

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

BY

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Introduction

"Although all Scripture breathes the grace of God, yet sweet beyond all others is the book of Psalms." This is the ancient witness of Ambrose. And Luther said "You might rightly call the Psalter a Bible in miniature." Hundreds of similar testimonies could be added. The Psalms have always been one of the choicest portions of the Word of God for all saints, Jewish and Christian. The ancient Jews used the Psalms in the temple worship. The so-called "Great Hallel," consisting of Psalms 113-118 was sung during the celebration of Passover, Pentecost and the feast of tabernacles. Daily in the temple Psalms were sung in a prescribed order, The Jews still use them in all their feast days and in the synagogue.

The Psalms are mentioned in connection with praise in the New Testament (Col. 3:16; James 5:13). The Church from the very start has used them in public and private devotion. All branches of Christendom use them today; Protestantism, Romish and Greek Catholicism make use of them in responsive reading or chanting. And even more so are they used and have always been used by individuals, because the heart finds in these songs and prayers, the different experiences of human life, and the different emotions. The sufferer steeped in sorrow finds in this book the experiences of suffering and sorrow; he finds more than that, encouragement to trust God and the assurance of deliverance. The penitent soul finds that which suits a broken and contrite heart. The lonely one, helpless and forsaken, reads of others who passed through the same experience. Then there is comfort, joy and peace, as well as hope. They stimulate faith and confidence in the Lord and are breathing a spirit of worship and praise which produce reverence and praise in the heart of the believer.

The Lord Jesus and the Psalms

But there is another reason why believers love the Psalms. The Lord Jesus is not only revealed in this book as nowhere else (as we shall show

later) but He used the Psalms throughout His blessed life on earth and even in glory. Here are His own prayers prewritten by the Spirit of God. The expression of sorrow, loneliness, rejection and suffering describe what He passed through in His life of humiliation. The praise and worship, the trust and confidence in God, express likewise prophetically that life of obedience and trust. We believe when He spent nights in prayer to pour out His heart before His Father, on the mountain or in the desert, He must have done so by using the Psalms. He used the Psalms speaking to His disciples; with Psalm 110 He silenced His enemies. Gethsemane is mentioned in the Psalms; and in the suffering of the cross He fulfilled all that the Psalms predict. In resurrection He used the twenty-second Psalm: "Go and tell My brethren." He opened to His disciples the Scriptures "that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me" (Luke 24:44) as He had before told the two on the way to Emmaus "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures concerning Himself. When He ascended on high and took the seat at God's right hand, and God welcomed Him to sit down and to be the priest after the order of Melchisedec it was according to the Psalms. And in His messages from the throne in speaking to the churches He uses the Psalms (Rev. 2:27). And when He comes again the Hallelujah chorus of the ending of this book will be sung by heaven and earth and all the predicted glory, as given in the Psalms, will come to pass. This book then ought to be precious to us, because it was precious to Him and makes Him known to our hearts. The Spirit of God also quotes the Psalms more frequently in the Epistles than any other Old Testament book.

The Title of the Book

Our English word "psalms" is taken from the Greek word employed in the Septuagint translation--"psalmoi"; this means "songs." It is also frequently called Psalter. This word is also Greek, from "psalterion," a harp or any other stringed instrument.

The Hebrews call this book "Tehillim," which means to make a joyful sound, or praises. It is in the Hebrew Bible in the third division, the "Kethubim" section. It is the great poetical book of the Old Testament. We refer the reader to our remarks on Hebrew poetry in the introduction to the book of Job. The poetry of the Psalms is of a lyric character. The real great beginning of lyric poetry is with King David. He was remarkably gifted and yet it was not natural gift which produced these wonderful utterances but it was the Spirit of God who tuned his harp. Our space is too valuable to pay much attention to the critical school with their denials of the Davidic authorship of different Psalms, and that which is worse, the denial of the Messianic predictions of the Psalms. If these critics were but seekers after the fine gold, the precious gems of truth and divine knowledge, so richly stored in this mine, they would cease criticising and become worshippers.

The Authorship of the Different Psalms

Nearly one-half of the Psalms, seventy-three in all, were given by the Holy Spirit through the Shepherd King of Israel, David, who is rightly called the sweet singer of Israel.

The following are the Davidic Psalms: 3--9; 11---41 (except Psalm 33); 51-70; 86; 101; 103; 108; 109; 110; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138--145.

Asaph has twelve Psalms: Psalm 1 and Psalms 73--83.

The children of Korah composed eleven Psalms: Psalms 43, 44--49, 84, 85, 87 and 88.

One by Heman the Ezrahite Psalm 88 and one by Ethan the Ezrahite Psalm 89; one by Moses, Psalm 90.

That makes 99 Psalms whose authors are known; the remaining 51 have no inscription.

The Collection and Arrangement of the Psalms in the Present Form

From the foregoing paragraphs we learn that the known authors of the Psalms are: David, Asaph, the Children of Korah, Moses, Heman, and Ethan. If we take into consideration that other Psalms were written during the exile we see that the authors are centuries apart. The people Israel possessed these Psalms in an uncollected form; they laid about loose, so to speak. Someone at some time collected them in a book, in the form we have them now.

Who did this valuable collecting and arranging of these Psalms we do not know for it is not revealed. But this we can say of certainty that the Hebrew saint who did it was called to do it by the Spirit of God and the very arrangement of these Psalms in the book as we have it now is the perfect work of the Holy Spirit.

Here we clash with the critics who speak of "different editors arranging and re-arranging at different occasions." They claim, for instance, that the statement at the close of Psalm 72 "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended," shows that it is misplaced because other Davidic Psalms come later, and that probably this is the work of some editor, etc. But the phrase at the close of Psalm 72 rather means something different, as we take it. The Seventy-second Psalm reveals the glories of the coming kingdom of Him who is greater than Solomon, and David, getting a glimpse of it, declares: "The prayers of David, my prayers are ended; I have nothing greater to ask, than what this Psalm reveals."

The work the unknown collector has done shows that it is the work of one person guided by the Spirit of God.

Let us suppose that we had in our possession a basket containing 150 precious stones, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, emeralds and pearls and we went with this basket to some jeweler with the request to arrange these gems in a necklace. How would he go about it? Would he take out a stone at random and put it on a string, and then take another, and another till he had strung them all? Certainly not. He would examine each stone. He would study the value of every emerald and sapphire, the brilliancy of each diamond and the lustre of every pearl. Then he would continue to study where each belongs on that chain so as to tell out its own value in relation to the other.

And here were 150 gems of greater value than earthly gems, gems of divine inspiration. They are to be arranged in perfect order so that each gem has the right place, to tell out its own story, in this book. Who else could do this but He who knows the value and meaning of these Psalms! The

Spirit of God through His chosen instrument put these Psalms together and therefore we have in the arrangement a most wonderful, consecutive revelation. It is this knowledge which so many readers of the Psalms have missed. Generally one Psalm is read without considering that this Psalm stands in some relationship to the preceding one and to those which follow, that it is only a link in a chain. Just as Romans 6 leads to Romans 7 and Romans 7 to Romans 8, so it is with the Psalms. And here we shall discover the divine wisdom. These Psalms come in clusters and must be treated as belonging together to get the real spiritual and especially prophetic message. We give the most simple illustration of this fact found in the book known to many readers of the Psalms: Psalm 22 is a prophecy of Christ in His suffering, or the good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep. Psalm 23 shows Him as the great Shepherd of the sheep and Psalm 24 reveals Him as the coming, chief Shepherd in glory. The many other most interesting interrelation of the Psalms the annotations will point out. Before we give the great message of the book of Psalms we call attention to other matters of importance in the study of this remarkable book.

The Hebrew Terms in Connection with the Psalms

In many of the Psalms we find the beginning a Hebrew word. For instance in Psalm 8 "To the Chief Musician upon the Gittith," or in Psalm 16 "Michtam of David." It is now a question whether these terms belong to the Psalm with which they are connected in our English Bibles, or to the preceding Psalm. When we read the last chapter of Habakkuk we find a psalmodic phrase at the close, "To the chief singer upon Neginoth." Upon this the interesting theory has been advanced that the different titles in the Psalms should be the subscription of the preceding one. In other words, to give an illustration, the words standing at the beginning of Psalm 8 "To the chief musician upon the Gittith," belongs to Psalm 7. Our work does not permit a minute examination of this. Such a misplacement could of course easily happen when we remember that the Hebrew manuscripts were written without a break. (Dr. J.W. Thirtle of England, to whom we are indebted for this suggestion, has written a volume on it, The Titles of the Psalms. We recommend it to those who desire to follow it more closely.)

We give in alphabetical arrangement the Hebrew titles and their English meaning.

Ayeleth-Shahar. Psalm 22. "The hind of the dawn." The early light preceding the dawn of the morning, whose first rays are likened to the shining horns of a hind. (Delitzsch)

Alamoth. It means "concerning maidens." It is found in the beginning of Psalm 46.

Al-Tashcheth. "Destroy not," in Psalms 57- 59 and in Psalm 75.

Gittith. "Winepresses," in Psalms 7, 80 and 83.

jeduthun. "Praise giver," in Psalms 39, 62, and 77.

Mahalath. "Sickness." Delitzsch says on the meaning the following: "Upon Mahalath signifies after a sad tone or manner, whether it be that Mahalath itself is a name for such an elegiac kind of melody, or that it was thereby designed to indicate the initial word of some popular song. So that we may regard 'Mahalath' as equivalent to piano or andante." This

would correspond to Psalm 53 where this word is found.

Mahalath Leannoth. It means "sickness unto humiliation." It stands connected with Psalm 88.

Maschil. "Instruction," found in Psalms 32, 42, 44, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, 142.

Michtam. "Engraven," in Psalms 16, 56-60.

Muth-Labben. "Death for the son." It is found as the superscription of Psalm 9.

Neginoth. "Smitings," in Psalms 4, 6, 54, 55, 61, 67 and 76.

Nehiloth. "Possessions," in Psalm 5.

Sheminith. "The Eighth Division" or "upon the Octave," in Psalms 6 and 7.

Shiggaion. "Loud Crying," Psalm 7.

Shoshannim. "Lilies," in Psalms 45 and 69.

Shoshannim-Eduth. "Lilies of testimony," Psalm 53. Eduth (testimony) is found in Psalm 60.

The word Selah occurs 71 times in the Psalms. It means "To pause," with a secondary meaning to "lift up." We can take it as an indication that in reading we should pause, meditate and then lift up our hearts in praise and prayer.

The Alphabetical Psalms

A number of the Psalms in the Hebrew are in an alphabetical arrangement; that is, certain verses begin with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This arrangement is not always perfect. Psalms 9 and 10 contain (the two together) the letters of the alphabet with several missing. Psalms 25 and 26 are also incomplete in the alphabetical scope. Psalm 37 has a perfect alphabetical character. Other alphabetical Psalms are Psalms 111 and 112. The most perfect Psalm in this respect is the longest in the book, Psalm 119.

The Psalms and the New Testament Scriptures

As already stated the Psalms are quoted by the Spirit of God more than any other Old Testament book. This is significant and a divine indication of the great importance of these inspired gems. We give now a list of quotations as found in the New Testament and also those passages where the Psalms are alluded to.

Matthew 4:6 (Psalm 91:11). This first quotation is by the Devil. By this he showed his great knowledge of the Word and its meaning. Matthew 13:35 (Psalm 78:2). Matthew 21:42 (Psalm 118:22). Matthew 27:43 (Psalm 110). John 2:17 (Psalm 69:9). John 6:31 (Psalm 78:24, 25). John 7:42 (Psalm 132:11). John 10:34 (Psalm 82:6). John 13:18 (Psalm 41:9). John 15:25 (Psalm 35:19; 49:4). John 19:24 (Psalm 22:18). John 19:28 (Psalm 69:21).

John 19:36 (Psalm 34:20). John 20:17 (Psalm 22:17). Acts 1:20 (Psalm 69:25). Acts 1:16 (Psalm 41:9). Acts 2:25 (Psalm 16:8). Acts 2:34 (Psalm 110:1). Acts 4:25 (Psalm 2:1, 2). Acts 13:33 (Psalm 2:7). Acts 13:35 (Psalm 16:10). Romans 3:4 (Psalm 51:4). Romans 3:12 (Psalm 14:2). Romans 3:13 (Psalm 140:3). Romans 4:6 (Psalm 32:1, 2). Romans 11:9, 10 (Psalm 69:22, 23). Romans 15:10 (Psalm 117:1). Eph. 4:8 (Psalm 68:18). 2 Cor. 4:13 (Psalm 116:10). Hebrews 1:10-12 (Psalm 102:25-27). Hebrews 1:8-9 (Psalm 45:6-7). Hebrews 1:13 (Psalm 110:1). Hebrews 2:6 (Psalm 8:4). Hebrews 4:3 (Psalm 95:11). Hebrews 4:7 (Psalm 95:7). Hebrews 5:6 (Psalm 110:4). Hebrews 7:17 (Psalm 110:4). Rev. 2:27 (Psalm 2:9).

This is not by any means a complete list of quotations, for there are many more passages. We have quoted only the most prominent. See also Psalm 2:7-9 in Hebrews 1:5 and Rev. 2:27. Psalm 4:4 in Ephesians 4:26. Psalm 6:8 [in Matthew 7:23]. Psalm 8:2 in Matthew 21:16. Psalm 7:6 in 1 Cor. 15:25-27. Psalm 9:8 in Acts 17:31. Psalm 19:4 in Romans 10:18. Psalm 22:1 in Matthew 27:46. Psalm 22:21 in 2 Tim. 4:17. Psalm 24:1 in 1 Cor. 10:26. Psalm 27:1 in Hebrews 13:6. Psalm 34:8 in 1 Peter 2:3. Psalm 40:6-8 in Hebrews 10:5-7. Psalm 41:9 in Mark 14:18 and John 13:18. Psalm 48:2 in Matthew 5:35. Psalm 50:14 in Hebrews 13:15. Psalm 55:22 in 1 Peter 5:7. Psalm 56:4 in Hebrews 13:6. Psalm 69:21 in Mark 15:36. Psalm 79:6 in 2 Thess. 1:8. Psalm 89:27, 37 in Rev. 1:5 and 3:14. Psalm 97:6 in Hebrews 1:6. Psalm 104:4 in Hebrews 1:7, etc.

In all about 50 Psalms are directly and indirectly quoted and alluded to in the books of the New Testament.

The Message of the Psalms

It would be impossible to give a complete review of the great message contained in the Psalms. A close study of each Psalm only can bring this out fully and even then we probably touch but the surface of this marvellous mine of wisdom and knowledge. That a part of the message is the experience of the saint in the world, his trials, sorrows, the persecutions he suffers, his dependence on God, his deliverance and much else, is known to all readers of this book. Yet it must be remembered that the experiences are those of Jewish saints; true Christian experience is higher! In the midst of persecutions from the enemies, these Jewish saints call to God to destroy their enemies, to burn them up like stubble. The New Testament demands that saints should love their enemies. What these imprecatory Psalms mean and how perfectly in order they are in the message of this book we shall show in the annotations. Nor do we find in these experiences salvation made known as it is in the gospel dispensation. While the writers of the Psalms call on the Lord and use different names by which they call Him, as rock, fortress, shepherd, shield, etc., nowhere do we find that one ever utters the word "Father," nor is there a declaration of the sonship of the saint nor do we find anything of the blessed hope of glory to be with Him in the Father's house. The message of praise, giving thanks, adoration and worship is another prominent feature. But true Christian worship and praise is of a higher note and order. No such doxology like the doxology of Eph. 1:3 is found anywhere in the Psalms. Yet the Christian believer, with the light of the full gospel revelation, indwelt by the same Spirit who gave the Psalms, can get the sweetest comfort and encouragement from the experiences recorded in these songs.

While this is part of the message of this book, the great message is the message of prophecy. The book of Psalms is preeminently a prophetic

book. The New Testament warrants us to say this for the quotations from the Psalms are overwhelmingly on prophetic lines. It is not saying too much when we say that all the great prophetic messages of the prophets of God, and their visions concerning the future are wonderfully given by the Psalms and many of them are enlarged. The prophetic scope of the Psalms is truly marvellous. Yet this feature of it is the most neglected in the study of the book. It is rarely ever studied as a prophetic book; the devotional study has always been in the lead.

What then is the prophetic message of the Psalms? The prophecies of the Psalms comprise the following three themes:

1. The prophetic message concerning the Messiah, His humiliation and His exaltation. There are more prophetic statements on this theme of all themes in the Psalms, than in the book of Isaiah or in any of the other prophetic books. As already stated in the paragraph of this introduction relating to the Lord Jesus and the Psalms, we have in many of them the prewritten prayers of our Lord, as well as the expressions of His sorrow and grief. The story of His life of loneliness down here, the hatred which He met, the rejection from the side of the nation; the betrayal and other features of His humiliation are found over and over again in the Psalms. While the chosen instruments passed through experiences of sorrow and trial, the Spirit of God pictures in them Him who could say "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me" (Lamentations 1:12). But the application of these Psalms to the person of our Lord needs great caution. Some teachers have erred grievously in this matter. We heard several years ago of a Bible teacher applying Psalm 38:7 to our Lord: "For my lions are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh." And this teacher declared that the Lord suffered thus because He took upon Himself our sickness and diseases. Such teaching must be severely condemned for it is positively false. Nor must other similar expressions be put into the mouth of our Lord. He had no need to complain of sins for He had no sin. He had no need to use the Fifty-first Psalm.

The sufferings of the cross are prophetically revealed in the twenty-second Psalm and in others as well. Then the glory which is to follow, the kingship of Christ, His kingdom is wonderfully predicted in many Psalms. His first coming in humiliation, to be rejected and to die; His second coming to be accepted and to reign over the earth, these are the two great prophetic messages of the Psalms. It is of much interest to note the order of the four great Messianic Psalms which we find in the first section of the book. The Spirit of God calls our attention to them in the New Testament. The Second Psalm is the first; here the divine sonship of our Lord is made known. The Eighth Psalm is next quoted; there He is the Son of Man. In Psalm 16 we see Him as the Obedient One and in Psalm 22 obedient unto death, the death of the cross. Son of God--Son of Man, obedient, obedient unto death, the death of the cross. And with each of these Psalms His glory is connected.

2. The second prophetic theme of the Psalms we mention are the sorrows, trials and suffering of Israel and their coming deliverance, restoration, blessing and glory. We do not mean by this the prediction of their present wanderings and the afflictions which are upon the nation as a result of having rejected the Christ, but the experiences through which a godly Jewish remnant will have to pass when this present age closes in its predicted darkness and apostasy. Of this time Jeremiah speaks as the time

of Jacob's trouble. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." That remnant will appear when the purpose of this present dispensation, the out calling of the people for His Name (the Church) is accomplished. A remnant of His earthly people, energized by the Spirit of God, will turn to the Lord and pass through that time of trouble, of which our Lord speaks as the great tribulation. It will be the travail time for them. They suffer from the side of ungodly nations and pray for deliverance. (See Isaiah 63:15-64.) The Psalms give us the completest picture of their harrowing experiences. Here we read their sorrows, their afflictions. We hear their prayers, their cry "How long, O Lord, how long!" We Year them plead that the Lord might intervene and come down to save them. The nations about them persecute them. The land, which is partially restored, is invaded again. Then we read in the Psalms of a wicked man who domineers over them; one who breaks the covenant. This is the man of sin, the final Anti-christ. And as they pray for deliverance, they cry to God for vengeance, to deal with their enemies and with His enemies according to His righteousness. This will explain perfectly the imprecatory prayers we find here and there in this book.

Suddenly the scene changeth. Their prayers are answered. Heaven opens and the long expected King returns. Their tears are wiped away; their moans are changed to songs, their agonizing cries are turned to laughter. They are delivered and receive the blessing as His people, their land is blest and they become the channel of blessing and mercy to the nations of the earth. It is all intensely interesting and fascinating.

