I *give myself unto* prayer.

And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Let his days be few; *and* let another take his office.

Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek *their bread* also out of their desolate places.

Let the extortioner catch all that he hath: and let the strangers spoil his labour.

Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

Let his posterity be cut off; *and* in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

Let it be unto him as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

Let this *be* the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy *is* good, deliver thou me.

For I *am* poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

I became also a reproach unto them: *when* they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

That they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it.

Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save *him* from those that condemn his soul.

Certain hypocrites of monks are accustomed to use this Psalm, (generally known by the name of ‘The God of praise,’) as a sort of incantation: and they say that, to a certainty, against what person soever they babble and sing out the terrible words of this Psalm; that man is at once death-struck, and never lives a year afterwards.

This Psalm, however, is most certainly full of the complaints, tears, and groans of the godly against these very hypocrites themselves. It may be very properly considered as used in the person of Christ, deeply complaining against his betrayers the Jews, and against the cruelty of the Jews, which was not satisfied, even after the shedding of his innocent blood.

Like unto Judas Iscariot, and unto all the Jews, are pharisaical saints and hypocrites, of all nations and ages; of whom Christ doth not say in vain, that they are guilty of all the blood that has been shed from Abel downwards. For so great and bitter is the terribleness and fury of their virulent and Satanic hatred, that they cannot rest satisfied with the shedding of the blood of Abel and all the saints from the beginning of the world, but must hang Christ himself on the cross; and that is not all, they must (as the Psalmist saith, ver. 22.) wag their heads at him, and insult and mock his sufferings; “If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross.”

Concerning these wretches, David says, (ver. 2.) “They have opened their blaspheming mouth against me:” for the raving fury of such hypocrites is incredible. And again he says, “For my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer. And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.” And again, “They fight against me without a cause.”

These are the true and real colours of these hypocrites who pretend to be in the truth. We have here pourtrayed not only the Cainish countenances of these Iscariots, but their pharisaic and virulent hearts themselves; which are now become organs and instruments of the devil. And we have also here depicted their thoughts, their furious purposes of injuring and harming, by which the minds of such are incessantly actuated. For these embittered wretches knowingly and purposely, and against the light of their own consciences, fight against and deny the known truth; and, as Stephen says,

cease not to resist the Holy Ghost. And although they are convinced by natural reason, by the Scriptures, and by their natural understanding, they still reject and fight against God and Christ, and harden themselves in the denial of the truth. And finally, “They delight not in blessing;” but refuse and cast from them God and his Christ.

In addition to all this, they “render evil for good.” The ingratitude of these hypocrites and of the world surely is enough, in not returning any thing for all that good which is offered to them by God himself, and by the saints in his name: but they rest not here; they render, for all this good, hatred and cursing, and a purpose to injure and to destroy: which is manifestly not human, but Satanic cruelty.

But we, the people of God, are hereby admonished throughout all times and ages of the church that, whenever God is pleased to reveal his word, and Christ is preached, so surely will the church have her Judases: that is, so surely will she have her enemies and her hypocrites; who, though they boast of the name of being the church of God, will prove themselves “vipers.”

To set forth, therefore, the terrible judgments that shall fall on those, who thus, with cruelty and without mercy, rage against the people of God, the Psalmist shows (ver. 16.) that God will, to recompense their iniquity, direct his fury also against them, who thus mercilessly oppress “his poor,” and will pour out all his wrath upon them: and that, as these hypocrites so confidently despised God and his saints; and as, though covered with the shed blood, and bathed with the tears of so many saints, they still laughed at their calamities, as if they really sought cursing and not blessing; so, that cursing shall flow in upon them like a river.

And again (saith David) they have cast away the word of God from them, and have rejected and despised the offered salvation, therefore all consolation and salvation shall depart from them, and no more be brought near unto them, neither now nor to all eternity. On the other hand, as they loved cursing, they shall be clothed with it as with a girdle; it shall enter like water into their bowels, and like oil into their bones: and they shall bear about with them, like Cain, everlasting fears and terrors, and shall be tormented unceasingly with the stings of their wickedness and sin; and they shall moreover be exiles, deserted outcasts, vagabonds, and held in

contempt of all, as the Jews now are, exhibiting an awful fulfilment of the judgments herein denounced.

PSALM CX.

The kingdom, the priesthood, the conquest, and the passion of Christ.

A Psalm of David.

The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

The LORD at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

This is a peculiar and glorious prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ. This Psalm is cited by Christ himself, Matt. xxii. and he applies it to his own kingdom and priesthood. It speaks gloriously of Christ sitting at the right hand of the Majesty in the heaven, and as being the son and the seed of David, according to the flesh, and also David's Lord and God, the Creator and the Maker of all things, all power being given unto him in heaven and in earth: as the apostle also saith, "Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness." Rom. i. 3.

Christ cites this Psalm, (which, as we have said, is a very glorious one) to confound the Pharisees. Indeed there is not a Psalm like it in the whole scripture; and it ought to be very dear unto the church; seeing that it confirms that great article of faith—Christ's sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. For Christ is here declared to be a King and Priest; sitting at God's right hand, not only as truly man, but also as properly God; the Propitiator and Mediator between God and men; the Omnipotent and the Eternal!

Christ is no where, throughout all the books of the prophets, and of the whole scripture, so plainly and clearly declared to be "a Priest," and so "a Priest for ever," who alone did, and alone could abrogate the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood; and who is, and ever will be an eternal propitiation and reconciliation for us; as is most beautifully, most fully, and with a wonderful power of the Holy Spirit, opened by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews.

Hence, this heavenly and golden Psalm has a blessed author (David) and a glorious interpreter (Christ.) And all the apostles, all godly consciences, and all who are not utterly unacquainted with the temptations of sin, and of Satan, know how great and firm a consolation it is against all the violent attacks of the devil, to be able to see Christ as our High Priest. Hence it is that Paul breaks forth into those great words, "If God be for us, who can be against us! Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. viii. 31–34.

It is, therefore, of infinite benefit to the universal church of Christ, that the glorious things of this Psalm, the remission of sins, and the reconciliation of God toward us, which are brought in unto us by the priesthood of Christ, and which are infinite and eternal, are most carefully and most fully explained to us in the epistle to the Hebrews; and that such glorious doctrines of the truth concerning the priesthood of Christ are always present, and ready to our hands.

PSALM CXI.

The Psalmist by his example inciteth others to praise God for his glorious and gracious works. —The fear of God breedeth true wisdom.

Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation.

The works of the LORD *are* great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

His work *is* honourable and glorious; and his righteousness endureth for ever.

He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion.

He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

The works of his hands *are* verity and judgment; all his commandments *are* sure.

They stand fast for ever and ever, *and are* done in truth and uprightness.

He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend *is* his name.

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments:* his praise endureth for ever.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, and a song for the people of Israel, to be sung at the feast of the passover, or at the eating of the paschal Lamb. For by this short song the people were instructed to give thanks, and to magnify and praise God for those great and glorious works of his,—the leading them out of Egypt at the first; and also, for giving them a good and divine government, for the priesthood he established, for the law he gave them, and for appointing the preaching of his word; for their feasts and for their Sabbaths, for public peace and a good administration of the laws, and, in a word, for all his infinite mercies: all which I have more fully opened in my more extended commentary on this Psalm.

PSALM CXII.

Godliness hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come.—The prosperity of the godly shall be an eyesore to the wicked.

Praise ye the LORD. Blessed *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* delighteth greatly in his commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: *he is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid, until he see *his desire* upon his enemies.

He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

The wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

This is a Psalm of consolation for those that fear God: in which those that truly fear him are encouraged and praised in their Christian conversation: “Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord,” saith the Psalmist. As if he had said, The people of God appear to them to be of all men the most miserable; and both their life and their doctrine are condemned by the world, and by those tongues which the devil raises up and uses for the work. All things in the saints make them appear to the world, as if they were left and forsaken,

and deserted of God, and as if they, and their posterity, and all like them, must surely perish. And then again, their lives and conversations, (though they render most essential services, both to their nation and to the church, and though they conduct themselves blamelessly before God and man,) are, by the malice of the devil, represented as most abominable, and they themselves are looked upon as the contempt and off-scouring of the earth.

On the other hand, all hypocrites in the world are lauded as the saints of God. “But,” as the wise man saith, “better is the little in the house of the righteous, than the great revenues of the wicked.” In the midst of all this false representation, however, the righteous, standing fast in all these their afflictions, and steadily trusting in God, are delivered and saved, and gain blessed consolation, while the wicked perish on every side. “To the upright,” saith the Psalmist, “there ariseth light in darkness.” Here, according to the general language of the scriptures, he calleth consolation, light; and temptation, darkness.

And, then, in the end of the Psalm, that noble and unsubdued steadiness of faith is greatly praised: which, in such mighty struggles, and in such agonizing conflicts, is yet unwearied and unyielding, resting in the promise of God; and which, though contending with such mighty waves, is yet enabled to sing with Paul, “Thanks be unto God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” “He shall not be afraid of evil tidings,” saith the Psalmist, “his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord: his heart is established, he shall not be afraid until he see his desire upon his enemies.” verse 7, 8. For unless there were in us divine strength communicated by Christ, it would be impossible that we could stand against such numerous and mighty assaults of temptation.

PSALM CXIII.

An exhortation to praise God for his excellency,—for his mercy.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name *is* to be praised.

The LORD *is* high above all nations, *and* his glory above the heavens.

Who *is* like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,

Who humbleth *himself* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and in the earth!

He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;

That he may set *him* with princes, *even* with the princes of his people.

He maketh the barren woman to keep house, *and to be* a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a most conspicuous and most blessed prophecy of the kingdom of Christ, and of its extension from the rising unto the setting of the sun throughout all the kingdoms of the earth: it calls upon all nations to laud and magnify God, and to proclaim the riches of his grace; that is, the remission of sins for Christ's sake. For Christ is the God of the humble, the God of the afflicted, and the God of those that call upon him and that cry unto him; he is an altogether loving and lovely Saviour and God, who sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and loves and has respect unto the humble, the afflicted, the oppressed, and the trembling and contrite in heart.

