

# PSALM 55

## INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 55

*To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil [A Psalm] of David.*

The occasion of this psalm was either the persecution of Saul, or the conspiracy of Absalom. Some think it was written when David understood that the inhabitants of Keilah would deliver him into the hands of Saul, (<sup><0232></sup>1 Samuel 23:12,13); and others when the Ziphites attempted a second time to do the same, (<sup><0231></sup>1 Samuel 26:1); but since a single person is spoken of that magnified himself against him, (<sup><0512></sup>Psalm 55:12,13); and Ahithophel seems to be designed; it may be thought rather to be written on account of Absalom's rebellion, and Ahithophel's counsel against him; who is considered by many Christian interpreters as a type of Judas, the betrayer of our Lord; and, indeed, there are many things in this psalm, if not the whole, which may be truly applied to Christ, as will be seen in the following exposition of it.

**Ver. 1.** *Give ear to my prayer, O God,* etc.] Which was for that which is just and right, and equitable to be given, as the word <sup>f713</sup> used signifies; being promised in the covenant of grace, ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ, Not only David was a man much given to prayer, as well as was the sweet psalmist of Israel; but the Messiah, as man, was much and often engaged in this work, in the days of his flesh, (<sup><0112></sup>Luke 6:12 <sup><0111></sup>Hebrews 5:7);

*and hide not thyself from my supplication;* made for mercies and blessings, which spring from the free grace and goodness of God, which is the sense of the word <sup>f714</sup> here used; and such are all mercies, whether temporal or spiritual; for none are merited by men: and from his supplication for such things the psalmist desires, that as he would not be as one deaf to him, so that he would not hide his eyes, or refuse to look upon him, and deny his requests; (see <sup><0115></sup>Isaiah 1:15).

**Ver. 2.** *Attend unto me, and hear me,* etc.] So as to answer, and that immediately and directly, his case requiring present help;

*I mourn in my complaint*; or “in my meditation”<sup>f715</sup>; solitary thoughts, and melancholy views of things. Saints have their complaints, on account of their sins and corruptions, their barrenness and unfruitfulness, and the decay of vital religion in them; and because of the low estate of Zion, the declining state of the interest of Christ, and the little success of his Gospel; and they mourn, in these complaints, over their own sins, and the sins of others, professors and profane, and under afflictions temporal and spiritual, both their own and the church’s. Christ also, in the days of his flesh, had his complaints of the perverseness and faithlessness of the generation of men among whom he lived; of the frowardness, pride and contentions of his disciples; of the reproaches, insult, and injuries of his enemies; and of the dereliction of his God and Father; and he often mourned on account of one or other of these things, being a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs;

*and make a noise*; not only with sighs and groans, but in so loud a manner as to be called roaring; (see ~~<4921>~~ Psalm 22:1 38:8).

**Ver. 3.** *Because of the voice of the enemy*, etc.] Of Absalom, as Arama; or of Ahithophel, who gave out he would smite the king only, (~~<1072>~~ 2 Samuel 17:2); and so of any spiritual enemy, as sin, Satan, and the world, when they threaten dominion and tyranny; and of the Scribes and Pharisees reproaching Christ, as being a Samaritan, and having a devil, and doing his miracles by his assistance; menacing, insulting, and triumphing over him, when on the cross;

*because of the oppression of the wicked*; of Absalom or Ahithophel, as Arama; who conspired against David, and obliged him to quit his palace, and the city of Jerusalem; and is applicable to the troubles which surround the people of God, from every quarter, by wicked men, and to our Lord’s being enclosed by them at the time of his Crucifixion, (~~<4922>~~ Psalm 22:12,13,16);

*for they cast iniquity upon me*; laid things to his charge he knew not: so wicked men falsely accuse the good conversation of the saints; and so the Jews imputed crimes to Christ he was innocent of; as immorality, sedition, blasphemy, etc.

*and in wrath they hate me*; as they do all the people of God, because chosen and called, and separated from them: and so they did Christ, and with a mortal hatred, though without a cause.

