

PSALM 5

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 5

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, a Psalm of David

This psalm, being written by David under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is inscribed and sent to him who had the direction and management of the musical instruments used in religious worship in David's time, and afterwards in the temple service, called "nehiloth"; as the preceding psalm is inscribed to him who presided over those called "neginoth", (^{<900>}Psalm 4:1); and as they seem to be such instruments as were played upon with the hand, stringed instruments, so these seem to be wind instruments, such as were blown with the mouth; as the flute, cornet, pipe, trumpet, and hautboy; the word being derived from the same root as "chalil", the pipe, is, and signifies hollow, and so designs such hollow instruments as above: Rabbenu Hai^{f70} thinks the instrument intended was so called from the humming of bees, which its sound resembled; "nechil shel deborim", with the Rabbins^{f71}, signifying a swarm of bees; and a word from the same root in the Arabic language is used for a bee^{f72}; though others have thought it might be so called from the murmuring noise of a brook or river, to which the sound of it might be like; because a word from the same root this is thought to come in the Hebrew language signifies a brook or river. The Septuagint version, which is followed by the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, renders it, "for that which obtained the inheritance"; and the Arabic version, "concerning the inheritance"; and to this agrees the old Midrash^{f73} of the Jews; but what is the meaning is left to everyone to conjecture; the reason of these versions is because the root from whence this word is supposed to be derived signifies to "inherit": the Targum renders the whole inscription thus, "to sing upon the dances a song of David", as it does the title of the preceding psalm; Aben Ezra takes the word, as he does "neginoth", to be the first word of some song, to the tune of which this psalm was to be sung; and Jarchi interprets it "troops" or "armies", and says it is a prayer on account of the troops of enemies that came against Israel; and that the singer said this psalm on the behalf of all Israel. The Syriac interpreter calls it a prayer in the person of the church,

when it went in the morning to the house of the Lord. The occasion of it seems to be the same with that of the two former: and certain it is that the psalmist was in distress by reason of wicked men when he wrote it, as appears from several passages in it; the ancient Jewish doctors ^{f74} understood by them Doeg and Ahithophel; some think it was penned, as the preceding psalm, on account of the rebellion of Sheba, (~~1000~~ 2 Samuel 20:1-22).

Ver. 1. *Give ear to my words, O Lord*, etc.] Meaning not his words in common conversation, but in prayer; the words which came out of his mouth, and were audibly expressed by him at the throne of grace, and design vocal prayer; and so stand distinguished from the meditation of his heart, sacred ejaculations, or mental prayer; (see ~~1540~~ Psalm 54:2 19:14); and words in prayer to God ought to be few, at least not repeated, (~~2000~~ Ecclesiastes 5:2 ~~4000~~ Matthew 6:7); and these should be a man's own words, as were the psalmist's; not what were suggested by another, or written in a book before him, but what were of his own composing and putting together, under the direction of the Spirit of God; who put words into his mouth, and furnished him both with words and matter, and which he freely uttered before the Lord: and this is the "parrhesia", boldness, freedom of speech, which the Scriptures speak of, (~~3000~~ Hebrews 4:16 10:19); and the saints are allowed to use in prayer before God; when they may pour out their souls unto him, and freely tell him all their mind, as the psalmist now did; to which he entreats the Lord to "give ear"; not that God has a corporeal ear as man has, but he that made the ear has the power of hearing: this is an anthropopathy, and is spoken after the manner of men; such as are of kind and benevolent dispositions do not turn away, but stop and hear what a poor miserable object has to say to them, to whom they listen and return an answer; and so this phrase is expressive of the kind regard God has to the prayers of the destitute, which he does not despise but delight in; and of his bowing and inclining his ear, or of the strict and close attention he gives to them; and of the full and suitable answer he returns, in his own time and way; and is what the psalmist most earnestly entreats. He adds,

consider my meditation; the prayer he had meditated: for meditation is requisite to prayer, and should go before it; which is necessary in order to pray with the understanding; nor should men utter anything rashly and hastily before the Lord: it may design mental prayer, in distinction from vocal prayer, signified by his words before, such as that of Moses at the

Red sea, and of Hannah before Eli, (^{<0245>}Exodus 14:15) (^{<0013>}1 Samuel 1:13). The word also signifies inward mourning, and groans; the root from whence this is derived to mourn, and is so rendered in (^{<2384>}Isaiah 38:14); where Hezekiah compares his prayers to the chattering of a crane and swallow, and the mourning of a dove; and are the same with the unutterable groanings with which the Spirit of God sometimes makes intercession for the saints, (^{<8186>}Romans 8:26); and which are not hid from God, (^{<980>}Psalm 38:9); but are well known to him: he understands the language of a sigh or groan; and so the words may be rendered “understand my moan”^{f75}.