The peculiar and express office of Christ, and the work of the kingdom of Christ is to bring down the proud, to put to shame the wise, and to condemn hypocrites and false saints: and, on the other side, to raise up and exalt the humble, to enlighten and instruct fools, to sanctify unclean sinners, to make fruitful the barren, to comfort the fatherless; that is, those who are in any way afflicted or distressed.

PSALM CXIV.

An exhortation, by the example of the dumb creatures, to fear God in his church.

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,

Judah was his sanctuary, *and* Israel his dominion.

The sea saw *it*, and fled; Jordan was driven back.

The mountains skipped like rams, *and* the little hills like lambs,

What *ailed* thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

Ye mountains, *that* ye skipped like rams; *and* ye little hills like lambs?

Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

Which turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, and a song for the people of Israel, to praise God while celebrating the feast of the passover; to magnify him for bringing them with a high hand out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, through the desert, over mountains, and through Jordan, into the land of promise. We use this Psalm to give thanks unto Christ, who delivered us from the kingdom of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of light, even into his own kingdom, the kingdom of God's dear Son, and led us forth into eternal life.

PSALM CXV.

Because God is truly glorious, and idols are vanity, he exhorteth to confidence in God.—God is to be blessed for his blessings.

Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.

Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* now their God?

But our God *is* in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not;

They have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat.

They that make them are like unto them; *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

O Israel, trust thou in the LORD; he *is* their help and their shield.

O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD; he *is* their help and their shield.

Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD; he *is* their help and their shield.

The LORD hath been mindful of us; he will bless *us:* he will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron.

He will bless them that fear the LORD, *both* small and great.

The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

Ye *are* blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.

The heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

This is a glorious Psalm of thanksgiving, wherein the God of Israel is praised, as being the one, only, true, living God, the Saviour of all men, and especially of them that believe; and wherein also, all the other gods of the nations, who can save neither themselves nor others, are confessed, in the true faith, to be dumb idols.

Wherefore the Psalmist, in the first verse, saith “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory.” As if he had said, ‘Look not upon us, O Lord, to see how good or how righteous we are, for if thou do this, thou wilt never help us, thou wilt never save us; we shall remain a people without salvation, and without God, like all the nations around us; or we shall ever be at an uncertainty whether we shall be saved or not. But look, O our God, at thy holy word, and at the glory of thine own name,—that thou callest thyself our God; and that thou art the true and the living God, with whom is mercy, and with whom is plenteous redemption. According, O Lord, to thy promises of grace, according to thy counsel and thy covenant, in the which thou hast said, “I am the Lord your God;” according to this thy glorious name deal thou with us, O Lord; but not according to any name of ours, whereby we may be called sacrificers, or good-workers, or singers, or fathers, or the like: for all these names the nations that know not thee may assume, and yet remain still nations without God.’

PSALM CXVI.

The psalmist professeth his love and duty to God for his deliverance.—He studieth to be thankful.

I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.

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

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

Then called I upon the name of the LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

Gracious *is* the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God *is* merciful.

The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

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

I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted.

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

What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits towards me?

I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints.

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

I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of LORD.

I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,

In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, in which the Psalmist renders thanks, after coming out of a most heavy trial, and again rejoices in God; praising God for having delivered him from the terrors of death, and from the pains of hell; for by such terms does he express those deep and heavy spiritual temptations, concerning which he had spoken before, Psalm vi., which are not known unto all. And the Psalmist complains also that he suffered all these things, and was thus overwhelmed and almost destroyed by these heavy trials, because of his confession of his faith and the truth of God before the world. “I believed (saith he) and therefore have I spoken:” but I am heavily afflicted for the word’s sake. For all the saints confess and teach the righteousness of faith; and, on the other hand, they expose and condemn all the righteousness, wisdom, and holiness of the world, and also all hypocrisy, and the outside form of godliness. And this the world will by no means whatever endure: they ever rage and roar against it: and they load the godly with every kind of affliction, because of their unsocial confession: and hence arise all those terrors without and those fears within, by which the church of Christ and the saints have ever been afflicted from the kingdom of the devil, in the midst of which their confession is made.

But amid all these great, and hard, and numerous afflictions of Satan and the world, the Psalmist has this firm consolation, that his work and cause are right before God; therefore he comforts and encourages himself by relying on the word of God, and stirs up and strengthens himself unto all confidence. “I will take (saith he) the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.” As if he had said, If they drink my destruction from the cup of their fury, and hate and persecute me unto death; what then? “I will take the cup of God’s salvation and helping grace:” that is (as if he had said), Supporting and strengthening my faith with the glad word of thy promise, as with strong and generous wine, I shall be filled with the Spirit, by drinking of that cup; and, by my continuing to preach and spread the word, I shall hold out the cup to others also, who confess with me the same truth, and preach the same word; that they also may draw the same consolation with me, out of the same most blessed word of the grace of God.

This (saith the Psalmist) is our case, and this is the way in which we drink of it and use it. We drink of it ourselves, and then we hold it out to others, and invite them to drink also; and this is the true worship of God; and by this we laud and magnify his name. By this service we truly pay our vows unto God, namely, the vow of the first commandment, paid unto God by his people; for the greatest and highest vow of the first commandment is this—God, the true, the living God, alone shall be our God: we will cleave unto him alone: him only will we adore; him only will we worship; him only will we seek; on him only will we call!

As, therefore, in many other Psalms, so also in this, you may see what is the true sacrifice of praise (of that praise which is wrought in the heart and in the spirit by the Holy Ghost, and is not lip-service only.) And in this Psalm you may also see that the true preaching of the word, and the true confession of the word, before the world, form the highest and most precious worship of God.

PSALM CXVII.

An exhortation to praise God for his mercy and truth.

O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a prophecy concerning Christ; that all peoples out of all kingdoms and islands, shall know Christ in his kingdom; that is, in his church; in that kingdom where mercy and grace, and the remission of sins, and eternal life,

and everlasting consolation, shall be preached against sin, death, the power of the devil, and all evil. This Psalm has been before explained in my more full commentary thereon.

PSALM CXVIII.

An exhortation to praise God for his mercy.—The psalmist by his experience sheweth how good it is trust in God.—Under the type of the psalmist, the coming of Christ in his kingdom is expressed.

O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good; because his mercy *endureth* for ever.

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

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

Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

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

The LORD *is* on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

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

It is better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence in man:

It is better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence in princes.

All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.

They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

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

Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

The LORD *is* my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

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

The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

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

This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

I will praise thee; for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

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

This is the LORD'S doing; it *is* marvellous in our eyes.

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

Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

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

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

Thou *art* my God, and I will praise thee; *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee.

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

This is also a Psalm of thanksgiving. This Psalm, “O give thanks unto the Lord,” which I so much love and admire, is the one which I, in particular, call the golden Psalm; and is the Psalm which has often revived and comforted me in my temptations.

The Psalmist gives thanks, and at the same time utters forth a prophecy concerning Christ, who by his suffering entered into glory; who is that stone rejected of the builders, which became the head of the corner; as Christ himself also saith, Matt. xxi. citing this Psalm. The Psalmist also describes with blessed feelings of heart the joyful day of the gospel, the day of salvation and peace, the day of joy and consolation, and the true and glorious feast-day.

Among other things the Psalmist speaks of the church and the children of God, who are to be conformed to the image of his Son; shewing, that they must be surrounded with afflictions on every side, and by the cross and through death enter into glory.

A brief summary, however, like this, cannot set forth the great and glorious contents of this Psalm: but my particular and more full Commentary on it will supply, in some measure, what is here wanting.

PSALM CXIX.

This psalm containeth sundry prayers, praises, and professions of obedience.

א ALEPH.

Blessed *are* the undefined in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.

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

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

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

O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.

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

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

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

ב BETH.

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

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

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

Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.

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

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

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

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

ג GIMEL.

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

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

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

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

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

Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

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

Thy testimonies also *are* my delight *and* my counsellors.

ד DALETH.

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

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

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

My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

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

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

I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

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

ה HE.

Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes: and I shall keep it *unto* the end.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Behold I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

ו VAU.

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

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

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

So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

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

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

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

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

ז ZAIN.

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

This *is* my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.

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

I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.

Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

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

I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

ח CHETH.

Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.

ט TETH.

Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

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

Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word.

Thou *art* good, and doest good: teach me thy statutes.

The proud have forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep thy precepts with *my* whole heart.

Their heart is as fat as grease: *but* I delight in thy law.

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

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

י JOD.

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

They that fear thee will be glad when they see me: because I have hoped in thy word.

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

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

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

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

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

Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.

כ CAPH.

My soul fainteth for thy salvation; *but* I hope in thy word.

Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

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

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

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

All thy commandments *are* faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.

They had almost consumed me upon earth: but I forsook not thy precepts.

Quicken me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

ל LAMED.

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Thy faithfulness *is* unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all *are* thy servants.

Unless thy law *had been* my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

I *am* thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.

The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: *but* I will consider thy testimonies.

I have seen an end of all perfection: *but* thy commandment *is* exceeding broad.

מ MEM.

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they *are* ever with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

I have not departed from thy judgments; for thou hast taught me.

How sweet are thy words unto my taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth!

Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

נ NUN.

Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

I have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments.

My soul *is* continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.

Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever; for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart.

I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, *even unto* the end.

ס SAMECH.

I hate *vain* thoughts: but thy law do I love.

Thou *art* my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit *is* falsehood.

Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth *like* dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

ע AIN.

I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.

Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.

I *am* thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

It is time for *thee*, LORD, to work: *for* they have made void thy law.

Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way.

פ PE.

Thy testimonies *are* wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

צ TSADDI.

Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments.

Thy testimonies *that* thou hast commanded *are* righteous and very faithful.

My zeal hath consumed me: because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

Thy word *is* very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

I *am* small and despised; *yet* do not I forget thy precepts.

Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* the truth.

Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me; *yet* thy commandments *are* my delights.

The righteousness of thy testimonies *is* everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

ק KOPH.

