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A Psalm by David.

PSALM 101: 1 I will sing of loving kindness and justice. To you, LORD, I will sing praises.

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The subject proposed, mercy and judgment, Psa 101:1. The psalmist's resolution in respect to his private conduct, Psa 101:2. He will put away evil, inward and outward, Psa 101:3. No evil person shall stand in his presence, Psa 101:4; nor any slanderer of his neighbor, Psa 101:4, Psa 101:5. He will encourage the faithful and upright, Psa 101:6; but the deceitful, the liars, and the profligate, he will cast out of the city of God, Psa 101:7, Psa 101:8.

The Hebrew and all the Versions attribute this Psalm to David. It shows us the resolutions he formed when he came to the throne; and it is a perfect model according to which a wise prince should regulate his conduct and his government.

Verse 1

I will sing of mercy and judgment - David might say, Adverse and prosperous providences have been of the utmost use to my soul; therefore, I will thank God for both. Or, as he was probably now called to the government of all the tribes, he might make a resolution that he would show דון chesed, incessant benevolence, to the upright; and משפט mishpat, the execution of judgment, to the wicked; and would make the conduct of God the model of his own.

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PSALM 101: 2 I will be careful to live a blameless life. When will you come to me? I will walk within my house with a blameless heart.

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Verse 2

I will behave myself wisely - God's law prescribes a perfect way of life; in this perfect way I have professed to walk, and I must act wisely in order to walk in it.

When wilt thou come unto me? - I can neither walk in this way, nor grow wise unto salvation, unless thou come unto me by thy grace and Spirit; for without thee I can do nothing.

I will walk within my house - It is easier for most men to walk with a perfect heart in the Church, or even in the world, than in their own families. How many are as meek as lambs among others, when at home they are wasps or tigers! The man who, in the midst of family provocations, maintains a Christian character, being meek, gentle, and long-suffering to his wife, his children, and his servants, has got a perfect heart, and adorns the doctrine of God his Savior in all things.

The original is very emphatic; אתהלך ethhallech, "I will set myself to walk," I will make it a determined point thus to walk. I will bear and forbear with children, servants, etc., not speaking rashly, nor giving way to bad tempers. Through various motives a man will behave with propriety and decorum among others; but none of these motives operate in his own house where he feels himself master, and consequently under no restraint.

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PSALM 101: 3 I will set no vile thing before my eyes. I hate the deeds of faithless men. They will not cling to me.

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#### Verse 3

I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes - I will undertake no unjust wars; will enter into no sinful alliances; will not oppress my subjects by excessive taxation, to support extravagance in my court. I will not look favourably on things or words of Belial. What is good for nothing or evil in its operation, what is wicked in its principle, and what would lead me away from righteousness and truth, I will never set before my eyes.

Them that turn aside - I shall particularly abominate the conduct of those who apostatize from the true religion, and those who deny its Divine authority, and who live without having their conduct governed by its influence, such shall never be put in a place of political trust or confidence by me.

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PSALM 101: 4 A perverse heart will be far from me. I will have nothing to do with evil.

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#### Verse 4

A froward heart - Rash and headstrong men shall not be employed by me.

I will not know a wicked person - I will give no countenance to sinners of any kind; and whatever is evil shall be an object of my abhorrence.

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PSALM 101: 5 I will silence whoever secretly slanders his neighbour. I won't tolerate one who is haughty and conceited.

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#### Verse 5

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor - All flatterers and time-servers, and those who by insinuations and false accusations endeavor to supplant the upright, that they may obtain their offices for themselves or their dependants, will I consider as enemies to the state, I will abominate, and expel them from my court.

The Chaldee gives a remarkable meaning to the Hebrew, *מלשני בסתר רעהו melasheni bassether reehu*, which we translate, Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, and which it renders thus, *דמשתעי לישן תליתי על חבריה demishtaey lishan telitai al chabreyah*: "He who speaks with the triple tongue against his neighbor." That is, the tongue by which he slays three persons, viz.,

1. The man whom he slanders;
2. Him to whom he communicates the slander; and,
3. Himself, the slanderer.

Every slanderer has his triple tongue, and by every slander inflicts those three deadly wounds. Such a person deserves to be cut off. On this subject St. Jerome speaks nearly in the same way: *Ille qui*

detrahit, et se, et illum qui audit, demergit; "He who slanders ruins both himself and him who hears him;" he might have added, and him who is slandered, for this is often the case; the innocent are ruined by detraction.

A high look and a proud heart - One who is seeking preferment; who sticks at nothing to gain it; and one who behaves himself haughtily and insolently in his office.

Will not I suffer - לא אוכל lo uchal, I cannot away with. These persons especially will I drive from my presence, and from all state employments.

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PSALM 101: 6 My eyes will be on the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me. He who walks in a perfect way, he will serve me.

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#### Verse 6

Mine eyes - My approbation.

Upon the faithful - The humble, upright followers of God.

That they may dwell with me - Be my confidants and privy counsellors. No irreligious or wicked man, whatever his abilities may be, shall be countenanced or supported by me. I will purify my court from the base, the irreligious, the avaricious, the venal, the profligate, and the wicked.

He that walketh in a perfect way - He that is truly religious.

He shalt serve me - Shall be my prime minister, and the chief officer in my army, and over my finances.

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PSALM 101: 7 He who practices deceit won't dwell within my house. He who speaks falsehood won't be established before my eyes.

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#### Verse 7

He that worketh deceit - that tenets lies - I will expel from my court all sycophants and flatterers. Tiberius encouraged flatterers; Titus burned some, banished several others, and sold many for slaves.

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PSALM 101: 8 Morning by morning, I will destroy all the wicked of the land; to cut off all the workers of iniquity from the LORD's city.

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#### Verse 8

I will early destroy - I will take the first opportunity of destroying all the wicked of the land. I will purify my court, purge Jerusalem, and cleanse the whole land of every abomination and abominable person; so that the city of my God, where holiness alone should dwell, shall indeed become the Holy

City; that the state may be made prosperous, and the people happy. Such an administration must have been a good one, where such pious caution was used in choosing all the officers of the state.