3. The third prophetic theme shows the future glories in store for His redeemed people, for the nations of the earth and for creation itself. In other words we have prophecies relating to the coming kingdom. The prophetic teaching of the Psalms annihilates postmillennialism. These prophecies show conclusively that there can be no blessing for Israel, for the nations, for the earth, no peace and prosperity, no world conversion, till the King comes back. The book ends with the mighty hallelujahs, the glorious consummation when heaven and earth will sing His praises. How well Handel caught this message when in his Oratorio, "The Messiah," he concludes all with a mighty hallelujah chorus. Our annotations will adhere to this threefold prophetic message. The task is difficult to condense these great truths. Far easier it would be to write a book of a thousand pages than one of a hundred. It is all so rich and glorious.

The Division of the Psalms

The unknown collector of these Psalms has divided the book into five sections, which we must maintain and follow. These five sections correspond in a remarkable manner with the five books with which the Bible opens, the Pentateuch. This was known to the ancient Jews, for they call the Psalter "the Pentateuch of David." The Aramaic comment (Midrash) on Psalm 1:1 declares that "Moses gave to the Israelites the five books of the law and corresponding with these David gave them the five books of the Psalms."

I. THE GENESIS SECTION -- Psalms 1-41. This section has the same character as the book of Genesis in that it has much to say about man. We have first a contrast between the righteous and the ungodly. After that a contrast between the first man, Adam, and the second Man who was made a little lower than the angels (Psalm 8). Here also is a description of the

wicked one, in whom in some future day the defiance of the ungodly will culminate. This man of sin, the Anti-christ, is revealed in Psalms 9 and 10; the tribulation which is yet to come for man is revealed in the Psalms which follow. The Christ, the last Adam, in His obedience, even the obedience unto the death of the cross, His salvation and His glory are unfolded (Psalms 16-41). The first book ends with a blessing and a double Amen.

II. THE EXODUS SECTION -- Psalms 42-72. Like in the book of Exodus, where the story is written how God redeems by blood and by power, we see a people groaning and moaning. The opening Psalms show a people oppressed and longing for God. This is the godly Jewish remnant. Then we find their prayers answered by the coming of the King (Psalm 45). Redemption by power then takes place and the blessings of the kingdom, when Christ has returned, are revealed in a number of Psalms. The Seventy-second Psalm, the conclusion of this second book gives the reign and the kingly glory of Christ. This book also ends with a double Amen and the statement, so very appropriate to this book, "And let the whole earth be filled with His glory." The book of Exodus ends with the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle, the Exodus portion of the Psalms ends with His glory filling the whole earth.

III. THE LEVITICUS SECTION -- Psalms 73-89. This is the briefest section. The theme of Leviticus is "holiness unto the Lord." In this section we are brought into the sanctuary and we behold the holiness of the Lord in dealing with His people. The Asaph Psalms are put into this section and nearly every Psalm has something about the sanctuary, the congregation, Zion and approaching the Lord. It also closes with a benediction and a double amen.

IV. THE NUMBERS SECTION -- Psalms 90-106. The first Psalm of this section is the Psalm Moses wrote, in all probability when he saw the people dying in the wilderness. The second Man is seen in Psalm 91. Here we have the prophetic Psalms which show that the times of unrest and wanderings will cease, when the Lord reigneth and when the nations will worship Him. No rest and no peace till then. This section ends with an amen and a hallelujah.

V. THE DEUTERONOMY SECTION -- Psalms 107-150. In this section, as it is in Deuteronomy, the Word is magnified. The Lord Jesus Christ quoted this book of Deuteronomy exclusively in His conflict with the devil. Christ is seen as the Living Word in the beginning of this section. His rejection, His exaltation, His return and the hallelujah times which follow are once more revealed in a cluster of Psalms (109-113). Then follows the consummation, deliverances, the end-ways of God, His praise and His glory. This section ends with five hallelujah Psalms. It is the hallelujah chorus of completed redemption.

Analysis and Annotations

I. THE GENESIS SECTION: BOOK ONE: PSALMS 1-41

Psalms 1-8

PSALM 1

The Godly and the Ungodly

1. The godly, his character and his fruit (1:1-3)
2. The ungodly in comparison with the godly (1:4-6)

The first eight Psalms are the Psalms in embryo, just as the opening chapters of the book of Genesis are the Bible in a nutshell. Throughout the Psalms we can trace the subjects of these eight Psalms, the godly and the ungodly; but especially the great theme of the Psalms, Christ, the Perfect Man, the King rejected, the suffering of the righteous during the time of His rejection, the King enthroned and all things put under His feet. These are the leading themes of Psalms 1-8.

Psalms 1 and 2 are introductory to the entire collection, put there by the Holy Spirit. In some ancient manuscripts the first Psalm is not numbered, in others the First and Second Psalms are put into one. The First Psalm begins with a beatitude and the second ends with a beatitude. The righteous man, negative and positive, nothing evil in him, no fellowship with sinners, and positive, obedience and entire devotedness to God, does not mean the natural man. The godly One is the perfect One who walked down here separated from sinners, and devoted to God. He walked in obedience, in dependence on God and in communion with Him, and therefore the blessing, honor and glory are His. But the godly man is also the believer, born of God, separated, a saint, who delights in the things of God, meditates in His Word day and night. It is still more, a description of what the true believing remnant of Israel will be some day, "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season." Such is converted, redeemed Israel's future as revealed here and also by Isaiah: "Thy people shall all be righteous, they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified" (Isaiah 60:21). We behold then in these opening verses of the Psalms the Lord Jesus Christ as the perfect Man, the individual believer in his separation and devotion, and what Israel, saved and converted, will be in the future.

(The Romish church has a volume called "The Psalter of the Virgin Mary compiled by Doctor St. Bonaventura." It is in Latin and contains the 150 Psalms, greatly abridged, and each addressed to Mary. Psalm 1 begins as follows: "Happy is the man that loves thy Name, O Virgin Mary, thy grace will comfort his soul. Ave Maria." Psalm 19: "The Heavens declare thy glory, O Virgin Mary." Horrible blasphemy!)

Then the ungodly: "Like the chaff which the wind driveth away" is a prophecy of the time when the ungodly are dealt with in judgment, when "He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12). Then the ungodly will forever disappear and cease troubling the righteous. They will have no place in the assembly of the righteous in millennial times.

PSALM 2

The Rejected King

1. The rejection and the coming confederacy (2:1-3)
2. Jehovah's attitude and interference (2:4-6)
3. The coming of the King and his inheritance (2:7-9)

4. Warning and exhortation (2:10-12)

Verses 1-3. The rejection of the perfect Man, the Son of God, by man, is here revealed. It is the first psalm quoted in the New Testament. See Acts 4:25-28. In this quotation it is applied to the Jews and Gentiles gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. This rejection continues throughout this present age; it becomes more marked as the age draws to its close. Finally the nations with their kings and also apostate Israel will form a great confederacy, they will form a tumultuous throng, taking counsel together for one great purpose, Satanically conceived and executed, to defy God and His Christ. The generalissimo will be Satan through the beast. It is the gathered confederacy as seen in Revelation. "And he gathered them together in a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Rev. 16:16). "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse (Christ) and His army" (Rev. 19:19).

Verses 4-6. Heaven is silent till the appointed time comes. Here we have, as in Psalm 110, the exalted position of the rejected Christ: He sitteth in the heavens; His place is at the right hand of God. He shares the Father's throne. In infinite patience He is waiting, silent to all what wicked men do in dishonouring His Name. But when on earth the final rebellion takes place, then He will laugh at them and hold them in derision. (The Jewish comment contained in the ancient "Yalkut Shimoni" is interesting. "Like a robber who was standing and expressing his contempt behind the palace of the king, and saying, If I find the son of the king, I will seize him, kill him, and crucify him, and put him to a terrible death; but the lord mocks at it.") Then He who has so long spoken in love, will speak in wrath and begin the execution of God's judgments which are committed into His hand. Then will He be established as God's King upon the holy hill of Zion.

Verses 7-9. And now we hear Him speak; He proclaims God's counsel concerning Himself. He declares who He is, "the Son of God"--"Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee." (See the New Testament comment, Acts 13:33, 34.) It is not a declaration of His eternal Sonship (though that is implied), but speaks of Him as the Incarnate One and the Risen One. And His second coming will be the completest vindication of His Sonship. It will demonstrate that He whom the nations rejected is the Son of God, who walked on the earth, who died, rose from the dead, ascended upon high and is manifested in power and glory. Then every mouth will be stopped and every knee must bow. He asks the Father and He gives Him the nations for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. In His prayer in John 17 (the model of His priestly intercession throughout this age of grace), He said, "I pray not for the world." When His present priestly ministrations cease, that is, when His own have been received by Him in glory, then will He ask for the world and receive the kingdoms of this world, to shepherd the nations with a rod of iron and execute judgment among them.

Verses 10-12. The exhortation and warning closes this perfect and beautiful Psalm. It is meant especially for that time when the final revolt takes place. The appeal goes forth then to turn to the Lord, to kiss the Son--"for in a little will His anger kindle," So even at that time mercy still is waiting. Critics object to the use of the Aramaic word "bar"--son--and give as the correct translation "receive instruction" or "do homage." The word "bar" is used in place of the Hebrew "ben" for the

sake of euphony. "Blessed are they that put their trust in Him." That is true of all at all times. It is our blessedness.

Sorrows and Trials of the Godly Remnant (3-7)

PSALM 3

1. Persecution and comfort (3:1-4)
2. Arise Jehovah! Save me, O my God (3:5-8)

The five Psalms which follow bring before us the godly remnant of Israel, their sorrows and trials during the end of the age, while the expected Redeemer and King has not yet come. While this is the dispensational aspect, the application is wider. The trials and sorrows are common to all saints, who live in accordance with their calling apart from the world which rejects Christ; and the comfort belongs to them likewise.

Verses 1-4. The Psalm was written by David when he fled from the face of Absalom. Persecution is mentioned first. The remnant is suffering persecution and that from their own unbelieving brethren, who sneer at them and mock. "There is no salvation (deliverance) for him from God." But the godly trust in Jehovah as a shield about them, giving protection; He is my glory and the lifter up of mine head. Thus David encouraged himself in the Lord and so do all saints in persecution and the remnant when they are persecuted in the time of Jacob's trouble.

Verses 5-8. The simple faith produces peace and quietness. He has slept in peace even if myriads of people should set themselves around him. He cries to Jehovah to arise and to save. Then faith looks back and remembers that God hath smitten the enemies in the past, and broken the teeth of the ungodly. He acknowledgeth that salvation belongeth to the Lord, it is of Him and that His blessing rests upon His people who trust in Him. Viewed in connection with the remnant of Israel in the coming tribulation all this takes on an interesting meaning. It is called a morning hymn.

PSALM 4

1. The cry to Jehovah (4:1-3)
2. The warning to the enemies (4:4-5)
3. The assurance of faith (4:6-8)

Verses 1-3. The fourth Psalm is closely connected with the third; the third is "a Morning Psalm" and the fourth "an Evening Hymn." He calls God "God of my righteousness" and He knows that He will act in righteousness toward him, be gracious and hear prayer. Then the appeal to the sons of men, who love emptiness and seek after a lie. They should know that the Lord hath set apart the godly for Himself and therefore He will hear.

Verses 4-5. This expresseth the concern of the godly for those who reject the Lord, it is a warning appeal to turn from their evil ways, to offer the sacrifices of righteousness and to trust Jehovah.

Verses 6-8. The mocking words "who will show us any good?" the challenge of unbelief, is met by prayer and the assurance of faith. "Lift upon us the light of Thy countenance, Jehovah." This we shall find later is

a choice prayer of the Jewish saints in the tribulation. (See Psalm 80.) His heart is filled with joy; he knows he is safe. "For Thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety." Such is the experience of the godly, who trust the Lord. Their hearts are filled with gladness; their safety is the Lord.

PSALM 5

1. The cry to God the King (5:1-3)
2. Hating iniquity and trusting in mercy (5:4-7)
3. Prayer for guidance and judgment (5:8-12)

Verses 1-3. In the third Psalm trust is expressed in God as shield; in the fourth the prayer is to the God of righteousness. "Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God." It is a fresh and more intense prayer, because evil increaseth and abounds. The cry is to God as King. David calls Him King, as the Jewish remnant will pray to the King and look for the coming of the King. The Church looks for the Lord, for the Bridegroom. Nowhere is the Lord Jesus Christ spoken of as the King of the Church.

Verses 4-7. The holiness of God is recognized and shared by the godly in hating iniquity. His confidence is in a sin--and iniquity--hating God, a holy God. He has no pleasure in wickedness or in folly. Falsehood He hates and liars He will destroy. Such are the enemies of God and his enemies also. The bloody and deceitful man mentioned in verse 6 is the first mention of the man of sin, the false Christ, who will persecute Jewish saints in the future. And how beautiful it is to see faith breaking through the gathering storm clouds again--"But as for me I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy, in Thy fear I will worship toward Thy holy temple." The final victory is seen by faith.

Verses 8-12. Prayer for guidance stands first. "Lead me, Jehovah, in Thy righteousness because of mine enemies." What these enemies, especially the future enemies of Israel will be, their character, is described and this is followed by prayer for judgment. Here is the first imprecatory prayer (verse 10). This and the other imprecatory prayers will be prayed during the final days of this age, when the wicked are ripe for judgment. It will be answered and then the righteous will be delivered and have joy (verses 11, 12). All this we shall find very much more prominent in the Exodus section of the Psalms.

PSALM 6

1. The cry of repentance (6:1-3)
2. In deep distress (6:4-7)
3. Jehovah has heard (6:8-10)

Verses 1-3. Here we have the deep soul exercise of the godly expressed. In the midst of the trials and sorrows they search their hearts. The persecution of the enemies is used under God to bring His people in the dust. And so they feel the trial and sorrow which passeth over them as divine displeasure against sin. They feel it is the chastening hand of God which rests heavily upon them. Perhaps bodily sickness is also indicated. They cry, Jehovah how long? It is a night experience, of deepest woe and agony. We know that all things must work together for good to them that love God and that our loving Father does not chasten in the heat of wrath.

Verses 4-7. But there is deeper distress. There is groaning, the couch is covered with tears, the eyes are sunken in because of grief. The remnant is put into the place of dust, and that is the place of blessing and deliverance.

Verses 8-10. Faith again is victorious. The Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping; heard the voice of my supplication; He will receive my prayer. The last verse is prophetic. All the enemies will be ashamed, they shall be suddenly ashamed. That will be when the Lord returns to save His people.

PSALM 7

1. Confidence and prayer (7:1-2)
2. Unjust persecution (7:3-5)
3. Arise Jehovah! (7:6-10)
4. God's dealings in government (7:11-16)
5. Thanksgiving (7:17)

Verses 1-2. It has been suggested that over this Psalm should be written the sentence, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" David appealed to God to judge His cause, that a righteous God cannot but save the righteous and judge the wicked. David sang this unto the Lord concerning the words of Cush, the Benjamite. Who Cush was we do not know. He must be a type of the man of sin. David appeals to God who is his refuge, to save and rescue him. The lion stands ready to tear him to pieces.

Verses 3-5. He knows it is unjust persecution he is suffering. If he had done evil to others he might well be treated in this way.

Verses 6-10. Then follows the appeal to Jehovah to arise in His anger, and to awake for him the judgment He has commanded, when the peoples are assembled for judgment. This appeal from the lips of the remnant will be answered by the manifestation of the Lord.

Verses 11-16. God's judgments in righteousness will overtake the wicked. It is a prophetic description of that day when the wickedness of the wicked comes to an end and the righteous are established. Verses 14-16 are another description of the man of sin, the wicked one.

Verse 17. A word of praise closes this series of Psalms in which the millennial name of Jehovah is given: "The Most High." We see that the overthrow of the wicked brings the praise of Jehovah, as it will be heard on earth when He has come back. In reviewing these Psalms, beginning with the Third, we have a morning hymn (3), followed by an evening hymn (4); then a night experience (5), followed by the deepest night (6) and the breaking of the morning, when the Judge ariseth and the wickedness of the wicked comes to an end (7).

PSALM 8

The Son of Man: All Things Put Under His Feet

1. A little lower than the angels; crowned with glory (8:1-5)
2. All things put under Him (8:6-8)
3. How excellent is Thy Name over all the earth (8:9)

Verses 1-5. In this Psalm we behold Christ again, and here as Son of Man. Three times this Psalm is quoted in the New Testament; in Matthew 21:16, 1 Cor. 15:27 and Hebrews 2:6-9. The latter passage shows clearly who the Son of Man is who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, to taste death for everything and who is now crowned with glory and honor.

(The inscription of this Psalm is "upon Gittith"--the winepress. If the theory is correct that the titles of the Psalms were misplaced, then "Gittith" should belong to the preceding Psalm, where it would find a good application. But it is equally in place in the beginning of this Psalm, for the Son of Man went into the winepress, the suffering of death when He shed His precious blood.)

The Psalm begins with praise; it will be His praise in that coming day when all things are put under His feet as the second Man, the last Adam, then His Name will be excellent in all the earth and His glory will be set in the heavens (the New Jerusalem). The little children in the temple who sang their Hosannahs when the Lord Jesus was there foreshadow this coming praise. Many expositors have made of "the son of Man" Adam, the first man; but he is the type of the last Adam; the Lord Jesus is meant as Hebrews 2:6-9 tells us so clearly.

Verses 6-8. The first man lost his dominion through sin, the second Man has bought it back by His death. When He comes again then all things will be put under His feet. During His absence "we see not yet all things put under Him." He must reign till all enemies are put under His feet.

Verse 9. The Psalm closes with the same praise with which it begins. It is the future praise of Him, who was made a little lower than the angels and whose Name in that day will be excellent in all the earth. We beheld Him as the perfect Man, as the King, rejected by men, enthroned by God, with the nations for His inheritance, in the opening Psalms. Then followed (Psalms 3-7) the experiences of the godly during His absence, especially the Jewish remnant and the Eighth Psalm shows Him as Son of Man, who comes for the deliverance of His people and receives the dominion over all the earth.

The Godly Remnant. The Wicked One and His Followers (9-15)

PSALM 9

1. The praise of the Most High (9:1-2)
2. Millennial deliverances and glories (9:3-12)
3. Prayer for divine intervention: Faith's Vision (9:12-18)

Verses 1-2. Psalms 9-15 continue the great prophetic story. Once more the godly remnant is before us and in this section the wicked one, the man of sin, is also revealed. The first part of this Psalm is a prophetic vision of what will be on earth, when the Son of Man has come and when all things are put under Him. His triumph is celebrated. We doubt not what is written here will be the comfort of that company of believing Jews at the end of the age as they anticipate in faith what will be when the King comes. But how much more we His heavenly people should praise Him, and declare His wondrous works in grace.

Verses 3-12. What it will mean when the Lord reigns is told out in these verses. His enemies will be defeated; He rebukes the nations and destroys the wicked; He judgeth the world in righteousness, and He is a refuge for His people. The Lord will dwell in Zion, Israel will sing praises and become the witness amongst the nations.

Verses 13-20. Up to the previous verse we saw the glorious results for Israel when the Son of Man comes. But that has not yet come. Faith realizeth it. In verse 13 we hear the voice of supplication of those who in faith look forward to the promises, but who suffer in the midst of the trials of the ending days of the age. They are hated and suffer and long to shew forth praises in Zion. Then once more the vision of faith what must happen ere long to the nations and to the wicked (15-18). The plea "Arise, O LORD," is the prayer for His glorious manifestation.

This Psalm and the next are linked together by the letters of the Alphabet (in Hebrew). Ten letters are used in this Psalm and five in the next. Six letters are dropped out in this alphabetical composition. The irregularity may be explained as in harmony with the time of tribulation when everything on earth is broken and out of joint.

PSALM 10

1. The cry of Jehovah and what causeth it (10:1-2)
2. That wicked one (10:3-11)
3. Prayer for divine Intervention: Faith's Vision (10:12-18)

Verses 1-2. Here is a renewed cry to Jehovah and why? Because the wicked in his pride persecutes the poor. The wicked is that coming man of sin.

Verses 3-11. That persecutor of the saints of God is now prophetically revealed in his arrogant pride, defiance of God and oppression of the poor and needy. Such will be the character of the beast out of the earth, the man of sin and son of perdition (2 Thes. 2). We shall get other photographs of the same person in other Psalms.

