

PSALM 78

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 78

Maschil of Asaph.

Or for “Asaph”^{f1104}; a doctrinal and “instructive” psalm, as the word “Maschil” signifies; (see ^{<4301>}Psalm 32:1), which was delivered to Asaph to be sung; the Targum is,

“the understanding of the Holy Spirit by the hands of Asaph.”

Some think David was the penman of it; but from the latter part of it, in which mention is made of him, and of his government of the people of Israel, it looks as if it was wrote by another, and after his death, though not long after, since the account is carried on no further than his times; and therefore it is probable enough it was written by Asaph, the chief singer, that lived in that age: whoever was the penman of it, it is certain he was a prophet, and so was Asaph, who is called a seer, the same with a prophet, and who is said to prophesy, (^{<4230>}2 Chronicles 29:30) (^{<4320>}1 Chronicles 25:1,2) and also that he represented Christ; for that the Messiah is the person that is introduced speaking in this psalm is clear from (^{<4034>}Matthew 13:34,35) and the whole may be considered as a discourse of his to the Jews of his time; giving them an history of the Israelites from their first coming out of Egypt to the times of David, and in it an account of the various benefits bestowed upon them, of their great ingratitude, and of the divine resentment; the design of which is to admonish and caution them against committing the like sins, lest they should be rejected of God, as their fathers were, and perish: some Jewish writers, as Arama observes, interpret this psalm of the children of Ephraim going out of Egypt before the time appointed.

Ver. 1. *Give ear, O my people*, etc.] The Jews were Christ’s people, he descending from their fathers according to the flesh; they were his own, to whom he came, though rejected by them; they were his nation and people that delivered him up into the hands of the Romans; (see ^{<4804>}Romans 9:4,5 ^{<4011>}John 1:11 18:35) thus it is usual with persons to call those, who are of the same nation with them, their people, (^{<4700>}Esther 7:3,4 ^{<4400>}Jeremiah

9:1,2) and especially for kings to call their subjects so; (see ^{<330>}1 Chronicles 28:2 29:14), and such was Christ; he was King of the Jews, though they would not have him reign over them; and therefore he here speaks as one having royal authority, and requires attention to him, and obedience to his word, which he calls his law:

to my law; meaning neither the moral nor the ceremonial law, but the doctrine of the Gospel, or law of faith, called the Messiah's law, (^{<208>}Isaiah 2:3 42:4 ^{<607>}Romans 3:27). This is the doctrine which he as man received of his Father, and which he taught and delivered to his disciples, and which concerns himself, his person, office, and grace, and is sometimes called the doctrine of Christ, (^{<609>}2 John 1:9),

incline your ears to the words of my mouth; the several doctrines of the everlasting Gospel preached by him, which were words of wisdom and of grace, of righteousness and eternal life, of peace, pardon, and everlasting salvation: these ought to be heard and diligently attended to; the matter contained in them requires attention; the office Christ bears demands it of men; all that have ears to hear should hear; all Christ's sheep do hear his voice, understand it, and act according to it: hear ye him was the instruction of Moses, and the direction of Christ's heavenly Father, (^{<615>}Deuteronomy 18:15 ^{<4075>}Matthew 17:5), and great is the danger such incur who hear him not, but neglect and despise his word, (^{<502>}Hebrews 2:2,3 12:25).

Ver. 2. *I will open my mouth*, etc.] Speak freely, boldly, and without reserve, (^{<409>}Ephesians 6:19), so Christ opened his mouth, (^{<402>}Matthew 5:2),

in a parable; not that what follows in this psalm was such, but what were delivered by our Lord in the days of his flesh, who spake many parables; as of the sower, and of tares, and of the grain of mustard seed, and many others, and without a parable he spake not, and so fulfilled what he here said he would do, (^{<403>}Matthew 13:34,35 ^{<4063>}Mark 4:33,34).

I will utter dark sayings of old; sayings that relate to things of old; meaning not to the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and what follows in the psalm, delivered, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe, in figurative and topical terms, as in (^{<4789>}Psalm 78:19,21,23-25,61), but to the things which were from the foundation of the world, as the phrase is rendered in (^{<4135>}Matthew 13:35), spoken of Christ in his ministry, such as the fall of the

angels, the ruin of man by Satan, the murder of Abel, Abraham's sight of his day with joy, and many things that were said by them of old, (~~2008~~ Luke 10:18 ~~404~~ John 8:44,56 ~~433~~ Matthew 23:35 5:21) or rather this refers to the Gospel, and the sayings and doctrines of it, which were kept secret since the world began, (~~433~~ Matthew 13:3 ~~565~~ Romans 16:25), yea, which were ordained before the world was, and therefore called the everlasting Gospel, (~~417~~ 1 Corinthians 2:7 ~~646~~ Revelation 14:6) and here in the Arabic version, "eternal mysteries"; such as concerning the everlasting love of God to his people, his everlasting choice of them, and everlasting covenant with them: and the sayings or doctrines of the Gospel may be called "dark", because secret, hidden, and mysterious; and were so under the legal dispensation, in comparison of the more clear light under the Gospel dispensation; they having been wrapped up in types and shadows, and in the rites and ceremonies of the law, but now held forth clearly and plainly in the ministry of Christ and his apostles, as in a glass: these Christ says he would "utter" or deliver out as water from a fountain, in great plenty, as he did; he came in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel; and being full of grace and truth, the doctrines of grace and truth, these came by him, and were delivered from him in all their fulness and glory.

Ver. 3. *Which we have heard and known*, etc.] The change of number from "I" to "we" have made some think that the disciples of Christ are here introduced speaking; but there is no need to suppose that, since our Lord uses the same form of speech, (~~431~~ John 3:11),

and our fathers have told us; this may not only regard the Jewish ancestors, from whom our Lord descended according to the flesh, and so refer to the following account of the wonderful things done for the people of Israel; but also the divine Father of Christ, from whom, as his only begotten Son that lay in his bosom, and as Mediator, and the Angel of the great council, he heard and became acquainted with the secrets and mysteries of grace, and with his Father's mind and will; all which he declared and made known to his apostles, and in so doing used them as his friends, (~~408~~ John 1:18 15:15) and so the apostles of Christ, what they had from him their everlasting Father, and who had used to call them his children, even what they had seen, and heard, and learned, they made known to others, (~~400~~ Acts 4:20).