Ver. 2. *Hearken unto the voice of my cry*, etc.] Which seems to intend more than groans or words, even a loud outcry, as of a person in great distress; such as the strong crying of Christ, in the days of his flesh, when on the cross, forsaken by God, deserted by his friends, and surrounded by his enemies, (^{<387>}Hebrews 5:7); and such, in some measure, was the case of David. The arguments used by him, that the Lord would hearken to him, are as follow: and the first is taken from his interest in the Lord, and his relation to him,

my King and my God; the Lord was David’s King in a civil sense; though David was a king over others, yet the Lord, who is the King of kings, was King over him, and he owned him to be so; he was set upon the throne by him, had his kingdom from him, and was accountable to him: and he was his King in a natural sense, the kingdom of nature and providence belonging to him, as he was his Creator, preserver, protector, and defender; and in a spiritual sense, he being delivered from the dominion of other lords, sin, Satan, and the world, and brought to a subjection to him by his Spirit and grace; and so to own him as his King and Lawgiver, as well as his Saviour. And he was his God; not in a general way, as he is the God of the spirits of all flesh living; nor merely in the peculiar way in which he was the God of the people of Israel; but in a most special manner, as being his covenant God and Father in Christ. He was his God, not only as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of all grace; who had distinguished him by special and spiritual blessings and favours; and whom David loved, believed in, and worshipped as his God. And this his interest in him, and relation to him, he uses with great pertinence and propriety, as an argument that he might be heard by him; since the Lord was his King, and he his subject; the Lord was his God, and he one of his people; the Lord was his father, and he a child of his; and therefore entreats and hopes

to be heard; (see ^{<23515>}Isaiah 63:15,16). His next argument is taken from his resolution to pray to him, and to continue to do so:

for unto thee will I pray; and only to thee: not to the gods of the Heathen, to idols, the works of men's hands, who can neither hear nor save: and to thee always; suggesting, that he would never leave off praying till he was heard; he would give him no rest, day nor night, until he received an answer.

Ver. 3. *My voice shall thou hear in the morning, O Lord*, etc.] These words may be considered either as expressing the confidence of the psalmist, that the Lord would hear and answer him, and that in the morning, every morning, as soon and as often as he prayed; or that he would hear him early, quickly, speedily, seasonably, and at the best time; or else as declaring what he would do in consequence of his resolution to pray to the Lord in (^{<4912>}Psalm 5:2); he would pray to him every morning: the morning is a proper time for prayer, both to return thanks to God for refreshing sleep and rest, for preservation from dangers by fire, by thieves and murderers, and for renewed mercies in the morning; as also to pray to God to keep from evil and dangers the day following; to give daily food, and to succeed in business and the employments of life; and for a continuation of every mercy, temporal and spiritual. God should be served and sought in the first place; and so to do looks as if God was with his people, and they with him, when they awake in the morning. The Targum and Arabic version consider the words as a petition, and render them, “Hear^{f76} in the morning, O Lord, my voice”, or “my petition”; and so bear the same sense as the other petitions;

in the morning will I direct [my prayer] unto thee; or “set [it] in order”^{f77}: not so much respecting the order of words, the method of prayer, which is sometimes very broken and confused, and yet regarded by God; but in allusion either to the shewbread, placed in order on the table, which was typical of Christ's continual intercession for his people, (^{<4110>}Exodus 40:4); or to the offering of incense and other sacrifices, which when offered were put in order upon the altar; and to which prayer is compared, (^{<4912>}Psalm 141:2). Or the words may be rendered, “I will stand before thee in the morning”, as the Arabic version; or, “I will present unto thee”, as the Septuagint; that is, myself; (see ^{<3806>}Job 1:6) (^{<5121>}Romans 12:1); though the supplement, “my prayer”, seems to be a good one; and so the words are supplied by the Jewish commentators^{f78};

and will look up; or “out”^{f79} as out of a watch tower, (~~300E~~ Habakkuk 2:1); to see if help is coming, and for an answer of prayer: the phrase is expressive of hope, expectation, faith, and confidence, that an answer would be returned; and therefore the psalmist determines to look upwards to heaven, whither he directed his prayer, and from whence the answer must come; and to look out from his watch tower, where he was waiting for it, and to continue patiently expecting it till he had it: and the ground of his confidence were the nature and perfections of God, particularly his purity and holiness, as appears from (~~300E~~ Psalm 5:4).