I cried with *my* whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

I cried unto thee; save me, and I shall keep thy testimonies.

I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

Mine eyes prevent the *night*-watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

Hear my voice, according unto thy loving-kindness: O LORD, quicken me according to thy judgment.

They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

Thou *art* near, O LORD; and all thy commandments *are* truth.

Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

ר RESH.

Consider mine affliction, and deliver me; for I do not forget thy law.

Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.

Salvation *is* far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

Great *are* thy tender mercies, O LORD; quicken me according to thy judgments.

Many *are* my persecutors and mine enemies; *yet* do I not decline from thy testimonies.

I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy loving-kindness.

Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

ש SCHIN.

Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

I hate and abhor lying: *but* thy law do I love.

Seven times a-day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways *are* before thee.

ת TAU.

Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD; give me understanding according to thy word.

Let my supplication come before thee; deliver me according to thy word.

My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.

Let thine hand help me: for I have chosen thy precepts.

I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law *is* my delight.

Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.

I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

This Psalm is the most extended in the whole Psalter. It contains prayers, consolations, doctrines, thanksgivings, and repeats all these with a varied fulness. It is however given forth with a deep and blessed intent: namely, that by this repetition and fulness, it may invite and exhort us to hear and diligently to treasure up the word of God. For throughout the whole Psalm the Psalmist exalts unto the heavens, with the highest praises, the pure doctrine of God’s holy word. He sets it forth as to be preferred before all gold and precious stones, and before all the riches of the world; as Solomon also beautifully speaks of it in his Proverbs.

On the other hand, the Psalmist earnestly warns against all false doctrine and against all security and contempt of the word. For no pestilence is more

destroying than false doctrine, or human doctrines without or contrary to the word of God. And knowing that Satan without cessation assaults the church of God with all kinds of heresies and false doctrine; the Psalmist takes up a great part of this Psalm in consolations.

The principal, and indeed whole foundation and truth of godliness lies in the pure teaching and hearing of the word of God. For where that word is purely taught and heard, there, to a certainty, will be begotten pure and prevailing prayer, calling upon God, diligence in reading, teaching, and exhortation, consolation for the weak that are afflicted and tried, strengthening of heart and spirit, joy, peace of conscience, thanksgivings, prophecyings, an abundant understanding of the scriptures; and, in a word, true religion, and the true worship of God; and also, confidence in God under the cross and afflictions, and perseverance unto the end; and, finally, all the blessed operations and gifts of the Holy Spirit, and all those things which please God and displease the Devil.

On the contrary, where the pure word is not taught, or where there is a weariness and loathing of the word, there the true religion becomes extinguished, and all true worship of God perishes. For where the true word of God is not taught, there is not any truth of God; there is found a great noise of external holiness, and the form of godliness, and hypocrisy;[1] there, indeed, is psalm-singing, prayer, doctrines, consolation, thanksgiving, and all the varieties of the worship of God, with all interpretations of the scriptures. I will add, also, that there you may find sufferings and martyrdoms. But all is outside show; all is the form of godliness only; all is false; all is feigned, and nothing but lies; all is full of the poison of the devil. Nor without true faith in the heart, nor without the divine word, nor without the worship of the First Commandment, is there, or can there be, any true and real worship of God.

[1] Luther is here deeply opening up the extent to which the “form of godliness” may be carried, yet without the truth and “power” of it.

How many thousands of priests and monks have sung this Psalm at their first, third, sixth, and ninth hours, in their temples.

But what did they do during all their singings? They did nothing else but call down God's judgment and indignation on their own heads! For the design of this Psalm, in every word of it, is to glorify the word of God, and to confound, put to shame, destroy, and blot out all hypocrisy upon the face of the earth.

PSALM CXX.

David prayeth against Doeg, reproveth his tongue, complaineth of his necessary conversation with the wicked.

A Song of degrees.

In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue.

What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?

Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, *that* I dwell in the tents of Kedar!

My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

I *am for* peace: but, when I speak, they *are* for war.

This Psalm is an earnest prayer; and it complains, with deep feelings of sorrow, of those horrible evils which Satan causes in the church by a false

and crafty tongue: that is, by that virulent and truly serpentine tongue which boasts of God and the worship of God, and never instructs any one in the truth, nor leads them to God.

For false teachers cause infinite and terrible evils in the church; and like giants with immense weapons in their hands, they never strike without inflicting some mighty wound: or, like fire-brands cast into a grove of juniper trees, they consume in all directions, with a sudden and devouring flame. And just so, the common people often burst out into one general flame, even by the throwing in among them of one single spark of false and wicked doctrine; and not only do they blaze forth with a sudden flame of their minds and spirits, but even greatly admire the error and the hypocrisy. For all doctrines of this kind, as being more congenial to human reason than the truth of God, quickly please men; as Paul saith, 2 Tim. iv. “They will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.”

Mesech are the nations nigh unto Jerusalem itself, towards the north; where the Tartars now are. And Kedar are the Arabs, to the east of Jerusalem. These nations are types of all enemies and heretics who oppose themselves as adversaries to the true church. The Mesech of Christians, at this time are the Turks, who derive their origin from the Tartars. And the Kedar are Mahomet and the Saracens; for they are from Arabia. These with their Alcoran have oppressed and laid waste the Gospel in many places: and that fire of wicked doctrine, broke out into a mighty blaze, just like a brand cast into a thicket of juniper trees.

PSALM CXXI.

The great safety of the godly, who put their trust in God’s protection.

A Song of degrees.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The LORD *is* thy keeper; the LORD *is* shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

The LORD shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore.

This is a Psalm of consolation, wherein the Psalmist, from his own experience, exhorts the godly to a constancy of faith, and to an expectation of help and defence from God. For although in the hour of temptation God puts off his help, and all things appear as if he were asleep, or had forgotten us altogether, and had left us to be scorched by the heat of the sun by day, and by the beams of the moon by night; that is, as though he had given us up to be afflicted and destroyed by all manner of temptations, by Satan, by the world, and by sin, day and night: yet it is not so;—he has not given us up, as we, according to the weakness of our flesh, imagine and feel. He sees and regards us, and watches over us; nor does he suffer us to be so burnt as to be destroyed, nor so tempted or distressed, as to be swallowed up of over-much sorrow: and this all blessedly experience, who call upon him for his help and patiently wait for it.

PSALM CXXII.

David professeth his joy for the church, and prayeth for the peace thereof.

A Song of degrees of David.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:

Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee.

Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, it contains the feelings of a glad, a rejoicing, and a thankful heart, for that unspeakable gift of God,—the ministry of his word. This Psalm in the person of the Jews, rejoices that God had appointed a certain place, namely Jerusalem, in the midst of that people, where the name and the word of God had a certain dwelling-place and could there be found: and where it was administered by certain persons,

the Levites and the priests, to certain disciples; namely, to the tribes of Israel.

For what calamity or misery can be greater than to seek the word of God anxiously, and not be able to find it? This calamity and misery the children of Israel experienced in the times of God's anger, when, being forsaken by him, and left to their own inventions, they sought and worshipped idols. And in these our times of monkery also, the masses and the travellings about to so many Marys have given abundant proofs of what it is to seek the word of God and not to find it.

Our Jerusalem, our certain place, is the church, and our temple is Christ. Wheresoever Christ is preached and the sacraments are duly administered, there we are sure God dwells; and there is our temple, our tabernacle, our cherubim, and our mercy-seat; for there God is present with us by his word.

PSALM CXXIII.

The godly profess their confidence in God, and pray to be delivered from contempt.

A Song of degrees.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, *and* with the contempt of the proud.

This Psalm is a fervent prayer against all those secure and proud despisers of the word of God and its true ministers. And the Gentile nations were not the only despisers who contemned the whole religion of the Israelites and the true worship of God, and condemned it as sedition altogether: but the idolaters and false teachers which were in the midst of that very people themselves proudly despised and derided the godly, that little flock of God, and the true prophets; as Psalms xii. and xiv. complain. And in the same way also our papists and fanatics now, who seem in their own eyes to be more holy than the gospel itself, more proudly and contemptuously than any others despise, trample underfoot, and spit upon all true and good ministers of the word of God. Not to say anything now about that security and pride wherein, at this day, even our bishops and priests themselves, who are more profane than all heathen nations put together, despise the true word of God. So that we, as the Psalmist saith in its conclusion, are indeed filled with the derision of the rich and the contempt of the proud. But may God, (and he will!) regard us, and glorify his word. Amen.

PSALM CXXIV.

The church blesseth God for a miraculous deliverance.

A Song of degrees of David.

If *it had not been* the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say;

If *it had not been* the LORD who was on our side when men rose up against us;

Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:

Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:

Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

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

Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

Our help *is* in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

The Psalmist, in this Psalm, gives thanks unto God for defending his little helpless flock, here in the midst of the kingdom of the devil, struggling against all temptations, against tyrants, and against bloodthirsting hypocrites; and for delivering them from the snares of virulent calumniators; the number of whom is so great, that compared with the little flock of God, they are like a sweeping torrent, or a mighty deluge, to one solitary rivulet.

Though, however, their teeth were of iron; that is, though their power were infinitely greater than it is, and though their snares (that is, their cunning devices,) were infinitely more crafty than they are; yet “Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world;” he breaks and destroys their teeth, he defeateth their snares, and wonderfully delivers his people, as we have seen it in our own times, on many and great occasions.

PSALM CXXV.

The safety of such as trust in God.—A prayer for the godly, and against the wicked.

A Song of degrees.

They that trust in the LORD *shall be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed, *but* abideth for ever.

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

For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

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

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

This also is a Psalm of thanksgiving containing the feelings of an exercised faith: thanking God, that, although he sometimes permits false prophets and fanatical spirits to prevail, as if they would possess all things (which thing God often does so permit to be, as a punishment for the ingratitude of his people, who value not the blessing of the word;) yet he visits such with the more terrible judgment, and suffers them not to prevail in all things against the righteous, lest the righteous, being entirely broken by too great afflictions and sorrows, should, through discouragement and despair, fall away from the word unto ungodliness and sin.