Ver. 4. *We will not hide them from their children*, etc.] The children of the Jewish fathers, but faithfully publish and declare them, as Christ and his

apostles did; or the children of God and Christ, their spiritual seed and offspring:

showing to the generation to come; and so in all successive ages, by the ministration of the word, and the Spirit attending it; (see ^{<4923>}Psalm 22:30,31 48:13),

the praises of the Lord; what he has done in predestination, redemption, and effectual calling, which is to the praise of the glory of his grace, (^{<4906>}Ephesians 1:6), and so all other truths of the Gospel, which are to the praise of Father, Son, and Spirit, and engage men to show it forth:

and his strength displayed; in Christ, the man of his right hand, made strong for himself, and in the redemption wrought out by him, as well as in the conversion of sinners by his mighty grace, and in the preservation of them by his power:

and his wonderful works that he hath done; in providence and grace; the miracles wrought by Christ, which were the wonderful works given him to finish, as proofs of his deity and Messiahship, and are testified in the Gospel for the confirmation of it; and especially the wonders of redeeming love, and calling grace, which are peculiarly to be ascribed unto him as the works his hands have wrought, and the wonderful decrees of God he made in eternity concerning these things.

Ver. 5. *For he established a testimony in Jacob*, etc.] So the law is called, being a testification of the divine will, (^{<4256>}Exodus 25:16,22) and the Scriptures, the writings of the Old Testament, which testify of Christ, his person, office, sufferings, and death, (^{<2383>}Isaiah 8:20 ^{<4959>}John 5:39) and particularly the Gospel, which is the testimony of God, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of his apostles, (^{<3008>}2 Timothy 1:8) which bears witness to the love and grace of God in the salvation of men by Christ; to the dignity of Christ's person, to the fulness of his grace, to each of the offices and relations he bears and stands in to his people; to the virtue of his obedience, sufferings, and death; to redemption, righteousness, peace and pardon by him: this is established in the house of Jacob, as the Targum; in the church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, among the saints and people of God, to whom it is delivered, and by whom it will be kept, and with whom it will remain throughout all ages; for it is the everlasting Gospel:

and appointed a law in Israel; the law given on Mount Sinai was peculiar to them, and so were the word and oracles, they were committed to them; and not only the writings of Moses, but the prophets, are called the law, (~~1815~~ John 10:34 ~~1808~~ Deuteronomy 4:8 ~~1879~~ Psalm 147:19,20 ~~1801~~ Romans 3:1,2 9:4), but the Gospel seems to be here meant, (see Gill on “~~1781~~ Psalm 78:1”): this was ordained before the world for our glory, and is put and placed in the hands and hearts of the faithful ministers of it, and is published among, and received by, the true Israel of God:

which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that is, the testimony and the law, and the things contained in them; the Jewish fathers were frequently commanded to teach their children the law of Moses, (~~1849~~ Deuteronomy 4:9,10 6:6,7 11:19) and it was their practice to instruct them in the knowledge of the Scriptures, (~~1815~~ 2 Timothy 3:15), and it becomes Christian parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, by making known to them the principles of the Christian religion, and the truths of the Gospel, (~~1804~~ Ephesians 6:4).

Ver. 6. *That the generation to come might know them*, etc.] Not only notionally, but spiritually and experimentally; which is the case, when human teachings are attended with the spirit of wisdom and reversion in the knowledge of divine truths; for the truths of the Gospel are unknown to men; the Gospel is hidden wisdom, the wisdom of God in a mystery; the Bible is a sealed book, the doctrines of it are riddles and dark sayings; the ministry of the word is the means of knowledge, which become effectual when attended with the Spirit and power of God:

even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children; and so be transmitted from age to age: it is the will of God, that, besides private instructions, there should be a standing ministry kept up in all ages, to the end of the world; and he will have some that shall receive the Gospel, and profess his name; there has been and will be a succession of regenerate persons; instead of the fathers come up the children, a seed to serve the Lord, accounted to him for a generation; the seed and the seed's seed of the church, from whose mouth the word of God shall never depart; but they shall declare it one to another, by which means it shall be continued to the latest posterity, (~~1823~~ Psalm 22:30,31 ~~1821~~ Isaiah 59:21).

Ver. 7. *That they might set their hope in God*, etc.] And not in the creature, nor in any creature enjoyment; (see ^{<18312>}Job 31:24), the Lord is the only proper object of hope and confidence; Christ, who is truly God, is the hope of his people, and in him they place it, as they have great reason to do; since with him there is mercy, the mercy of God is proclaimed in him; and with him there is redemption, which includes the blessings of peace, pardon, and righteousness; and a plenteous one, a redemption from all sin; and it is the Gospel which points out these things in Christ, and encourages a firm and settled hope and trust in him: and this shows that that is meant by the law and testimony; since the law of Moses gives no encouragement to hope in God; it convinces of sin, but does not direct to a Saviour, and so leaves without hope; it works wrath, terror, and despair; it is in the Gospel only Christ is set before men, as the object of hope to lay hold on, and which is as an anchor sure and steadfast, where they may securely place it:

and not forget the works of God; which the Gospel declares; not only the miracles of Christ recorded by the evangelists, but the works of grace, redemption, and salvation; the remembrance of which is kept up by the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances:

but keep his commandments; the commandments of Christ, and which are peculiar to the Gospel dispensation; and are to be kept in faith, from a principle of love, through the grace and strength of Christ, and to the glory of God by him; (see ^{<3145>}John 14:15,21,23).