Ver. 4. *For thou [art] not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness*, etc.] Sin, ungodliness; it is contrary to his nature, who is holy, just, and good; and to his will revealed in his law, which is the same with his nature; and sin is a transgression of it. God is so far from taking pleasure in sin, that it is the abominable thing which his righteous soul hates; though this hinders not his voluntary permission of sin, or his decree of it; which he has willed, though he does not delight in it, in order to magnify the riches of his grace and mercy in the salvation of his people: nor is this contrary to the delight and pleasure which he takes in the persons of his elect in Christ, though they are sinners in themselves, and were so when he so loved them as to give his Son for them, and who died for them while they were yet sinners; and when he sends his Spirit to regenerate and sanctify them, and are after conversion guilty of many sins: for, though he delights in their persons, he has no pleasure in their sins; nor is it consistent with the holiness of his nature to take pleasure in wickedness, let it be committed by whomsoever;

neither shall evil dwell with thee; that is, the evil man, who continues in a course of wickedness, and lives and dies in his sins. He has no communion with God here, nor shall he dwell with him hereafter; but shall be bid to depart from him, whether he be a profane sinner openly, or secretly a wicked professor of religion. The sense of the psalmist is, that since they were evil and wicked men, that were risen up against him, and gave him trouble, he entertained a strong confidence that God would hear him, for himself and his friends, whose cause was righteous; and appear against his enemies, who were wicked and ungodly men; and this he grounded upon the purity and holiness of God.

Ver. 5. *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight*, etc.] By the “foolish” are meant not such who are so in a natural, but in a moral sense, wicked and ungodly men. The Septuagint render the word, “transgressors of the law”;

and the Vulgate Latin version, “the unrighteous”; and the Arabic version, “they that contradict thy precepts”. The word ^{f80} used comes from a root which signifies to “praise”; and may design such as are praisers of themselves, proud boasters; who are elated with their own excellencies, with their wisdom, strength, honours, riches, and righteousness, and treat all others with contempt; for though they are unrighteous, yet they trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others, which betrays their folly; hence the Syriac version renders it, “the proud”; and the Chaldee paraphrase, “mockers”. And their not standing in the sight of God denotes his abhorrence and detestation of them; as when one man abhors another he cannot endure to look upon him, or bear to have him in his presence: and it shows that such shall receive no favour from him; for though, like proud Haman, they may think themselves his favourites, and they are the persons the king will delight to honour; yet to their great mortification they will find, that a poor Mordecai, a mean despicable believer, will be preferred unto them. Nor shall they stand in acceptance and confidence before him at the day of judgment: they will not be able to stand themselves, but will call to the rocks and mountains to cover them; and they will not be suffered lost and, but will be driven from the presence of the Lord into everlasting burnings,

thou hatest all workers of iniquity; not all that have sin in them or do sin, for there are none without it; but such who give themselves up to work wickedness, who make it the business of their lives, and are slaves unto it, living in a continued series and course of impiety; and this character does not only belong to openly profane sinners, but to some professors of religion; (see ⁴¹⁷²Matthew 7:22,23); and these are the objects of God’s hatred. Which does not so much intend any past act of his, the preterition or passing them by, when he chose others in his eternal purposes; in which sense the word is used in (⁴¹¹³Romans 9:13), as his continued aversion to them, denying them his grace and favour, and rejecting them from all nearness to him and communion with him; and may include the everlasting punishment of them, by which his displicine and hatred will be made manifest: and he is impartial in it, without any respect to persons, high or low, rich or poor; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, will come upon every soul of man that does evil. God’s love to his own people was antecedent to sin, and was placed upon them in Christ, in whom their persons are always well pleasing to him; and though they sinned in Adam, and became actual transgressors of his law, yet such was his love to their

persons, that he saves them from their sins by the blood and righteousness of his son.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing*, etc.] Or “a lie”^{f81}; whether in matters of religion; as false doctrines, errors, and heresies, are lies; and so all that deny the deity, sonship, and Messiahship of Christ, are liars; and the followers of the man of sin speak lies in hypocrisy: or in common conversation; such are like to Satan, and are abominable in the sight of God; and he will destroy them, either with a temporal destruction, with bodily diseases, as Gehazi was smitten with a leprosy; and with corporeal death, as Ananias and Sapphira; or with eternal destruction, the destruction of body and soul in hell; for all liars have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone;

