

PSALM 75

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 75

To the chief Musician, Altaschith, A Psalm [or] Song of Asaph

Of the word “altaschith”, (see Gill on “^{-1570b}Psalm 57:1”), it signifies “do not destroy”, or “do not corrupt”; the Targum renders it,

“do not destroy thy people;”

so Jarchi,

“do not destroy Israel;”

perhaps it may be considered as a petition, that God would not suffer the man of sin to go on to destroy the earth, and corrupt the inhabitants of it with his false doctrine, idolatry, and superstition, (⁻⁶¹¹⁸Revelation 11:18 19:2), for the psalm respects the times of the Gospel dispensation, and includes both the first coming of Christ in the flesh, and his second coming to judgment; the argument of it with the Syriac version is,

“the divinity of Christ, and a remembrance of the judgment;”

it is said to be a psalm or song of Asaph, but is thought to be written by David, and delivered to Asaph; for it may be rendered “for Asaph”^{f1064}; and so the Targum,

“by the hands of Asaph;”

though some think it was written after the Babylonish captivity; perhaps by some person whose name was Asaph, or was of the family of him that lived in David’s time. Theodoret supposes it was written in the person of the captives in Babylon.

Ver. 1. *Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks,* etc.] Either David and his men, when he was delivered from Saul, and raised to the kingdom, or the Jews upon their return from the Babylonish captivity; or rather the churches of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, for the coming of Christ and the blessings of grace through him, and in the view of the sure and

certain destruction of antichrist and all the wicked of the earth; yea, Christ himself may be considered as at the head of his people, joining with them in thanksgiving, to whom this action is sometimes ascribed, (^{<012>}Matthew 11:25,26 26:27) and the rather since he is continued all along speaking to the end of the psalm:

unto thee do we give thanks; which is repeated to show the constancy, fervency, and sincerity with which this was performed: it may be rendered, “unto thee do we confess”^{f1065}; sins committed against God, unworthiness to receive favours from him, and his grace and goodness in bestowing them:

for that thy name is near; or rather, “for thy name is near”^{f1066}; and so the words are a reason of the above thanksgiving; for they belong not so much to what follows after as to what goes before, since the accent “athnach” is upon אֱמֹץ, “thy name”; and are to be understood of God himself, for his name is himself; who is near to his people, both in relation, being their Father, and as to presence, communion, and fellowship, which are matter of praise and thanksgiving; or his works and word, by which he is known and made manifest; his works which are throughout the earth, and so near at hand, and his word which is nigh, being in the mouths and in the hearts of his people; or rather his Son, in whom his name is, his nature and divine perfections: he was at a distance in promise and prophecy, and only seen afar off; after the Babylonish captivity, at which time some think this psalm was written, he was near; the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, speak of him as just coming; and when he was made flesh, and dwelt among men, he was near indeed, so as to be found of them, seen, heard, and handled by them; on which account there was and is reason to give thanks to God:

thy wondrous works declare; meaning either the miracles of Christ, which were proofs and evidences of his being come, and of his being the true Messiah; (see ^{<013>}Matthew 11:3-5) or the wonderful works done by him, which to do were the principal end of his coming; as the work of righteousness, the business of reconciliation, and in general the affair of redemption and salvation; all which were amazing instances of his power, grace, and goodness, and which are declared in the everlasting Gospel by the ministers of it; for the words, I think, may be better rendered, “they declare thy wondrous works”^{f1067}, or impersonally, “thy wondrous works are declared”.

Ver. 2. *When I shall receive the congregation*, etc.] Some render it, from the Arabic signification of the word, “the promise”^{f1068}; the Spirit promised, the gifts of the Spirit, which Christ received for men, and gave to men, whereby he executes the judgment or government of the church committed to him: others the time, so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, Syriac, and Arabic versions, to which agrees the Targum, the word signifying a set appointed time, (^{<19A214>}Psalm 102:14), and so may respect the time appointed for the judgment of the world, which when come, Christ will execute in a most righteous manner, as follows; (see ^{<4173>}Acts 17:31), but whereas the people of Israel met at the door of the tabernacle, which from thence was called “Ohel Moed”, the tabernacle of the congregation; hence the word is used for a congregation, and here designs the general assembly and church of the firstborn written in heaven, even all the elect of God; these were received by Christ of his Father in eternity, when he espoused them to himself, and undertook the care of them; and they are received by him, one by one, in effectual calling; and in like manner are they received by him into glory at death; but when they are all gathered in, and are prepared for him as a bride for her husband, then will he receive them all in a body, and present them to himself a glorious church during the thousand years’ reign; upon which will proceed the judgment of the wicked; (see ^{<6115>}Revelation 20:5,12),

I will judge uprightly; in equity, in strict justice, in the most righteous manner, rendering to every man according to his works; hence the future judgment is called a righteous one, and so is the Judge; no injustice will be done to men, but the strictest integrity, uprightness, and impartiality, will be observed in pronouncing the several sentences on the righteous and on the wicked, and in adjudging them to their several places and states.