**Ver. 4.** *My heart is sore pained within me*, etc.] At the civil war in his kingdom; at the battle likely to ensue between his forces and Absalom's, and at the issue of it; (see <sup><2449></sup>Jeremiah 4:19); this was true of Christ in the garden, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death, and he was in pain, as a woman in travail, as the word <sup>f716</sup> here used signifies; and on the cross, when his heart, like wax, melted in the midst of his bowels;

*and the terrors of death are fallen upon me*; (see <sup><3054></sup>2 Samuel 15:14); thus it was with the human nature of Christ, when he desired, if possible, the cup might pass from him.

**Ver. 5.** *Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me*, etc.] Fear and dread of mind, and trembling of body;

*and horror hath overwhelmed me*; or "covered me"; he was in the utmost consternation and surprise at what he apprehended would be the issue of things; so Christ in the garden is said to be "sore amazed", (<sup><4143></sup>Mark 14:33); all which terror, fearfulness, trembling, and horror, arose from a sense of sin imputed to him, even of all the sins of his people, the faith of which must be nauseous to him, and the guilt thereof pressing upon him; and from a feeling of the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, which he endured in the room and stead of his people; and this shows the truth of his human nature, and the weakness and insufficiency of that, without his divine nature, to have performed the great work of redemption; also the evil of sin, the exceeding sinfulness of it, and the strictness of divine justice; and likewise the wonderful love of Christ in becoming a surety for his people, and what ease and pleasure they may take; all the pain, the trembling, and horror, were his, and all the joy is theirs.

**Ver. 6.** *And I said, oh that I had wings like a dove*, etc.] The psalmist pitches upon this creature, partly to suggest that his enemies pursuing him were like the ravenous hawk, and he like the harmless, innocent, and trembling dove; and partly because of its swiftness in flying. Aben Ezra thinks the dove is mentioned, because it is sociable with men, and who send letters by them for quick dispatch, of which instances may be given <sup>f717</sup>. This wish is expressed suitably to his character and case. The church is sometimes compared to a dove for its innocence, modesty, chastity, purity, affection, inconsolableness for the loss of its mate, and for its fearfulness, (<sup><2124></sup>Song of Solomon 2:14 4:1 6:9); and so is Christ, (<sup><2162></sup>Song of Solomon 5:12); who was typified by Jonah, whose name signifies a dove; and on

whom the Spirit of God descended as a dove, at his baptism, and by whom he was filled with his dovelike graces;

*[for then] would I fly away*; so David desired to flee, and did flee with good speed and haste from Absalom his son, (<sup>3054</sup>2 Samuel 15:14 <sup>348E</sup>Psalm 3:1), title. Arama observes of the dove, that, when weary with flying with one wing, it rests that, and flies with the other, and so has strength to fly continually without stopping, which he supposes to be the reason why the wing of a dove is desired. So every sensible sinner desires to flee from sin and sinners, and from wrath to come; from avenging justice, to Christ the city of refuge; so Christ, under the terrors of death, in his human nature, in a view of the law's curse and wrath, desired the cup might pass from him, and he might flee and escape death, though with submission to the divine will;

*and be at rest*; safe and secure from the conspirators, as David was; and as a sinner is that has fled to Christ; in whom is rest from the burden and guilt of sin, from the wrath, curse, and condemnation of the law, and under all afflictions, whether of body or mind; and not in the world, and worldly enjoyments; nor in the law, and the works of it: and as Christ is; not by escaping death, but through dying, and having done his work has ceased from it, and is entered into his rest; which was the joy set before him, that animated him as man to endure the cross, and despise the shame; here also true believers, weary of the world, desire to be, enjoying that rest which remains for the people of God.