Ver. 8. *And might not be as their fathers*, etc.] This chiefly respects the Jews in Christ's time: though it also is an admonition to them in succeeding ages, and especially in the latter day, when they shall be instructed, called, and converted; and even to us, to whom the Gospel is preached, on whom the ends of the world are come, not to be disobedient, as the Jewish fathers were, and to take care we do not fall after the same example of unbelief; this opens the whole scope and general design of the psalm; (see ^{<4306>}1 Corinthians 10:6-11 ^{<3837>}Hebrews 3:7-14 4:1-11),

a stubborn and rebellions generation; as the generation in the wilderness was, (^{<1806>}Deuteronomy 9:6,7,24) and so were their posterity in Christ's time, (^{<4123>}Matthew 12:34,39 ^{<4075>}Acts 7:51),

a generation that set not their heart aright; to seek the Lord, serve and obey him; their hearts were removed far from him, and they were hypocritical in their prayers to him, and service of him:

and whose spirit was not steadfast with God; did not continue in the faith of God, in the true religion, but departed and apostatized from him; (see ^{<1983>}Psalm 78:37,57). Apostasy is generally the fruit and effect of hypocrisy; all the following facts support the character which is here given of them.

Ver. 9. *The children of Ephraim being armed, and carrying bows*, etc.] Or “casting” arrows out of the “bow” ^{f1105}; they went out well armed to meet the enemy, and they trusted in their armour, and not in the Lord; and being skilful in throwing darts, or shooting arrows, promised themselves victory:

but turned back in the day of battle; fled from the enemy, could not stand their ground when the onset was made: what this refers to is not easy to determine; some think this with what follows respects the defection of the ten tribes in Rehoboam’s time, which frequently go under the name of Ephraim; but we have no account of any battle then fought, and lost by them; and besides the history of this psalm reaches no further than the times of David; others are of opinion that it regards the time of Eli, when the Israelites were beaten by the Philistines, the ark of God was taken, Eli’s two sons slain, and thirty thousand more, (^{<1993>}1 Samuel 4:1-11). Ephraim being put for the rest of the tribes, the ark being in that tribe; others suppose that the affair between the Gileadites and Ephraimites, in the times of Jephthah, is referred to, when there fell of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand, (^{<1971>}Judges 12:1-6), many of the Jewish ^{f1106} writers take it to be the history of a fact that was done in Egypt before the children of Israel came out from thence; (see ^{<1372>}1 Chronicles 7:20-22), so the Targum,

“when they dwelt in Egypt, the children of Ephraim grew proud, they appointed the end (or term of going out of Egypt), and they erred, and went out thirty years before the end, with warlike arms, and mighty men carrying bows, turned back, and were slain in the day of battle;”

though it seems most likely to have respect to what was done in the wilderness, as Kimchi observes, after they were come out of Egypt, and had seen the wonders of God there, and at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; and perhaps reference is had to the discomfiture of the Israelites by the Amalekites, when they went up the hill they were forbid to do, and in which, it may be, the Ephraimites were most forward, and suffered most; (see ^{<1944>}Numbers 14:40-45).

Ver. 10. *They kept not the covenant of God*, etc.] Either the covenant of circumcision, which was neglected during their travels through the wilderness, (^{<0685>}Joshua 5:5) or the covenant made with the people of Israel at Mount Sinai, (^{<0240>}Exodus 24:7) and this is to be understood not of the children of Ephraim only, but of the Israelites in general, who in many instances broke the covenant, and were not steadfast in it, (^{<0887>}Psalm 78:37), (see Gill on ^{<2813>}“Jeremiah 31:32”)

and refused to walk in his law; the law of God, which was given forth by him, by the disposition of angels, through the hands of a mediator, Moses, as a rule of their walk and conversation; but they refused to order their conversation according to it, being unwilling to be subject to it, but despised and cast it away; a sad instance of the corruption of human nature, and the depravity of man’s will, boasted of for its freedom, yet what is common, and to be observed in all mankind.

Ver. 11. *And forgot his works, and his wonders*, etc.] That is, his wonderful works, the miracles he wrought in their favour, and for their deliverance, afterwards particularly mentioned; these were not only forgotten in the next generation, (^{<0750>}Judges 15:10), but in a few years, yea, in a few months, nay, in a few days, when they had been but three days’ journey in the wilderness, after their passage through the Red sea, (see ^{<0250>}Exodus 15:1,22,24), which occasioned the observation of the psalmist, (^{<0462>}Psalm 106:12,13), that he had showed them; done in their sight, and in the sight of their fathers, as follows.

Ver. 12. *Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers*, etc.] The Targum is,

“before Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes of their fathers, he did marvellous things;”

but these were dead before this time; the Jews have a fancy, that these were brought to the sea, and placed upon it; and the Lord showed them what he would do for their children, and how he would redeem them; but this is to be understood of the plagues which were brought upon the Egyptians, and which are called wonders, (^{<0210>}Exodus 11:10), and were so to the Egyptians themselves; and these were done by the hands of Moses and Aaron, and in their sight:

in the land of Egypt; where the Israelites were in bondage, and while they were there, and on their account were these things done:

in the field of Zoan; that is, in the territory of Zoan, which was an ancient city of Egypt, (^{<0432>}Numbers 13:22), the metropolis of the land where Pharaoh kept his court; hence we read of the princes of Zoan, (^{<2391>}Isaiah 19:11,13), it is the same with Tanis, and so it is called here in the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, and also in the Targum; it is said to have been two miles from Heliopolis, and one from Memphis; and at this day these three cities are become one, which is fifteen miles in compass, and goes by the name of Alcair. In this great city, the metropolis of the nation, before Pharaoh and all his court, were the above wonders done.

Ver. 13. *He divided the sea*, etc.] The Targum adds, “by the rod of Moses their master;”

which he was ordered to lift up, and to stretch out his hand over the sea; which he did, and at the same time a strong east wind was raised, which caused the sea to go back, and divided the waters of it; (see ^{<0146>}Exodus 14:16,21)

and caused them to pass through; that is, he caused the Israelites to pass through the sea; this they did in faith, (^{<5812>}Hebrews 11:29), in the faith of the power and promise of God, and of future grace and blessings, which this was an emblem of; for it was a representation of baptism, and is so called, (^{<4601>}1 Corinthians 10:1,2) and of the sea of Christ’s blood, or of his sufferings and death; whereby all enemies are overcome and destroyed, as sin and Satan, signified by the Egyptians, and salvation is wrought, and every blessing of grace procured; and of the passage of God’s people through the sea of this world, and afflictions in it, safe to glory:

and he made the waters to stand as an heap; and were as a wall on the right hand and on the left hand so they continued until the Israelites had passed through; and then they returned, and covered the Egyptians, and drowned them, (^{<0122>}Exodus 14:22,28).