Verses 12-18. Significant prayers these. And they will be prayed by that future remnant. Arise--lift up Thy hand--forget not--Thou hast seen it--break Thou the arm of the wicked! And then faith seeth the answer. "The LORD is King forever and ever." The prayer of the humble has been heard. The man of the earth no more oppresseth.

PSALM 11

1. Faith's resources in the day of trouble (11:1-4)
2. The recompense for the righteous and the wicked (11:5-7)

Verses 1-4. Their refuge is the Lord, in Him they trust as we, His heavenly people, know Him as our hiding place in the time of trouble. That coming day of trouble is the time "when the foundations are destroyed." It is the time of apostasy and confusion. But their comfort is "Jehovah is in His holy temple, the Throne of Jehovah is in heaven."

Verses 5-7. But faith also reckons with the day of retribution and judgment, when the days of tribulation are ended. Then the wicked receive

their punishment. But the righteous shall behold His face.

PSALM 12

1. The arrogance of the wicked in the last days (12:1-4)
2. Then Jehovah will act and deliver His people (12:5-8)

Verses 1-4. It is the time of departure from the Lord; the godly and faithful have ceased. It is a mass of corruption, lying lips, flattering lips, proud lips. They reject the Lord. "Who is lord over us?"

Verses 5-8. Then faith sees the coming intervention. The Lord will speak. "Now will I arise, saith Jehovah, I will set him in safety whom they would puff." Jehovah will keep His people in these coming dark days, "when the wicked walk on all sides and the vilest men are exalted.

PSALM 13

1. How long? Answer me, Jehovah (13:1-4)
2. The victory of faith (13:5-6)

Verses 1-4. Four times "How long?" The trial of faith becomes more severe. Sorrow is in the heart and an enemy is outside. Has then Jehovah forgotten? The hearts begin to despair; an answer is demanded, it must come "lest I sleep the sleep of death."

Verses 5-6. But here comes the change. Faith triumphs and is victorious. "I have trusted in Thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation. I will sing unto Jehovah, for He hath dealt bountifully with me."

PSALM 14

1. The days of Noah repeated (14:1-6)
2. Salvation and glory (14:7)

Verses 1-6. As it was in the days of Noah so shall it be when the Son of Man cometh. Here we have a prophetic forecast of these coming days of corruption and violence. Iniquity abounds, wickedness is on all sides. None doeth good, none seeketh after God. While all this is used by the Spirit of God in the Epistle to the Romans to describe the condition of the race at large, here dispensationally it describes the moral conditions in the end of the age.

Verse 7. Will this end? Is there to be a better day than violence and wickedness? When will that day come? It comes when the salvation comes out of Zion (Romans 11:26), when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of His people, when Israel is restored. That will be when the Lord returns.

PSALM 15

1. The question (15:1)
2. The answer (15:2-5)

Verse 1. The connection with the previous Psalm is obvious. When He comes and that promised salvation becomes reality, who then shall sojourn in His tabernacle? Who shall dwell in His holy hill? Who will become a

partaker of that kingdom, when the King is set upon the holy hill of Zion?

Verses 2-5. The answer is given. The character here described is impossible for the natural man. To walk uprightly, to work righteousness, to speak the truth in the heart and practise righteousness in life is only possible if man is born again. So Israel will be born again, receive the new heart and the Spirit and thus enter the kingdom.

A Revelation of the Christ of God (16-24)

PSALM 16

1. The obedient One (16:1-3)
2. The path He went (16:4-8)
3. Death and resurrection (16:9-11)

In the nine Psalms which compose this section Christ is marvellously revealed. We notice an interesting progress in the messianic message of this section, culminating in the manifestation of the King, the Lord of Glory in Psalm 24. In the Sixteenth Psalm we behold Christ in His obedience on earth. See also Paul's testimony in Acts 13:35.

Verses 1-3. Here we hear Him speak, it is not David who speaks of himself. This we learn from Acts 2:25, when Peter quoted this Psalm and states that David spoke concerning Him (Christ). As the all obedient One, in humiliation He lived the life of faith and dependence on God. He took the place of lowliness in which He said to Jehovah, "Thou art my Lord." And this humiliation was for the saints and the excellent, His own people in whom is all His delight.

Verses 4-8. In that path the Lord was His portion and His cup, He was His All, nor did He want anything beside Him. "Thou maintainest my lot." Thus He could say "the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly inheritance." And so He walked in obedience, learning obedience though He was the Son, with the Lord always set before Him.

Verses 9-11. These last three verses show that He went into death, the death of the cross as seen in Psalm 22, with the assurance that His soul should not be left in sheol and that His body should not see corruption. It is the promise of resurrection and after that glory, the way of life through death into the presence of God, to the right hand of God, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore. It is a beautiful prophecy of Him who walked on earth in obedience, devoted to God, dying the sinner's death, His resurrection and His presence in glory. We shall find these precious prophecies concerning Himself more fully revealed in this section.

PSALM 17

The Prayer of Christ Against the Enemy

1. The Righteous Intercessor (17:1-5)
2. Prayer for deliverance (17:6-12)
3. The deliverance (17:13-15)

Verses 1-5. This Psalm is blessedly linked with the foregoing one. We

hear Christ interceding for the saints in whom is His delight (16:3). He pleads His own perfection. He is righteous; His prayer does not come from feigned lips. Not David, but Christ alone could truly say, "Thou hast proved my heart; Thou hast visited me in the night; Thou hast tried me. Thou findest nothing." By the Word of God He had walked and was kept from the paths of the destroyer. What a grand testimony to inspiration we have in verse 4 when the Spirit of Christ declares beforehand that Christ would walk in obedience to the Word and that Word is called here "the Word of Thy lips," which came from the mouth and heart of God.

Verses 6-12. It is a marvellous prayer for His own with whom He so perfectly identifies Himself. The seventh verse is the key, for He prays, "Show Thy marvellous loving-kindness, delivering those who put their trust in Thee by Thy right hand from those rising up against them." He pleads for His beloved saints that they may be kept as the apple of the eye, and hidden under the shadow of His wings. He speaks as for Himself, but it is for the saints, those that trust God, and God hears Him and answers. The enemy threatens His people on earth and therefore we find the plural in verse 11, "they have now compassed us in our steps."

Verses 13-15. The final prayer is to the Lord to arise and to rescue His suffering people from the wicked one, who is the sword in the hand of the Lord. Then when the Lord ariseth His people will behold His face in righteousness and in awakening shall be satisfied with His likeness. Oh, blessed Hope! which is ours too, when shall it be!

PSALM 18

The Story of God's Power in Behalf of Christ

1. In the jaws of death (18:1-6)
2. God appearing and delivering (18:7-18)
3. God gave Him glory (18:19-27)
4. His enemies subdued (18:28-42)
5. The head of the nations (18:43-45)

Verses 1-6. This is another remarkable Psalm. Though David wrote it not everything could be his experience. He was a prophet (Acts 2:30) and prophesied; much in this Psalm is prophecy describing the deliverance of Christ from the jaws of death and the glory God has given Him, and this deliverance and glory also concerns the remnant of His earthly people in "that day." The Psalm begins with an outburst of praise and it ends with His praise among the nations. Hebrew authorities tell us that the proper translation of "The LORD is my Rock" is "Jehovah, my cleft of the rock." It is Christ the rock, cleft for us, in whom the believer has found His refuge. And He Himself was saved from His enemies and in Him His people are saved and will be saved from their enemies (verse 3). It is His own death experience which is described in verses 4-6. "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of Belial (marginal reading) made me afraid." Then in His distress He called and cried unto God and was heard.

Verses 7-18. In these verses we have the answer in behalf of Christ. It is a wonderful description of God's power and His appearing. It is the manifestation and glory of Jehovah in deliverance. "He sent from above, He took me, He drew me from great waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hate me for they were too strong for me." This describes His resurrection.

At the same time while all this shows His experience as the author and finisher of the faith, it is also the experience of His trusting people, and the deliverance of that remnant living during the tribulation period.

Verses 19-27. The Lord has recompensed Him for His righteousness. He not only raised Him from the dead "but gave Him glory." He was brought forth into a large place. He was delivered because God delighted in Him and He has rewarded Him. Verse 23 as it stands in the authorized version can not apply to Christ. It is in fact a poor translation. The translation in the Numerical Bible is very satisfactory. "I was also perfect with Him and kept myself from perverseness being mine."

Verses 28-42. He will save an humble people and all His enemies will be conquered by Him. While much in this section was David's experience, who overcame all his enemies, in its prophetic meaning it must apply to the Lord Jesus. Verses 37-42 speak prophetically of this coming great victory when all His enemies will be made the footstool of His feet.

Verses 43-45. He becomes the head of the nations. "Thou hast made me the head of the nations" cannot apply to David and his experience, but it is David's Son and David's Lord who will head the nations of the earth. It is the coming kingdom which is described in verse 44. "As soon as they hear of me they shall obey me, the strangers (Gentiles) shall submit themselves unto me." The marginal reading is suggestive, "they shall yield feigned obedience unto Me," which tells us that the obedience of many during the kingdom reign of our Lord will not be whole-hearted and therefore the revolt at the end of the thousand years (Rev. 20). His praise will then be heard among the nations (Verses 49-50).

PSALM 19

Christ in Creation and in Revelation

1. In creation (19:1-6)
2. In revelation (19:7-11)

Verses 1-6. This Psalm also bears witness to Christ as Creator and as revealing Himself through the Word. The two great books, Creation and Revelation, bear witness to Him. The Heavens which declare the glory of God were created by Him (Col. 1:16; John 1:3). And there is a testimony to Him in creation which is continuous. "Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge." (See Romans 1:20) The sun is especially mentioned, for the sun is the type of Christ. "As a bridegroom coming out of His chamber he rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course. His going forth is from the end of the heavens, and his circuits unto the end of it and nothing is hid from the heat thereof." He is the Sun of Righteousness, who will arise some day with healing beneath his wings.

Verses 7-11. The second witness to Him is the Law of Jehovah, the testimony and the precepts of the Lord. It is His written Word. This Word comes from Himself and speaks of Himself. What this Word is and what it produces and the practical use of the testimony of the Lord as well as prayer are mentioned in these verses.

The nineteenth Psalm is an introduction to the next five Psalms, which tells us more fully of the person of Christ, the Creator and Revealer, in

His great work as Redeemer.

PSALM 20

Christ and His Salvation as Contemplated by His People

1. What God has done for Christ (20:1-4)
2. The salvation His people enjoy (20:5-9)

Verses 1-4. "My Redeemer" was the last word of the previous Psalm. Christ the Redeemer of His people is revealed in this Psalm. His death and sacrificial work, revealed in Psalm 22, are here anticipated. He who humbled Himself has been heard by Jehovah, He has set Him upon high (marginal reading), He has sent Him help, He has accepted His great offering, the whole burnt offering which typifies the death of the cross. All the desires of His heart are given to Him and all His counsels will be fulfilled. The believing remnant is contemplating the Redeemer and His salvation. Because He has been heard, because His offering is accepted, because He is set on high, they possess salvation.

Verses 5-9. This salvation is now celebrated in inspired song. It is anticipatory of that coming salvation. They will rejoice in His salvation, His heavenly people, now rejoice in it. Banners, the symbol of victory won, will be set up. The intercessions of His Anointed (Christ) will be answered, all enemies are bowed down and fallen. "But we are risen and stand upright" refers to the day of Israel's national and spiritual resurrection. In anticipation of the trouble of the last days we read the prayer of this godly remnant. "Save LORD! Let the King hear us when we call."

PSALM 21

The King's Glory Anticipated and Contemplated

1. The King's power, glory and salvation (21:1-6)
2. His victory over the enemies (21:7-13)

Verses 1-6. This is another Messianic Psalm in anticipation of the glory of the King. The prayers He offered up are all answered. (See Ps. 20:4) He shares the strength of Jehovah as the Risen and Exalted One. The desire of His heart is fulfilled, as it will be when the kingly crown of pure gold is set upon His head, the head which was once crowned with thorns. He had gone down into the jaws of death and then received life, yea, eternal life, as the head of the new creation, which shares this life He has received. And His glory is great in Jehovah's salvation, the salvation which the Lord has planned and which He has accomplished, which is His glory.

Verses 7-13. Here once more the downfall and complete overthrow of the enemies, when the King reigns, is prophetically anticipated. Then we hear in the last verse a prophetic prayer, that all this might be accomplished. "Be Thou exalted, LORD, in Thine own strength." And when He is exalted, then Israel redeemed will sing--"So will we sing and praise Thy power."

(How the critics have made havoc with all these Psalms, trying to find a solution, when the Lord Jesus is the only solution as He is the key to all the Scriptures! The Targum reads in verses 1 and 7 "King Messiah" and

Jewish interpretation has mostly been on Messianic lines. Perowne writes on this kingly Psalm "Each Jewish monarch was but a feeble type of Israel's true King; and all the hopes of pious hearts still looked beyond David or David's children to Him who should be David's Lord as well as David's Son.")

PSALM 22

The Sufferings of Christ and the Glory That Follows

1. The suffering (22:1-21)
2. The glory (22:22-31)

Verses 1-21. In many respects this Psalm is the most remarkable in the entire book and one of the sublimest prophecies in the whole Bible. The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow are here wonderfully foretold. The inscription mentions *A yeleth Shahar*, which means "the hind of the morning." Jewish tradition identifies this hind with the early morning light, when the day dawns and the rays of the rising sun appear like the horns of the hind. The eminent Hebraist Professor Delitzsch, makes the following remark: "Even the Jewish synagogue, so far as it recognizes a suffering Messiah, hears His voice here, and takes the hind of the morning as a name of the Shechinah, and makes it a symbol of coming redemption." And the Targum recalls the lamb of the morning sacrifice, which was offered as soon as the watchman on the pinnacle of the temple cried out, "The first rays of the morning burst forth." All this is very suggestive. The inscription also tells us that the Psalm was written by David. "We know, however, of no circumstances in his life to which it can possibly be referred. In none of the persecutions by Saul was he ever reduced to such straits as those here described" (Perowne). David's personal experience is all out of question. He speaks as a prophet, such as he was (Acts 2:30) and the Spirit of God useth him to give one of the completest pictures of Christ, His suffering and glory, which to David must have been a mystery, so that with other prophets, he searched and enquired as to its meaning. (See 1 Peter 1:10-12). Our Lord in uttering the solemn word with which this Psalm begins in the darkness which enshrouded the cross gives us the conclusive evidence that it is He of whom the Psalm speaks. The Spirit of God equally so in Hebrews 2:11-12 shows that it is Christ. And the glory-side of this gem of prophecy proves fully that none other than the Christ of God is meant.

The precious, blessed, unfathomable work of the sin-bearer on the Cross and its far reaching results in blessing and glory is here unfolded to our faith, as well as for our joy and comfort. The heart of the atonement occupies the foreground, not the physical sufferings, but the suffering He endured from the side of God, when He made Him who knew no sin, sin for us. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"--But Thou art holy! That is the answer to the "Why?" And when the blessed One was thus forsaken, and faced as the substitute of sinners the holy, sin-hating God, He finished the work, the work which enables God to be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus. "It is finished!" was His triumphant shout, expressed in the Greek by one word--"tetelestai." And our Psalm ends with a similar word--"He hath done"--the Hebrew word "ohsa" expresseth the same thought--it is finished.

Still more astonishing are the details of His physical sufferings, which were all so minutely fulfilled on Calvary. Here we find foretold the

piercing of hands and feet, the excessive thirst He suffered, the terrible agony by hanging suspended, every bone out of joint; the laughter and hooting of his enemies, the very expressions they used surrounding the cross are given here, and the dividing of the garments and casting lots over them and other details are prophetically revealed. And to this must be added another fact. Crucifixion was an unknown method of death in Jewish law. Among ancient nations the Roman penal code alone seems to contain exclusively this cruel penalty; Rome evidently invented it. Yet here this unknown death penalty is described in a perfect manner. What an evidence of divine inspiration!

And the critics, how they have tried to explain away this great prophecy! And they are still trying to explain it away. Some apply it to Hezekiah; others say it may describe the sufferings of Jeremiah; still others say it is the Jewish nation. And some try to make it out as being only coincident that the Hebrews had such a piece of literature and that one of their own, Jesus of Nazareth, made such an experience. Surely these infidels are fools, for only a fool can adopt and believe such a method of reasoning against these conclusive evidences of revelation.

Verses 22-31. The deliverance of the sufferer comes in with the twenty-first verse. Thrice He calls for help. "Haste Thee to help Me"--"Deliver my soul from the Sword"--"Save me from the Lion's Mouth." Then we hear of the answer: "Thou hast answered Me from the horns of the wild-oxen." He was surrounded by the dogs (Gentiles) and the assembly of the wicked (Jews) as mentioned in verse 16, but now God has answered Him. The sufferings are ended and the glory begins. The horns of the wild-oxen denote power; the power of God answered Him and raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory. We therefore behold Him at once as the risen One with a great declaration. "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren." And thus He spake after His passion and resurrection, "Go and tell my brethren that I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." This brings out the first great result of His finished work. It is the Church, His body, brought into this definite and blessed relationship with Himself. In the midst of the congregation (the Church) He sings praises. He is in the midst. "For both, He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee" (Hebrews 2:11-12). And then the circle widens. Israel too will praise Him, all the seed of Jacob will glorify Him. The ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord. All the kindreds of the nations will worship Him. He will receive the kingdom and the glory. Thus this Psalm, which begins with suffering, ends with glory, a glory yet to come for Israel and the nations of the earth.

PSALM 23

Christ, the Great Shepherd

1. Assurance (23:1-3)
2. Comfort (23:4-6)

Verses 1-3. Well has it been said "without Psalm 22, there could be no Twenty-third Psalm." While the former Psalm reveals Christ as the good Shepherd, who gives His life for the sheep, this Psalm makes Him known as the great Shepherd of the sheep, whom the God of Peace hath brought again from the dead, through the blood of the everlasting covenant (Hebrews

13:20). And all who deny the atoning work of Christ have no claim whatever upon the assurance and comfort of this Psalm.

But we must not overlook the fact that the first application of the Twenty-third Psalm must be made in connection with that godly remnant of Israel of a future day. While He is individually the Shepherd of all who trust in Him, He is also nationally the Shepherd of Israel. The Patriarch Jacob spoke of this when he said, "the God which fed me," or, literally, "my Shepherd." In Psalm 53:1 the Lord is spoken of as being the Shepherd of Israel nationally, while in another Psalm the pious in Israel declare "we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hands." In Isaiah 40:11 we have record of another national promise made to His people Israel--"He shall feed His flock like a Shepherd" and Micah calls Israel "the flock of Thine inheritance" (Micah 7:14). The entire thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel reveals Him as the Shepherd and His future work when He will gather graciously the scattered sheep of Israel and lead them back to their own land. This Psalm has therefore a wider national application, especially in connection with the already mentioned godly remnant who look forward during the time of Jacob's trouble, the great tribulation, to His visible manifestation. It will be their comfort, when they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, when their enemies arise threateningly on all sides. Then they will say, "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me" and again "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Their hope is expressed in holy anticipation as dwelling finally in the house of the Lord forever, that is the hope of sharing the blessings and glories of the millennial reign.

Much has been written devotionally on this Psalm. Hundreds of books have been published, but it has never been exhausted nor ever will be. The assurance of the first three verses belong to every believer on the Lord Jesus. He is individually the Shepherd and each child of God can say, "Jehovah is my Shepherd, the Shepherd who never fails, who never changeth, the Jehovah-jireh--the LORD who provides. He gives pasture, peace and rest, with the never failing waters, the supply of His Spirit. Then He restoreth after failure and leads in paths of righteousness for His Name's sake.

Verses 4-6. And here is the comfort for all earthly circumstances, no matter where the path may be. Goodness and mercy are in store for all His sheep and the blessed goal to be with Him, not in an earthly house, where yet His glory is to dwell visibly, but in the Father's house with its many mansions.

A good way to read this Psalm is by asking the question, "What shall I not want?"

