

PSALM 43

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 43

This psalm is without a title; but may well enough be thought to be one of David's: and the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, and Syriac versions, call it a psalm of David, and the latter adds, when Jonathan told him that Saul intended to kill him; and certain it is, that it was wrote by the same person, at the same time, and upon the same occasion as the preceding, seeing some of the same expressions are used in it, (see ^{<BIB>}Psalm 42:1), title; and some take this and the preceding to be but one psalm, and this might be written with that on account of the rebellion of his son Absalom.

Ver. 1. *Judge me, O God*, etc.] The Targum adds, with the judgment of truth; (see ^{<BIB>}Romans 2:2);

and plead my cause; which was a righteous one; and therefore he could commit it to God to be tried and judged by him, and could put it into his hands to plead it for him; (see Gill on "^{<BIB>}Psalm 35:1");

against an ungodly nation; meaning either the Philistines, among whom he was; or his own nation, when they joined his son Absalom in rebellion against him: some understand it of the great numbers that were with Saul, when he was persecuted by him;

O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man; either Absalom, who, under pretence of a vow he had vowed in Hebron, got leave of David to go thither, and then engaged in a conspiracy against him; or Ahithophel, who had been his friend and acquaintance, but now joined with Absalom. It is true of Saul, who, under pretence of friendship, sought his ruin, and to whom he expressed himself almost in the same words here used; (see ^{<BIB>}1 Samuel 18:17,25 24:12,15).

Ver. 2. *For thou [art] the God of my strength*, etc.] Who being the strong and mighty God was able to deliver and save him, as well as to plead his cause; and was the author and giver of strength, natural and spiritual, to him; and was the strength of his heart, life and salvation; and is a good reason why he committed his cause unto him;

why dost thou cast me off? this is the language of unbelief: it being what was not in reality, only in appearance: the psalmist was ready to conclude he was cast off and rejected of God, because he was afflicted and left in a desolate condition by him, and he did not immediately arise to his help and deliverance, and had withdrawn the light of his countenance from him; but God does not cast off or reject any of his people; they always continue in his love, and in his covenant, and in the hands of his Son; they are always in his sight and family, and shall never perish eternally; and whoever casts them off, or casts them out, he will not;

why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? (see Gill on “~~1900~~ Psalm 42:9”).

Ver. 3. *O send out thy light and thy truth*, etc.] By light is meant, not the law, as Arama; but rather, as some Jewish ^{f594} interpreters understand it, the Messiah, the sun of righteousness, and light of the world; who is the author of all light, natural, spiritual, and eternal; and whose coming into the world is often signified by being sent into it. The Spirit of God also is the enlightener of men, both at first conversion and afterwards, and is sent down into their hearts as a comforter of them, by being the Spirit of adoption. The Gospel of Christ is a great and glorious light, which, with the Holy Ghost, is sent down from heaven; though perhaps here rather may be meant the light of God’s countenance, the discoveries of his favour and lovingkindness, which produce light, life, joy, peace, and comfort: and by “truth” may be meant, either Christ himself, who is the truth; or the Gospel the word of truth; or rather the faithfulness of God in the fulfilment of his promises; and so the words are a petition that God would show forth his lovingkindness, and make good his word, which would be of the following use:

let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles; that is, to the place of public worship, where the tabernacle was, the “hill” where it was, which seems to be Mount Zion; and is called “holy”; not that there was any real holiness in it; only relative, because of the worship of God in it; and the “tabernacle” is called “tabernacles”, because of the holy place and the most holy place in it; the one being the first, the other the second tabernacle, as in (~~3000~~ Hebrews 9:2,3); and this hill and tabernacles represented the church and ordinances of God, to which such who are possessed of light and truth are led.

Ver. 4. *Then will I go unto the altar of God*, etc.] Which was in the tabernacle, either of burnt offerings, or of incense, there to offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for mercies received. The altar under the Gospel dispensation is Christ, on which such sacrifices being offered, are acceptable to God, (^{<-3830>}Hebrews 13:10,15);

unto God my exceeding joy; as over the mercy seat, upon a throne of grace, and as his covenant God; or this is exegetical of the altar, which is Christ, God over all, blessed for ever; and who is the object of the unspeakable joy of his people, in his person, righteousness, and salvation;

yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God: the harp is a musical instrument, used in that part of public worship which concerned the praise of God under the former dispensation, and was typical of that spiritual melody made in the hearts of God's people when they sing his praise, (see ^{<6188>}Revelation 5:8 14:2).

Ver. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* etc.] (See Gill on "^{<-3925>}Psalm 42:5") and (see Gill on "^{<-3921>}Psalm 42:11").