Ver. 14. *In the daytime also he led them with a cloud*, etc.] Which was in the form of a pillar, and went before them, and the Lord in it, and directed their way, and protected them from heat; (see ^{<0121>}Exodus 13:21,22) (^{<4692>}Nehemiah 9:12,19) this was typical of Christ, who is a shadow and security from the heat of a fiery law, the flaming sword of justice, the wrath of God, which is poured forth like fire, the fiery darts of Satan, and from hurt by any enemy whatever; (see ^{<2045>}Isaiah 4:5,6 25:4), and who leads his people through the wilderness of this world by his Spirit, by his

word, and by his own example; and who is the best and safest guide to follow:

and all the night with a light of fire; which also was in the form of a pillar, and went before them, and gave light in the night, and the Lord was in it; and this also was typical of Christ, who is the light of his people amidst all their darkness in this world.

Ver. 15. *He clave the rocks in the wilderness*, etc.] The one at Rephidim, (~~<1270>~~Exodus 17:1-6), and the other at Kadesh, (~~<1280>~~Numbers 20:1-11) both to be seen at this day; though of the latter no modern traveller makes mention but one, yet Jerom^{f1107} from Eusebius affirms that it was shown in his day: they were typical of Christ, (~~<1300>~~1 Corinthians 10:4), who is frequently compared to one for height, strength, and duration, shade, shelter, and protection; and is called the Rock of Israel, the Rock of offence to both houses of Israel, the Rock of salvation, the Rock of refuge, the Rock of strength, the Rock that is higher than the saints, and on which the church is built, and who is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The cleaving of the rocks is ascribed to God, which was done by the hands of Moses; and so the Targum adds,

“by the rod of Moses their master;”

but Moses was only the instrument, it was the Lord that did it; Moses with his rod could never have done it, had not the power of God went along with it. This smiting and cleaving the rocks were an emblem of the sufferings of Christ, who was smitten of God with the rod of justice, according to the law of Moses, in a judicial way, for the sins of his people, and in order to obtain salvation for them:

and gave them drink as out of the great depths; such a large quantity of water flowed out of the rocks when smitten, as if it came out of the great sea, which furnished them with drink sufficient, and more than enough for them and their cattle; this was typical of the large abundance of grace, and the blessings of it, which flow freely and plentifully from Christ and his fulness, and through his sufferings and death.

Ver. 16. *He brought streams also out of the rock*, etc.] Which is expressed in the singular number, as also in (~~<1320>~~Psalm 78:20), because the children of Israel were not come to Kadesh, and the second rock was not smitten when they lusted after flesh, and murmured against God, and tempted him, as is after related:

and caused waters to run down like rivers; from the descent of the rock, which followed them all the way in the wilderness; this was a most marvellous thing, that water should flow from a flinty rock upon striking it, from whence fire rather than water might have been expected; and that it should flow in such great abundance, and that from a rock in a wilderness.

Ver. 17. *And they sinned yet more against him*, etc.] Or, “and they added yet to sin against him”^{f1108}; which was great ingratitude; they had sinned before, and it might have been hoped that the goodness of God to them would have engaged them to have sinned no more, at least at such a rate, and in such a manner, as they had done; but instead of sinning less, they sinned more and more, they added sin to sin; such is the corrupt heart of man, notwithstanding the grace of God, and the blessings of it vouchsafed unto him:

by provoking the most High in the wilderness; everything is aggravating; the object against whom they sinned was the most High, which betrays their impiety, folly, and vanity; and they did not slightly sin against him, but did those things which were highly provoking and exasperating; and that in the wilderness, where they received so many favours, and where they must have been starved and perish, and could not have lived, without immediate provision, support, and protection, from the hand of the Lord.

Ver. 18. *And they tempted God in their heart*, etc.] Which is desperately wicked, and from whence all impiety flows; they entertained hard thoughts of God; they inwardly fretted at their present circumstances, and secretly repined and murmured against God, and wished for things they should not; not being contented with what they had, and thankful for them, as they ought to have been:

by asking meat for their lust; or, “for their soul”; such as their souls lusted after, and their sensitive appetites craved; for they were not satisfied with the bread they had, which was sufficient for their sustenance and support; they wanted food for pleasure and wantonness; to ask for daily bread is right, but to ask for more to consume on our lusts is wrong, (~~300B~~ James 4:3).

Ver. 19. *Yea, they spoke against God*, etc.] Not only thought ill of him, and tempted him in their hearts, but they expressed with their mouths what was in their hearts, and spoke against him, his power, and his providence,

in plain words, though he had been so good and gracious to them, and had done such wonderful things for them: they said,

can God furnish a table in the wilderness? these are the words which they spoke against him, and by which they tempted him, questioning his power and his goodness, and expressing their dissatisfaction with their present and daily allowance; they were not content with the manna they had every day, but they wanted to have a table ordered and spread with all kind of dainties. The sense of the question is, can the Lord do this for us? give us a plentiful table in the wilderness, as well as drop the manna about our tents? if he can, why does not he? if he does not, it must be either for want in himself, or want of good will to us; and thus tried and tempted the Lord.

Ver. 20. *Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed,* etc.] This they allow was done by him, for these are their words continued; suggesting, that though the waters did gush out upon smiting the rock, yet they might have been in the caverns of it before, and had remained there a long time, and might have come out of themselves; and therefore this was no such great matter, and might easily be accounted for:

but can he give bread also? solid, substantial bread, and not like this light bread, the manna, as they called it, (^{Q1105}Numbers 21:5), can he give us bread of corn, in a wilderness which is not a place of seed, where no corn grows? can he do this? this would show his power indeed:

can he provide flesh for his people? for so great a multitude, and in a place where no cattle are? let him do this, and we will believe his power; or else the words intimate that the smiting of the rock, and the waters flowing in such large streams, were an instance of his power, and therefore he that could do the one could do the other; he that could bring such large quantities of water out of a rock could give them solid bread and suitable flesh, and fulness of both; and should he not do so, they must conclude that he bore no good will to them, and had no love and kindness for them.