I shall not want--
Rest--for He makes me to lie down in green pastures.
Drink--for He leadeth me beside the still waters.
Forgiveness--for He restoreth my soul.
Guidance--for He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness.
Companionship--for Thou art with me.
Comfort--for Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me.
Food--for Thou preparest a table before me.
Victory--in the presence of mine enemies.
Joy--Thou anointest my head with oil.
Overrunning joy--for my cup runneth over.
Everything in time--for goodness and mercy shall follow me.

Everything in eternity--for I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

PSALM 24

The Chief Shepherd, the King of Glory

1. Who shall dwell with Him when He comes? (24:1-6)
2. The glorious manifestation of the King (24:7-10)

Verses 1-6. This Psalm may have been composed and used on the occasion of the removal of the ark from the house of Obed-Edom, to the city of David on Mount Zion (2 Sam. 6). It is a millennial Psalm and describes how the Lord will enter His glorious dwelling place on Mount Zion when He appears in power and in glory. When the King comes back He will choose Zion for His glorious rest, as so many prophecies tell us, and reign from there, while another house of the Lord, the great millennial temple filled with His glory, will then be built. Who then shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? That these questions have nothing to do with the church, which at that time is as the glorified body with the Lord, is obvious. The character of those who will enter into His presence when He comes back to earth to dwell in Zion, and who will share the blessings of the kingdom, is that of practical righteousness, which is the fruit of faith. This company includes those Israelites who believed during the tribulation, who turned to the Lord, and also the company of Gentiles who learn righteousness when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth (Isaiah 26:9).

Verses 7-10. Here we have the glorious manifestation and entry of the King into His House and dwelling place. It is a most sublime description. It has nothing to do with the ascension of our Lord, it is His glorious return and entry into the earthly Zion to fill it once more with His visible glory. And the King of Glory is the Lord of Hosts. Jehovah of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. He who was forsaken on the cross is now crowned with many crowns.

This Psalm concludes this series which so wonderfully tells out the person and work of Christ.

Psalms 25-39

The fifteen Psalms which follow give the deep soul exercise of the godly. All fifteen, except the thirty-third, are marked as Psalms of David. Much of it expresses undoubtedly his own individual experience during the days of his suffering and at other occasions. Prophetically these Psalms give again the experience of the godly remnant of Israel in the time of trouble, preceding the coming of the King. We also can trace in these experiences much which concerns our Lord in His earthly life, when as the Holy One He lived that perfect life of obedience and trust, suffering too among the ungodly. But great caution is needed in the application of these Psalms to our Lord. Here we find expressions which could never be true of Him, who knew no sin. For instance some have applied Psalm 38:7: "for my loins are filled with a loathsome disease and there is no soundness in my flesh" to the Lord Jesus, simply to sustain the theory that He carried literally our diseases in His body. This is positively wrong. His body was a holy body. Death had no claim on it nor could disease lay hold on that

body. But many of these experiences are unquestionably the experiences of the Perfect and Righteous Man, the second Man, walking in the midst of sinners.

These fifteen Psalms are rich in spiritual food, yet it must always be remembered that strictly speaking it is not Christian experience, but the experience of Jews under the Law dispensation, and it needs spiritual discernment in using these utterances for ourselves with our heavenly calling and spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. We give but one illustration of what we mean.

The much beloved thirty-seventh Psalm with its blessed promises which we as Christian believers have a right to enjoy and to claim contains the promise, "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (verse 2). This is promised to the godly Jews who will inherit the earth. The Church does not inherit the earth, but hers is a heavenly possession. When our Lord in the kingly proclamation, the sermon on the mount, said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," He quoted from the thirty-seventh Psalm. This promise has therefore nothing whatever to do with the Church, but is a kingdom promise for the godly in Israel.

(It is deplorable that of late not a few of God's people have been confused by "new light" concerning the kingdom. This theory claims that John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus never offered the promised kingdom to Israel, but that the kingdom of heaven is equivalent with the present dispensation.)

The scope of our work does not permit a detailed exposition of these fifteen beautiful Psalms. We must leave it to the reader to ponder over them prayerfully and to enjoy their blessed comfort, yet always "dividing the Word of Truth rightly."

PSALM 25

Prayer for Mercy and Deliverance

1. Dependence on the Lord (25:1-7)
2. Confidence and assurance (25:8-14)
3. The Lord the refuge in trial and distress (25:15-22)

Verses 1-7. This is another alphabetical Psalm, though not perfect in structure as two letters of the Hebrew alphabet (v and k) are missing. This great prayer-psalm begins with the expressions of trust in Jehovah. The soul is uplifted and calm in His presence. Depending on the Eternal One, the soul knows that none that wait on Him shall be ashamed. David found this true in his own experience; so have generations upon generations of His people, and the godly of Israel in the future will make the same experience. They will turn to Him and inquire for His ways, His paths and His truth. Here are their prayers: "Show me--lead me--teach me--remember Thy mercies--remember not my sins--remember me." And He will answer, yea, He will remember their sins and iniquities no more and remember them in mercy. Our prayer as Christian believers is also for guidance, but we know that our sins are put away, that He hath saved us.

Verses 8-14. Here we find expressions of confidence and assurance. He guides the humble in judgment, He teaches the humble His way, a truth which

all His people may well remember. The godly in Israel, fearing the Lord, express their confidence that their seed shall inherit the earth and that "all the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies." Yea, they know His secrets through His Word; this godly remnant will see and enjoy His covenant, the new covenant. (See Jeremiah 31:31-34.)

Verses 15-20. They are in distress, a net has entangled their feet; they are desolate and afflicted, in affliction and pain, the burden of sin is upon them, enemies hate them with cruel hatred. They look away from self and from man and are turning their eyes only to the Lord. From Him their deliverance must come. "Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles." And that prayer will be answered.

PSALM 26

An Appeal on Account of Righteousness

1. Pleading integrity (26:1-5)
2. Separated unto the Lord (26:6-8)
3. Be gracious unto Me (36:9-12)

Verses 1-5. The opening verses remind us of the First Psalm and well may we put these words into the lips of the perfect man, who walked in integrity and was separate from sinners. Here we find no confessions of sin, no pleadings for forgiveness, but instead an avowal of conscious uprightness and separation from wicked men as well as love for His house and for the place where His honour dwells. It is the godly remnant pleading not exactly moral perfection, but uprightness of heart, which has led them apart from the apostate part of the nation. They hate the congregation of evil doers, and on account of this they look for divine vindication. No Christian believer pleads on such grounds with God. We plead that worthy Name, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 6-8. The washing of the hands in innocency is a Jewish figure. See Deut. 21:6. They cleanse themselves from defilement to approach His altar as the priests had to wash their hands and feet (Exodus 30:17-21).

Verses 9-12. Then their prayer--redeem me and be merciful unto me--gather not my soul with sinners--all the pleading of integrity of heart and separation from evil-doers has not produced assurance of acceptance, though in hope they look forward to the day when in the congregations they will bless the Lord. How different the assurance which grace gives to us, that we are redeemed and the fullest mercy is on our side.

PSALM 27

Holy Longings and Anticipations

1. Confidence in the Lord (27:1-3)
2. Longings and anticipations (27:4-6)
3. Earnest prayer in trial and trust in the Lord (27:7-14)

Verses 1-3. This Psalm leads us deeper. We repeat that primarily it is a rehearsal of David's experience, perhaps at the time of Absalom's rebellion. Here faith breaks through in triumph, with deep longings for the house of the Lord and for His presence, which is followed by a description

of the trials through which the godly Israelites will pass in the future. He is light, salvation and the strength of life; thus faith lays hold on the Lord and in view all fear and terror must vanish. "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?" It belongs to us all. Yet greater is the shout of faith uttered on the pinnacle of our great Salvation Epistle, Romans 8--"If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Verses 4-6. Heart longings and blessed anticipations follow. They long for the earthly sanctuary, we for our heavenly abode. Their desire is to dwell in the house of the Lord--to behold the beauty of the Lord--to inquire in His temple. And we too desire to be with Him, to behold Him face to face, and what it will mean then to inquire in His holy temple! What it will be when up yonder we shall no longer look into a glass darkly! Then follows praise. Their heads will be lifted up--"therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto Jehovah." And while Israel will sing on earth when their earthly hope and deliverance has come, the praises of His church will fill the heavens above.

Verses 7-14. Once more we hear the cry in distress. The present trouble which is upon them comes into view. They plead, "leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation"--a prayer which no true Christian believer needs to pray.

PSALM 28

Prayer For Judgment and Praise For the Answer

1. Prayer for judgment (28:1-5)
2. Praise for the answer (28:6-9)

Verses 1-5. Their cry now increaseth because of their enemies, the enemies of Israel in the last days. They breathe out cruelty to them (27:12). They pass through the valley of the shadow of death and if He does not answer and remains silent they be like those that go down to the pit. Hence the imprecatory prayer, "Give them according to their deeds, etc." (verse 4)

Verses 6-9. In faith the answer is anticipated and praise is given for it. The Psalm ends with a prayer. "Save Thy people (Israel), and bless Thine inheritance, and lift them up forever." The next Psalms bring the answer.

PSALM 29

The judgment Storm

1. Give unto the Lord the glory of His Name (29:1-2)
2. The day of the Lord described as a thunderstorm (29:3-9)
3. The calm after the storm--the Lord is King (29:10-11)

Verses 1-2. The voice of His trusting people is hushed; His voice is now heard. From Psalm 25 to 28 we have seen the soul exercise of the remnant of Israel, we heard their prayers, we learned of their hopes and anticipations and of their trials and sorrows. Their last prayer in the preceding Psalm was "Save Thy people," and now He is seen arising to save

them. His glory and strength, the glory of His Name, is now to be manifested.

Verses 3-9. This is one of the most wonderful poetic descriptions we have in the Bible. The day of the Lord, when He will be manifested in wrath and in mercy, is described under an onrushing thunderstorm. The mighty tempest passes from north to south. Jehovah thundereth, great waters sweep along, His voice is heard with power. The mighty cedars of Lebanon are broken by the fury of the storm. The cedars of Lebanon are symbolical of the high and exalted things which will be broken to pieces in that day. (Read Isaiah 2:11-14.) Lebanon and Sirion, the lofty mountains, skip like a young unicorn. The mountains will be shaken by mighty earthquakes and all the governments, typified by mountains, will also be shaken. He is manifested with flames of fire, the lightning of His righteousness, which ushers in His glorious reign. Then the hind is made to calve--it means Israel's new birth, while the forests (the nations) are stripped and laid low. And in His temple, that greater house, whose maker He is, earth and heaven, "all that is therein uttereth glory" (literal translation).

Verses 10-11. The storm is past. The Lord has come. The judgment flood is gone. Jehovah now has taken His throne. He is King and blesseth His people with peace. The name of Jehovah is found 18 times in this Psalm and this Jehovah is our ever blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

PSALM 30

A Psalm of Praise

1. Praise for deliverance (30:1-5)
2. Past experience (30:6-12)

Verses 1-5. The inscription says that the Psalm was written by David as a song of dedication of the house. It probably means the house of the Lord mentioned in 1 Chron. 22:1. The Psalm must be looked upon as expressing prophetically the praise of the nation for the deliverance and when that greater house of the Lord will be on the earth (Ezekiel 40, etc.) David's experience, of course, stands in the foreground. It is generally assumed that David was sick unto death and that the Lord raised him up. But this foreshadows the experience of the remnant of Israel. They approached the pit, while their foes were ready to rejoice over them, but the Lord intervened, and they were saved and healed. Then the singing begins (verse 4). Weeping had endured for a night, the dark night of tribulation, but joy came with the morning, that blessed morning for which all is waiting, when the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

Verses 6-12. This is a rehearsal of the experiences through which they passed. Mourning for them is turned into dancing; the sackcloth is taken off and the garments of joy and gladness are put on. Then His glory will be manifested and will sing His praise throughout Israel's land and the whole earth will be filled with His glory.

PSALM 31

The Enemies of Israel and the Victory

1. The prayer for deliverance (31:1-18)
2. The victory (31:19-24)

Verses 1-18. Many saints have turned to this Psalm for encouragement in time of trouble and sorrow. And there is much in it which helps the trusting soul. Notice the different names of Jehovah--my rock--my house of defense--my strong rock--my fortress--my strength--God of truth. But like the previous Psalms this one also unfolds prophetically the sufferings of the remnant of Israel during the last days of this age.

Yet likewise we may think of Him who endured the contradiction of sinners. The words "into Thine hand I commit My spirit" were used by our Lord when He laid down His life on the cross (Luke 23:46).

Verses 19-24. The outcome of all the suffering and trials will be victory for the godly. His goodness will be displayed in their behalf, He will answer the voice of their supplications in the coming great deliverance. The faithful ones will be preserved. the proud rewarded for their evil deeds.

PSALM 32

Fullest Blessing

1. The blessedness of righteousness imputed (32:1-5)
2. The blessedness of hiding-place (32:6-7)
3. The blessedness of guidance and preservation (32:8-11)

Verses 1-5. This is the first of the 13 Maschil Psalms, the Psalms of special instruction. They tell us of the understanding which the godly in Israel will have in spiritual things (Daniel 12:10). All these Maschil Psalms have reference to the last days. The foundation of this Psalm is David's own experience. See the application of it in Romans 4. This blessedness of being justified by faith, and all that is included, will be the portion also of the godly in Israel during the end of the age, after the true Church has been caught up. They will pass through David's experience and enjoy the "sure mercies of David."

Verses 6-7. And the Justifier is the hiding-place, the refuge. As He is now the hiding-place for His trusting people, so will He be their hiding-place. The floods of great waters point clearly to the great tribulation. They will be preserved as it is written concerning this godly remnant by Isaiah: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as if it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah 26:20).

Verses 8-11. Then the blessedness of guidance and preservation. His eye will rest upon them and with His eye He will guide them, as He watches over and guides all His people. And finally the righteous kept and delivered will shout for joy.

PSALM 33

The Future Praise of Jehovah

1. The call to praise Jehovah (33:1-3)
2. His praise as the Creator (33:4-9)
3. His praise of His governmental dealings (33:10-17)
4. His praise as the Keeper and Deliverer of the Righteous (33:18-22)

What the last verse of the preceding Psalm exhorts to shout for joy, is in this Psalm more fully unfolded. Such praise the Lord has not yet received, it looks forward to millennial times when all earth fears the Lord and all the inhabitants stand in awe of Him (verse 8). Now they oppose and defy Him and His Word. Then the counsel of the nations will be brought to nought and His people Israel, His own nation, will be blessed. The last verse is a prayer that His mercy may be bestowed upon His people Israel, who hope in Him.

PSALM 34

The Perfect Praise of His Redeemed People

1. His praise for salvation (34:1-10)
2. The instructions of the righteous (34:11-16)
3. His redemption remembered (34:17-22)

This is another alphabetical Psalm, only one letter is omitted. It is primarily the praise of David after his escape from Gath, as the inscription tells us. Prophetically it is the praise of His redeemed and delivered people, delivered from all their fears (verse 4) and saved out of all their troubles (verse 6). Such will be their worship and praise in the coming day, while they themselves will be teachers and instructors in righteousness (verses 12-16; see 1 Peter 3:10-12).

Verse 20 is a literal prophecy concerning our Lord and was literally fulfilled (John 19:36). But the believer also can claim this promise, for we are His bones. "It intimates to the believer the limitation within which the power of the oppressor is confined, with whom he is in ceaseless conflict. As the same Scripture which contains the record of Messiah's sufferings provided also that no bone of Him should be broken, so it is with the saint." They will be kept by His own power. The last two verses of this Psalm shows the judgment of the wicked and the deliverance of the righteous in that day. We have seen once more how Psalm is linked with Psalm.

PSALM 35

The Cry for Justice and Divine Help

1. The cry of distress (35:1-10)
2. The contrast? (35:11-18)
3. Prayer for vindication and victory (35:19-28)

This Psalm introduces us again to the suffering of the righteous, giving another prophetic picture of the distress of the remnant. When David composed this Psalm we do not know. But He casts himself completely on the Lord and calls to Him for help and vindication. Thus the godly have always done when surrounded by the enemies who persecuted them. The condition of the godly when violence is in the earth during the time of Jacob's trouble is here fully pictured, and their prayers prewritten by the Spirit of God. They look to Him to fight against their enemies, so that they may be confounded and put to shame, that they might be like the chaff before the wind, driven away. These are imprecatory petitions, such as a Christian is not authorized to pray, but these petitions will be perfectly justified in those final days, when judgment is decreed upon the enemies of God. The

godly act in righteousness towards the wicked, but they reward evil for good, showing that they are ripe for judgment. And therefore their plea, "How long, O Lord, wilt Thou look on?" (verse 17) "Rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions." This reminds us of the Twenty-second Psalm where this expression applies to our Lord. The remnant suffers with Him. And then their faith looks forward to the time of vindication and victory.

PSALM 36

Contrasts

1. What the wicked is and does (36:1-4)
2. What Jehovah is and does (36:5-9)
3. Prayer and trust in His loving kindness (36:10-12)

The wicked are described in their wickedness, with sin in the heart, no fear of God; filled with pride and flattery, speaking evil and doing evil. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). This is the divine forecast for the last days and these opening verses of this psalm show the wicked of the last days. But what a Lord He is whom they do not fear! What a contrast! And the righteous know His mercy, His faithfulness, His righteousness and His judgment. Only good is in store from His side for those who trust in Him. His lovingkindness is excellent, He covers them with the shadow of His wings, He satisfies them abundantly with the fatness of His house. Such will be the hope and comfort of the godly when the wicked wax worse and worse, till the day comes when the workers of iniquity shall fall, unable to rise again.

PSALM 37

The Blessed Lot of the Righteous Contrasted with the Wicked

1. Waiting for Jehovah and His promise (37:1-11)
2. The doom of the wicked and the portion of the righteous (37:12-20)
3. The ways of the righteous and the wicked (37:21-29)
4. God's gracious ways with the righteous (37:30-40)

This Psalm is also alphabetical in structure and somewhat proverbial in character. It is full of sweet comfort and encouragement to faith. All the saints of God have fed on its beautiful statements, and the coming saints of Israel will find help and strength in it for their souls. He who trusts in the Lord and waits for Him needs not to fret on account of evil-doers; they will soon be cut off. But what is the righteous man to do? Trust in the Lord--delight thyself in Him--commit thy way unto the Lord--rest in the Lord. If God's people will but do this all is well, for He who never faileth adds His promises. He promises safety, the fulfilment of the heart's desire; He will bring it to pass and bring forth righteousness as the light. Waiting for the Lord will end for the godly of that coming day, when the evil-doers will be cut off in judgment and when those who waited on the Lord shall inherit the earth. This is Israel's promise which will be realized for the godly remnant when the Lord appears in glory in their midst. These brief hints will help in the study of the entire Psalm. It must be looked upon as prophetic, pointing to the day when the wicked troubles no more, when his end is come and when the Lord exalts the righteous to inherit the land.

PSALM 38

The Suffering Saint and Confession of Sin

1. Suffering and Humiliation (38:1-8)
2. Looking to the Lord (38:9-15)
3. Confession and prayer (38:16-20)

This Psalm is read by the Jews on the day of atonement. It pictures great suffering in body and soul; it reminds us in different ways of the book of Job. (See and compare verse 2 with Job 6:4; verse 4 with Job 23:2; verse 11 with Job 19:13; the loathsome disease, with no soundness in the flesh, also reminds of Job's experience.) And the suffering one looks to Jehovah, He is his hope. He confesses his sins, pleads, "Make haste to help me, O Lord of my salvation." And that cry will always be answered.

PSALM 39

Deep Soul Exercise in View of Man's Frailty and Nothingness

1. The vanity of life (39:1-6)
2. Self-judgment and prayer (39:7-13)

This Psalm is connected closely with the preceding one and shows deep soul exercises. In the midst of trial, with God's hand resting upon the sufferer, he had been silent before his enemies. Before the Lord he did not maintain silence but pours out his heart, confessing the vanity of his fleeting life which appears to him as a hand-breadth and altogether vanity. Beautiful is verse 7. "And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee." All else the saint waits for in this little life down here is vanity except the Lord. These two Psalms have also their special application to the suffering remnant, who learn the vanity of all things and wait for the Lord only.