**Ver. 7.** *Lo, [then] would I wander far off, [and] remain in the wilderness*, etc.] So David did when he fled from Absalom, (<sup>3052</sup>2 Samuel 15:23,27,28 16:1,2); so gracious souls desire to be; not in the wilderness of the people; but to be solitary as in a wilderness, clear of the company of wicked men, as Jeremiah wished for, (<sup>348E</sup>Jeremiah 9:2); and that they might be more at leisure for and given up unto spiritual devotion, and be secure from their enemies: and as this may be applied to Christ, it shows the wickedness, cruelty, and barbarity of the men of that generation among whom he lived; that he chose rather to be in the wilderness, among wild beasts, than to dwell among them, (<sup>3077</sup>Matthew 17:17) (<sup>2538</sup>Isaiah 53:8); some apply this to the state of the primitive church under Jewish persecution, when it fled from Judea, and settled in the wilderness of the Gentiles; the preachers of the word being scattered abroad by the windy storm and tempest of persecution, and the Gospel taken from the Jews, and carried to a nation

bringing forth the fruit of it, where it has remained ever since. With this may be compared the state of the church under Rome Pagan, in (~~6616~~ Revelation 12:6,13,14).

*Selah*; on this word, (see Gill on “~~4982~~ Psalm 3:2”).

**Ver. 8.** *I would hasten my escape from the windy storm [and] tempest.*] Of an army of rebellious subjects, bearing down all before them, and threatening with utter ruin and destruction; so a powerful army of enemies invading a country is signified by a storm and tempest, (~~2330~~ Isaiah 28:2 32:2); and may be expressive of the storm and tempest of divine wrath and vengeance the sensible sinner hastens his escape from by fleeing to Christ; and of the blowing and furious winds of persecution, which the church, Christ’s dove, flees from, by getting into the clefts of the rock, and the secret places of the stairs, (~~2714~~ Song of Solomon 2:14); and of the storms of divine wrath and justice that fell upon Christ as the surety of his people; from which the human nature, seized with fearfulness, trembling, and horror, desired an hasty escape.

**Ver. 9.** *Destroy, O Lord,* etc.] Or “swallow up” <sup>f718</sup>, as Pharaoh and his host were swallowed up in the Red sea; or as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were swallowed up in the earth; so all the enemies of Christ and his church will be destroyed; and death, the last of them, will be swallowed up in victory, (~~2338~~ Isaiah 25:8). The Targum interprets it, “destroy”, or “scatter their counsel”: but this seems to be intended in the next clause;

*[and] divide their tongues:* as at the confusion of languages at Babel, to which the allusion is: this had its accomplishment in Absalom’s counsellors according to David’s wish, (~~3063~~ 2 Samuel 15:31 17:14); and in the Jewish sanhedrim in Christ’s time, and in the witnesses they produced against him, (~~425~~ Luke 23:51 ~~4149~~ Mark 14:59); and of which there is an instance in the council of the Jews, held on account of the Apostle Paul, (~~4237~~ Acts 23:7);

*for I have seen violence and strife in the city:* in the city of Jerusalem, now left by David, and possessed by Absalom, by whom “violence” was done to David’s wives, through the advice of Ahithophel; and “strife”, contention, and rebellion, were fomented among the people: this David saw, understood, and perceived, by the intelligence brought him from time to time: and in the times of Christ the kingdom of heaven suffered “violence” in this place, and he endured the “contradiction” of sinners against himself.

**Ver. 10.** *Day and night they go about it, upon the walls thereof,* etc.] That is, “violence” and “strife” go about the walls of it continually; men of violence and contention are the only watchmen of it: a city must be sadly guarded that has no better watch than this;

*mischief also and sorrow [are] in the midst of it;* it was full of wickedness within and without; the city, as Aben Ezra observes, was like a circle; violence and strife were as a line round about it, and mischief and sorrow the centre of it: and these two commonly go together; where mischief is, sorrow follows.