the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man; or “the man of blood and deceit”^{f82}; that thirsts after blood; who sheds innocent blood, as the Targum paraphrases it. He showed his resentment against Cain, the first of this sort, in a way that was intolerable to him. He very early established a law, requiring that he who shed man’s blood, by man should his blood be shed; and he will give the whore of Rome, who has been drunk with the blood of his saints, blood to drink, because she is worthy. And all such who flatter with their tongue, and speak with a double heart, and lie in wait to deceive their neighbour, whether in things temporal or spiritual, are the objects of his abhorrence and indignation; (see ~~1023~~ Psalm 55:23). Now David’s enemies being such sort of persons, foolish wicked men, proud and haughty, workers of iniquity, liars, bloody and deceitful men, men that God had an abhorrence of, he therefore hoped and was confident that God would hear his prayers against them, and for himself.

Ver. 7. *But as for me, I will come [into] thy house*, etc.] The tabernacle of Moses, sometimes called the house of God, (~~1023~~ 1 Chronicles 9:23); for as yet the temple was not built. Here David had been used to go in times past; and though he was now in a kind of exile from it, he was confident he should again enter into and determined so to do whenever he had an opportunity, and that in the following manner:

in the multitude of thy mercy; grace or goodness. God is rich in mercy, abundant in goodness and truth; there is a multitude of mercy, love, and grace in his heart, and which is stored up in his covenant, and displayed in his Son, and in the provision of him as a Saviour of lost sinners; abundant mercy is shown in regeneration, in adoption, and in the forgiveness of sins,

and in every spiritual blessing, and in the gift of eternal life. And now, not relying on his own merits, strength, and righteousness, or leaning to his own understanding, but trusting in the mercy, grace, and goodness of God in Christ, and in hope of finding more grace and mercy to help in time of need; with thankfulness for what he had received, he determines, by divine leave and assistance, to enter, into the house of the Lord: and whatever other persons did, whom he had before described, it was his resolution to serve the Lord, under a sense of his mercy and goodness to him; which laid him under an obligation so to do, and is the true principle from which all service should proceed;

[and] in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple; either heaven, the habitation of God's holiness, towards which, and to God there, the psalmist would lift up his eyes, his hands, and heart; or the tabernacle, at the door of which the worship of God was performed, the sacrifices were brought, and God met his people; and therefore he says he would worship towards the temple or tabernacle, (^(100B)Leviticus 1:3 ^(102D)Exodus 29:42,43). And it may be that David has reference to the Messiah, the medium of divine worship; whose human nature was typified by the tabernacle and temple, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells: the psalmist therefore purposes to worship God in Christ, and to perform all acts of worship, as prayer, praise, hearing the word, offering sacrifice, etc. in the name and faith of Christ; looking towards him for the presentation of his services by him, and for the acceptance of them with God through him: and this he desired to do in the "fear" of God; not with a slavish fear, but with reverence and godly fear; with a fear influenced by the multitude of God's mercy, grace, and goodness, in art humble modest manner, not trusting to, or depending upon, any service done by him.

Ver. 8. *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness,* etc.] Not in mine, but thine; in the righteousness of God, which is revealed in the Gospel, from faith to faith, and is imputed by God, and received by faith; in this righteousness the psalmist desired to be led into the house of God, and appear before him; nor is there any other righteousness in which man can stand before God and worship. Or else the sense is, that God would lead him in the way of righteousness, in his righteous statutes, judgments, and ordinances; in which way the Lord does lead his people, (^(102B)Psalms 23:3 ^(101D)Proverbs 8:20). Or that he would lead him for his righteousness' sake; because of his faithfulness to his promises, that he would direct, uphold, and never leave nor forsake him. David was very sensible that the way of

man is not in himself, and that he could not direct his own steps; and therefore desired to be guided by the Lord, and to be led by the right hand of his righteousness, and to be upheld by it in his ways:

because of mine enemies; or, “those that observe me”^{f83} that lie in wait and watch for my halting, as Jeremiah’s enemies did; and would rejoice at my fall, and insult me, and blaspheme thy name; therefore lead, guide, and uphold me;

make thy way straight before my face; thy way of providence, thy way of grace, thy way of worship and duty; let it appear plain and manifest, that I may know in which way I should walk; and let all obstructions be removed out of the way, that I may walk straight on, without any difficulty or hinderance. He seems to have respect to his enemies, who lay in his way, that God would remove them; (see ^{<49B>}Psalm 5:9,10).