PSALM 40

Christ the Obedient One and the Fruit of His Work

1. The path of the Obedient One (40:1-12)
2. His prayer and His comfort (40:13-17)

Verses 1-12. The Fortieth and Forty-first Psalms are Messianic. Our Redeemer and Israel's Redeemer is blessedly revealed in them both and with the testimony to Him the first book of the Psalms closes. Psalm 40 begins with what may be termed "Christ's resurrection song." He came and went as the sin-bearer into the horrible pit (Hebrew: the pit of destruction) and the miry clay, and the power of God brought Him out, raised Him from the dead, set His feet upon a rock and established His goings (His ascension). A new song is put into His mouth, "even praise unto our God." It is the song of redemption which He sings first and all who believe on Him join in that song. That is why we read "our God." The many who shall see it are those who trust in Him who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. And who can tell out the wonderful works He has done in redemption; "they are more than can be numbered." Verses 6-8 are quoted in Hebrews 10. The ears opened, literally "digged ears," refers us to Exodus 21. The New Testament quotes the Septuagint translation, made

undoubtedly with the sanction of the Holy Spirit, "a body hast Thou prepared Me." In verses 13-17 we hear Him pray as the sin-bearer of His people, as we hear Him say in verse 12 that the sins He bore are more than the hairs upon His head. The doom of those who reject and despise Him, and the blessing of all who love His salvation are likewise mentioned.

PSALM 41

Faith and Unbelief in View of the Cross

1. Faith in Him and the Results (41:1-3)
2. Unbelief and its hatred (41:4-9)
3. The vindication of the Christ of the cross (41:10-13)

The poor one (literally: the miserable, exhausted one) is the Lord Jesus suffering on the cross. Blessed are they who understand as to Him, who consider Him, for it means deliverance, salvation, preservation, victory and happiness. But unbelief mocks and sneers at Him. They speak against Him, make evil devices against Him, the sin-bearer, that an evil disease (literally: a thing of Belial) is upon Him and that He shall rise no more. All this points back to the cross and is still true of the unbeliever who rejects the cross. Verse 9 refers to Judas who betrayed Him. See John 13:18 and notice when our Lord quotes from this Psalm He omits the words "whom I trusted," for the Omniscient One knew Judas, and did not trust him. And He, the Poor and Needy One, the Miserable One, the Forsaken One, had His prayer answered; He is the Risen One (verse 10); in God's own presence, before His face (verse 12). The first book of the Psalms ends with praise, prophetic of the praise which is yet to fill all the earth. Amen and Amen.

II. THE EXODUS SECTION: BOOK Two: PSALMS 42-72

The second division of the book of Psalms corresponds to the book of Exodus, the second book of the Pentateuch. That book begins with the groans and moans of a suffering people in Egypt and after redemption by blood and by power, ends with the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle when the work was finished. Ruin, oppression, suffering and sorrow, ending in deliverance and redemption, is the order in which the Psalms in this section are arranged. It is a most interesting study and we regret that we cannot enter into all the details, to explore these mines of prophecy. The oppressed, persecuted people, who suffer surrounded by the ungodly, is that same godly remnant of Israelites. Their deliverance comes by the visible manifestation of the Lord, the second coming of our Lord. The Psalm which concludes this Exodus of the Psalms is 72, the great Kingdom Psalm, when His Kingdom has come and the King reigns in righteousness.

Psalms 42-49

The first eight Psalms form the first section. Here the remnant is seen in great distress, having fled from Jerusalem on account of wickedness during the time of the great tribulation (Daniel 12:1), longing for deliverance. Then we learn how that deliverance comes by the manifestation of the King and the results which follow that deliverance.

PSALM 42

Longing after God in the Midst of Distress

1. Longing after God and His sanctuary (42:1-6)
2. Distress and the comfort of hope (42:7-11)

This is the second Maschil Psalm, for instruction of the godly of that day. The remnant looks towards the sanctuary, the house of God, from which they are separated and driven away. They are panting after God, as the hart panteth after the water brooks. Their cry comes from "the land of Jordan"--Jordan, the type of death--and from the Hermons (which means "ban"), from the hill Mizar (littleness). The enemy taunts, "Where is thy God?" For them deep calleth unto deep and they cry out "all Thy waves and billows are gone over me." They suffer with Him, bearing His reproach, over whose blessed head the waves and billows also passed. "Why hast Thou forgotten me?" they cry to God and remind Him of the oppression of the enemy. Yet hope and trust fills their soul.

PSALM 43

The Cry Against the Ungodly Nation and Antichrist

1. The cry to God (43:1-2)
2. Send out Thy light and truth (43:3-5)

Here their enemies are mentioned, the ungodly nation, serving the beast (Rev. 13:11-18). The deceitful and unjust man, is that coming man of sin, the son of perdition, who then has taken his seat in the temple of God in Jerusalem (2 Thess. 2). They realize their help must come from the Lord to lead them to the holy hill and the sanctuary. They call for the coming of Him who is "the Light and the Truth."

PSALM 44

The Increased Cry for Deliverance

1. My King, O God! Command deliverances (44:1-8)
2. Trouble upon trouble and confusion (44:9-21)
3. Awake! Arise for our help! (44:22-26)

The third Maschil Psalm. They remember the days of old, what God did for His covenant people in the past, how He gave them the land with an outstretched arm and delivered them from their enemies. They own Him as King and call on Him to command deliverances for Jacob. Then they utter their complaint and describe the great troubles and calamities they are facing; they are spoiled, like sheep appointed for meat, scattered, scorned and derided. Yet they have not forgotten Him. Then follows the cry for the Deliverer and for deliverance. "Arise for our help, and redeem us for Thy mercies' sake."

PSALM 45

The Answer: The King Messiah and His Glory

1. The King in His majesty and power (45:1-5)
2. His throne and His glory (45:6-8)
3. With the King, sharing His glory and kingdom (45:9-17)

This beautiful Psalm, a perfect gem, gives the answer to the prayer of distress, "Arise for our help", with which the preceding Psalm closed. It is also a Maschil Psalm and a traditional view claims Solomon as the author. And how the critics have laboured, without success, to explain away its Messianic meaning! The Jews have borne witness to this fact. The Chaldean Targum paraphrases verse 2 by saying, "Thy beauty, O King Messiah, is greater than that of the sons of men." And the eminent Jewish expositor Aben-Ezra says, "This Psalm treats of David, or rather of his son the Messiah." But the first chapter in the Hebrew Epistle establishes forever that the Lord Jesus Christ is here prophetically revealed. It has the inscription upon Shoshannim" (lilies). Here the theory that the inscriptions belong to preceding Psalms breaks down, for He is the Lily of the Valley, revealed now as the King, the Beloved One.

What sublime descriptions of the Person of our Lord! Here is His perfect Humanity, fairer than the children of men, with grace poured into His lips. His kingly glory, His manifestation in glory, executing the vengeance of God upon His enemies and delivering His waiting people. Here is His deity, for the King is God, "Thy Throne, O God, is forever"; His cross, He loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and the oil of gladness which is upon Him in resurrection glory, and His fellows share His glory. He receives the kingdom. With Him is the queen at His right hand in gold of Ophir, the Lamb's wife, to share His rule and reign with Him. The King's daughter is Israel, now all glorious within, born again, with garments of wrought gold, the symbol of glory. Her companions are nations now brought to the King. From henceforth the Name, which is above every other name, will be remembered and His people will praise Him forever and ever.

PSALM 46

The Deliverance and What Follows

1. God is our Refuge and Strength (46:1-3)
2. His coming in power and glory (46:4-7)
3. What follows His manifestation (46:8-11).

This is "a song upon Alamothe," which means "maidens' voices" and calls to remembrance the song which Miriam and the women sang when the Lord redeemed His people by power at the Red Sea. The remnant delivered relates prophetically the experience of deliverance. They trusted in God as their refuge and strength, though the earth was moved and the mountains carried into the sea. Then He appeared and helped His people "at the dawn of the morning." The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved--then His voice was heard, while His people shouted "Jehovah of hosts is with us." They call next to behold the desolations which judgment has wrought. Then, and only then follows peace and all wars are ended. "He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear asunder."

PSALM 47

He is King Over All the Earth

1. In the midst of His people (47:1-5)
2. The praise of His delivered people (47:6-9)

And now we see prophetically how the redeemed people clap their hands

and shout unto God with the voice of triumph, for Messiah is King and then they sing praises unto the King, for He is King over all the earth and highly exalted. Every knee must bow and every tongue confess.

PSALM 48

The Judgment of the Nations and the Millennium

1. Jerusalem the city of the King (48:1-3)
2. The confederated nations scattered (48:4-7)
3. The millennium (48:8-14)

Jerusalem is now seen as the city of the great King. His glorious throne will there be established, and Mount Zion becomes the joy of the whole earth. Verses 4-7 show what preceded the coming of the King. The nations had come against Jerusalem (Zech. 14), a mighty confederacy was assembled. He came and scattered them by His judgments. Then Jerusalem is established forever; His millennial reign begins.

PSALM 49

Retrospects and Meditations

1. Hear this, all ye peoples! (49:1-4)
2. His message of retrospect and encouragement (49:5-20)

If such is the outcome and the goal of the purposes of God concerning His people, why should they fear in the days of evil, which precede the coming glory? The ungodly will pass away no matter how great their riches are, nor can they redeem themselves; their way is folly; like sheep they are laid in the grave and death feeds on them. But different is the lot of the righteous. They shall have dominion over them in the morning, when the night of suffering and trouble is ended. They will be redeemed from the power of the grave and He shall receive them, "for He will swallow up death in victory."

Psalms 50 and 51

PSALM 50

The Demands of a Righteous God

1. His coming and His call (50:1-6)
2. The God of Israel speaks (50:7-13)
3. The demands of righteousness (50:16-21)

Psalms 50 and 51 belong together. In the first God is described coming to Israel, proclaiming His righteousness and demanding righteousness from His people and in the second Israel makes confession of sin. Psalm 50 is by Asaph. He describes the Lord shining out of Zion, coming in glory as the righteous judge to judge His people. When the Lord appears His people will be gathered in His presence, for He has a controversy with them; He declares unto them the righteousness which He as their God requires. He does not want their ritual services, sacrifices and offerings, but He requires that which is the fruit of true faith, the sacrifice of thanksgiving and practical righteousness of life. He uncovers their moral

condition and warns, "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."

PSALM 51

The Confession

1. Conviction and prayer for forgiveness (51:1-8)
2. Prayer for cleansing and restoration (51:9-13)
3. Bloodguiltiness acknowledged (51:14-17)
4. Prayer for Zion (51:18-19)

This great penitential Psalm, according to the inscription, was the outburst of confession and repentance of David when Nathan had uncovered his sin. Well has it been said, "So profound a conviction of sin, so deep and unfeigned a penitence, so true a confession, a heart so tender, so contrite, a desire so fervent for renewal, a trust so humble, so filial in the forgiving love of God, are such as we might surely expect from 'the man after God's own heart.'" We cannot enter into all the petitions and expressions of sorrow over sin which are found in this remarkable Psalm. It goes deep in confession and brokenness of spirit. All the saints of God know something of such deep soul exercises on account of sin.

We point out the prophetic meaning of the Psalm. It is the future confession of Israel of their sin and especially their bloodguiltiness which is upon that nation. It is therefore the answer of penitent Israel to the words of the righteous judge in the preceding Psalm. David had bloodguiltiness upon him. And when the Jews delivered the Holy One into the hands of the Gentiles they cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." This bloodguiltiness will then be confessed when the Lord comes, when they look upon Him whom they pierced and shall mourn for Him (Zech. 12:10). Isaiah 53 is a similar confession which Israel will yet make. It will be the time of their deep contrition, national repentance and weeping. Then they will become the teachers of the Gentiles, to teach transgressors His ways, that sinners be converted unto Him. They will sing aloud of His righteousness, when the Lord has taken away their sins. Then they will bring sacrifices of righteousness and the Lord will do good to Zion and build Jerusalem.

PSALM 52

The Proud and Boasting Man

1. The character of the man of sin (52:1-7)
2. The character of the righteous (52:8-9)

The four Psalms which follow (all Maschil Psalms) give mostly a prophetic picture of the man of sin, the final Antichrist, the false messiah-king, under whom the godly in Israel will especially suffer. He is first described as the mighty man, the super-man, who boasts in evil. He is also a lying, deceitful man, "working deceitfully" and having a "deceitful tongue." But God is going to deal with him, destroy him forever, take him away, pluck him out of his dwelling place, and out of the land of the living. He will be destroyed with the brightness of the Lord's coming (2 Thes. 2:8).

PSALM 53

The Apostasy Under the Man of Sin

This Psalm is in greater part the same as the fourteenth. It is the description of the apostasy, the complete turning away from God and opposition to God, which will hold sway when Satan's mighty man is on the earth. Then the godly remnant will sigh for the coming of salvation out of Zion.

PSALM 54

The Prayer of the Godly

1. The prayer for salvation (54:1-3)
2. The assurance of faith (54:4-7)

During that final apostasy when the man of sin is revealed, the saints among the Jews will suffer persecution as the prophetic Word elsewhere reveals. Here is another prophetic record of their prayers, with a believing anticipation of deliverance.

PSALM 55

In the Throes of the Great Tribulation

1. Prayer for help (55:1-3)
2. Longings to escape (55:4-8)
3. The great tribulation (55:9-21)
4. The comfort of hope (53:22-23)

The man of sin, the Antichrist, stands out prominently in this Psalm. Because of him and his oppression, the godly remnant calls for help. They are overwhelmed with horror and beholding the abomination, they wish for wings like a dove and escape from the storm and the tempest of the great tribulation. This is in accordance with Matthew 24:15-16, which refers to the same time. They will actually flee to the mountain and will be away from Jerusalem as we learned in Psalm 42. The great tribulation has begun and of Jerusalem it will be true "wickedness is in the midst thereof, deceit and guile depart not from her streets." And this wicked one, the Antichrist, is one of the nation, not a stranger, the man with a flattering tongue, who even walked in the house of God. And now his character and the character of his followers is exposed as they turn against the godly. Hence the imprecatory prayer (verse 15). Here is the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy, the last seven years, divided into half. In the first half the Antichrist is the man who claims friendship, with words smooth as butter, but in the middle of the week he breaks the covenant and puts his hands against such as are at peace with him (verse 20).

Psalms 56-60

PSALM 56

The Faithfulness of God, the Comfort of His People

1. Trust and Comfort (56:1-9)
2. Praise for anticipated deliverance (56:10-13)

These five Psalms which are grouped together are Michtam Psalms. This one was written by David when the Philistines took him at Gath. The inscription Jonathelem-rechokim has been rendered by the Septuagint translators as "upon the people driven afar from the holy place," the literal rendering is, "The dove of silence in far off places." On account of the great tribulation, the abomination in Jerusalem, seen in the previous Psalm, the godly have left the city and here we have the expressions of their trust in the faithfulness of their God. Whatever the enemy may do they can say in all their wanderings and with all their tears, "Thou tellest my wanderings, put Thou my tears into Thy bottle, are they not in Thy book?" Blessed comfort is ours too.

PSALM 57

Perfect Trust in God

1. Sheltered until the trouble is past (57:1-5)
2. Deliverance and praise (57:6-11)

The inscription is Al-taschith, which means "destroy not"; it is the Michtam of David when he fled from Saul. It shows us once more the exercise of faith in the God of Israel. In the shadow of His wings they take refuge till these calamities are overpast. They look for intervention from above, from where it will surely come at the close of the days of tribulation. "He shall send from heaven, and save me." Then they know they will be delivered in anticipation of which the voice of praise is heard. "Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, let Thy glory cover all the earth."

PSALM 58

A Judgment Psalm

1. Why God must judge (58:1-5)
2. The judgment executed (58:6-11)

"Do ye of a truth in silence speak righteousness?" (literal rendering of the first verse). Righteousness is not heard on earth. Wickedness and violence are on the earth, therefore God must arise and deal with these conditions in judgment. It will overtake the wicked and the imprecatory prayers will be answered. Then the righteous will be glad when he seeth the vengeance and it will be said, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily He is a God who judgeth the earth."

PSALM 59

Gentile Enmity Against Israel

1. Surrounded by nations (59:1-8)
2. Their judgment anticipated (59:9-17)

Another Michtam of David when he was persecuted by Saul. While in previous Psalms we saw prophetically the remnant of the last suffering from their own ungodly brethren and the Antichrist, here the nations are their enemies. The word "heathen" should always be translated "nations." They will surround Jerusalem. This is mentioned in verse 6. They are like the

dogs, the term used for Gentiles in the Word. The godly pray for deliverance and in faith sing of His power--"I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning"--that coming morning when the shadows flee away.

PSALM 60

The Lord with His People

1. Confessions and prayer (60:1-5)
2. The inheritance anticipated (60:6-8)
3. Faith's certainty (60:9-12)

This Psalm, "Shushan-Eduth" (the lily of testimony), also a Michtam of David, has for its beginning a confession of the godly in Israel. The Lord they acknowledge had scattered them and is angry with them. They pray for restoration. "That thy beloved may be delivered, save with Thy right hand and hear me." Then He hears and answers in His holiness and His people rejoice as once more they possess their earthly inheritance. The casting of the shoe upon Edom means the subjugation of Edom, taking possession and making Edom a servant.

Psalms 61-68

PSALM 61

The Identification of the King with His People

1. His cry and their cry (61:1-4)
2. His answer and exaltation (61:5-8)

The following eight Psalms are grouped together leading up again to the final deliverance of Israel and the glory of the Lord. The question in connection with this Psalm is, who is the king whose years shall be from generations to generations, that is forever, who shall abide in God's presence forever? The ancient Jewish Targum says it is King Messiah, which is the true answer. This is the key to this Psalm. The King, Christ, is seen as identified with the remnant. He walked on earth trusting, having as the dependent Man His shelter in God. And so does the godly remnant trust and fleeing to the rock which is higher than they, find their shelter there also. And when the King comes back they will have their full deliverance.

PSALM 62

Waiting and Trusting

1. He only (62:1-2)
2. Persecuted (62:3-4)
3. My expectation from him (62:5-12)

This Psalm is not difficult to interpret. It has always been food for the saints of God. Faith in God in the midst of adversity and persecution, waiting on Him, expecting salvation, deliverance and defense only from Him is beautifully expressed. Like all these Psalms this one also gives us a prophetic glimpse into the experience of the remnant of Israel. But it has its practical value for us likewise. The first verse literally rendered is, "Only unto God my soul is silence"; that is, hushed in His presence, in

confident submission. To expect all from Him, nothing from man, to look away from self and magnify the Lord, is the secret of a life of rest and victory.

PSALM 63

Heart Longings

1. To see Thy power and glory (63:1-4)
2. Satisfied longings (63:5-11)

A Psalm of David when he was an outcast in the wilderness of Judah. Thus it fits in well with the outcast remnant, thirsting after God, longing to see His power and His glory displayed. And these longings are created in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, as in our hearts also. These longings will be satisfied in the coming day of His manifestation, when His people shall praise and worship Him.

PSALM 64

The Wicked and their End

1. The power of the wicked displaced (64:1-6)
2. Their sudden end (64:7-10)

This Psalm stands in contrast with the preceding ones. The outward circumstances, the deeds and power of the wicked, are seen again. But suddenly the Lord will act and strike down the wicked. He will avenge His own elect, who cry day and night unto Him. (See Luke 18:1-7. The widow in this parable is the godly Israelitish remnant.)

PSALM 65

The Times of Restitution and Refreshing

1. Spiritual blessings (65:1-5)
2. Earthly glories and blessing (65:6-13)

The four next Psalms unfold prophetically the times of restitution of all things as spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began. Here we get the visions of Israel's restoration, her spiritual blessings and her praise unto the Lord, and what will be the result for the nations and for all creation. We recommend a careful study in details by comparing Scripture with Scripture. In this Psalm Zion is mentioned first. It will be the joy of the whole earth and His praises will sound forth from the glorious place of His rest. Then He who answereth prayer unto Him, who is the desire of all nations, all flesh will come. The nations will be gathered into the kingdom. Israel's transgression will be purged away and they will be fitted to draw near and be satisfied with the blessings of His house, that future holy temple which will be filled with His glory (Ezekiel 43). The terrible things in righteousness with which the Lord has answered the pleadings of His suffering people, are His judgments, the vengeance of God. The results will be "peace on earth, Who stilleth the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the tumult of nations." Verses 9-13 show that the curse which rests now upon creation will then be removed and even creation itself will shout for joy and sing.