For the final end of all false teachers and blasphemers ever is,—confusion, terrible judgment, and destruction; “And their glory,” as the apostle saith, “is turned into shame.” But the end of the poor flock of God, even though the church be proved and tried by a thousand fires and deaths, though it appear a thousand times over to be oppressed, destroyed and extirpated is, —eternal life, eternal consolation, eternal glory! This is what the Psalmist means, when he says, “The Lord doth good to them that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts: but as for them that turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the evil doers, but peace shall be upon Israel.”

PSALM CXXVI.

The church, celebrating her incredible return out of captivity, prayeth for, and prophesieth the good success thereof.

A Song of degrees.

When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.

The LORD hath done great things for us; *whereof* we are glad.

Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

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

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving for deliverance from the Babylonish captivity; whether it was written after the captivity, or before it, as a prophecy to comfort the Jews with the certain hope of deliverance, and that they should not despair, is uncertain: but at what particular time it was written, it matters not.

This Psalm ends with a remarkable and glorious conclusion; which embraces, in a few words, the whole counsel and the immutable decree of God concerning his church; namely, that it behoved Christ first to suffer, and then to be raised up, and exalted of God and glorified. And so also Christians must first fill up a certain measure of afflictions before they enter into their joy; while, on the contrary, the men of the world fill up a certain measure of their joy before they are eternally punished and damned.

The church, therefore, is that poor little helpless flock, in the midst of a wicked nation. They are that little company who pray, cry, are tempted, and are afflicted by the world; who sow in tears, but reap in joy. “But,” says the Psalmist, “they went, and wept as they went, sowing precious seed; but they shall come again with joy, bringing their sheaves with them.”

These afflictions, and these deaths of the saints are very precious; hence it is that the Psalmist calls them “precious seed;” because they are followed by the most fruitful crops, and by the most abundant harvests. But we infants in grace, we poor little children, under our tears and our sighs, understand not the voice, or the mind, or the will of our heavenly Father in these afflictions: nor can we see or understand how precious this seed is in the sight of God; who calls even “death,” (which is the worst and lowest of all these seeds,) “precious;” saying, in another place, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;” and God sets this precious seed thus sown by his children, before all the treasures of the world.

PSALM CXXVII.

The virtue of God's blessing.—Good children are his gift.

A song of degrees for Solomon.

Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

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

Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD; *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

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

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

This Psalm contains a most blessed and important doctrine. It is of the same subject-matter as that contained in the book of Solomon, called Ecclesiastes. The Psalmist teaches, that all governments and commonwealths rightly constituted are the good and free gifts of God: and that none of them can be either rightly constituted, at the first, nor preserved afterwards, by any human wisdom or might: but that all these things are in the hand of God: that, where he giveth not peace, where he giveth not men desirous of the arts of peace, and wise therein, where he holdeth not the helm of the state,—that there, all human wisdom, however great, all laws, all ordinances, all might, all arms, all preparations are vain.

In the next place, the Psalmist saith, that where God blesseth not a domestic household, where he giveth not concord between husband and wife, success and happiness in the bringing up of children, diligence and faithfulness to men-servants and maid-servants; there, all labour and industry and toil are vain: concerning all which I have spoken more largely in my more full commentary on this psalm.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The sundry blessings which follow them that fear God.

A Song of degrees.

Blessed *is* every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

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

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

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

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

This is a Psalm of consolation, wherein the Psalmist extols, with the highest praises, marriage, as a holy and godly kind of life, instituted of God himself. The Holy Spirit here comforts and encourages all husbands and wives with a divine consolation; and confirms and fortifies them against all those wrong cogitations and thoughts of human reason; which reason does not look at what good there is in marriage, but only beholds and exaggerates what of evil there may be in it; and thus blasphemes the glorious work of God in the two sexes. Hence, here arises all those blasphemous sayings among the heathen: ‘There are three great evils in life; fire, water, and woman.’ But Solomon saith, “He that findeth a wife findeth a good thing.”

This Psalm reminds husbands and wives that they should not look at the labours, the troubles, the cares, or the various temptations and trials which are to be endured in marriage; but that they should rather keep their eyes fixed on the word and will of God; from which they ought to hold themselves assured that marriage was not a human invention, nor a matter casually contrived of men; but that the whole human race were, from the beginning, created and formed of God, man and woman, and that neither of the sexes, nor their design can or ought to be altered or changed by men, by the devil, or any other creature, any more than the sun and moon and their offices can or ought to be altered or changed.

God, saith the scripture, created them male and female, and blessed them. Marriage, therefore, is that kind of life, which, as being the creation and institution of God, greatly pleases him. If, therefore, thou shalt obey God herein, and shalt keep the eyes of thy faith fixed on the good, and on the blessings of marriage; if thou shalt obey the commandment and the call of God in taking to thyself a wife, the sexes created of God will not be vile, but precious in thy sight: and all the little troubles and trials of marriage shall be drowned and lost in that divine blessedness,—the knowing that God favours husbands and wives, and is present with them; that the joining of marriage is one of his own works; and that he provides for, and defends those who are joined together.

To fortify thyself, therefore, against all that blasphemy of human reason and of the devil, by which they condemn marriage, hold thou fixed in thine

heart that heavenly word, “And the Lord made them male and female, and said, Be fruitful and multiply.” And if thou fear the Lord thou shalt be happy, and it shall be *well with thee* in marriage, even though the virulent and blaspheming mouth of the devil, and the whole world together with him, should say it shall be *evil with thee!*

PSALM CXXIX.

An exhortation to praise God for saving Israel in their great afflictions.—The haters of the church are cursed.

A Song of degrees.

Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:

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

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

The LORD *is* righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion:

Let them be as the grass *upon* the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves, his bosom.

Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the LORD *be* upon you; we bless you in the name of the LORD.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving, wherein the people of Israel give thanks unto the God of Israel for his deliverances and consolations of every kind: seeing that from the beginning he had often mightily and marvellously delivered them from the hand of their enemies, as we have it recorded in the books of Judges and Kings; where we find that the Israelites were often oppressed by the cruel power and tyranny of their Gentile enemies, who afflicted them for a long time, and, as it were, ploughed upon their backs (as the Psalmist saith) and made long their furrows, and held them most cruelly under their yokes; until God sent them a Saviour, and delivered them both from the ploughers and the ploughs, and their yokes also.

At the conclusion, the Psalmist prays against them; or rather, prophesies that they shall perish, and shall be burnt up like grass upon the house-tops; as it also came to pass: for all the enemies and the nations that were adversaries unto Israel perished; but Israel remained, and was afterwards lifted up with new consolations.

In the same way also all the wicked and the enemies of God and of his word, are like grass upon the house-tops; which flourishes, indeed, like a thriving garden, as if it would remain; but before it is grown up, it withers, is burnt up, and becomes of no use whatever. So also the enemies of the word, and all erroneous teachers, when they are shining in pride and magnifying themselves in their boastings against God, wither on a sudden like the falling grass; while Christians and the church of God flourish for evermore.

PSALM CXXX.

The Psalmist professeth his hope in prayer, and his patience in hope.—He exhorteth Israel to hope in God.

A Song of degrees.

Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD: Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

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

I wait for the LORD; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

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

Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

This is a very blessed Psalm and a prayer unto God, proceeding from a spirit and feeling of heart truly Davidical: for this Psalm confesses that none is righteous before God on account of his own works and merits, but only through grace and by faith in the promise of God, freely giving the remission of sins and peace by Jesus Christ: on this promise of God the Psalmist relies; and with this word of promise he supports and comforts himself when struggling in the depths of sin and hell.

And he exhorts all Israel with a loud voice, to learn and to do the same. “For (says the Psalmist) with thee only is mercy, and with thee is plenteous redemption, that thou mayest be feared:” that is, that thou mayest be worshipped with the worship of the first and greatest commandment,—with the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. “And he (continues the Psalmist)

shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities;" that is, neither Israel, nor any man, shall be delivered from sin, from the power of the devil, and from death, in any other way than by the grace and the free remission of sins: but he shall, without these, remain in the deep; that is, in the kingdom of sin, death, and the devil, and under the wrath of God.

Behold in how few words this Psalm expresses the most glorious things! The Psalmist is a truly great teacher of divine truths, and of the whole sum of godliness. He has a clear and thorough view of those glorious promises. "I will put enmity between thee and the serpent, and between thy seed and his seed: thou shalt bruise his head:" and, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The Psalmist wraps up both these promises in that one verse, "And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

PSALM CXXXI.

David professing his humility, exhorteth Israel to hope in God.

A Song of Degrees of David.

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

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

Let Israel hope in the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

This is also a blessed Psalm, containing, in a few brief words, the same most important doctrine which was taught also in the preceding Psalm,—that we are not to trust in our own righteousness or works: and it attacks all proud and arrogant hypocrites, who, by human strength, attempt works beyond all human powers, namely to pacify God; and understand not the power of grace nor the remission of sins; but endeavour to pacify God by their own works.

“My heart is not lifted up,” (saith the Psalmist); as if he had said, Those proud saints (as they imagine themselves) being ignorant of all trials and temptations, and spiritual things, trust greatly in their own works, and know not what sin is, nor what the anger and judgment of God are. But I, being broken down and humbled by these things, know what they are. For whenever I leave off to trust closely and wholly to the promise of grace; as often as I cease to suck the breast of mercy and promised pardon, my rest is gone, and I begin to weep and howl with distresses and straits of conscience; just as a little newly-weaned infant cries unceasingly, night and day, for the breast of its mother which it has lost.

The sum therefore of all true religion and godliness is this, “Let Israel hope in the Lord:” that is, there is no other salvation, there is no other consolation, there is no other sure peace of conscience for any mortal, than the apprehending and embracing the promise of grace. Take care, therefore, that thou neglect not this true mother’s breast for thy soul; take heed that thou lose it not out of thy mouth; for this breast alone is that which can relieve, refresh, and quiet thirsting and sinking consciences, in any of their agonies on account of sin. Christ alone is eternal life, peace, and consolation!