Ver. 21. *Therefore the Lord heard this,* etc.] What they said in their hearts, and what they expressed with their mouths, all their murmurings against him, their distrust of his power and providence, and disbelief of his promises; (see ^{Q1106}Numbers 11:1), and was wroth; exceeding wroth; he was highly displeased; there was an overflow of his indignation, as the word ^{f1109} signifies; it was running upon him, upon the thick bosses of his

buckler, to arraign his perfections, call in question any of his attributes, and disbelieve his word; this must greatly exasperate him, and provoke the eyes of his glory:

so a fire was kindled against Jacob; the posterity of Jacob; or in Jacob ^{f1110}, in the camp of Israel; which was literally true, because of the murmurings of the people against the Lord fire came down from heaven, and burnt among them, and consumed the uttermost parts of the camp; wherefore the name of the place was called Taberah, which signifies a burning, (^{Q110}Numbers 11:1-3), or it may be taken figuratively for the wrath of God, which is oftentimes compared to fire; (see Na 1:6) hence it follows,

and anger also came up against Israel; the people of Israel, the same with Jacob before; the allusion is to men when angry, in whose breasts anger burns, and from thence it rises up, and shows itself in their countenance, in their eyes, and by the words of their mouth.

Ver. 22. *Because they believed not in God*, etc.] That he was able to give them bread, and provide flesh for them, or bring them through the wilderness to Canaan's land, as he had promised. God, and he only, is the object of faith, and he is to be believed in at all times, and for all things temporal and spiritual; and nothing is more displeasing to him than unbelief; for as faith gives glory to him, unbelief reflects dishonour upon him; faith sets its seal to him as true, but unbelief makes him a liar; and what is more provoking to man than to have his veracity called in question, and to be counted a liar? in short, as faith has salvation annexed to it, unbelief has damnation, and to whom did the Lord swear that they should not enter into his rest but to them that believed not? so great an evil is unbelief, and is the sin which "easily beset" ^{f1111} the Israelites, as appears from the context; (see ^{S112}Hebrews 3:12-18)

and trusted not in his salvation; which he promised them, and bid them stand still and see, (^{Q143}Exodus 14:13), and of which they had had some proofs and instances in leading them through the Red sea, and thus far guiding them through the wilderness, and providing for them; and therefore had reason and encouragement to trust in the Lord, that he would yet be with them, and save them, and complete the mercy promised unto them.

Ver. 23. *Though he had commanded the clouds from above*, etc.] Which were round about him, his chariots, and the dust of his feet; and which

were at his command to go here and there, and carry and let down provisions for his people, as they did:

and opened the doors of heaven; as a large granary, from whence the manna, afterwards called the corn of heaven, was given out in great abundance, which is signified by opening the doors; (see ^{<3880>}Malachi 3:10).

Ver. 24. *And had rained down manna upon them to eat*, etc.] So called, either from **hnm**, “manah”, which signifies to prepare, appoint, and distribute, because this was food prepared of God for the Israelites without them, and was their provision, their appointed portion, and which was daily distributed to them in measure; or from the words **wh ʿm**, “man hu”, what is it? which they used at first sight of the manna, they not knowing what it was, and hence called it “man”; or “manna”; this the Lord rained down from heaven, as he promised he would, that they might have food to eat; (see ^{<1216>}Exodus 16:4,15)

and had given them of the corn of heaven; bread corn springs out of the earth, but this was corn from heaven, very unusual and wonderful; this greatly aggravated the unbelief of the Israelites, and shows their great ingratitude, that after all this they should disbelieve the Lord, and not trust in his salvation; the manna was a type of Christ, who is called the hidden manna, (^{<6003>}1 Corinthians 10:3 ^{<6127>}Revelation 2:17), (see Gill on “^{<8162>}John 6:32”).

Ver. 25. *Man did eat angels’ food*, etc.] Or, “the bread of the mighty”^{f1112}; such as Moses and Elijah ate of; so Arama; but Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret it of the clouds, or skies, said to be strong, (^{<8578>}Job 37:18) in which the manna was prepared, and let down: but rather the words may be read, “every man did eat the bread of the mighty ones”; of princes and nobles, and the great men of the earth; it was royal food, it was princely fare; and, indeed, the common people of Israel ate the same as their princes and nobles did; they all fared alike; but the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, render the word “angels”, and so Jarchi interprets it, and who are called mighty angels, and are creatures that excel in strength, (^{<3007>}2 Thessalonians 1:7 ^{<9331>}Psalms 103:20) now the manna may be said to be their food, as it is in the Apocrypha:

“Instead whereof thou feddest thine own people with angels’ food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their

labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste." (Wisdom 16:20)

because it might be prepared in the air by the ministry of angels, and given by their disposition, as the law was, (^{<4075>}Acts 7:53) or because it came down from heaven, where they dwell, and so the Targum,

"the children of men did eat food, which came down from the habitation of angels;"

or because it was most excellent food, as the tongue of angels is the most excellent and eloquent, (^{<4531>}1 Corinthians 13:1), or because it was such food, that, if angels ate any, it was fit for them, and not at all unworthy of them. Cocceius thinks, and so Gussetius^{f1113}, that by the mighty ones are meant the mighty God, Father, Son, and Spirit, by whom this food was prepared and given; so the word is used in the singular number, of Jehovah, who is called the mighty One of Jacob, (^{<0424>}Genesis 49:24) and of the Redeemer, (^{<2425>}Isaiah 49:26),

he sent them meat to the full; which may be understood either of the manna, of which they had great plenty, so that there was no lack for any man, and this continued with them till they came to the land of Canaan; or of the quails, of which in the following verses.