PSALM 66

The Praise and Worship of the Millennium

1. What God hath wrought! (66:1-7)
2. Israel's praise and worship (66:8-20)

"Shout aloud unto God, all the earth! Sing the glory of His Name, ascribe to Him glory, in His praise." This will be done in the coming kingdom age. And Israel will be the leader of that praise, calling upon the nations to join into the glory song. "All the earth shall worship Thee, and shall sing unto Thee, they shall sing Thy Name, Israel will worship in the beauty of holiness, and this people, now a holy nation and kingdom of priests, become His witnesses." "Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He has done for my soul."

PSALM 67

The Fullest Blessing

This brief Psalm does not permit any division. It is closely linked with the preceding one, telling us of the fullest blessings in store for Israel and the whole earth, when the new day has dawned and the King reigns. If this little Psalm in its prophetic message were understood it would end forever all postmillennial misconceptions as to the conversion of the world. Israel prays that the Lord may be gracious to them as He will in that coming day. As a result of Israel's conversion by the coming of the Lord, His way will be known upon the earth and His salvation among the nations. Then the peoples will praise, and the nations will be glad and rejoice. The Lord will be King of nations (verse 4) and the earth yield her increase. Here is God's way for the full blessing the earth and the race needs. Israel prays "God shall bless us" and as the result "all the ends of the earth shall fear Him." But Israel's blessing is inseparably connected with the return of our Lord. No blessing and restoration till He comes again.

PSALM 68

The Great Redemption Accomplished

1. The introduction (68:1-3)
2. The proclamation of His Name and of 'His acts (68:4-6)
3. A historic review (68:7-12)
4. Israel's place of blessing and the Redeemer (68:13-19)
5. His victory over the enemies (68:20-23)
6. The great procession (68:24-29)
7. The conversion of the nations and the kingdom (68:30-35)

This is one of the greatest Psalms. The Name of God is found in it in seven different forms: Jehovah, Adonai, El, Shaddai, Jah, Jehovah-Adonai and Jah-Elohim. The opening verses mention three great facts of the accomplished redemption. God arises--the enemies are scattered--the righteous rejoice. See Num. 10:35. Praise then begins. Verse 4 correctly rendered is "Sing unto God, sing forth His Name, Cast up a way for Him that rideth in the deserts" (not heavens). See also Isaiah 62:10. The word used for deserts (araboth) refers to the regions south of Jerusalem, Jordan and the Dead Sea. The One who comes as the glorious King is He who hath passed

through the scenes of death and has the power to lead from death to life. He delivers His earthly people who waited for Him, while the rebellious dwell in a parched land. The manifestation of the God of Israel at Sinai (verse 7, etc.) is the type of His future manifestation. Verse 13, "Though ye have lain among the sheepfolds (Israel)--wings of a dove covered with silver and greenish gold." The dove, as the sacrificial bird, is a type of Christ, but it is also applied to godly Israel in the Song of Solomon, when they are addressed as "O my dove." It applies therefore to both. The wings are covered with silver and gold. Silver stands for redemption and the greenish gold, the finest, for glory. Christ has brought redemption and glory, and under His blessed wings, Israel enjoys and possesseth both. Then the mount of God where His glory will be seen where He dwells forever. Verse 18 is quoted in Ephesians 4:8. He, the Redeemer of Israel, had descended first into the lower parts of the earth, even into the depths of death and the grave. Then He ascended into glory. But notice, it saith here that this ascended One received gifts for men, but in Ephesians we read that He communicates that which He hath received as the risen and glorified One. The Holy Spirit adds to it in Ephesians. But He also omits something. He leaves out "even for the rebellious." This refers to rebellious Israel and has no place in the Epistle which concerns the church alone. Then His victory over enemies and the lawless leader, the Antichrist (verses 20-23). The wonderful procession, He the triumphant leader, the head of the new creation (verses 24-29). And finally the world and the nations bowing before Him. There will be a temple in Jerusalem once more, as we saw before. The kings of the earth will go there to worship and to bring presents. And then peace on earth, true peace, lasting peace, universal peace, which the world tries to have now while we write this, without the Prince of Peace. "He scattereth the peoples that delight in war" (verse 30). Peace on earth in the Psalms always follows the visible and glorious manifestation of the King.

Psalms 69-72

PSALM 69

The Suffering and Rejected Christ

1. Hated without a cause (69:1-6)
2. Bearing reproach (69:7-12)
3. His own prayer (69:13-21)
4. The retribution (69:22-28)
5. His exaltation and the glory (69:29-36)

Psalms 69-72 go together and lead us prophetically from the suffering and rejected Christ to the glory of His kingdom in the Seventy-second Psalm. The Sixty-ninth Psalm, like the Forty-fifth, bears the inscription, "upon Shoshanim" (lilies). It concerns Christ and indirectly also the people who suffer for His sake. The Spirit of God in the New Testament quotes this Psalm repeatedly. See verse 4 and John 15:25; verse 9 and John 2:17 and Romans 15:3; verses 22-23 and Romans 11:9-10; verse 25 and Acts 1:20. Verse 21 was literally fulfilled as we find from the Gospels, Matthew 27:34, 48; Mark 15:23, 36; Luke 23:36 and John 19:28-30. No further evidence is needed that the Lord Jesus Christ in His suffering and rejection is here described. Yet the critical school attempts to deny the prophetic aspect. Referring to verse 21 and what the Gospels say about our Lord's words, "I thirst" that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, Prof.

Davidson saith in the Century Bible "the fulfilment of Scripture referred to must not be understood as the accomplishment of a direct prophecy." And again in commenting on verses 22-23, quoted by the Spirit of God in Romans 11, the same professor declares, "These imprecations are among the darkest and fiercest in the Psalter. The gulf which separates these verses from 'Father forgive them,' marks the impassable limits of typology." But it does not in the least. The words apply to the nation as righteous retribution from the side of God after they rejected His Son. In His heart there is still the same love, for they are still beloved for the Father's sake. But these imprecations also belong rightly into the lips of the remnant against the antichristian oppressors of the last days. Well may we read the Psalm and think of all His suffering and sorrow in our behalf. The Psalm ends with His praise, the exaltation and victory of the Christ who died for the ungodly.

PSALM 70

This Psalm is "to bring to remembrance." It is the repetition of the last five verses of the Fortieth Psalm. The cross is again made known and the attitude of men towards that cross, those who reject Him and those that love His salvation.

PSALM 71

Israel's Song of Hope

1. Declaration of trust (71:1-11)
2. Anticipations of faith (71:12-18)
3. Revival and victory (71:19-24)

This Psalm, which bears no inscription whatever, gives another prophetic picture of the faith and the anticipations of faith as found in the godly of Israel, when the salvation is about to come out of Zion. They look to Him who is all sufficient to deliver and to save them. The Psalm may well be called Israel's song of hope. It abounds in many beautiful, refreshing statements, equally precious to us.

PSALM 72

The Kingdom Psalm

1. The King, who reigns in righteousness (72:1-4)
2. His kingdom from sea to sea (72:5-11)
3. The blessings and the kingdom (72:12-20)

The last Psalm of this Exodus section describes the establishment of the promised kingdom, the kingdom of heaven on earth. Surely the Spirit of God directed the arrangement of the Psalms, and put each into the right place. Here we have a beautiful prophecy of what is yet to be and for which all is waiting now, in a time when every form of government has failed and law and order seems to go to pieces. The King and the King's Son is the Lord Jesus Christ, He who came as the Only-Begotten from the bosom of the Father to this earth, to seek the lost sheep of the house of Israel, offering them first the promised kingdom. His own received Him not. In previous Psalms we heard the voice of His complaints, His sorrows and saw the sufferings of the cross. But here we behold Him enthroned as the King of Righteousness and the King of Peace. Righteousness and peace He alone

can bring to man and He will surely bring both for the whole earth when the cloud brings Him back. Then He will be feared and worshipped as long as the sun and moon endure, for all times. Showers of blessing will fall and the righteous will flourish, while the wicked can trouble the righteous no more. Abundance of peace will be the lot of mankind then and His kingdom will include all the kingdoms of the earth. His enemies will lick the dust and kings will bring Him presents. And the blessings of His Kingdom! All the subjects in His kingdom will share them and all creation as well. The doxology of this section is the greatest of all. "And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen."--The prayers of David the Son of Jesse are ended." Let us quote once more Prof. Davidson what he makes of this. "A note, probably added by the editor of the Elohist collection, to mark the end of a group of Davidic Psalms." What blindness! David had seen the glories of the kingdom of Him who is His Lord and His Son and then declared "his prayers are ended." He has nothing more to pray for.

III. THE LEVITICUS SECTION: BOOK THREE: PSALMS 73-89

The third division of the book of Psalms corresponds in character to the third book of the Pentateuch, the book of Leviticus. That is the book of the Sanctuary, of Holiness. And this section, which is the shortest, also has the same character. Each Psalm brings the sanctuary of Israel in view, with the same prophetic-dispensational character as in the first two books. The Companion Bible gives the following division of the 17 Psalms: Psalms 73-83, The Sanctuary in Relation to Man. Psalms 84-89, The Sanctuary in Relation to Jehovah.

Psalms of Asaph Concerning the Sanctuary (73-77)

PSALM 73

The Problem of the Suffering of the Righteous

1. The perplexity (73:1-9)
2. Departure from God (73:10-14)
3. The sanctuary and the solution (73:15-28)

Eleven Psalms by Asaph open this Leviticus section. The clean heart is mentioned at once, and the assurance that truly God is good unto Israel and to those of clean heart. But here is the old question, the wicked prosper in spite of all their pride, their violence and corruption, while the righteous suffer. The prosperity of the wicked had an evil effect too upon the people, who departed from God. And Asaph's steps had well nigh slipped, as some said, "Verily I cleaned my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency." Then he turns to the sanctuary and finds the solution. In the light of God and His holiness he sees their end. Desolation is coming upon them in a moment, they are utterly consumed with terrors. Then having had the vision of the sanctuary he grieves over his foolishness, like a beast which does not know God. But could there be more beautiful words than those in verses 23-26! Read and enjoy them. But the experience of Asaph will be the experience of the godly remnant.

PSALM 74

The Enemy in the Sanctuary

1. The Prayer on account of the enemy (74:1-3)
2. The work of the enemy (74:4-9)
3. Intercession for intervention (74:10-23)

This is a Psalm for instruction, a Maschil Psalm. The enemy is seen in the sanctuary. This has been applied to the defilement of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, but prophetically it rather refers to that end-time, when the enemy will defile the temple with the abomination of desolation (Matthew 24:15). Then the remnant loving the sanctuary tells the Lord about it as we read in this Psalm, and in a mighty intercession pleads for intervention. "O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove (Israel) unto the multitude of the wicked--Have respect unto the covenant, for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." How true that will be during the great time of trouble. And then the cry to God to arise.

PSALM 75

The Divine Answer

1. Christ the righteous judge (75:1-5)
2. His judgment (75:6-10)

It is Christ as King who is pictured in this Psalm coming to answer the pleas of His people in behalf of His sanctuary. The translation in our version of the opening verses is faulty. "We give thanks to Thee, O God, we give thanks--Thy Name is near! When I have taken the set time, I, even I, will judge uprightly. Though the earth and all the inhabitants thereof are melting, I myself set up its pillars." Then He executes His judgments. He deals with the wicked, the horn lifted up, the man of sin. He putteth down and lifteth up. The wicked will be cut off and the righteous exalted.

PSALM 76

Divine Government Established and Maintained

1. The Prince of Peace reigns (76:1-6)
2. The day of wrath and what it brought (76:7-12)

We behold the Lord now in Judah, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, His Name great in Israel! In Salem He has His tabernacle and in Zion His dwelling place. There, as the Prince of Peace, He broke the arrows, the shield, and sword and battle. The stouthearted were spoiled. Judgments were heard from heaven; the earth feared and was still, then the meek of the earth were saved. The Lord is terrible to the kings of the earth, the final confederacy of nations. How wonderful the order of these Psalms!

PSALM 77

The Distressed Saint and His Comfort

1. The distress (77:1-10)
2. The comfort (77:11-20)

This Psalm shows the distress of the saint in deepest exercise of soul. He earnestly seeks the Lord and never leaves off. "my hand was stretched out in the night, and failed not" (literal translation of verse

2). He moaned and complained and his spirit was overwhelmed. Then in still greater distress he asks, "Will the Lord cast off forever?--Is His mercy come to an end forever?--"Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" The comfort comes to him as he thinks of God's past dealings, as he remembers His work of old. He realizeth "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary, who is so great a God as our God?" He remembers how God redeemed His people Israel in the past, and this being His way as a holy God, the God of the Sanctuary, He will redeem again and manifest His power. One can easily see how this Psalm also is Israelitish and finds its application in the last days.

Psalms 78-83

PSALM 78

A Historical Retrospect

1. The call to hear (78:1-8)
2. Ephraim's failure (78:9-11)
3. His dealings in power and mercy (78:12-55)
4. The continued provocation (78:56-64)
5. His sovereign grace in choosing David (78:65-72)

This historical retrospect needs no further comment. It is God speaking to the hearts of His people through their own history from Egypt to David. How graciously He dealt with them all the way! The crowning fact is His sovereign grace in choosing Judah, Mount Zion which he loved, building there His sanctuary, and choosing David His servant to feed Jacob His people and Israel His inheritance. Here we may well think of the Son of David, God's Anointed in whom God's sovereign grace is made known and who will yet feed Jacob and Israel His inheritance.

PSALM 79

Lamentation and Prayer on Account of the Enemy

1. The Enemy in Jerusalem (79:1-4)
2. How Long, Lord? (79:5-13)

Zion, the place He loves, mentioned in the preceding Psalm, is here prophetically seen in desolation. The nations have come into the inheritance, Jerusalem is become a heap of ruins, the temple is defiled. The dead bodies of His servants and His saints lie unburied, and the people are a reproach, a scorn and a derision. A similar prophecy we found in the Seventy-fourth Psalm, which should be compared with this Psalm. While Jerusalem and the temple has seen more than once such desolations, we must view these predicted calamities as being the final disaster which is yet to overtake the city. Read Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; Rev. 11, and Rev. 13:11-18. And in that day of calamity where shall the faithful turn? They cry to Him whose faithfulness is proven by the dealings of the past and assured by the Davidic covenant. How long, Lord? Pour out Thy wrath upon the nations and the kingdoms, the ten kingdoms and the little horn of Daniel 7. They pray, "Remember not our former iniquities--Help us, God of our Salvation." Then when the answer comes they will give Him never ceasing praise.

PSALM 80

Looking to Heaven for Help Through the Man at His Right Hand

1. Calling to the Shepherd (80:1-4)
2. The ruin of His inheritance (80:5-16)
3. The Man of the right hand (80:17-19)

This Psalm continues the same theme. They call now definitely to the Shepherd, He who is enthroned in glory between the Cherubim. They ask Him to "shine forth," to manifest Himself in glory and power for their salvation, to answer their cries for help. Three times they plead, "Turn us again, O God, and cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved." Ancient Jewish comments on this verse say that the face which shines upon Israel is the Messiah. Even so when His face shines, when He is manifested in glory His earthly people will be saved. And they know Him. They speak of Him as "the Man of Thy right hand," as "the Son of Man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself." It is our Lord who sits at the right hand of God, waiting till His enemies are made the footstool of His feet (Psalm 110). Criticism refuses to accept this. They say, "Of course Israel is meant" (Century Bible on the Psalms, p. 88).

PSALM 81

Hope Revived: His Gracious Return to Israel

1. The blowing of the trumpet (81:1-5)
2. His loving call to His people (81:6-12)
3. Gracious results promised (81:13-16)

Hope has revived and singing is commanded. What interests us most is the call to blow the trumpet in the new moon. The blowing of the trumpet, in the feast of trumpets (Leviticus 23), marks the beginning of Israel's New Year. Dispensationally it stands for the regathering of Israel and is followed by the day of atonement, that future day, when they shall look upon Him whom they pierced (Zech. 12:10) and after that the final feast, the harvest feast of tabernacles, a type of the millennium. Thus with the blowing of trumpets begins the revival of Israel's hope in answer to the prayers of the preceding Psalm. And He Himself addresses His people and promises as a result of hearkening to His voice deliverance from their enemies and other blessings.

PSALM 82

Concerning Judgment

1. The judge with His righteous judgment (82:1-5)
2. Arise O God! judge the earth (82:6-8)

His own presence in the congregation of God (Israel) means a righteous judgment. Israel is then owned as His congregation (Num. 27:17). The judges among them were called gods; the Hebrew word for judges in Exodus 21:6 is "elohim"--gods, mighty ones. Our Lord refers to this verse 6 in John 10:34. But they were unrighteous in their judgments and so He comes Himself to execute judgment and to do justice to the afflicted and needy. And more than that, He will judge the earth and the nations.

PSALM 83

The Final Enemies Overthrown

1. The enemies in confederacy (83:1-8)
2. Their complete defeat and fate (83:9-18)

Elsewhere in prophecy we read of the confederacies of nations, Israel's enemies, coming against the land of Israel in a final great onslaught. There will be an invasion from the north mentioned in Isaiah 29; Joel 2; Daniel 8:9-12, and in Zech. 12:2. Then there will also be Gog and Magog invading the land (Ezek. 38, etc.). It seems the former is in view here. The godly remnant prays and speaks of these invading hosts as "His enemies" calling upon the Lord to deal with them. Their satanic object is to cut them off from being a nation. They remind the Lord of what He did with Israel's former enemies and treat them likewise, so that Jehovah may become the Most High (God's millennial Name) over all the earth.

Psalms 84-89

PSALM 84

In View of the Sanctuary

1. Heart longings (84:1-7)
2. In the sanctuary (84:8-12)

The two next Psalms are of the sons of Korah, who themselves are monuments of saving grace. (They were saved from the fate of Korah; see Num. 26:10-11.) In these precious outpourings of the heart for the sanctuary of the Lord, we read prophetically the heart longings of the remnant of Israel. They are not yet in possession of the fullest blessings but look forward now to an early realization of all their hopes of being at His altars again. And all they long for will be their happy and lasting portion. They will go from strength to strength; He will be their Sun and Shield; He will give grace and glory. Verse 9 shows us our Lord. "Behold, O God our Shield, look upon the face of Thine Anointed (Christ)." It is through Him that all this will be accomplished.

PSALM 85

All Promised Blessings Realized

1. What grace has done (85:1-3)
2. Prayer for the fulfilment (85:4-9)
3. Righteousness and peace (85:10-13)

What will come to Israel when Christ returns to be their King is blessedly made known in the opening verses of this other Korah Psalm. Favour will rest upon the land; the captivity of Jacob is brought back, their iniquity is forgiven and their sin covered; His wrath is turned away. Hence they pray that all this may speedily be accomplished as it surely will in the days when heaven will send Him back. Then He will speak peace to His people and His saints and glory will dwell in the land, even their land (verses 8-9). Then righteousness and peace will kiss each other and truth shall spring out of the earth.

PSALM 86

A Prayer

1. The prayer of the poor and needy one (86:1-9)
2. The praise of His Name (86:10-17)

This Psalm has for an inscription "A prayer of David." We can hear in it the voice of the Son of David, our Lord, pleading in the place of humiliation, and also the pleadings of the remnant saints. The prophetic element enters in with verse 9. "All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before thee O Lord." This will be the glorious result of His humiliation. Into the many and precious details of this Psalm we cannot enter. The name of the Lord (Adonai) is found seven times in this Psalm.