PSALM CXXXII.

David in his prayer commendeth unto God the religious care he had for the ark.—His prayer at the removing of the ark, with a repetition of God's promises.

A Song of Degrees.

LORD, remember David, *and* all his afflictions;

How he sware unto the LORD, *and* vowed unto the mighty *God* of Jacob;

Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;

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

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

Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah; we found it in the fields of the wood.

We will go into his tabernacles; we will worship at his footstool.

Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength.

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

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

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

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

For the LORD hath chosen Zion: he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

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

I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.

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

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

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

This Psalm is a prayer, in which Solomon and the people of Israel beg of God to preserve the priesthood and the kingdom: that is, that he would maintain the true religion, the true worship of God, and a prosperous and happy state of the kingdom among that people. In a word, it is a prayer to God that he would be pleased to preserve the ministry of the word above all things; and then also the laws, the magistrates, and the public peace: for where these two things, the word and the laws, are rightly constituted and preserved, there all things go well with a kingdom.

In the eleventh verse, the Psalmist, turning his eye, as it were, to the promise, feels the fullest assurance that he is heard. For God had promised by oath that he would dwell in that place, namely, in Jerusalem or Zion; and would bless both the priesthood and the kingdom, if they would keep the commandments of their God, and obey him.

Why the Psalmist calls, in the sixth verse, this habitation of God, Jerusalem, “Ephratah,” and “the fields of the wood,” is explained in my more full commentary elsewhere, on these “Psalms of Degrees.”

PSALM CXXXIII.

The benefit of the communion of saints.

A song of degrees.

Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!

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

As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

This Psalm contains an important doctrine, and an exhortation unto concord in the church, and also in the state; and especially an exhortation unto unity in the Spirit; concerning which Paul speaks, Phil. ii.; and also, it exhorts unto agreement in doctrine, and unto peace in general. Let the wise, the strong, and the holy, (the Psalmist would say,) bear with and support the simple, the weak-minded, and the infirm; which is indicated and implied by the two similitudes of "ointment" and "dew."

The Psalmist alludes to the priesthood and the kingdom. For divine harmony and agreement in the priesthood, or in the doctrine of the truth, is a great and lovely gift of God, and diffuseth a fragrance like precious ointment; and this fragrance descendeth or runneth down; that is, unity in the doctrine of truth, runs down from the high priest Aaron, down his beard, and even unto the skirts of his clothing; that is, down to all other teachers of the truth.

And this “dew of Hermon” signifies literally that dew which revives the flower of Lebanon; and, spiritually, the concord of Lebanon; that is, of Jerusalem. For, as the natural dew fructifies Lebanon, and all the places near unto Lebanon, so concord in divine and spiritual things causes a kingdom to flourish and prosper.

Wherever, therefore, concord in a state and in its church flourishes, there God dwells with all his grace and blessing; but where there are dissensions, divisions, and discord, there is the dwelling of Satan.

PSALM CXXXIV.

An exhortation to bless God.

A song of degrees.

Behold, bless ye the LORD, all *ye* servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

Lift up your hands *in* the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

The LORD, that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion.

This again is a very short and brief Psalm, but it contains a most blessed doctrine. It teaches and exhorts priests and Levites, to perform the duties of their office diligently, and to be constant and careful in the worship of God; that they be instant day and night in teaching and exhorting by the word; as Paul exhorteth Timothy to the continual preaching of the word; saying, “be instant in season and out of season.” As if he had said, Be thou ever at the

duty of thy office; teach, exhort, rebuke; exercise both thyself and others unto godliness by a constant preaching of the word; and continue therein, even though some be turned unto fables, and others despise thee.

For where the pure word of God is not sought and learnt, there, most certainly, is no worship of God; there, of necessity, perishes all true religion; and there as surely perishes also, the good and prosperity of the nation; which is certainly either deserted of God, or involved in darkness, errors, and the power of the Devil. But where the word of God continues in truth, and the scriptures are rightly set forth, there God gives his blessing. And although Satan will there greatly oppose himself to, and will afflict both the church and the state; yet God, who made the heavens and the earth, and who is therefore greater than all creatures and the Devil also, preserves that state and that church; and, on account of their holding fast his name and his word, he saves them, even though they be ungrateful and unworthy of his salvation.

Let all ministers, and preachers, and bishops therefore, know, that this Psalm, beginning “Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord,” &c. pertains unto them; teaching them to know that the highest worship of God is the preaching of the word; because, thereby are praised and celebrated the name and the benefits of Christ.

PSALM CXXXV.

An exhortation to praise God for his mercy, for his power, for his judgments. The vanity of idols. An exhortation to bless God.

Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise *him*, O ye servants of the LORD.

Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God,

Praise the LORD; for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant.

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

For I know that the LORD *is* great, and *that* our LORD *is* above all gods.

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

He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain: he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.

Who smote the first-born of Egypt, both of man and beast.

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

Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings; Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan:

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

Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever; *and* thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations.

For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.

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

They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

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

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

Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

Bless the LORD, O house of Levi; ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

This Psalm is a Psalm of thanksgiving; exhorting all priests and ministers of the word to preach and to praise God in his great and marvellous works, done in Egypt and in the land of Canaan, that the people might not forget God and his wonderful works, and be turned unto idols, and false kinds of worship; which very soon takes place through security or contempt; where the word of God is not taught diligently and with a great willingness and fervor of heart; as we have already seen in the preceding Psalm.

But where God judges a people; as the Psalmist sets it forth, verse 14; that is, when God by the mouth of his ministers, judges and condemns our sin; there he manifests his grace unto us; there is a ground of firm consolation for afflicted consciences; there God is found and known, (for he is found in no other places and doctrines than these!) there, to a certainty, he will be propitious and merciful to his servant. But, where the word of God is not; there God is silent; for where he doth not preach, he doth not judge; and there, to a certainty, is the wrath of God and blindness. “Therefore,” (as saith the Psalmist) “Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise him, all ye servants of the Lord:” that is, preach the word and explain it, with all diligence; and proclaim the works of the Lord.

PSALM CXXXVI.

An exhortation to give thanks to God for particular mercies.

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

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

O give thanks to the LORD of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

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

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

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

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

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

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

To him that smote Egypt in their first-born: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

And brought out Israel from amongst them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

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

To him which divided the Red Sea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

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

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

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

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

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

Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

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

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

Even an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

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

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

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

This Psalm is a blessed and general thanksgiving for the infinite, unspeakable, and never-failing mercies of God, both with respect to the body and the soul. In this golden and glorious Psalm, the Psalmist’s design

is to embrace and set forth a summary, as it were, to all priests and ministers of the word; as a pattern for the subject matter of all sermons, exhortations, and Psalms to be delivered to the people: that all false and wicked doctrine might be avoided, and also all false worship of God; and that God might be worshipped truly with that worship required by the first commandment of the Decalogue.

For this ought to be the sum and substance of all true worship,—"Let us praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever:" that is, praise, laud, and proclaim, without ceasing, the infinite largeness of his grace. Learn ye, from his word, that as he hath promised, so he is ever present with us, and continually bestows his blessings upon us; and that the riches of his goodness are boundless and inexhaustible.

To fortify our hearts, therefore, against the devil, (whose whole aim and employment is to destroy in our hearts faith in God, and the knowledge of his goodness and mercy, and to cast us under doubting and sorrow,) the Psalmist repeats this holy sentence at the end of every verse—"For his mercy endureth for ever:" by which words, so often repeated, the holy man wishes to impress and fix on our hearts the doctrine of grace and the worship of the first commandment: as if he had said, it is the infinite goodness of God, and not any human works or merits of your own, that has done all these wonderful things for you. It is the pure and unspeakable greatness of God's goodness and grace, that pours forth all these things upon you, and therefore they are poured forth upon you freely and without any merit or deserving of yours, and even while you are wholly undeserving of such mercies.

In this repeated expression also the Psalmist refers, after the manner of the prophets, to the promise of Christ to come; for it was from no works of men, nor from any merit of theirs, that the promise of Christ was given unto Abraham, which said, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Learn, thou, therefore, to rehearse and impress upon thine own heart, and on the hearts of others also, this repeated conclusion of each verse; that it may be a bulwark for thee against the devil, who is ever maliciously jeering our temptations, and saying, that it is not the *mercy* of God, but his

judgment, that “endureth for ever.” Hypocrites and enthusiasts sing not, nor can sing, this blessed conclusion of the verses, “For his mercy endureth for ever.” They can only sing, ‘For our goodness endureth for ever.’ But do thou, Christian brother, hold fast this doctrine of a Davidical heart; the truly divine and heavenly doctrine of the remission of sins; a remission “enduring for ever,” and which sin can never destroy; which alone overcomes the devil and all errors, and which alone can give the conscience rest under all temptations, and the agonizing conflicts of death.

PSALM CXXXVII.

The constancy of the Jews in captivity.—The prophet curseth Edom and Babel.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us *required of us* mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the LORD’S song in a strange land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*.

If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase *it*, rase *it, even* to the foundation thereof.

O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy *shall he be*, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

This Psalm is a prayer in the persons of the captives of Babylon; whether we understand it as having been written after the captivity, or before it in the way of prophecy. The captives here pray for the city of Jerusalem; that is, for the place of the word and the worship of God; for all these things had been destroyed by the Babylonians.

This Psalm shows us that the first concern of all that fear and know God should be the preservation of a place for the ministration of the word, and for the true religion and true worship of God. For, as here, when Jerusalem is destroyed, Babylon and Edom, and all other wicked nations rejoice, and triumph over the grief and the tears of the people of God, which adds great bitterness to their afflictions. But such enemies shall never enjoy their triumph unpunished of God. They themselves shall be laid waste in their appointed time, and shall be utterly overthrown and laid in ruins and in ashes; their flourishing youth shall be destroyed by the sword, their children shall be dashed against the stones, and neither age nor sex shall find mercy. But Israel and the people of God shall remain for evermore. In this manner fell Babylon, that queen of nations: and in the same manner also shall fall all the Babylonians and Edomites in our day, who rejoice, like their forefathers, in the afflictions and calamities of the true church of God.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

David praiseth God for the truth of his word.—He prophesieth that the kings of the earth shall praise God.—He professeth his confidence in God.