Ver. 9. *For [there is] no faithfulness in their mouth*, etc.] In the mouth of the ungodly, as the Chaldee paraphrase; in the mouth of every one of them, as Aben Ezra interprets it: that is, in the mouth of every wicked, bloody, and deceitful man; of everyone of David’s enemies, as Saul, or the conspirators with Absalom his son. There was no steadfastness in them; nothing right, sure, or firm said by them; nothing that could be depended upon; there was “no truth” in them, as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it. And as this was true of David’s, so of Christ’s enemies; of Herod, and of the Herodians, and of the Scribes and Pharisees; (see ^{<40B>}Matthew 2:8 22:16); and of the enemies of Christ’s Gospel; of all false teachers, who speak not the word faithfully; tell dreams, use the hidden things of dishonesty, walk in craftiness, handle the word of God deceitfully, and speak lies in hypocrisy: there is no certainty in them, nor is any thing they say to be trusted to. And this is the character of wicked men in common: they are an assembly of treacherous men; there is none upright among them; nor is any confidence to be placed in them: the people of God are in danger of being imposed upon and misled by them to their hurt; and therefore the psalmist prays, that the Lord would lead him in his righteousness;

their inward part [is] very wickedness; their heart, which is desperately wicked, exceeding sinful; not only wicked, and very wicked, but wickedness itself. This is the root and fountain of all wickedness, and the reason why there is no faithfulness in their mouth: the word^{f84} is sometimes rendered, “their inward thought”, (^{<49B>}Psalm 49:11 64:6); which is the

inmost of man, the nearest to him; and which, and even the imagination of it, is evil, and that continually: the word ^{f85} translated “wickedness” signifies woes, calamities, and mischiefs; and such the wicked hearts of men are full of, and are continually devising against the people of God, and his righteous cause. And this is the just character of ungodly men, even though they may profess to know God, have a form of godliness, and be outwardly righteous before men; as these were David was concerned with;

their throat [is] an open sepulchre; or as one, as the Targum paraphrases it; to which the throat of wicked men may be compared for its voracity and insatiableness; the grave being one of those three or four things, which never has enough or is satisfied. And this is true of the throat, whether it be considered as an instrument of speech, and throws out devouring words to the prejudice of the characters and reputations of others; or as an instrument of swallowing meat and drink, and where the pleasure of appetite is; and so may be expressive of the eager desire of the wicked after sin, who drink up iniquity like water; and of their delight in it, and their fulness of it, and yet still greedy, insatiable, and not to be satisfied: and their throat may be compared to an open grave for the nauseous stench it emits; corrupt communication, filthiness, and foolish talking, proceeding out of it; and horrible oaths, curses, imprecations, and blasphemies, being belched out through it; and for the danger which is by it, since into it men may fall unawares; and so the evil communications of wicked men corrupt good manners, and do great mischief to those who fall into company with them;

they flatter with their tongue; or, “make it smooth” ^{f86}; use oily expressions, soft language: or, “part” or “divide” ^{f87} their tongue; are double tongued and double hearted; and so deceive persons, as the apostle interprets it in (~~4813~~ Romans 3:13). They flatter God himself, drawing nigh to him in an hypocritical way; they flatter men, their neighbours, and impose upon them; they flatter princes, and such parasitic people were about David. And such are false teachers, who prophesy smooth things, and with good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple; or, which account there is great reason to pray to be led and directed by the Lord.

Ver. 10. *Destroy thou them, O God*, etc.] Or “make them guilty” ^{f88}; that is, make them appear to be guilty, either to themselves, that they may acknowledge their offences, confess their guilt, and ask for pardon; or to

others, pronounce them guilty, pass the sentence of condemnation on them: and the Chaldee paraphrase and the Syriac version render it by *byj* , “condemn them”, or hold them guilty; and the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, “judge” them; treat them as guilty persons, punish them, destroy them, soul and body, with an everlasting destruction;

let them fall by their own counsels; into the pit they have dug for others; as Haman fell by his counsels, and was hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai. And so sometimes a man’s own counsel casts him down, and is the cause of his ruin, (^{<38307>}Job 18:7). Or, “because of their own counsels” ^{f89}; which they have taken against the Lord and his Anointed, against his cause and interest, and against his righteous ones, particularly David; meaning their wicked counsels, in which they walked; (see ^{<28106>}Hosea 11:6). Or “from their counsels” ^{f90}; as the Targum and most versions render it: that is, let their counsels be turned into foolishness, become brutish, be carried headlong, and come to nought. Which had its accomplishment in Ahithophel;