Ver. 26. *He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens*, etc.] In the airy heaven: or "he caused it to go"^{f1114}; to go forth out of its place, out of the repositories and treasures of it, from whence he brings the wind, (^{<4107>}Psalm 130:7) the winds are under the power and government of God, they are his servants that obey him; he says to one, Go, and it goes; and to another, Come, and it comes; stormy wind fulfils his word of command, and obeys its Creator:

and by his power he brought in the south wind; into the heavens, into the air, as before, and with it he brought the quails; and which made his power to appear the greater, since they do not fly with the south wind, which is too moist and heavy for them, as naturalists observe^{f1115}; it looks as if first one wind blew, and then another was used for the bringing of them from the place where they were; perhaps about the Red sea, where they are said to have been in great numbers; and that the east wind brought them to a certain point, and then the south wind blew to bring them into the camp of Israel, where, by the moistness of it, they fell; hence fowlers, as the above naturalists relate, observe the south wind, in order to take them; though it

may be that only one wind is intended, namely, the southeast wind; and so Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, understand it.

Ver. 27. *He rained flesh also upon them as dust*, etc.] By “flesh” is meant fowl, as the following clause shows; for there is flesh of birds, as well as of other creatures, (see ^{<4659>}1 Corinthians 15:39) and the quails which are here meant may be very fitly called flesh, since they are, for their size, a very plump, fat, and fleshy bird:

and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea; or “fowl of wing”^{f1116}: winged fowls, so the Targum; fowl that flies; and therefore it was the more remarkable that these should be rained and fall, and be taken by the Israelites; and which fell in great numbers, as is signified by these phrases, the dust and the sand of the sea; for there fell enough to feed six hundred thousand men, beside women and children, for a month together; they lay in heaps, two cubits high, on one another, and everyone that gathered them brought in ten homers; (see ^{<4419>}Numbers 11:19-21,31,32), which is the history referred to; and quails are used to fly together in large bodies; and sometimes, as Pliny^{f1117} relates, will light on ships at sea, and sink them with their numbers. Some think one sort of locusts is meant, which were used for food, and was very delicious food; and the circumstances of bringing them with an east or southeast wind, their falling in heaps, and being gathered in bushels, and spread about to be dried in the sun, seem to favour such a sense; (see Gill on “^{<4419>}Numbers 11:19-21; 31,32”). The ancients interpret this mystically of the flesh of Christ, whose flesh is meat indeed, delicious food for faith, as the quails were a rich food; and as they were rained down from heaven, so Christ is the bread of life which came down from heaven, and the bread he gave for the life of the world was his flesh: and as these came up, however the first quails, in the evening, (^{<4163>}Exodus 16:13), so Christ came in the flesh, in the evening or end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; to which may be added, that these creatures sit upon their young, and cherish and protect them, as an hen her chickens^{f1118} with which compare (^{<4237>}Matthew 23:37), but seeing the quails are never called spiritual meat, as the manna is, (^{<4603>}1 Corinthians 10:3), but were given in wrath and judgment, they are rather an emblem of riches, or worldly goods, things given to carnal men; these are of God, as the quails were, and are by some persons enjoyed without care or trouble, as these were; their meat, as it is sometimes said, falls into their mouth, as these quails did into the mouths of the Israelites, as it were; and are in wrath, their blessings are cursed to them, and, while they have a

great affluence of worldly things, have leanness in their souls, as the Israelites now had, (^{<BAG5>}Psalm 106:15), moreover, as these were feathered or winged fowl, so riches have wings, and sometimes flee away, and are very uncertain things to trust to, (^{<DIX5>}Proverbs 23:5).

Ver. 28. *And he let it fall in the midst of their camp*, etc.] Or, “his camps” ^{f1119}; the four camps of Israel; for so many there were, (^{<QIII>}Numbers 2:1) or the camp of God, where he dwelt, and before which he went as the General, Leader, and Commander of them; in the midst of this, or by it, by the side of it, (^{<QIII>}Numbers 11:31), the flesh or feathered fowl fell, so that they had no trouble to fetch it in; and here it fell by the order and direction of the Lord himself; he caused it to fall, without whose knowledge and will a sparrow does not fall to the ground, (^{<QIX>}Matthew 10:29). These creatures fell either, as some think, being wearied with their flight over the Red sea; or through their wings being broken by the vehemency of the wind that brought them, as others; or by the moistness of the south wind, which wetted their wings, and made them flag and fall; but, by whatever means this was done, it was so ordered by the Lord that they should fall, and fall just in the place where they did:

round about their habitations; for the space of a day’s journey on every side, where they lay in heaps, here and there, two cubits high, (^{<QIII>}Numbers 11:31), so that they could gather them with great ease, and had no need of arrows to shoot at them, nor nets to spread for them; they were ready at hand, and in great plenty.

Ver. 29. *So they did eat, and were well filled*, etc.]. Or “exceedingly filled” ^{f1120}, or too much, as some versions render it; they eat to excess, not merely to satisfy nature, but to gratify their sensual appetite: gluttony is a sin; it is an abuse of the creatures; it hurts the body by filling it with gross humours, and bringing diseases on it; it is injurious to the mind; the heart may be overcharged by it; it disposes it to sin; it leads to impiety, to atheism, and disbelief of a future state, which often go along with it, and ends in destruction, which is the case of those whose god is their belly:

for he gave them their own desire; or their lust ^{f1121}, what they lusted after, flesh; and they had as much of it as they would, though this was given in judgment; and a sad thing it is when God gives men a fulness of this world’s things, and leaves them to the abuse of them, or sends leanness into their souls, and gives them up to their own hearts’ lusts.

Ver. 30. *They were not estranged from their lust*, etc.] By the goodness and liberality of God unto them, they were not brought to repentance for their sin of lusting; nor did they abstain from their fleshly lusts, or deny themselves of them, which the grace of God teaches to do; or else the sense is, what they lusted after, flesh, was not withheld from them, or they restrained from eating it; they were indulged with it for a whole month together; to which agrees what follows:

but while their meat was yet in their mouths; the meat of the quails, while it was between their teeth, ere it was chewed, and before it was swallowed down, while they were rolling this sweet morsel under their tongues, and were gorging themselves with it, destruction came upon them, as follows; just as Belshazzar, while he was feasting with his nobles, in the midst of his mirth and jollity, was slain by the Persians, (^{278B}Daniel 5:1-30).