A Psalm of David.

I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

Though the LORD *be* high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: forsake not the work of thine own hands.

This is a Psalm of general thanksgiving unto God for all his help against enemies: and it prays that the kingdom of Christ may come; and it prophesies also that even kings and nations shall hear the gospel, shall render thanks unto God for the same, and shall know and worship him in truth; and shall acknowledge the eternal kingdom of Christ, namely, his exaltation over all things, and over every name that is named; and that he succours, helps, and saves humble, tempted, and afflicted sinners.

In the conclusion of the Psalm, the Psalmist prays, “Forsake not the work of thine own hands;” that is, Raise up, establish, and preserve this promised kingdom of Christ, for the sake of which thou hast chosen this people.

PSALM CXXXIX.

David praiseth God for his allseeing providence, and for his infinite mercies.—He defieth the wicked.—He prayeth for sincerity.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*.

Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways.

For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

Such knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*.

If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light above me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee*.

For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well.

My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me, therefore, ye bloody men.

For they speak against thee wickedly, *and* thine enemies take *thy name* in vain.

> Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?
>
> I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.
>
> Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:
>
> And see if *there be any* wicked way, and lead me in the way everlasting.

This is a high and glorious Psalm of thanksgiving, wherein the Psalmist, with a marvellous fervour of spirit, touches on that all-high matter,—God's predestination of all things; and proclaims that incomprehensibleness of the divine wisdom and goodness, whereby, in a wonderful manner, he himself and all men, with all their affairs, all their works and all their thoughts, both the greatest and the least, were predestinated of God from everlasting. This manifold wisdom of God is incomprehensible to flesh and blood!

"Thou, O Lord (saith the Psalmist) hast searched me out and known me; thou knowest me altogether; thou understandest my thoughts long before they are conceived by me. Wherever I move, whithersoever I go, thou surroundest me on every side; and being ever present with me, thou beholdest all my undertakings, and my works, and my ways, and all that I think of doing or undertaking. There is no speech, not even the least word, upon my tongue, but thou, O God, knowest it, before I utter it. Thine eyes beheld me, when yet imperfect in my mother's womb; and thou didst wonderfully form and fashion me there." And (ver. 6) the Psalmist exclaims, "Such knowledge is too high and wonderful; no mortal thought can attain unto it."

Here, it is as if the Psalmist had said, it is not in the capacity or powers of any mortal to think or determine how he will lead his life, what he will undertake, what he will do, what he will speak, what he will think, where he will go, or to, or from, or in what place he will turn; but all our acts, motions, and thoughts, are nothing less than the works of God ever present

with us, doing and ruling all things as he will. And hence (ver. 19.) he utters his indignation against the wicked; saying, “Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God.” Here he burns with zeal against hypocrites, who, being ignorant of all the works and words of God, and utterly blind and mad, ascribe all their doings to their own works and merits.

These mortals are perpetually putting forth and boasting of their own ability and works, and are ever relying on their own doings and merits, and ascribing unto themselves that glory which belongs to God alone; whereas they have not one of their words in their own power, as of, or from, themselves; but all their words and thoughts are in the hand of God.—This glory, I say, they arrogate to themselves, when they are all the while so far from the wisdom of God and his divine works, that they neither know themselves nor any one part of themselves; nor understand how they were formed or fashioned in the womb of their mother; nor what their own body is, nor what are its properties and organs; nor what their eyes are, nor what their brain is; nor what the origin and nature of that motion is, by which their body is moved; and, in a word, when they know not what the soul and this natural life are; nor whence arise all those various motions and affections of the mind within, nor how they are uttered outwards by the tongue.

When, therefore, this whole that we are, and this all that we do, are not our own wisdom or doing, but God’s; and since we cannot comprehend these earthly things; since, I say, we neither can know nor do any one of these earthly and corporal things, as of ourselves; how awful a sin is that enormous arrogance, whereby we profess that we have so much power in ourselves and in our free-will, that we can understand God, and do his divine and spiritual works, and deliver ourselves from sin, and death, and hell.

Wherefore (ver. 20.) the Psalmist utters his holy indignation against such hypocrites and teachers of human works and doings; saying, “Thine enemies speak blasphemously against thee, O Lord, and they are proud and lifted up against thee without cause. Guard thou me, and prove and try me, that I may continue in the right way; the way that is true and eternal;” that is, in the way of the knowledge of the word of thy grace.

PSALM CXL.

David prayeth to be delivered from Saul and Doeg.—He prayeth against them.—He comforteth himself by confidence in God.

To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man;

Which imagine mischiefs in *their* heart: continually are they gathered together *for* war.

They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison *is* under their lips. Selah.

Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from the violent man, who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords: they have spread a net by the way-side: they have set gins for me. Selah.

I said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

O GOD the LORD, the strength of my salvation; thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked; further not his wicked device, *lest* they exalt themselves. Selah.

As for the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow *him*.

I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor.

Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

This Psalm is an ardent prayer against those hypocrites, who not only cause many offences, and lay many nets and snares for them that go on the right way, but proceed with terrible threats and unceasing cruelty against all who will not approve and follow their errors and wicked ways.

The Psalmist therefore here prays that God would be pleased to disappoint their counsels and purposes, and all the wicked plots which they form, and devise, and to turn them on themselves and on their own heads; that all these enemies of the people of God may perish with that horrible judgment with which Pharaoh perished in the Red Sea, who, being at the same time struck with lightning from heaven, and overwhelmed with the waves of the sea, was utterly destroyed.

This Psalm affords an abundant consolation to the godly; as the Psalmist saith in its conclusion, “The wicked shall fall into their own nets, whilst that I at all times escape.”

PSALM CXLI.

David prayeth that his suit may be acceptable, his conscience sincere, and his life safe from snares.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

Let my prayer be set forth before thee *as* incense; *and* the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

Incline not my heart to *any* evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.

Let the righteous smite me; *it shall be* a kindness: and let him reprove me; *it shall be* an excellent oil, *which* shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also *shall be* in their calamities.

When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.

Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth.

But mine eyes *are* unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.

Keep me from the snares *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.

This Psalm also is a fervent prayer, wherein the Psalmist prays to be delivered from wicked teachers, who pretend to speak of peace, and craftily use soft and flattering words, after they have found that they can prevail nothing by terrors and threats. “Let the righteous,” saith he, “smite me:” that is, I had rather that true and faithful teachers should rebuke and condemn me, and reprove my ways, than that hypocrites should flatter me and applaud me as a saint.

And farther, (saith the Psalmist) although I suffer affliction for the sake of that true and sound doctrine to which I cleave, and though, by afflictions returning again and again, my bones be broken in pieces and scattered like clods of earth before the penetrating and dividing plough; yet I had rather be reproved and smitten by godly and true teachers, and so acknowledge my sin, and rest upon the promise of God, than hear all the flattering words of those hypocrites who deceive themselves and others; and who pretend to have peace with God, when there is no such peace unto them. For all such teachers and their hypocrisies shall be hurled, as it were, from a mighty precipice, and they shall suddenly be dashed to pieces and shall perish together; their glory shall be hurried into confusion, and their end shall be utter destruction; and then it shall appear how bitter their pleasing doctrine is.

PSALM CXLII.

David sheweth that in his trouble all his comfort was in prayer unto God.

Maschil of David; a Prayer when he was in the cave.

I cried unto the LORD with my voice: with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

I poured out my complaint before him: I shewed before him my trouble.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path; in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, but *there was* no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my refuge, *and* my portion in the land of the living.

Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors: for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shall deal bountifully with me.

This Psalm is a prayer; wherein the Psalmist, being now surrounded with peril on every side, cries unto God out of prison, as it were, by reason of the great cruelty and malice of false teachers, who persecuted him on account of the word.

As the people of Israel were a stiff-necked people, their Cainish malice and bitterness had so hardened them, that they stoned, rejected, and killed the true prophets, on account of their preaching of the word, and maintaining the true worship of God; and had given themselves up to hypocrisy and idolatry; and all this, their histories of them testify; as does Christ also, (Matt. xxiii.) and Stephen. (Acts vii.)

Hence, as these things were fully known, so we find most of the Psalms grievously complaining of the cruel malice of false prophets and hypocrites. And just in the same way, from the very beginning, hypocrites and false teachers have afflicted the true church of God; and the true saints in all ages found it necessary to cry unto God continually, against all such hypocrites

and Cainish pretenders to saintship. All this is abundantly testified by the histories of the times of Elijah and king Ahab and Jezebel; when all the true prophets of the Lord were compelled to flee and to hide themselves, to escape the furious cruelty of these adversaries; all which histories might have been adduced as examples in this Psalm. And the recent times of the Arian heresy afford also a plain example of the same persecution and malice, when all the catholic bishops were compelled to flee; for Satan neither can nor will endure the pure word of God!

PSALM CXLIII.

David prayeth for favour in judgment.—He complaineth of his griefs.—He strengtheneth his faith by meditation and prayer.—He prayeth for grace, for deliverance, for sanctification, for destruction of his enemies.

A Psalm of David.

Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, *and* in thy righteousness.

And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground: he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that hath been long dead.

Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me: my heart within me is desolate.

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works: I muse on the work of thy hands.

I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

Hear me speedily, O LORD; my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.

Teach me to do thy will; for thou *art* my God: thy Spirit *is* good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I *am* thy servant.

This is a prayer, expressing the deep feelings of an afflicted and agonizing conscience. The Psalmist, being in the midst of the sense and peril of sin, and terrified at the judgment of God, begs of God not to enter into judgment with him, and firmly cleaves to the promise of mercy, and of the remission of sins. He complains, on the other hand, of hypocrites and teachers of the law and of works; by means of whom, as his instruments, the devil terribly harasses the godly, and loads them with various trials and straits of mind and conscience, and endeavours to draw them away from the certainty of the divine promise unto doubt; in which state, consciences are horribly shaken with fear and darkness, and the dread of the wrath of an unappeased God.