cast them out; either out of their own country, and carry them into captivity; or from the presence of the Lord, from his tabernacle and worship; which David’s enemies now enjoyed, and gloried in: or into outer darkness, into a furnace of fire, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth;

in the multitude of their transgressions: when God deals with men in a way of grace, he turns away ungodliness from them, or them from their ungodliness; but when in a way of judgment he suffers them to die in their sins, and so perish: or “for the multitude of their transgressions” ^{f91}. The sins of transgressors are many and because of them they are cast out of the sight o God, and will be bid to depart from him hereafter;

for they have rebelled against thee: all sin is a rebellion against God; hence sinners are called rebellious ones. The rebellion of David’s subjects against him was a rebellion against God; because it was an attempt to dethrone him, whom God had made king of Israel. The word ^{f92} signifies to embitter, exasperate, and provoke: and such is the nature of sin, it is a bitter thing in itself, and it provokes the eyes of God’s glory. Now each of these expressions are to be considered, not so much petitions, as prophecies; and not as imprecations, but as predictions of what would be the portion of wicked men.

Ver. 11. *But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice*, etc.] Who trust not in themselves, in their own hearts, in their righteousness, or riches, or strength; but in the name, righteousness, and strength of the Lord: who betake themselves to him, and put all their confidence in him: let them rejoice in the salvation of the Lord, and in hope of eternal glory and happiness;

let them even shout for joy: not only rejoice inwardly, but express their joy externally, with their voices, and in the loudest manner; and that always, the matter and foundation of a believer's joy always continues; and so does the grace itself: though it is not always in exercise, yet it is an everlasting joy; and with it the redeemed of the Lord will come to Zion, and no man will be able to take away their joy. Which distinguishes it from the triumphing of the wicked, and the joy of the hypocrite, which is but for a moment;

because thou defendest them, or "coverest them"^{f93}; with the feathers of divine protection, under the shadow of his wings, and with the hollow of his hand: so God preserves his people, keeps them by his power, as the apple of his eye, and is a wall of fire round about them. Which is a good reason why they should rejoice, and shout for joy;

let them also that love thy name; as all that put their trust in the, Lord do; they love the Lord himself, because of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands, and for what he has done for them: they love all they know of him; they love him in all his persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; and every name of his, by which he has made himself known. They love, admire, and adore all his attributes and perfections, as they are displayed in the works of creation and providence; and especially in redemption by Jesus Christ, where they all gloriously meet together; and in whom God has proclaimed his name gracious and merciful. They love his word, his Gospel, by which he is made known; and they love his people, on whom his name is called, and who call upon his name. And let such, says the psalmist,

be joyful in thee: not rejoice in their boasting of their wisdom, strength, riches, and righteousness; all such rejoicing is evil: but in the Lord, in his grace, righteousness, and salvation. He is the only true proper object of spiritual joy; and there is good reason for it, from what follows.

Ver. 12. *For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous.*] As he has blessed him with a righteousness, even the righteousness of God imputed to him, by which he is denominated righteous, and with the forgiveness of his sins; so he will bless him with peace and prosperity, with all spiritual blessings, with the blessings of grace here, and glory hereafter. Hence he has just reason to rejoice and be glad;

with favour wilt thou compass him as [with] a shield: by which is meant the free favour, love, and grace of God in Christ, which springs from his sovereign will and pleasure; is his good will to men, and the exceeding riches of his grace, shown in his kindness towards them in Christ Jesus: and the compassing or crowning of the righteous with it, as the word ^{f94} signifies, is expressive of the abundance of it, in the application of it to them in conversion, and in every instance and blessing of grace; for such are crowned with lovingkindness and tender mercies; the grace of the Lord is exceeding abundant towards them, it flows and overflows; it surrounds them on all sides, and covers them all over: it is as a shield unto them from all their enemies, (^{3901B} Psalm 40:11); and which being held in the hand of faith, quenches the fiery darts of Satan; and is the saints security from every enemy, and from all hurt and danger, here or hereafter; (see ³⁹¹⁷ Zephaniah 3:17 ³⁹³⁸ Romans 8:38,39); and is a crown of glory upon them, which makes them glorious, lovely, and amiable. Some interpret this of Christ the righteous One; so Nebiensis.