**Ver. 11.** *Wickedness [is] in the midst thereof,* etc.] All manner of wickedness; abominable wickedness; wickedness as arrived to its highest pitch, and as having filled up its measure; (see <sup><3904></sup>Ezekiel 9:4 <sup><3907></sup>Zechariah 5:7,8);

*deceit and guile depart not from her streets;* where truth was fallen, and equity could not enter, (<sup><2894></sup>Isaiah 59:14); for these are contrary the one to the other, and are incompatible; where the one prevails, the other must give way. This whole account shows the aboundings of sin in Jerusalem at this time, and that it was openly and publicly committed, and contains so many reasons of the imprecations in (<sup><4599></sup>Psalms 55:9).

**Ver. 12.** *For [it was] not an enemy [that] reproached me,* etc.] An open and avowed one; a Moabite or a Philistine; such an one as Goliath, who cursed him by his gods; but one of his own country, city, court, and family, who pretended to be a friend; his son Absalom, according to Arama: so it was not one of the Scribes and Pharisees, the sworn enemies of Christ, who rejected him as the Messiah, and would not have him to reign over them, that reproached him, but one of his own apostles;

*then I could have borne [it];* reproach from an enemy is to be expected, and may be patiently endured; and, when it is for righteousness’ sake, should be accounted an happiness, and rejoiced at; but the reproaches of one that has been thought to be a friend are very cutting, wounding, heartbreaking, and intolerable, (<sup><4997></sup>Psalms 69:7,8,20); the calumnies and reproaches of the Scribes and Pharisees were borne by Christ with great patience, and were answered with great calmness and mildness, (<sup><4119></sup>Matthew 11:19 12:24,25 <sup><4388></sup>John 8:48,49). Or, “I would have lifted up” <sup>f719</sup>; that is, my hand, and defended myself; I should have been upon my guard, ready to receive the blow, or to have put it off, or repelled it;

*neither [was it] he that hated me:* openly, but secretly in his heart;

*[that] did magnify [himself] against me;* made himself a great man, and set himself at the head of the conspiracy and opposition against him, and spoke great swelling words, in way of raillery and reproach;

*then I would have hid myself from him;* as David did from Saul, when he became his enemy, (<sup>Q114</sup>1 Samuel 20:24 23:19 24:1); and as Christ from the Jews, (<sup>R189</sup>John 8:59); but as for Judas, he knew the place he resorted to; and therefore easily found him, (<sup>R182</sup>John 18:2); the sense may be, that he would have shunned his company, refused conversation with him; much less would he have admitted him to his privy councils, by which means he knew all his affairs, and there was no hiding and concealing things from him.

**Ver. 13.** *But [it was] thou,* etc.] The Targum is, “but thou Ahithophel”; of whom the words are literally to be understood, and so they are in the Talmud <sup>f720</sup>; and mystically and typically of Judas;

*a man mine equal;* “a man”, and not a beast, nor a devil; but a man, from whom humanity, kindness, and tenderness might have been expected; though both Ahithophel and Judas acted the part of a devil; and the latter is expressly called one, (<sup>R160</sup>John 6:70); “mine equal”; or like unto me; as the Targum. Ahithophel was not equal to David in dignity, as the king of Israel; nor in gifts, as the sweet psalmist of Israel; nor in grace as he; but as a man, a mortal dying man: kings and subjects are of the same blood, equally liable to death, and in the grave will be manifestly on a level: or rather the sense is, that he was in his esteem and affliction as himself; he was his friend that he loved as his own soul: so Judas could not be in every sense equal to Christ who is Jehovah’s fellow, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Indeed as a man he was like unto him; a frail, mortal man, though not sinless as Christ. The word *ykr* [k] may be rendered “according to my appointment” <sup>f721</sup>, ordination, or constitution; Judas being a man appointed and ordained to be an apostle of Christ with the rest: or, “according to my esteem” <sup>f722</sup>; being had in great esteem and familiarity with Christ: or, “according to my order” <sup>f723</sup>, rank and class; being taken into his family, admitted to his table, where he sat down and ate with him, as if he was his equal;