Ver. 31. *The wrath of God came upon them*, etc.] Either by causing fire to come down from heaven, or by suffering them to be surfeited by excessive eating, or by sending a plague among them; (see ^{401B}Numbers 11:33),

and slew the fattest of them; such perhaps who had been most guilty of the sin of gluttony, and had fed the most inordinately upon the flesh that was sent them; or this designs the chief among their princes and nobles, though not only them, but them as well as the common people; so the Targum,

“and slew their mighty ones:”

or the words may be rendered, “and slew them among their fatness”, or “fat things”^{f1122}; while they were feeding on their feast of fat things, the fat quails, which were brought among them, in such plenty; for the quail is a very fat bird, as Kimchi observes^{f1123}:

and smote down the chosen men of Israel; or the young men, as the Targum, who were within the twentieth and fiftieth year of their age; who were chosen and fit for war within that time, as well as were the choicest for comeliness, strength, and service; or “made” them “to bow”^{f1124} to death and the grave; whose power they could not withstand, though in the prime and vigour of youth, and while they were freely and heartily feeding upon the food they lusted after.

Ver. 32. *For all this they sinned still*, etc.] Those that survived, not being brought to repentance by mercies, nor by judgments; not by mercies, such as before mentioned, though they were great and many, and some of them

continued, and of which they were very unworthy; the goodness of God should, but it does not always, lead persons to repentance; mercies, unless they are sanctified, often prove snares and temptations to sin yet more and more; nothing short of the grace of God will bring persons to repentance for sin, or keep them from it: nor by judgments, which were last mentioned, and seem chiefly designed; these have no more effect than the other, unless the power of divine grace goes along with them; (see ^{<0416>}Amos 4:6,11) it could not be thought, nor was it expected, that they should, after all these mercies and judgments, have lived without sin, which no man does, or can do; but then they went on in a course of sin, and were continually repeating their transgressions, and were guilty of sins of a very heinous nature, many of which are on record; as Aaron and Miriam, by speaking against Moses, the faithful servant of the Lord, which brought upon the latter the plague of leprosy; the spies which were sent to search the land, and brought an evil report of it, which set the people a murmuring, and put them on thoughts of returning to Egypt; those that were concerned in the business of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who were swallowed up in the earth, or burnt with fire from heaven; the whole congregation which murmured at Kadesh, whom Moses called rebels, and who afterwards expressed their loathing of the manna, for which fiery serpents were sent among them, (^{<0413>}Numbers 12:1,10 13:32 14:2,3,4 16:1,2,3,31,35), (^{<0415>}Numbers 20:2-5 21:5,6) but their prevailing sin was unbelief, as follows:

and believed not for his wondrous works: not “in” them, though the words will bear to be so rendered; for they did believe in them when they were wrought, and that they were wrought by the Lord; though they soon forgot them, and fell into distrust and unbelief; but “by” them ^{f1125}, or by means of them; though such wonderful things were done for them in providence, as before related, which should have engaged their faith and trust in the Lord; yet, notwithstanding these, they called in question his providence, power, and goodness.

Ver. 33. *Therefore their days did he consume in vanity*, etc.] They were not immediately cut off by the hand of God, though some were; but the greatest part spent their time, for about eight and thirty years together, in fruitless marches to and fro in the wilderness, and never entered into the land of Canaan, where they were gradually wasted and consumed, till at length all their carcasses fell in the wilderness; (see ^{<0442>}Numbers 14:32,35), time spent in sin is all waste time, and is spent in vanity; let a man enjoy

ever so much of worldly things, it is all vanity and vexation of spirit; if he does not get to heaven at last, his life here is lived in vain; it had been better if he had never been born:

and their years in trouble: or “in terror” ^{f1126} and consternation; through their enemies, who smote and discomfited them, (^{<0445>}Numbers 14:45), through the earth’s opening and swallowing many of them up; through fire coming from heaven on some of them, and fiery serpents being sent among them all, (^{<0461>}Numbers 16:31 21:6,7). It is an awful consideration, and yet it is true, of some wicked men, though not all, that they have nothing but trouble here, by what their sins bring upon them, and hell at last. Kimchi renders the word here used “suddenly”, and interprets it of the sudden death of the spies; so the Syriac and Arabic versions “swiftly”, following the Vulgate Latin, which renders it “with haste”.

Ver. 34. *When he slew them*, etc.] Some of them, the spies particularly; or when he threatened to slay them, or was about to do it:

then they sought him; that is, those who either survived the slain, or were threatened with destruction; these sought the Lord by prayer and supplication, that he would not destroy them; the Targum is,

“they repented and sought him;”

(see ^{<0445>}Numbers 14:37,39,40),

and they returned; from their evil ways, and by repentance, at least in show and appearance:

and inquired early after God; but not earnestly, and with their whole hearts and spirits; the Targum is, “they prayed before God;”

which is often done, by carnal professors, in trouble; (see ^{<2316>}Isaiah 26:16) (^{<2155>}Hosea 5:15).

Ver. 35. *And they remembered that God was their Rock*, etc.] Who had delivered them out of the hands of their enemies, had strengthened them against them, and supported and protected them, as well as supplied them with all good things, of whom they had been greatly unmindful; but affliction was a means of refreshing their memory; (see ^{<6215>}Deuteronomy 32:15,18),

and the high God their Redeemer; who had redeemed them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, with a high hand and a mighty arm, and thereby showed himself to be the most high God: between this and the following verse the Masorah puts this note,

“half of the book,”

i.e. half of the book of Psalms ends here.

Ver. 36. *Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their mouth*, etc.] In prayer to him, they only drew nigh to him with their mouths, and honoured him with their lips; they showed much love to him and his ways and ordinances hereby; but their hearts were not with him, but after their lusts; they made fine speeches and fair promises, but their hearts and mouths did not agree; they spoke with a double heart, thinking and endeavouring to “deceive” the Lord, as the word ^{f1127} here used signifies; but he is not to be deceived, nor will he be mocked; the Targum is,

“they allured (or persuaded) him, with their mouth;”

they attempted to do so; the Syriac and Arabic versions are, “they loved him with their mouth”; professed great love and sincere affection to him, when they had none:

and they lied unto him with their tongues; to lie unto men is bad, but to God is worse; and it is a most vain and foolish thing, since there is not a word in the tongue of any but is known to him.