Ver. 3. *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved*, etc.] Or “melted”^{f1069}; the inhabitants, through fear and dread of the righteous Judge, appearing in the clouds of heaven, and of the wrath that is coming on they are deserving of; and the earth, through fire, when the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burnt up, (^{<6110>}2 Peter 3:10-12).

I bear up the pillars of it.: so that it shall not utterly perish; for though by the fire, at the general conflagration, the heavens and the earth will be so melted and dissolved as to lose their present form, and shall be purged and purified from all noxious qualities, the effects of sin; yet the substance will

remain, out of which will be formed new heavens and a new earth, and this through the power of Christ sustaining it, and preserving it from entire destruction or annihilation. R. Obadiah by “pillars” understands in a figurative sense the righteous, for whose sake the world is continued in its being; these at the general conflagration will be bore up and preserved by Christ, whom they shall meet in the air, even the church, who is the pillar and ground of truth; and not only the ministers of the Gospel, who are pillars in Christ’s house, but also every believer, which is a pillar there, that shall never go out, (⁵¹⁸⁵1 Timothy 3:15 ^{688D}Galatians 2:9 ^{668D}Revelation 3:12). Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret the pillars of the mountains.

Selah. (See Gill on “^{688D}Psalm 3:2”).

Ver. 4. *I said unto the fools*, etc.] To the vain gloriosos, proud boasters, mockers, and scoffers at the day of judgment, and burning of the world:

deal not foolishly; by glorying in themselves, boasting of their riches, and trusting in them; singing a requiem to themselves on account of their abundance, and by putting away the evil day far from them:

and to the wicked, lift not up the horn; of power, grandeur, and wealth, and use it to the injury of others; or be so elated with it as to look with disdain on others; or imagine they shall always continue in this exalted state, as antichrist the horned beast does, (^{688D}Revelation 18:7), the allusion is to horned beasts, particularly harts, which lift up their heads and horns in great pride ^{f1070}: the phrase signifies to behave proudly and haughtily.

Ver. 5. *Lift not up your horn on high*, etc.] Or “against the most High” ^{f1071}; as the little horn, or the beast with ten horns, antichrist, does, whose look is more stout than his fellows, and opens his mouth in blasphemy against God, his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, (²⁰⁰⁸Daniel 7:8,20 ^{688D}Revelation 18:1,6),

speak [not with] a stiff neck; arrogantly, proudly, and haughtily: or “hard things with a neck” ^{f1072}; hard speeches against Christ and his people with an outstretched neck, in an imperious and insolent manner; for the righteous Judge will convince such of their hard speeches, and condemn them for them; (⁶⁰¹⁴Jude 1:14,15).

Ver. 6. *For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.*] It is not from men, from themselves, or others, or from any quarter under the heavens, but from God; it is he that raises men

to high places, and sets them there, which are often slippery ones: by him kings reign; they have their crowns and sceptres, thrones and kingdoms from him; there is no power but what is of God; riches and honour come of him, and he can take them away when he pleases; and therefore men should not be proud, haughty, and arrogant: some take these words to be the words of the fools and wicked, when they speak with a stiff neck, either as triumphing over the Messiah, his ministers, cause, and interest, reading the words thus, “neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, shall there be a lifting up”^{f1073}, or an exaltation; that is, of Christ and his people, they are low, and shall never rise more; but in this they are mistaken; though now the Son of God is trampled under foot in his person and offices, there is a day coming when the Lord, and he alone, shall be exalted; though his ministers and witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and shall be slain and lie unburied, yet they will arise again and ascend to heaven, to the great terror and astonishment of those their enemies; though Jacob is small, and it is said, by whom shall he arise? yet he shall become, great and numerous; the mountain of the Lord’s house, the church, shall be established upon the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills; and this enlargement of Christ’s kingdom and interest shall be east, west, north, and south; or else as flattering themselves that no evil shall come to them from any quarter: “neither from the east, nor from the west, nor, from the desert of the mountains”^{f1074}, cometh evil; meaning to themselves, looking upon themselves as secure, and putting the evil day far from them: but there will be an awful and righteous judgment; there is a Judge ordained, a day appointed, in which the world will be judged in righteousness, and destruction and ruin will come upon the ungodly, and at a time when they are crying Peace, peace; nor shall they escape; and so the Syriac version renders the words, “for there is no escape from the west, nor from the desert of the mountains”; taking the word **pyrh**, not to signify “promotion, elevation”, or “a lifting up”, as Kimchi and others, whom we follow: but Moatanus and R. Aba observe that the word always signifies “mountains” but in this place: the Targum is,

“for there is none besides me from the east to the west, nor from the north of the wildernesses, and from the south, the place of the mountains;”

no Messiah to be expected from any quarter; (see ⁴²²³Matthew 24:23,26), no God besides him, nor any other Saviour, (²³⁴⁶Isaiah 44:6,8 45:21,22) nor any other Judge, as follows.