*my guide:* or “governor” <sup>f724</sup>. Ahithophel was not governor over David; but was made a governor by him: he was one of his dukes or nobles, as the



word is rendered in (~~0335~~ Genesis 36:15), was raised to great dignity by him; perhaps was chief minister of state: it is certain he was his counsellor, and his counsel was with him as the oracle of God, (~~1373~~ 1 Chronicles 27:33 ~~0163~~ 2 Samuel 16:23); he was his guide in civil affairs; he was directed by his advice, and it may be was president of his privy council. Judas was not only the guide of them to Christ who took him, (~~4016~~ Acts 1:16); but when the apostles were sent out two by two before the face of Christ, to preach where he himself should come, Judas was sent also, (~~4007~~ Mark 6:7 ~~4007~~ Luke 10:1);

*and mine acquaintance*: one well known to him, as Ahithophel was to David, and Judas to Christ, his friend and companion, in whom he confided, and who ate of his bread; and all these characters are so many aggravations of his treachery and wickedness.

**Ver. 14.** *We took sweet counsel together*, etc.] Not in religious matters; for in these the testimonies of the Lord were David's counsellors, (~~4324~~ Psalm 119:24); but in civil things: hearty counsel is one branch of friendship, and which greatly sweetens it, (~~3170~~ Proverbs 27:9); as this may be applied to Christ and Judas, it may denote the mutual delight and pleasure they had, the one in communicating, the other in receiving a notional knowledge of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, which are the counsel of God, (~~4407~~ Acts 20:27); for if hearers may hear the word gladly, as Herod did, and receive it with joy, as did the stony ground hearers, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; why may not Judas, and other preachers devoid of true grace, be thought to receive and preach the doctrines of the Gospel in a speculative way, with some kind of delight and pleasure? so professors of religion take sweet counsel together, when they communicate to each other what light and knowledge they have in the mysteries of the Gospel, and converse about experience, and the mysteries and secrets of internal godliness, and give and take advice in spiritual things; and sad it is when anyone of these drop their profession, and reproachers, scoffers, or persecutors;

*[and] walked unto the house of God in company*: David with his royal family and courtiers, and Ahithophel among the rest; where he delighted to go, and that with a multitude. So Christ and Judas often went to the temple together, with the rest of the disciples, who heard many an excellent sermon from his mouth: all which are further aggravations of sin and guilt. And so such persons, who have walked together to the house of God and



in it, have attended together on public worship, and walked together in holy fellowship; when any of these forsake the assembling of themselves together, scoff at religion, speak evil of ordinances, reproach the saints, or persecute them, it is very shocking, cutting, and grieving indeed.

**Ver. 15.** *Let death seize upon them*, etc.] Ahithophel and his accomplices, Judas and the men with him; as a mighty man, as the king of terrors, and shake them to pieces. Or, “let him exact upon them”<sup>[725]</sup>; as a creditor upon the debtor, and demand the debt of punishment for sin: or let him come upon them at an unawares; let them not die a natural, but a violent death. The Targum mentions Doeg and Ahithophel;

*[and] let them, go down quick into hell*: as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, went down quick or alive into the earth; so let these men die, and descend into the grave, in their full strength; and accordingly Absalom and Ahithophel died sudden and violent deaths, (<sup>[1072]</sup>2 Samuel 17:23 18:9); and so did Judas, (<sup>[426]</sup>Matthew 27:5); and the beast and false prophet, another part of the antitype, will be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire, (<sup>[680]</sup>Revelation 19:20);

*for wickedness [is] in their dwellings*; and dwells in them; wherever they go or sojourn, this goes and abides with them, being the reigning principle in their hearts and lives;

*[and] among them*; in the midst of them; their inward part is very wickedness. The Targum is, “in their bodies”. But rather the sense is, in their hearts; wickedness was both in their houses and in their hearts, and is the reason of the imprecation on them; which arises not from a revengeful spirit, but from a zeal for the glory of God; and is to be considered as a prophecy of what would be, and not to be drawn into an example for private Christians to act by.