PSALM 87

Zion and Its Coming Glories

Another Korah Psalm. Zion is the object of Jehovah's love where He will manifest His glory. Glorious things are spoken of the city of God. This we learn from many visions of the prophets. When these prophecies are fulfilled and the glory has come, then Rahab (pride--Egypt) and Babylon shall know, as well as Philistia, Tyre and Cush. Nations will be born again and turn to the Lord and share the blessings of the kingdom. Then the singers will sing "All my springs are in Thee," in Him who dwelleth in Zion. The Christian believer gives now this testimony and knows its blessed truth, that Christ is all and in Him we have all our resources. But what will it be when nations with Zion shall know this!

PSALM 88

The Deepest Soul Misery Poured Out

1. In deepest misery and distress (88:1-7)
2. Crying and no answer (88:8-18)

This is a Maschil Psalm by Heman the Ezrahite. See 1 Kings 4:31; 1 Chronicles 6:33, 44; 25:4. It is a Psalm of deepest distress, picturing the darkest experience with no ray of light or word of comfort. That it describes the real experience of a saint no one would doubt. But in it we can hear again the voice of sorrow of Him who was the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. It is His testimony concerning that He passed through as the Great Sufferer. "Thou hast laid me into the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves."--"Thy fierce wrath goeth over me, Thy terrors cut me off." Such was His experience when on the cross. The Christ in humiliation and suffering is mentioned so frequently to remind His people of the costprice of deliverance and glory, and that His must be the glory and the praise.

PSALM 89

God's Faithfulness: His Oath-bound Covenant with David

1. Jehovah's faithfulness (89:1-18)
2. His covenant with David (89:19-37)

3. The ruin and desolation (89:38-45)
4. How long, Lord? Remember! (89:46-52)

A Maschil of Ethan, a Merarite (1 Chron. 6:44; 15:17). The greater part of this Psalm extols Jehovah's lovingkindness and faithfulness and makes prominent the covenant with David. We must of course look beyond David and behold Him, the Son of David in whom this covenant will be ratified. Viewed prophetically this Psalm becomes intensely interesting. Verses 4-37 tell us of all the blessings which will be on earth when our Lord, the Son of David, is King. He is the Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth (verse 27). All His enemies will be beaten down, they are scattered (verses 10, 22). Justice and judgment will be the foundations of His throne, mercy and truth will go before His face (verse 14). His people will be blessed and walk in the light of His countenance; He will be the glory of their strength, their defense and their King (15-18). His seed (including the heavenly people, the Church, and the earthly people) shall endure forever, and His throne as the days of heaven (29, 36). The past ruin of the house of David and the people Israel, the result of unbelief and disobedience, covered with shame instead of glory, is described in verses 38-45 and the prayer follows that the Lord may remember what He has sworn to David.

IV. THE NUMBERS SECTION: BOOK FOUR: PSALMS 90-106

The Ninetieth Psalm begins the fourth book of Psalms, corresponding in different ways with the book of Numbers. It opens with the only Psalm written by Moses in the wilderness when the people were dying on account of unbelief, and is followed by a Psalm which shows the second Man, the Lord as the head of a new creation. In this book are found numerous millennial Psalms, showing us prophetically when under Christ, in the day when all things are put under His feet, the wilderness experiences of His people end, glory comes to Israel, the nations and all the earth.

Psalms 90-93

PSALM 90

Man's Condition of Sin and Death

1. The Eternal One (90:1-2)
2. Frailty and Death because of Sin (90:3-10)
3. The Prayer: Return Jehovah! How long? (90:11-17)

This Psalm of Moses shows what man is as a sinner, picturing his nothingness, the misery and frailty of his life, and death. The race dies, but does not become extinct, for He says, "Return ye children of men. They are carried away as with a flood, they are as a sleep-like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth." And time to the Eternal One is as nothing, for a thousand years are to Him as nothing. (See 2 Peter 3:8.) It is true, every statement as to frailty, uncertainty and death, of the entire race. But even in this Psalm of the first man with sin and death, we must see the prophetic aspect. If Verses 7-8 are true of those who died in the wilderness, they are also true of God's earthly people in the time of their trouble. "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." Hence their plea to return. The prayer with which this Psalm of death closes becomes illuminated when we look at it dispensationally. "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.--Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants and Thy glory unto their children." It is the expression of hope uttered by His earthly saints.

PSALM 91

Christ, the Second Man

1. In dependence (91:1-2)
2. In security (91:3-8)
3. His triumph and exaltation (91:9-16)

This Psalm has no inscription. Its author is unknown, but we know it is the testimony of the Spirit of God concerning the second Man, our Lord. Satan knew this also for he quoted this Psalm to our Lord in Matthew 4, omitting the words "in all thy ways" (verses 11-12 and Matthew 4:6). It is the Psalm God's people love to read on account of its precious assurances given to those who put their trust in Him. In a larger and prophetic sense we have here the blessings of God's power in the kingdom age when under the rule of the King His people will be kept from all evil. But let us not forget that we have in it a prophetic picture of our Lord as He walked as the dependent Man on the earth. He dwelled in the secret place of the Most High and trusted in Him, walking in perfect obedience. Death had no claim on His life, for He knew no sin. No evil could come near Him. Angels ministered unto Him. The lion and the adder--Satan in his two-fold character, as the powerful enemy and as the sneaking, hidden serpent--He tramples under His feet. And some day the enemy will also be completely bruised under the feet of His people. Then His exaltation, "I will set Him on high."

PSALM 92

A Psalm of Praise

1. Praise for His works (92:1-5)
2. The enemies who perish (92:6-9)
3. The happy lot of the righteous (92:10-15)

The inscription tells us it is a Psalm for the Sabbath day. The rest for His people comes when the Lord arises, delivers them, and the enemies perish. This Psalm looks forward to that rest, the coming great Lord's day. The praise is on account of the work Jehovah has done, His redemption work in behalf of His people. "Thou hast made me glad through Thy work--I will triumph in the work of Thy hands." Then the wicked shall perish, and all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered, while the saints of God shall flourish like the palm tree.

PSALM 93

Jehovah Reigneth

This is a kingdom Psalm by an unknown author. The Lord reigneth in

majesty. And under His reign the world is established; He is above all the floods of many waters, none can withstand Him. Revelation 11:15-18 may be read in connection with this brief kingdom Psalm. The angry nations mentioned in this passage correspond with the floods of waters mentioned in the Psalm.

PSALMS 94-100

PSALM 94

Prayer for the Execution of the Vengeance of God

1. The Prayer on account of the enemy (94:1-7)
2. Expostulation with the wicked (94:8-13)
3. The comfort of the righteous (94:14-23)

The seven Psalms which follow lead on to the full establishment of the kingdom on earth and most of these Psalms celebrate His judgment reign, and the blessings of the age to come. We start once more with a Psalm which pictures vividly the trials of the days which precede the coming of the Lord and the coming of His kingdom. The Spirit of God has arranged these Psalms, as we have by this time learned, in such a manner as to lead from suffering to glory, the path which He went and which His people are appointed to follow also. Hence we see in this Psalm the wicked persecuting and breaking in pieces the people of God, and the righteous remnant is calling to the God to whom vengeance belongeth to show Himself, that is, to manifest His glory in their behalf. The voice of faith we hear also, the assurance that the Lord will not forsake His people nor His inheritance, that the Lord will intervene in behalf of His own and cut off the wicked.

PSALM 95

In Anticipation of His Coming

1. Singing unto Him? (95:1-5)
2. Let us worship and bow down (95:6-11)

It is a call to Israel in anticipation of the soon appearing of the expected Saviour-King. The next Psalm will show that He has come. How are they, His people, to welcome Him? With singing, with confession (this is the literal translation of thanksgiving in verse 2), with worship and prostration. And there is the warning now not to harden their hearts, not be like their fathers who could not enter into His rest. His people must welcome Him as a willing, as an obedient people and such will be the humble remnant, having passed through the gracious discipline of the tribulation days. The end verses are quoted in Hebrews 3 and 4.

PSALM 96

The Lord Has Come

1. The new song (96:1-3)
2. The Lord supreme (96:4-6)
3. Glory unto His Name (96:7-10)
4. Creation celebrating (96:11-13)

And now He has come and is manifested in the earth. The singing times begin and will last for a thousand years, when they will merge into the never ceasing songs of eternity. It is a call now to make the glad and glorious news known in all the earth and to make His glory known among the nations. That will be the work of converted Israel. Not much comment is needed; it is all so plain if we just see it refers to His visible return. And while Israel rejoices, the nations hear that He reigneth, all creation will rejoice as well, for He takes the curse away and delivers creation from its groans.

PSALM 97

His Glorious Reign

1. Jehovah reigneth (97:1-5)
2. In righteousness and with glory (97:6-12)

He reigneth! Earth and the multitude of isles will now rejoice, for He whose right it is occupies the throne and all unrighteousness, wickedness and idolatry will be banished. Zion and the daughters of Judah rejoice and all the righteous rejoice. It is the time of singing and of joy. And the heavens will reveal His righteousness, while angels worship Him (verse 7 and Hebrews 1:6). What glory scenes will then take place upon this earth!

PSALM 98

The New Song

1. The call to sing (98:1-3)
2. The response (98:4-6)
3. The praise of all (98:7-9)

The Lord by His coming has done wonderful things. He has brought salvation and victory; He has made known His salvation, His righteousness in judgment was seen by the nations. He has also remembered the house of Israel in His mercy and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of God. And therefore the call to sing the new song. And the world and creation will Join in.

PSALM 99

The Reign of Righteousness

1. His throne (99:1-3)
2. Judgment and righteousness executed (99:4-6)
3. His gracious dealings (99:7-9)

It is a Psalm of the righteous government. The Lord who reigns is holy, demands obedience. He is holy and must be worshipped. Moses and Aaron were His priests in the past and Samuel among them that called upon His Name. He dealt graciously with His people in the past and forgave them, and the same Lord now reigneth and will deal in righteousness and mercy with His people.

PSALM 100

Nothing but Praise

It is Israel's voice in praise which we hear in this brief Psalm, which so fittingly concludes this series of great millennial Psalms. They exhort that all the earth should make a joyful noise unto the Lord, to serve Him and come before Him with singing. The third verse tells us that they are the speakers. All are to enter His gates with thanksgiving and come into His courts with praise. How often is this Psalm used in a spiritualized way, making the gates and the courts some church building. But we worship in spirit and in truth and not in an earthly house. The gates and courts have reference to that future temple, which will be a house of prayer for all nations.

Psalms 101-106

PSALM 101

The Righteous King Speaketh

1. The character of the King (101:1-3)
2. His righteous demands of His subjects (101:4-8)

A Psalm of David. He speaks as king concerning himself and those in his kingdom. But it is evident that once more he speaks as a prophet concerning the true King, the Son, whom God had promised through him, our Lord Jesus Christ. He is a King of perfect righteousness, which David was not. This true King is in complete fellowship with Jehovah, for He is one with Him. He will not tolerate evil in His kingdom of righteousness. The proud and wicked are not suffered by Him. He will destroy early (morning by morning) the wicked out of the land and all evil doers will be cut off from the city of the Lord. Those who walk in a perfect way shall serve Him.

PSALM 102

Christ the King in His Humiliation

1. In the place of humiliation and dependence (102:1-7)
2. His enemies (102:8-11)
3. The set time for Zion (102:12-16)
4. The blessings which follow (102:17-22)
5. The God-man in His work (102:23-28)

That this Psalm is a prophecy concerning the sufferings of Christ, His humiliation and death, and the gracious results which flow from it, is confirmed by the quotation in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In that chapter His work and His glory are unfolded. Here we have both. First we have a prophetic picture of the lonely One, like a pelican, an owl in the desert and as a sparrow alone upon the house top. What a deep humiliation for Him who created all things (verses 23-28) to take the lowest place, even like a sparrow. Then we read how His enemies reproach Him. He eats His bread like ashes and mingles His drink with weeping. He suffers more than that, in making atonement--God's indignation and wrath is upon Him.

Next we read something of the joy which was set before Him on account of which He endured the cross, despising the shame. Here is part of the travail of His soul. God will through Him, have mercy upon Zion when the

set time to favour her has come. All nations will then fear His Name, and all the kings behold His glory. And Zion shall assuredly be built when the Lord appears in glory, His second coming. Then the glorious results when "the people are gathered together (in the kingdom) and the kingdoms serve the Lord." The closing verses tell us of His glory as the God-Man. The Man who suffered thus is the Lord of all, Jehovah the Creator. The Spirit of God alone could teach the true application of these words and He has done so in Hebrews 1:10-12.

PSALM 103

The Praise of Israel

1. The benefits of full salvation (103:1-7)
2. Merciful and gracious (103:8-18)
3. His throne and His kingdom (103:19-22)

This is the well-beloved Psalm, because God's people love it for its precious and beautiful expressions, telling out the full salvation of our Saviour Lord and the gracious compassion which He manifests towards His own. But we must not overlook the prophetic aspect, which but few believers have recognized. It is really the hymn of Praise which will be sung by redeemed and restored Israel. Theirs will be a whole-souled praise. Their iniquities are forgiven, their diseases are healed, their life is redeemed from the pit, they are crowned with lovingkindness and tender mercies. Their youth is renewed like the eagle's (Isaiah 40:28-31), which will be fulfilled then. And then the riches of mercy towards His beloved people! His Throne and His kingdom are seen in the closing verses and everything blesses Him.

PSALM 104

Creation's Praise

1. The Creator (104:1-4)
2. The foundations of the earth (104:5-9)
3. His works manifesting His kindness (104:10-23)
4. How manifold are Thy works (104:24-30)
5. Rejoicing in His works: Hallelujah! (104:31-35)

He is now praised as the Creator by creation. He is seen in His creator-glory. When the kingdom is established that glory will then be manifested. Verse 4 is quoted in Hebrews 1 showing that the glory of the risen Christ is here likewise revealed. The angels of God will ascend and descend upon the Son of Man. Then creation will be in its rightful place and man will see His glory there. The earth will be filled with His Riches (verse 24). Then too sinners will be consumed out of the earth and the wicked be no more for He is King. The Psalm ends with hallelujah. His people and all creation will praise Him.

PSALMS 105 and 106

The Memories of the Past

The last two Psalms of this fourth section review the entire history of Israel up to the time of the judges. It is the story of God's faithfulness and mercy, and the story of their shameful failure and

apostasy. He is ever mindful of His covenant, and that covenant is mentioned first, as the foundation of all. Then how He watched over them. The story of Joseph is mentioned, followed by the rehearsal of the deliverance out of Egypt. Psalm 106 is couched in words of confession, showing their failure all the way, sinning, forgetting, lusting, unbelieving and disobedient. Only infinite mercy and grace could save such a people. Prophetically these Psalms express the repentance and national confession of Israel, when the Lord has saved them. Then with a new heart, the nation born again, with a new spirit within them, they read their history aright and learn to know the God of Jacob as never before. It is the fulfillment of Ezekiel 36:31. "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourself in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations."

THE DEUTERONOMY SECTION: BOOK FIVE: PSALMS 107-150

The final section of the book of Psalms, the fifth, is just like Deuteronomy. It shows God's ways with Israel, the end of these ways in deliverance not only for His people, but for their land, for the nations of the earth, for all creation. The book ends with the Hallelujah Chorus of redemption.

Psalms 107-108

PSALM 107

Israel's Deliverances

1. The wanderers regathered (107:1-9)
2. The prisoners released (107:10-16)
3. The fools healed (107:17-22)
4. Brought to the haven of rest (107:23-32)
5. The praise of His ways (107:33-43)

In the book of Deuteronomy, in Moses' great prophecies, we read of the scattering of the nation, the lot which should befall them as a disobedient people, becoming wanderers among the nations. But we read also of the promised regathering and the promises of restoration (Deut. 30). How harmonious it is to find the first Psalm of the Deuteronomy section celebrating this promised regathering and restoration! Again we see the divine power which guided the hand of the instrument who arranged these Psalms. And they thank and praise Him for this accomplished salvation. As wanderers amongst the nations they suffered and yet perished not as the peculiar nation; but now they are brought back to the city of habitation, to their own land. They had rebelled against the words of God and sat as prisoners in darkness and shadow of death; but now they are released and He brought them out of the darkness, out of judicial blindness, out of national and spiritual death, into life and light. They were fools on account of their transgressions; but now His Word has healed them. They were the storm tossed nation upon the restless waves of the sea, the emblems of the nations of the world; but now the storm is passed, the sea of nations is calm and He has brought them into the desired haven. For all this they praise Him. They are now "Israel His glory" through whom and in whom He has glorified Himself.

PSALM 108

Israel's Praise for Salvation

1. Israel's praise (108:1-4)
2. The inheritance (108:5-9)
3. Through God alone (108:10-13)

This Psalm is not a patchwork of two other Psalms as the critics declare (Ps. 72:8-12 and 60:7-14), but it comes in as a Psalm of David to give another hint on Israel's praise in the day of deliverance. Their heart is fixed to sing His praise. It is a praise not only amongst themselves, but a praise among the nations. Where they were once a byword they are now a blessing. And their deliverance and possession they will enjoy is not of themselves; it is through God and His power. The second part of the Psalm looks back to the time when deliverance had not yet come.

Psalms 109-113

PSALM 109

Christ in Humiliation

1. Despised and rejected (109:1-5)
2. The rejectors and their fate (109:6-20)
3. The Christ in His sorrow (109:21-25)

The five Psalms which are next grouped together belong to the most interesting in the whole collection. They give a marvellous prophecy concerning Christ, His rejection, exaltation and coming glory. In Psalm 109 we see Him rejected. In Psalm 110 He is at the Right hand of God, waiting till His enemies are made His footstool, returns as the victorious King and becomes the Priest after the order of Melchisedec. The three Psalms which follow, all Hallelujah Psalms, show forth His glory and His kingdom.

Psalm 109 gives us once more the story of His rejection. We hear the complaints from Himself, indited by His Spirit. He is the hated One. They fight against Him without a cause. They reward Him with evil for good, and His love, the love which sought them, they answer with hatred. Verses 6-15 have reference to Judas who betrayed Him and applies to all those who reject Him. Verse 8 is quoted by Peter in Acts 1:20. Of the betrayer it is said, "He loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him." But this is true of all who reject Christ. All the cursing and punishment which come upon the rejectors of Christ are self-chosen. In the closing verses we hear the weeping, sorrowful voice of the Rejected One.

PSALM I 10

The Psalm of the King-Priest

1. His person, exaltation and waiting (110:1)
2. His manifestation and His glory (110:2-4)
3. His judgment and His glory (110:5-7)

Seven verses only, but what revelations and depths we find here! The

Psalm is frequently quoted in the New Testament. Who is the person of whom the first verse testifies? Here is the critics' answer. "Is the Psalm Messianic? Looking at it by itself, and without prepossession, one would not say that it is, for the writer has in mind some actual ruler of his own day, and his references are to events of his own times" (Prof. Davidson). But what about the words of our Lord in Matthew 22:41-46? In the light of these words every critic who denies the Messianic meaning of this Psalm is branded as a liar. And such they are. Our Lord shows that David wrote the Psalm, that he wrote by the Spirit, that the Psalm speaks of Him, as David's Lord and David's Son. To deny these facts is infidelity. And the Holy Spirit useth the Psalm to show the exaltation of Christ. See Acts 2:34-35; Hebrews 1:13 and Hebrews 10:12-13.

How well it fits in with the preceding Psalm. The Rejected One is the Risen One. His work on earth as the sin-bearer is finished. God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to His own right hand. There He waits for the hour when God will make His enemies His footstool. This is not accomplished by the preaching of the gospel, nor by the work of the Church, but by God when He sends Him back to earth again and He will bind Satan and all His enemies will be overthrown. The rod of His power will proceed out of Zion and He will rule in the midst of His enemies. Then in that coming day of power, His people (Israel) will be a willing people, who will shine in the beauty of holiness in the dawning of the morning. He will be the true Melchisedec, a Priest upon His own throne. Then His judgment work and His Victory, judging nations and the wicked head of nations. "He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall He lift up the head." He was the humbled One, who drank of death, and now is the exalted One. (For a complete exposition see the author's pamphlet "The Royal Psalms.")