“The enemy,” saith David, “hath persecuted my soul; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead; therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me.” Here David refers to those straits into which consciences are cast by those who lay upon them burdens too heavy to be borne, (as Christ saith concerning the Pharisees, Matt. xxiii.) And yet will not so much as touch them with one of their fingers. And hence this Psalm blessedly shows that there is no sure or solid consolation for consciences, save for those who depend on the promise of the free remission of sins, and on the word of God’s grace: “Enter not,” saith David, “into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.”

That afflicted hearts and consciences can find rest in no other way than this, all the scriptural histories bear witness. All the holy patriarchs, from the beginning of the world, were justified before God by the free, unmerited imputation of righteousness, and not by their own works; as Peter also testifies (Acts xv.) concerning the law, “Why tempt ye God; to lay upon us a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. But we believe that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, as they.”

“I remember,” says David again, “the days of old, I meditate on the works of thy hands;” as if he had added, ‘By these, thy works from the beginning, I comfort and support myself in all my temptations: for all the great saints from the beginning were saved, not by any merit of their own righteousness, but by grace alone: they were delivered from sin and from the wrath of God, by faith in Christ the promised seed: as Abraham also was, by the same grace of God in Christ, called out of idolatry.’ Joshua xxiv. 2, 3.

Therefore God leaves here no ground for any mortal’s boasting in his own works and merits: and yet, by this doctrine of works Satan hath never ceased to distress and torment consciences, contrary to the manifest words and works of God.

PSALM CXLIV.

David blesseth God for his mercy both to him and to man.—He prayeth that God would powerfully deliver him from his enemies.—He promiseth to praise God.—He prayeth for the happy state of the kingdom.

A Psalm of David.

Blessed *be* the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, *and* my fingers to fight:

My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and *he* in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.

LORD, what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

Man is like to vanity: his days *are* as a shadow that passeth away.

Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows and destroy them.

Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children;

Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood.

I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltry *and* an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

It is he that giveth salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood:

That our sons *may be* as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters *may be* as cornerstones, polished *after* the similitude of a palace:

That our garners *may be* full, affording all manner of store: *that* our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:

That our oxen *may be* strong to labour; *that there be* no breaking in, nor going out; that *there be* no complaining in our streets.

Happy *is that* people that is in such a case: *yea,* happy *is that* people whose God *is* the LORD.

This is a blessed Psalm of thanksgiving for kings, princes, and all magistrates. David here, as a king and a magistrate himself, who had to govern the state and carry on wars, confesses that all prosperous and happy government, all success at home and abroad, all the arts of peace, and all victory in war, are the good gifts of God; and that a man can no more effect these things by human wisdom or strength, or by any ability of his own, than he can hold the millions of minds of nations bound unto himself, and make their multitudes obey him alone: for what could any mortal man do towards preserving whole kingdoms, and cities, and provinces in quiet from sedition and commotions amid all the infinite malice of the devil and the world? Every mortal man would fail, like a vanishing shadow, before the thought of such an undertaking.

But the God of all majesty, as Isaiah saith, is the Lord of all the kingdoms and kings of the earth. He, as Daniel saith, removes and establishes kingdoms. That monarch of heaven and earth also taketh down one king and sitteth up another. And he it is, who, in the time of peace, curbs the wills and holds the minds of the multitude, and stills all civil commotions like the waves of the sea, against all the raised winds of the devil. And it is

the same God also, who, in the time of war, terrifieth the enemies of a nation, and maketh their hearts to tremble, when he thunders in the heavens, when he touches the mountains and great hills of nations and of peoples: he is terrible; and who can stand before him? When he strikes the hearts of the enemy with fear, it is easy for us to conquer. But what human wisdom or power can strike this terror, or do or ordain such mighty things?

David then prays against the deeds of his own people, and rebukes their ungodliness. The Israelites, because they had that especial honour and glory of being the people of God, were above all people of a stiff-neck; proud, seditious, avaricious, envious, unbelieving, and disobedient; and all these things they manifested in their conduct to Moses, to David himself, and to other godly kings. And although they saw David, in the same manner as Moses before him, with the manifest presence of God, and with great and divine miracles, governing the state, and conducting wars successfully, in the midst of the assaults of enemies on every side; yet falling into pride and security, from a confidence in their high title, as the people of God; they showed themselves to be no better than those of their forefathers, of whom Moses saith, “Ye have always been a rebellious and stiff-necked people before the Lord, from the day that I first knew you.” For the people of David were carnally affected and ungodly; and were as if they had said, ‘Command, and command again, if thou wilt; expect, and expect still; and why dost thou preach unto us faith, whereas we all the while continue in affliction? Those whom God favors, and to whom he shows mercy, he blesses: to them he gives wives, children, riches, houses, lands, and all things, and happiness in all things; and happy are the people that are in such a case.’ Nor were false prophets wanting, to dwell upon temporal promises in their preaching, and to withstand the true prophets; denying that those were the favorites of God who were not blessed with temporal prosperities; and saying that all the saints of God were so blessed.

Against these, therefore, David now most fervently prays, and encourages himself in heart and in faith by his past experiences of God’s mercies and deliverances. “If, (saith David,) thou hast aforetime delivered me from the sword of Goliath, and hast given me the victory, as thou hast done also unto other kings; so now defend me from this ungodly, hardened, and unbelieving people; who neither regard God nor his civil ministers; who

care not with what evils a good king is surrounded in his government, nor what perils of war prevail, nor what blessings of peace are enjoyed; but are an ignorant and unfeeling herd; the very dregs and sink of men: yea, very swine, who regard nothing but their belly; whom it is more difficult to rule, than to conduct the most fierce and perilous wars." Exactly like unto these are some of our nobles and citizens and countrymen now; who, for the sake of their belly, trample and spit upon all true religion and good learning; and indeed on all things human and divine.

David here attacks these ungodly ones with a most severe rebuke; calling them "strange children;" hereby cutting up that glorying of theirs, wherein they boasted of being the children of Abraham, and the peculiar people of God: and yet were all the while worse than any heathen nation, and were false children and strangers; for they honoured God with their mouth and with their lips, while their heart was far from him.

PSALM CXLV.

David praiseth God for his fame, for his goodness, for his kingdom, for his providence, for his saving mercy.

David's Psalm of praise.

I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness *is* unsearchable.

One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

And *men* shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.

They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

The LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

The LORD *is* good to all and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

Thy kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all *those that be* bowed down.

The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

The LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

This is a very blessed Psalm of thanksgiving for the kingdom and dominion of Christ, which God was about to raise up among the people of Israel: for it was on account of Christ, that this whole people was from the beginning chosen out of all other nations; and on account of Christ also that the law was given unto them, and the whole Mosaic worship established.

This Psalm also most especially urges forward that highest and most excellent of all works, the peculiar and most glorious worship of God, which the first table of the decalogue demands; that is, the sacrifice of praise. The Psalmist in the most exalted expressions proclaims the power of God, and his infinite mercy; which is above all his works.

The whole Psalm presents to us a wonderful display of the eloquence of the Holy Spirit; setting forth, by a great depth of feeling, and by a luxuriant abundance of words and expressions, the glorious height of the worship of God embraced in these words of the first commandment of the decalogue, "I AM THE LORD THY GOD!" And the Psalm prays that men may acknowledge the kingdom of Christ, "That thy power," says David, "may be known unto men, and the glorious majesty of thy kingdom:" that is, that it may be known by the gospel, that there is no other deliverance from the power of the devil, and from sin and eternal death, than by faith in the word of thy mercy and grace, given unto us in Jesus Christ.

The power and kingdom of Christ lies hidden under the outward appearance of the cross and of weakness; and the word of the gospel is a contemptible doctrine with the wise and powerful of the world; for "the gospel," as Paul saith, "is the wisdom of God hidden in a mystery." And again, saith he,

“Christ crucified, is, unto the Jews, a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.” But when this kingdom is, by the preaching of the word, and by the teaching and the confession of the saints, made known before the world, it is proved to be the kingdom of God and the power of God.

That which the Psalmist saith, (verse 14) pertains especially unto the kingdom of Christ, which is a kingdom that “upholdeth all that fall, and lifteth up all them that are down;” for Christ is the king of the afflicted, of the poor, of the fallen; and the king who justifies sinners and raises the dead: by whom God is reconciled unto us, and hears us as a father; fulfilling the desire of them that fear him, and feeding and clothing us whom the world hateth, and guarding and defending us against the gates of hell.

From a worshipping admiration therefore, of the largeness of the grace of God, the Psalmist breaks out into this fervent wish and prayer, “and let all flesh bless his holy name;” as if he had said, the blessings and riches of the kingdom of Christ are immense and unsearchable; as Paul also saith, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

PSALM CXLVI.

The Psalmist voweth perpetual praises to God.—He exhorteth not to trust in man.—God, for his power, justice, mercy, and kingdom, is only worthy to be trusted.

Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.

While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no help.

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

Happy *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope *is* in the LORD his God:

Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein *is;* which keepeth truth for ever:

Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:

The LORD openeth *the eyes of* the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:

The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

The LORD shall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving; and it contains a blessed doctrine; namely, that we ought to trust in God, who alone can defend; and who does defend faithfully all those that trust in him, and all those whom the world hates and casts out. And the Psalm shows, that we ought not to trust in any man, not even in kings or princes, nor in the mighty, nor in the rich, as the world do. For (as the Psalmist saith) “it is God alone that can mightily and gloriously deliver out of affliction,” and all trust in man is deceitful and vain; for (to say nothing about the vanity of such trust in all other particulars) no man knoweth any thing certain respecting his own life!

PSALM CXLVII.

The Prophet exhorteth to praise God for his care of the church, his power, and his mercy:—to praise him for his providence:—to praise him for his blessings upon the kingdom, for his power over the meteors, and for his ordinances in the church.

Praise ye the LORD: for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant, *and* praise is comely.