**Ver. 16.** *As for me, I will call upon God*, etc.] Not upon a creature, on idols and images, on angels or saints departed; but upon God, in his time of trouble, for salvation and deliverance from enemies; who is able to save. This is to be understood of calling upon God in prayer; as (<sup>[1557]</sup>Psalms 55:17) explains it, and the Targum here renders it; though sometimes invocation of the name of God takes in the whole of divine worship;

*and the Lord shall save me*; which confidence was founded partly upon his promise to deliver such that call upon him in the day of trouble, (<sup>[1515]</sup>Psalms

50:15); and partly upon his power, whose hand is not shortened that it cannot save. The Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord shall redeem me.”

**Ver. 17.** *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray*, etc.] These being the stated times of prayer with the Jews, and which continued to later ages, (<sup><260></sup>Daniel 6:10). These times, they say <sup>1726</sup>, were fixed by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: the morning prayer by Abraham, according to (<sup><0228></sup>Genesis 22:3), the prayer of the “minchah” by Isaac, according to (<sup><0243></sup>Genesis 24:63); and the evening prayer by Jacob, according to (<sup><0281></sup>Genesis 28:11). The prayer of the evening was at the time of the evening sacrifice, to which it is compared, (<sup><490></sup>Psalms 141:2). This was at the ninth hour, at which time Peter and John went up to the temple to pray; and Cornelius prayed in his own house, (<sup><400></sup>Acts 3:1 10:30). The prayer of the morning was at the time of the morning daily sacrifice, and was about the third hour of the day; at which time the apostles met together for prayer on the day of Pentecost, (<sup><400></sup>Acts 2:1,15); and that at noon was at the sixth hour of the day; at which time Peter went up to the housetop to pray, (<sup><400></sup>Acts 10:9). And now, though we are not tied down to these exact and precise times of prayer, yet this teaches us that we ought to pray frequently and constantly, and that a day should not pass without it; and the morning and evening seem to be very proper seasons for it, seeing the mercies of the Lord are new every morning; and we should be thankful for them and the mercies of the night past, and implore divine protection and grace for the day following; and at evening we should express our thankfulness for the mercies of the day, and commit ourselves and families into the hands of God, who is Israel’s Keeper, that neither slumbers nor sleeps;

*and cry aloud*; denoting the distress he was in, the fervency of his prayer, and the importunity of it;

*and he shall hear my voice*; this he might be assured of, from the general character of God, as a God hearing prayer, and from his own special and particular experience of the truth of it, and from the promises made unto him.

**Ver. 18.** *He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle [that was] against me*, etc.] That is, God had preserved his life, and delivered him safe and sound from many a battle which was fought against him, and might seem at first to go against him; and had given him peace and rest from all

his enemies before the present trouble came upon him, (~~1001~~2 Samuel 7:1); wherefore he believed, that he who had delivered him in time past would deliver him again; this is the reasoning of faith, (~~5009~~2 Corinthians 1:9,10 ~~5017~~2 Timothy 4:17,18). The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render the last clause, “from them that draw nigh unto thee”; and the Syriac version renders it, by way of petition, “deliver my soul from them that know me”; and the Targum,

“lest evil should come unto me;”

*for there were many with me*; either enemies fighting with him; and so this is mentioned to set forth the more the power of God in his deliverance: or friends, who were on his side; all Israel and Judah, who loved David and prayed for him, as Jarchi interprets it: or the angels of God, as Aben Ezra; who being for the Lord’s people, are more than they that are against them, (~~1066~~2 Kings 6:16); or God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and if he is for us, who shall be against us? (~~5089~~Romans 8:31). The Targum is,

“for in many afflictions his Word was for my help.”

**Ver. 19.** *God shall hear and afflict them*, etc.] That is, either he shall hear the prayers of his servant, imprecating evils upon his enemies, (~~1889~~Psalm 55:9,15); and shall bring them down upon them, in answer to his requests; or it may be, rendered, “God shall hear and answer them” <sup>f727</sup>; he shall hear their blasphemies, and take notice of their wickedness, and answer them by terrible things in righteousness;

*even he that abideth of old*; or “is the inhabitant of eternity” <sup>f728</sup> (~~2875~~Isaiah 57:15); the eternal God, from everlasting to everlasting, who was before all creatures and before all time, and will ever remain the same, out of whose hands there is no escaping. The Targum is,

“and he inhabiteth the heavens from of old to everlasting.”