PSALM 111

Hallelujah! He Has Done It

This is the first Hallelujah Psalm, following Psalm 110, in which He is praised for what He is and for what He has done. It is a perfect alphabetical Psalm: not a letter of the Hebrew alphabet is missing. It shows the perfect One and the perfect praise He will receive when He is on the throne as the King-Priest. The next Psalm is also perfect in its alphabetical character. Both Psalms have 22 lines, each prefixed by a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in their right order. All then will be order and all human speech can say will be said in praise of Him who has done it. Read the Psalm and see how His work in redemption is praised. He has now sent redemption to His people. Verse 9 is quoted in Zacharias' song, Luke 1:68, showing that in faith he too looked forward to the time of the kingdom.

PSALM 112

Hallelujah! The Righteous are Blessed

The second Hallelujah Psalm tells of blessedness of the righteous in the day the Lord is enthroned. It is preeminently Israel. His seed will be mighty upon the earth--wealth and riches will be in their house. And the righteous character, their righteous acts are given. "He hath dispersed, He hath given to the poor." While this is done by the Jews even today in their unbelief, what will it be in the day they know Him and worship the King? See Paul's answer in Romans 11:12-15. The desire of the wicked is then

perished. Righteousness reigns.

PSALM 113

Hallelujah! Praise His Name!

This third Hallelujah Psalm begins with a Hallelujah and ends with Hallelujah. It is given in the authorized version as "Praise ye the Lord" (as in all these Psalms). It would be more sublime to maintain this grand old Hebrew word "Hallelujah." His Name is praised. "Praise the name of the Lord--Blessed be the Name of the Lord." Yea from the rising of the sun unto the going down, from one end of the earth unto the other, the Lord's Name is praised. He is above all nations. What Hannah so beautifully uttered in her song of Praise has come. "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." That is Israel redeemed by Him. And so is "the barren woman, a joyful mother of children."

Psalms 114-117

PSALM 114

Retrospect

As in the book of Deuteronomy God's ways with His people are reviewed so we find in some of these Psalms the reminders of God's dealing with Israel in the past. Here it is first of all the deliverance out of Egypt and what happened then, the type of the greater deliverance effected by the power of God. (See Jeremiah 16:14-15.)

PSALM 115

Who Their God is?

1. Israel's God (115:1-3)
2. In Contrast with Idols (115:4-8)
3. O Israel Trust in the Lord (115:9-18)

Here Israel acknowledges her Saviour-Lord, unto Him alone is glory due. The nations had asked, Where is now their God? (Ps. 43:3, 10; 79:10) The Contrast between the God of Israel and the dumb idols of the nations follows. But Israel's God, the Lord, who has delivered them, is the living God and therefore the exhortation to trust Him who blesseth His people. Israel's resolve closes this Psalm: "But we will praise the LORD, from this time forth forevermore. Hallelujah."

PSALM 116

The Praise of Israel for Deliverance from Death

1. The Deliverance-Experience (116:1-9)
2. Thanksgiving (116:10-19)

Redeemed Israel expresseth in this Psalm her love to Jehovah for His gracious deliverances, for answered prayer and for His salvation. They were, during the great tribulation, as a faithful remnant; surrounded by

the sorrows of death, the pains of Sheol were upon them. Death stared them in the face. Then they cried to the Lord, and, as of old, He heard them and sent deliverance. He dealt bountifully with them, delivered them from death, the eyes from tears, the feet from falling. And now they serve Him, taking the cup of salvation and performing their vows unto the Lord. The death of those who died in the tribulation period as martyrs is mentioned in verse 15. "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." Compare with Rev. 14:13, which also refers to the Jewish martyrs during the tribulation. The Psalm ends with another hallelujah.

PSALM 117

This is the shortest Psalm. All the earth, all the nations, are now called upon to praise, because His merciful kindness has been great towards His people Israel. And their blessing means the blessing of the world. See the significant and interesting verse in Deut. 32:43, the last note of Moses' prophetic song. Hallelujah.

Psalms 118-119

PSALM 118

Christ the Head of the Corner

1. His mercy endureth forever (118:1-7)
2. The past experience (118:8-12)
3. Jehovah My Salvation (118:13-19)
4. The rejected stone the head of the corner (118:20-29)

This Psalm is the last one which is used from ancient times by the Jews in celebrating the Passover in the home. The Psalms sung begin with Psalm 113 and end with this Psalm, the one hundred-eighteenth. It is called the "Hallel," the Praise. Our Lord sang together with His disciples this Hallel (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26). The One hundred-eighteenth Psalm was therefore the last which they sang, before the Lord with His disciples that memorable night when He was betrayed, went to the Mount of Olives. And speaking to the chief priests and elders our Lord applied this Psalm to Himself. See verse 22 and compare with Matthew 21:42. Furthermore verse 26 is also used by our Lord in Matthew 23:39. So there is no question that the Spirit of God speaks of Him in this Psalm. It has been suggested that this Psalm was written and used in connection with the completion and consecration of the second temple. That it was used in other feast days, apart from Passover, seems evident; perhaps in connection with the feast of tabernacles. The Psalm begins with thanksgiving for His mercy manifested towards Israel in their deliverance. Nations had compassed them about, but in the Name of the Lord they were cut off. Therefore Israel sings "The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation." The voice of rejoicing and salvation is therefore in the tabernacles of the righteous (verses 14, 15). They are delivered from death. Note the "gates of righteousness" in verse 19, through which they wish to enter in to praise the Lord. But immediately after we read, "This gate is the LORD's, the righteous shall enter it." It is Christ the Door, through which Israel also must enter, as every other sinner must use Him as the gate, the door of salvation. We read therefore at once "I will praise Thee for Thou hast heard me and art become my salvation."

And then the verse concerning the stone which the builders rejected

and which has become the head of the corner. His people rejected Him and He became for them the stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. They were nationally broken to pieces (Matthew 21:44). Then He became the cornerstone of another house, the church, of which He is the chief cornerstone. In the day of His second coming He will be the smiting stone, striking down Gentile dominion (Daniel 2) and grinding opposing nations to powder (Matthew 21:44). And after that He will be the cornerstone for His people Israel, upon whom all rests. This is indeed marvellous in their eyes as it is also to us. The cry "Hosanna," or "Save now" (verse 25) and "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the LORD is the welcome of Israel to her returning King.

PSALM 119

The Law Written on Their Hearts and the Praise of the Word

This is the longest and most perfect Psalm in the whole collection. It is an alphabetical acrostic. It is composed of 22 sections, each having eight verses, 176 verses in all. Each section begins with a different letter of the alphabet and each verse of the different sections begins also with the corresponding letter of the section. Eight times each letter of the alphabet is mentioned in the 22 sections. The number eight in the Word has the meaning of resurrection, death is gone and life has come. Israel has passed from death to life and now extols the Word and the Law of God. The time has come when it is fulfilled what the Lord spoke through Jeremiah concerning the new covenant, "I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts." We behold then in this Psalm the joy of Israel in knowing the Word, in praising the Word and being obedient to the Word. In each verse except verses 90 and 122 the Word is mentioned and the following terms are employed: Law, commandment, word, saying, path, way, testimonies, judgments, precepts and statutes.

We give the twenty-two sections under the different Hebrew letters with a brief succession as to their contents:

Aleph: 1-8. The blessedness of those who obey His Word.
Beth: 9-16. Cleansing by the Word.
Gimmel: 17-24. The quickening by the Word.
Daleth: 25-32. The uplift of the Word.
He: 33-40. The power of the Word.
Vav: 41-48. Victory through the Word.
Zayin: 49-56. Comfort through the Word.
Cheth: 57-64. Preservation through the Word.
Teth: 65-72. The pricelessness of the Word.
Jod: 73-80. Testimony through the Word.
Caph: 81-88. Affliction and the Word.
Lamed: 89-96. The Word eternal.
Mem: 97-104. Wisdom through the Word.
Nun: 105-112. The Word the lamp and the light for all occasions.
Samech: 113-120. The wicked and the Word.
Ain: 121-128. Separation and deliverance through the Word.
Pe: 129-136. Communion through the Word.
Tsaddi: 137-144. Zeal for the Word.
Koph: 145-152. Experience through the Word.
Resh: 153-160. Salvation through the Word.
Schin: 161-168. The perfection of the Word.
Tav: 169-176. Prayer and praise through the Word.

The whole Psalm is a marvellous evidence of verbal inspiration. But what will it be when the Word will thus be exalted and lifted to its proper place of supremacy through righteous Israel!

PSALMS 120-134

The Psalms of Degrees

Fifteen brief Psalms follow, called songs of degrees, or, ascents. They were in all probability used by Israel going up to Jerusalem three times a year to celebrate the feasts of the Lord--"Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, a testimony for Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD." They are indeed Psalms of "the goings-up" for we rise higher and higher as we read through them. Prophetically they give us again the steps from trial and suffering to the glorious consummation.

As they are so simple in language and construction no lengthy annotations are needed. Psalm 120 begins with distress, picturing again the suffering of the righteous godly remnant. In Psalm 121 the Keeper of Israel, the Covenant Keeping God, is revealed, who has made heaven and earth and neither sleeps nor slumbers. He has kept Israel in all their troubles and saved them. Psalm 122 brings us to Jerusalem and the house of the Lord. The redeemed ones go up to worship there. Thrones are there also for judgment, the thrones of which our Lord speaks in Matthew 19:28. Peace and prosperity have come.

In Psalm 123 there is another cry to Jehovah to be gracious and the next one, Psalm 124 celebrates the deliverance of Israel. "Blessed be the LORD." Men arose against them, but the Lord delivered His people. Mount Zion comes in view in Psalm 125. It cannot be moved, it abideth forever. Then when the word and the law go forth from Zion and Jerusalem there will be peace upon Israel. Psalm 126 celebrates the returning of the captives and this is the song they sing: "The LORD has done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Psalm 127 acknowledges the Lord as the One from whom all blessing and help must come. Psalm 128, which follows, shows the blessing which will be enjoyed when the Lord reigneth and blesseth His people out of Zion. Then we have a description of Israel's affliction in the past and how the hand of the Lord delivered them out of all their afflictions--Psalm 129. And in Psalm 130 we have a Psalm calling for forgiveness and waiting for the plenteous mercy and redemption which is promised to His people. Psalm 131 shows Israel prostrate, hoping in the Lord. Then follows the beautiful One hundred thirty-second Psalm in which Zion and its King is prophetically unfolded. It begins with the promise made by David to build a house, but the Lord made a covenant instead with him. "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" (Acts 2:30). And that is Christ, as the Son of David. He will choose Zion; it is His resting-place. He is enthroned in Zion and what is connected with it is found in verses 13-18.

The One hundred thirty-third Psalm gives a blessed picture, not of the church, as it is so often taught, but of the great brotherhood of Israel, when once more they are a nation before the Lord. Then the Spirit will flow upon them and through them. In the last songs of the ascents, Psalm 134, we behold them in the house of the Lord, in the temple, lifting up their hands

in worship in the sanctuary, praising the Lord and calling for blessing out of Zion.

Psalms 135-136

PSALM 135

Israel's Knowledge and Praise of the Lord

1. Knowing and praising His Name (135:1-7)
2. Deliverances of the past remembered (135:8-12)
3. His Name endureth forever (135:13-21)

The last song of ascents (134) showed Israel's praise in the sanctuary. The two Psalms which come next show this worship and praise more fully. This Psalm begins with a hallelujah and ends with a hallelujah. It will be an endless praise. The servants who stand in the house of the Lord and in the courts are called to praise Him. Israel cleansed and redeemed is now His servant (Zech. 3:7). They are His peculiar treasure (verse 4--Exod. 19:5). Then once more the remembrance of the deliverances of the past, the contrast with the idols of the nations (like Psalm 115) and the call to the house of Aaron, the house of Israel, the house of Levi and all that fear Him, to bless the Lord.

PSALM 136

His Mercy Endureth Forever

This is a historical Psalm of praise, as His grateful people Israel think of all He has done. Twenty-six times we read "His mercy endureth forever." The Psalm begins with a threefold call to give thanks unto the Lord, the God of gods, and the Lord of lords; the triune God is thus adored. And after this the brief sentences which rehearse His mighty deeds of the past as Creator and as the God of Israel, are followed by the praise of His mercy. This Psalm was undoubtedly used in the Temple worship. The Jews in their ritual call it "the great Hallel." It will probably be used in the future, when in the new temple Israel will sing the praises of His Name.

PSALM 137

Remembering the Exile

This Psalm is in remembrance of the Babylonian captivity written by an unknown person. Some have named Jeremiah, but he was not in Babylon. The Psalm expresseth the never dying love for Zion in the heart of Israel. The same love is alive today after an exile of almost two thousand years. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy." But this Psalm also looks forward to the day when divine retribution will be measured out to the daughter of Babylon, when Israel's enemies will be punished for their sins committed against His people. The fate of the final Babylon as given in Isaiah 13:16 corresponds with the last verse of this Psalm. See also Isaiah 47:6.

PSALM 138

A Psalm of Deliverance

This is a Psalm of David giving praise to the Lord for deliverance. The harp is now no more hanging idle on the willows, but is tuned afresh to praise His Name. It is not alone David's praise who cried and the Lord answered him, it is the praise of Israel for accomplished deliverance from the exile and therefore the kings of the earth are also mentioned. "All the kings of the earth shall praise Thee O LORD, when they hear the words of Thy mouth."

PSALM 139

In the Divine Presence

1. His omniscience (139:1-6)
2. His omnipresence (139:7-12)
3. Praising Him (139:13-18)
4. Delighting in His holiness (139:19-24)

Here we see the people of God in the light of God, standing in His presence. He is an omniscient and an omnipresent God. How marvellously this is given in this Psalm. And what a comfort to know that He knoweth, that He seeth, that He is about us, around us, with us everywhere, that His hand leads, that His hand upholds the saint, and that darkness and light are both alike to Him. And this God has fashioned us, He is our Creator. And the thoughts of God mentioned in verses 17 and 18 may be applied to the thoughts of His love in redemption. How precious are these thoughts in which He has remembered the sinner's need. They are indeed more than the sand. And with the knowledge of God's omniscience, His omnipresence, His thoughts of love and grace, the saint loves God's holiness, separating himself from the wicked, counting God's enemies his enemies, hating those who rise up against God. And then that prayer-"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Can you pray thus daily in the presence of an omniscient and omnipresent Lord?

PSALMS 140-142

These three Psalms are Psalms of David. The third one in this series, 142 is another Maschil, the last Maschil Psalm, being a prayer when David was in the cave. In these Psalms the distress of Israel, the godly remnant of Israel, is again remembered. In Psalm 140 we see prophetically the evil and violent man, that man of sin of the last days. And therefore have we one more imprecatory prayer for the destruction of the wicked (verse 10). The last verses look forward to the overthrow of the wicked and the exaltation of the righteous.

In Psalm 141 the righteous are seen in separation from the wicked, and the prayer for preservation. Psalm 142 contains continued prayer for deliverance. The psalmist's voice is lifted up to the Lord. Before Him he poured out his complaint and before Him he showed his trouble; not before man, but before the Lord. He knew when his spirit was overwhelmed that the Lord knew his path. All these experiences of trial and trouble will be repeated among the godly remnant, as all God's people have passed and are

still passing through similar soul-exercises.

PSALMS 143-145

In Psalm 143 the enemy is mentioned again, the enemy who pursued David. "For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has smitten my life down to the ground; he has made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have long been dead." How this again reminds us of the death experience of the pious remnant when the man of sin, the Antichrist will rule in Israel's land. Prayer for deliverance follows. Hear me speedily--Hide not Thy face from me--Cause me to hear Thy lovingkindness--Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies, I flee unto Thee to hide me!

The next Psalm riseth higher. Faith lays hold on God. Israel, as David did, will look in faith to Him who has the power to deliver His trusting ones. "My Goodness, and my Fortress; my high tower and my deliverer; my shield and He in whom I trust; who subdueth the peoples under me" (literal translation). They acknowledge before Him their nothingness, days like shadows passing away. We see how this prayer too brings the final days of the age and the coming deliverance by the intervention from above before us. "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 the great waters (the great tribulation) from the hands of the strangers (the Gentiles). Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood" (144:5-8). Then bursts forth the new song which anticipates the answer for this great prayer, the answer which the coming Lord brings to His suffering people, by His manifestation in power and in glory. Verses 12-15 anticipate the days of earthly blessings when the King has returned and rules in righteousness.

Psalm 145 is a magnificent outburst of praise. While it is David's praise, it is also the praise of Him who is the leader of all the praises of His people, the Son of David, our Lord. He is singing praises in the great congregation (Psalm 22:25) composed of His redeemed people Israel and the nations of the earth. It is an alphabetical Psalm, all letters of the Hebrew alphabet are given except one, the letter "nun." The Numerical Bible gives the following helpful suggestion: "I cannot but conclude that the gap is meant to remind us that in fact the fullness of praise is not complete without other voices which are not found here; and that those missing voices are those of the Church and the heavenly saints." In the book of Revelation we have the record of this full praise. See Chapter 5 and the fourfold Hallelujah in the beginning of Chapter 19. In this Psalm we find the celebration of the power of God displayed in judgments and in the deliverance of His people. Here we read likewise of His great lovingkindness in "The LORD is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and of great mercy." See Exodus 34:6-7. He has come to dwell in the midst of His people. The kingdom has come and His saints speak now of the glory of that kingdom. They will talk of His Power. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." The mercies of the Lord displayed in that coming kingdom are the subject of the praise in verses 14-21. We learn now why this great praise Psalm was preceded by Psalms of distress and prayer. It is in remembrance of the sufferings of His trusting people in the last days, and to magnify the Lord, who alone will save them and that unto the praise of His Name.

PSALMS 146-150

The Hallelujah Chorus

The five Psalms with which this marvellous book closeth are all Psalms of praise. The word "praise" is found in the Hebrew thirty-seven times. Each one of these Psalms begins and ends with a hallelujah; there are ten hallelujahs.

First is a hallelujah which celebrates Himself, He who is the God of Jacob. Precious vision of Him who delights to call Himself "the God of Jacob," the God who loves the sinner and has redeemed His people. Who is He? The Creator of all, by whom and for whom all things were made (verse 6). The Lord of judgment and redemption; the Lord who looseth the prisoners, openeth the eyes of the blind, raiseth them that are bowed down--and He will reign for ever. Hallelujah.

Psalm 147 is the hallelujah for what He has done for His people Israel. They praise Him now in the beauty of holiness. He hath built Jerusalem; He hath gathered the outcasts of Israel; He hath healed the broken hearted and bound up their wounds. He manifests His glory too by the heavens above. And nature is now in full harmony, restored and blessed. But Jerusalem is the center of praise and glory. He hath blessed Zion and her children (verses 12-14). Hallelujah.

The notes of praise swell higher and higher. In Psalm 148 it is heaven and earth which sing His praises. The heights above, the angels, the heavenly hosts, the sun, the moon, the stars, the heaven of heavens, His eternal dwelling place, praiseth Him. And so does all the earth. The creatures of the deep praise Him, so do the hills and the mountains, the trees of the field, beasts, cattle, birds and creeping things. The kings of the earth, all races of men praise Him, who is worthy of all praise. Hallelujah.

Psalm 149 is the hallelujah of the new song. Israel redeemed is leading the glory-hallelujah song. The children of Zion are joyful in their King. They sing praises unto Him. They praise Him for victory and blessing. He has executed vengeance upon the ungodly. All His saints have honour and Glory now. Hallelujah.

And the finale, the last Psalm! It is the praise to the full. We have seen the "crescendo" of praise in these Psalms and now we reach the "fortissimo," the loudest and the strongest praise. With this the great redemption is consummated. Look at this Psalm. It begins with hallelujah and after this first hallelujah we find nothing but praise--praise Him--praise Him--praise Him! Let all that hath breath praise the Lord. Hallelujah!

Do you praise Him now? Oh let us give Him as our Lord, Him who hath redeemed us by His own Blood, who will soon gather us home to be like Him and forever with Him, let us give Him praise. Let us sing our hallelujahs now, songs of praise in the night, while we wait for the break of day, the Morningstar. And the end of all for earth and heaven will be the hallelujah chorus, a praise which will never die in all eternity. Hallelujah!

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