The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by *their* names.

Great *is* our LORD, and of great power: his understanding *is* infinite.

The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving: sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

He giveth to the beast his food, *and* to the young ravens which cry.

He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

He maketh peace *in* thy borders, *and* filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.

He sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.

He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?

He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow.

He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

He hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a very blessed Psalm of thanksgiving for the various unequalled and infinite mercies and gifts of God.

In the first place, it thanks him for that especial mercy—his regarding in, and miraculously delivering out of, afflictions, the nations of Israel, his peculiar people, and the city of Jerusalem, though placed in the midst of Gentile enemies.

In the next place, it blesses God for that great and unspeakable mercy, his giving throughout all the earth, to the godly and to the ungodly, to the grateful and to the ungrateful, all necessary food and gladness of heart, as Paul saith, Acts xiv. 17. “Filling the hearts of men with food and gladness.”

And more especially the Psalmist renders thanks unto God for his refreshing, reviving, and comforting with his consolations, the hearts of the godly when distressed and weakened by the devil, and burnt up, as it were, by the greatness of the temptations; and for helping them in all times of their temptation, affliction, and labour.

Again, it thanks him for giving rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, both unto the evil and unto the good; and for giving food unto men and unto all the beasts of the earth; even so, that he suffereth not even the ravens to hunger.

And above all, the Psalmist gives thanks unto God, because he hears and regards the godly, who call upon him; and that, especially in Jerusalem; which is the place of his name and of his word; and because he giveth Jerusalem, his city, civil peace, and a happy state of government.

Further, the Psalmist praises God for health of body and his blessing therein, and for the good bringing up of children, and domestic order and prosperity. And also for defence against all outward enemies, and for the preservation of the boundaries of their land, and for national peace and

happiness. And, finally, he blesses God for the richness and fertility of the land of Judah, and for the abundance of its fruits.

The chosen people of God, and the elect places of his Zion have the privilege, above all other nations, of being blessed with the word and the worship of God. Wherefore they, above all others, show forth the works of God and his wonders among the people. And all the creatures of God, and his daily wonders, and blessings of rain, snow, dew, frost, &c. are more clearly known where his word and worship are, than among idolatrous nations, who have neither the prophets, nor the Spirit, nor the word, nor see his works, though they daily enjoy his creatures and all his heavenly gifts and mercies; on all which abundant gifts and mercies they feed like swine; for as they are ignorant of the word, they are altogether ignorant of God.

PSALM CXLVIII.

The Psalmist exhorteth the celestial, the terrestrial, and the rational creatures to praise God.

Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that *be* above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.

He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:

Fire and hail; snow and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word:

Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:

Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:

Both young men and maidens; old men and children:

Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory *is* above the earth and heaven.

He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; *even* of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving; wherein the Psalmist calls upon, and exhorts all creatures, both in heaven and in earth, to praise God; calling more especially on his saints, the children of Israel, among whom is the word and the worship of God.

In this Psalm you may remark this blessed doctrine, that all orders of men, all kinds of life, which are created of God, are good,—that is, kings, magistrates, judges, young men, old men, &c. For if to hold the office of a magistrate and to hear and judge causes were of itself wicked, then such magistrates could not call upon and praise God, nor would the Holy Spirit exhort them in this Psalm to that praise of God. And where there are magistrates and laws, kings and princes, there also there are subjects, town-sergeants and constables. And there also there must be artificers in the cities, and men-servants and maid-servants, and countrymen, and soldiers, &c. And, again, where there are young men and old men, there are also wives and children, and so whole families and households.

All these things are good and holy gifts of God, and by no means to be condemned or refused, as the pope blasphemously saith they are. All these things, moreover, show that their all-high and Almighty Creator is good; and that all these his good creatures ought to speak his praise, to sound it forth with thousands of tongues, and to celebrate this infinite goodness and the countless and unspeakable mercies of God!

If, therefore, thou desirest, contrary to the blasphemous doctrine of the pope, and all like him, to know how supremely good all the creatures of God are, from the least of them even to the greatest of them; then, suppose to thyself that one of these creatures, out of the universal whole, were deficient or wanting, for one short moment; suppose there were no fire or no sun for a moment's space even; suppose there were no women, no infantine offspring;—suppose, I say, any deficiency of this kind: by this thought thou wilt immediately feel that no one can sufficiently praise God, even for one of his creatures? And how many creatures has he formed! What worlds of goodness has he created!

PSALM CXLIX.

The prophet exhorteth to praise God for his love to the church, and for that power which he hath given to the church.

Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints.

Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.

Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.

Let the high *praises* of God *be* in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;

To execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people;

To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

This Psalm is also a Psalm of thanksgiving for that infinite goodness of God, his being merciful to his people; and for assuring them, by his word, and by his promises of his good will towards them; and that he will hear them, regard them, and have mercy upon them. To which immense goodness of God, no thanks of his people can be equal. And that treasure of mercy, which is greater than the whole world unto afflicted consciences,—that God freely promises to his people his blessing, in the seed of Abraham, and the remission of sins; and does not regard their unworthiness in the gift;—that treasure of mercy, I say, is greater than the mind of man is capable of conceiving.

This Psalm, therefore, (if we may so speak) is properly a Psalm of the New Testament. Hence the Psalmist saith, “Sing unto the Lord a new song:” showing that all praise is to be sung unto the king of Israel and of Zion; whom all ought to laud with rejoicing, “upon their beds:” that is, in the churches and temples where they meet for worship; as the prophet Isaiah also mentions their temples, their altars, their beds, and their couches, where Israel committed fornication; that is, worshipped their idols.

And that also pertains to the New Testament where the Psalmist saith, “And a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the heathen, and to bind their kings with chains.” This is not to be understood simply of the Jews or of the Mahometans, with respect to any earthly tyranny; but this is the vengeance promised in the scriptures; which the seed of Abraham, that is, the Israelites and the apostles, should execute by the sword of the Spirit, by which they should destroy idolatry in so many nations, and should put to shame the wisdom of the whole world, as the apostle Paul saith. 2 Cor. x.

PSALM CXL.

An exhortation to praise God with all kinds of instruments.

Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.

Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

This is a Psalm of praise, written for the people of Israel, (to praise God in his holiness, or in his sanctuary): that is, to praise him for that infinite and unequalled mercy, of erecting his sanctuary, his tabernacle, his ark, his mercy-seat among the Israelites; and thereby making Jerusalem the place of his dwelling. For God dwelt in that place, the city of Jerusalem, as in the heaven of his habitation. Hence other prophets call that people “the heavens,” and the place of the habitation, of the name, and of the word of God. Because the presence, the power, and the majesty of God are there, where he manifests himself forth by his acts and his wonderful works.

The Psalmist then mentions many musical instruments, which were used by the people of Israel in their worship, according to the appointed ceremonies of the Levitical worship and priesthood. But among Christians and the people of the New Testament, the trumpet, psaltery, the harp, the timbrels, are the gospel itself in the ministration of the word.

CONCLUDING ADMONITION.

I would, in conclusion, have all godly souls (whom Satan, without ceasing, harasses with temptations,) to bear in mind that all the laudatory Psalms, or Psalms of thanksgiving, are also promises of God, designed to lift up, to sustain, and to refresh afflicted consciences, and to furnish them with arguments against the devil; assuring them that God is the God of peace, of life, of consolation, and not the God of misery, cruelty, and damnation. For when David and other saints thus joyfully, and with all possible abundance of expression, praise God, they thereby show forth unto all the afflicted, that God never forsakes his own in their temptations, but pities all such; and that he gives them breathing-times in their conflicts, succours them in their distresses, beholds their contrite hearts, gives them in due time an end of

their afflictions, delivers them from all evils, and oft-times most sweetly and marvellously comforts them.

Wherefore, every thanksgiving in the Psalms, is at the same time, a promise of grace, and a sweet doctrine to the tempted and the afflicted: because thereby is shown, by the example of David and of others, that God regardeth the afflicted, heareth all that call upon him, and giveth peace unto them in all the various afflictions under which they labour.

Learn thou well then how to gather, throughout the book of Psalms, the blessed argument against the devil, contained in the words, "PRAISE YE THE LORD!" It was this that comforted David himself while praising God: for they are not the dead that praise the Lord, nor they that are swallowed up of sorrow, nor they that go down into hell!

As therefore God ceaseth not, during this short and momentous life, to try and prove his church, by causing her to undergo these many and great offences, temptations, and afflictions, and these most bitter hatreds of Satan and of the word; so he will, as surely, most marvellously and excellently comfort her from heaven, and deliver her, and save her!

All, therefore, that believe, how many soever they be, and how many or great soever their afflictions, are ever lifted up by the consolations of God. And hence God will comfort us also, and all saints; and he will open our mouths to praise him; that Satan may be confounded in all his devices and in all his works, and that Jesus Christ, the Lord our God, may be glorified! who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth, One God, blessed for evermore. Amen.

THE PRINTER

TO THE GODLY READER, GREETING.

Behold, we here present unto thee, good Reader, the summary Commentary of Doctor Martin Luther, collected from his mouth by those that heard him, with all possible care and diligence. We could scarcely obtain leave from the holy author to edit this commentary in his name: because he felt that many things were wanting in this extemporaneous explication, which a diligent writing down might have rendered more perfect and more clear. But as he was satisfied that the sense and substance of each Psalm were every where faithfully given, and that a very important part of the true religion was here copiously handled; he was, under these assurances, the more willing to overlook any thing that might be wanting in the way of greater correctness, and loftier language and expression.

We hope, therefore, that this our labour will not be unacceptable to the lovers of the Holy Scriptures and divine things. For they will here see how blessedly this great man opened and taught the word of God, and what his only aim and object were therein. And they will also be the better enabled to judge of the writings of others. For while others devote all their labours, pains, and aims, to thrust their books upon the world; they never, in those books, touch in the least upon those things which form the substance of the true religion! Reader, farewell! May thy soul be blessed by our labour!

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*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A MANUAL OF THE BOOK OF PSALMS ***

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