*Selah*; of this word, (see Gill on “~~1002~~Psalm 3:2”).

*Because they have no changes*; Kimchi renders it, who hath no changes; taking *wml* to be the same with *wl*, and interprets it of God; connecting it with the former clause, that he that abideth of old hath no changes. There is no variableness nor shadow of turning with him; he never changes his mind, nor alters his counsel, whether it be for good or evil; and yet wicked

men fear him not. But rather this is to be understood of sinners, as the Targum paraphrases it,

“who are not of old, and who do not change their evil way;”

who have no changes in their hearts, nor in their lives, but continue in their natural and sinful estate, without any impression of the power and grace of God upon them. Or they have no changes in their worldly circumstances, from good to bad, as Aben Ezra explains it; things go well with them, and they are not in trouble as other men; they are at ease and quiet, and are settled on their lees; (see <sup><1807></sup>Job 10:17) (<sup><1973></sup>Psalm 73:4,5 <sup><2481></sup>Jeremiah 48:11). Or they have no regard to their last change by death; and are not afraid of that, as Jarchi interprets it; they put away this evil day far from them; think nothing about it, as if it would never be, and as if they had made an agreement with it that this change should never come upon them, (<sup><1814></sup>Job 14:14,20);

*therefore they fear not God*; do not serve and worship him now, and are not afraid of his judgments here or hereafter; no change being made in their hearts, nor any alteration in their secular affairs for the worse; but having much goods laid up for many years, and sentence against their evil works not being speedily executed, their hearts are hardened, and they live secure in sin.

**Ver. 20.** *He hath put forth his hands*, etc.] The psalmist returns and describes, in this verse (<sup><1878></sup>Psalm 55:3), the cruelty, perfidy, and hypocrisy of his false friend; who had stretched forth his hands

*against such as be at peace with him*, or he pretended to be at peace with. So Ahithophel put forth his hands against David, by whom he had been admitted into his privy council, and there had taken sweet counsel together, by entering into a conspiracy and rebellion against him, and by forming a scheme to smite the king only, (<sup><1070></sup>2 Samuel 17:1,2); and Judas, though he did not lay hands on Christ himself, yet he gave his enemies a sign by which they might know him, and seize him, and hold him fast, as they did; and him Christ calls the man of his peace, (<sup><1940></sup>Psalm 41:9); they being at peace when he lifted up his heel against him;

*he hath broken his covenant*; of friendship that was made between them; he proved false and treacherous, broke through his engagements, and violated his faith.

**Ver. 21.** [*The words*] of his mouth were smoother than butter, etc.] Such were the words of Ahithophel, when in counsel with David; and such the words of Judas, when he said to Christ, “hail, master”, and kissed him, (<sup><135></sup>Matthew 26:49);

*but war [was] in his heart*; even a civil war, rebellion against his prince; that was what Ahithophel meditated in his heart; and nothing less than to take away the life of Christ was designed by Judas. The words may be rendered, “they were divided” <sup>f729</sup>; that is, his mouth and his heart: “his mouth [was] butter, and his heart war”; the one declared for peace, when the other intended war; (see <sup><208></sup>Jeremiah 9:8);

*his words were softer than oil*; at one time full of soothing and flattery:

*yet [were] they drawn swords*: at another time sharp and cutting, breathing out threatening and slaughter, destruction and death.