Ver. 7. *But God is the Judge*, etc.] Or “because God is the Judge”^{f1075}; and so this is another reason why fools should not deal foolishly, nor wicked men lift up the horn, and speak with a stiff neck, because there is a Judge to whom they are accountable for their words and actions; and this Judge is God omniscient, knows all persons and things, searches the heart and tries the reins, will bring every secret thing into judgment, bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart; omnipotent, able to do all things, raise the dead, call to judgment, bring all before him, pass the sentences, and execute them; omnipresent, there is no fleeing from him, nor escaping his righteous judgment; holy, just, and true, who will render to every man according to his works:

he putteth down one, and setteth up another; he humbles or brings one low, such as are proud, haughty, and arrogant; and he exalts another, such as are lowly and humble: this he does in providence, he removes kings, and sets up kings; puts down the mighty from their seats, and exalts them of low degree, (^{<2702>}Daniel 2:21 ^{<4015>}Luke 1:52 14:11), he has many ways to mortify the proud, by inflicting diseases on their bodies, by stripping them of their honour and wealth, and by bringing them into disgrace among men: and this he does in grace; such as are stout hearted and far from righteousness, and will not submit to the righteousness of Christ, he brings them to it; and those whom he makes humble by his grace, he raises to a high estate, to be kings and priests, and to sit among princes, and to inherit a throne of glory. This might be exemplified in Jews and Gentiles; he has stripped the one of their privileges, and put them down from their civil and church state, and raised up the other to be his church and people; and also in antichrist and the true church of Christ; he will ere long put down the one, that sits as a queen, and exalt the other, when she shall be as a bride adorned for her husband, having the glory of God upon her.

Ver. 8. *For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup*, etc.] Another reason why men should not act haughtily and arrogantly; for by the cup are meant afflictions, calamities, and judgments, which are measured out in proportion to men’s sins, and are of God’s appointing, and in his hands, and at his disposal

and the wine is red; an emblem of the wrath of God this cup is full of, as it is explained, (^{<6140>}Revelation 14:10), where there is a reference to this passage; for it is a cup of fury, of trembling, and of indignation: (^{<2517>}Isaiah 51:17 ^{<42515>}Jeremiah 25:15),

it is full of mixture; has many ingredients in it, dreadful and shocking ones, though it is sometimes said to be without mixture, (^{<6640>}Revelation 14:10), without any allay, alluding to the mixing of wine with water in the eastern countries; (see ^{<1002>}Proverbs 9:2),

and he poureth out of the same; his judgments upon men in this world, in all ages; on some more, others less, as their sins call for, or his infinite wisdom judges meet and proper:

but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them; the whole cup that God has measured out and filled up shall be poured out at last, and all be drank up; the very dregs of it by the wicked of the world, when they shall be punished with everlasting destruction in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: this will be the portion of their cup, (^{<9116>}Psalms 11:6).

Ver. 9. *But I will declare for ever*, etc.] These are not the words of the psalmist, but of Christ, who is all along speaking in the psalm; what he would declare is not expressed, and is to be supplied in sense thus; either that he would declare the wonderful works of God, (^{<1971>}Psalms 75:1), so the Targum, his thoughts, mercies, and kindnesses to his people, as in (^{<1885>}Psalms 55:5), or his judgments on his enemies, whom he shall pass sentence on, which will be for ever; or the name of the Lord, his purposes and decrees, his counsel and covenant, his mind and will, his Gospel and the truth of it: (see ^{<1922>}Psalms 22:22),

I will sing praises to the God of Jacob; the covenant God of his people, Christ's God, and their God; of his singing praise to him, (see ^{<1922>}Psalms 22:22).

Ver. 10. *All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off*, etc.] Therefore let them not lift up the horn on high: "horns" denote the power and authority of wicked men, their kingdoms and states; both Rome Pagan and Rome Papal are said to have ten horns, which are interpreted of ten kings or kingdoms; and which will be cut off when the vials of God's wrath are poured out on the antichristian states; which vials will be filled from the cup which is in the hand of the Lord, (^{<6621>}Revelation 12:1 13:1 17:12 16:1), the Jews ^{f1076} interpret this of the ten horns of the nations of the world, that shall be cut off in future time; and Jarchi particularly of the horns of Esau, by whom he means Rome, or the Roman empire:

but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted; either of the righteous one Christ, for the word is in the singular number; he who is the Lord our righteousness, whose power and authority, kingdom and government, shall be enlarged and increased, signified by the budding of the horn of David, and the exaltation of the horn of his Messiah, (~~4920~~1 Samuel 2:10 ~~4927~~Psalm 132:17) or of everyone of the righteous, which will be when the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, and they shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years, (~~2177~~Daniel 7:27 ~~4150~~Revelation 5:10 20:5). Kimchi says this will be in the war of Gog and Magog, which is expected by the Jews.