**Ver. 22.** *Cast thy burden upon the Lord*, etc.] These are either the words of the Holy Ghost to David, according to Jarchi; or of David to his own soul in distress, and may be directed to any good man in like circumstances. The word rendered “burden” signifies a gift and so the words are translated by many, “cast thy gift upon the Lord” <sup>f730</sup>; what he has given in a way of providence and of grace, acknowledge him to be the author of it; pray for a continuance of mercies, and for fresh supplies, and expect them; and also what he gives in a way of trial, the cross, with all afflictions and troubles: which sense seems most agreeable to the context; and these may be said to be “the gift” of God, as the cup of sorrow Christ drank of is said to be “given” him by his Father, (<sup><681></sup>John 18:11). These are given by the Lord to bring his people to a sense of sin, and acknowledgment of it; to humble them for it, and cause them to return from it; and to try their graces: and then do they cast them upon him, when they acknowledge them as coming from him; wait the removal of them in his time; desire a sanctified use of them, and expect deliverance from them by him. Or the sense is, whatever thou desirest should be given thee by the Lord, cast it on him; that is, leave it with him to do as he pleases, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. The Targum renders it,

“cast thy hope upon the Lord;”

as an anchor on a good bottom, to which hope is compared, (<sup><369></sup>Hebrews 6:19). This is done when persons make the Lord the object of their hope, and expect all from him they hope to enjoy here and hereafter. The

Septuagint version is, “cast thy care upon the Lord”; of thy body, and all the temporal concerns of thy family, and everything relating thereunto; and of thy soul, and its everlasting welfare and salvation; (see <sup><118></sup>1 Peter 5:7). But Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, interpret the word by **Æaçm**, “thy burden”, which is learnt from the use of it in the Arabic language. The Rabbins did not know the meaning of the word, till one of them heard an Arabian merchant say <sup>f731</sup>,

“take up **Æybhy**, “thy burden”, and cast it upon the camels.”

The burden here meant is either the burden of afflictions, which is sometimes very heavy; (see <sup><802></sup>Job 6:23 23:2); no affliction is joyous, but grievous; but some are heavier in their own kind and nature than others, and become so through the multiplicity of them, as in the case of Job; or through the long continuance of them, and especially when attended with the hidings of God’s face, or with the temptations of Satan: or else the burden of sin and corruption, which is an heavy burden, and a very disagreeable one; under which the saints groan, and by which they are hindered in running their Christian race, and which they are like to carry with them to their graves; their only relief under it is to look to Christ, who has borne it and took it away; which may be meant by casting it on the Lord:

*and he shall sustain thee*; in being, both natural and spiritual; and supply with all things necessary both to the temporal and spiritual life, and support under all trials and difficulties;

*he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved*; to be shaken and stagger so as to fall, especially totally and finally; for the words may be rendered, “he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved for ever” <sup>f732</sup>; or so to be moved by their afflictions as to desert the cause in which they are engaged; nor shall they ever be moved by men or devils, or anything whatever, from their spiritual estate, in which they are by grace; nor from the love of God and covenant of grace; nor out of the hands of Christ; nor from their state of justification, adoption, and sanctification.

**Ver. 23.** *But thou, O God, shall bring them down*, etc.] Ahithophel and his accomplices in the conspiracy against David, Judas and the wicked Jews concerned in Christ’s death; and did not believe in him;

*into the pit of destruction*, or “corruption”<sup>f733</sup>; either the grave, where bodies being put corrupt and putrefy; or hell, where the wicked are punished with everlasting destruction; (see <sup><1985></sup>Psalm 55:15);

*bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days*; such as Ahithophel and Absalom, Judas, and the murderers of our Lord: or, “do not halve their days”<sup>f734</sup>; do not come up to the half of the ordinary term of man’s life, which is threescore years and ten. The Jews say<sup>f735</sup>, that all the years of Doeg were but thirty four, and of Ahithophel thirty three; and probably Judas might be about the same age. Or the sense is, that, generally speaking, such sort of men die in the prime of their days, and do not live half the time that, according to the course of nature, they might live; and which they promise themselves they should, and their friends hoped and expected they would:

*but I will trust in thee*; the Lord, that he would hear and save him, support him under his burden, supply him with his grace, and every thing needful, and not suffer him to be moved; and that he should live to fill up the measure of his days, do the will and work of God, and then be received to glory.