Ver. 37. *For their heart was not right with him*, etc.] Neither prepared and ready to any good work, but reprobate thereunto; nor steady, fixed, and established, as a good man’s heart is, trusting in the Lord; but wavering, fickle, and inconstant; nor true, faithful, and upright; but turning aside like a deceitful bow, as is afterwards said, (¹⁹⁷⁸⁷Psalm 78:57),

neither were they steadfast in his covenant; which was made with them at Sinai, though they promised to be obedient, and to do all the Lord said unto them; but this covenant they broke, though he were an husband to them; (see ¹²⁴⁷Exodus 24:7 ²⁸¹³²Jeremiah 31:32).

Ver. 38. *But he, being full of compassion*, etc.] Or merciful; having bowels of mercy, as a tender mother to the son of her womb; a word from the same root as this signifies the womb: the mercies of God are tender and

abundant; there is a multitude of them; he is rich and plenteous in mercy, and so ready to forgive; hence it follows,

forgave their iniquity; forgiveness of sin flows from the tender mercy of God; it is according to the multitude of his mercies, and the riches of his grace; yet is through the blood and attoning sacrifice of his Son; and the word ^{f1128} that is here used signifies to expiate or atone; God never intended to pardon sinners, but through the propitiation of his Son, whom he set forth in his purpose, and sent forth in the fulness of time to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; he forgave the sins of Old Testament saints with a view to that; and it is for Christ's sake he forgives any; for without shedding of blood there is no remission; though perhaps, since these persons were impenitent, unbelievers and hypocrites, no more may be meant here by the forgiveness of their sins than averting a threatened judgment, or a removing of one, and putting a stop to the further execution of it, which is sometimes meant by forgiving sin; (see ^{<04:49>}Numbers 14:19,20) (^{<10:33>}1 Kings 8:30,34,36,39,50) which sense the following words incline to:

and destroyed [them] not; though they deserved it, and he was able to do it, he did not destroy them immediately and at once, nor all of them, at least not their seed and posterity, who were preserved and brought into the land of Canaan:

yea, many a time turned he his anger away; he does not retain it for ever, or always carry on a resentment, or the appearance of it; though he causes grief, he has and shows compassion; he is said to turn away his anger from his own people when he forgives their sins, and comforts their souls, (^{<08:12>}Psalms 85:2,3 ^{<23:10>}Isaiah 12:1), so when he causes the effects of his displeasure to cease, or stays a plague, or stops a judgment, by means of any of his servants; (see ^{<02:18>}Numbers 25:8,10),

and did not stir up all his wrath; which their sins deserved, and was laid up among his treasures: the wrath of a temporal king is as the roaring of a lion, (^{<10:12>}Proverbs 19:12) much more that of the King of kings; and the allusion here seems to be to the arousing of some fierce creature; the wrath of God is intolerable, and, even when it is kindled but a little, it cannot be endured; and much less should it be all stirred up; but here in wrath he remembered mercy.

Ver. 39. *For he remembered that they [were but] flesh,* etc.] Or “children of flesh”, as the Targum; poor, frail, weak, mortal creatures, unable to bear the weight of his displeasure, the stroke of his hand, and the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his wrath; that they must be crushed before him, and would sink, and fail, and die; (see ^{<19A34>}Psalm 103:14 ^{<25716>}Isaiah 57:16), or that they were naturally sinful and corrupt, prone to evil, easily drawn into sin; it was what their depraved natures inclined unto; they were impotent to that which is good, and unable to withstand temptations to evil; all which was taken notice of and considered by the Lord in his condescending goodness, and therefore he dealt gently with them; (see ^{<0003>}Genesis 6:3 8:21),

a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again; such is the life of man; it may be fitly compared to the wind, which moves swiftly, and, passing on, loses its strength and subsides; so the life of man is quickly gone, his days move swiftly on, he dies, and returns not again to his former state, to a mortal life; and though the spirit returns to the body again, yet not till the resurrection; and then not of itself, but by the power of God; (see ^{<18007>}Job 7:7).

Ver. 40. *How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness,* etc.] Where they were not only at his mercy, having nothing to help themselves with, but had many singular mercies bestowed upon them; and yet were continually committing such sins against God as provoked the eyes of his glory; ten times they tempted him, the Lord says, (^{<0442>}Numbers 14:22), therefore that dispensation is called the provocation and day of temptation; for it was a series of rebellion and sin, (^{<19278>}Psalm 95:8),

and grieve him in the desert; which signifies the same as before, and is spoken after the manner of men, (^{<0006>}Genesis 6:6) and like a tender parent grieved at the disobedience of his child, and that he is obliged to take the rod and chastise it. The prophet Isaiah says, they “vexed” or “grieved his Holy Spirit”, (^{<27310>}Isaiah 63:10), the same word is there used as here; compare with it (^{<14030>}Ephesians 4:30).

Ver. 41. *Yea, they turned back, and tempted God,* etc.] They talked of going back to Egypt, and of choosing a captain to lead them back thither, (^{<0443>}Numbers 14:3,4), and they turned back from the Lord, and from his good ways, and chose their own ways, and followed after idols; or the sense is, they again tempted God, not only at Meribah, but elsewhere; they tempted him again and again, even ten times, as before observed:

and limited the Holy One of Israel; or “signed” ^{f1129} him; signed him with a sign, so the Targum; they tempted him by asking a sign of him, as Jarchi interprets it; insisting that a miracle be wrought, by which it might be known whether the Lord was among them or not, (^{<0170>}Exodus 17:7), with which compare (^{<0161>}Matthew 16:1), or they set bounds, so Kimchi; to his power and goodness, saying, this he could do, and the other he could not; (see ^{<0180>}Psalm 78:19,20), and so men limit the Lord when they fix on a blessing they would have, even that, and not another; and the measure of it, to what degree it should be bestowed on them, as well as set the time when they would have it; whereas the blessing itself, and the degree of it, and the time of giving it, should be all left with the Lord; who knows which and what of it is most convenient for us, and when is the best time to bestow it on us.

Ver. 42. *They remembered not his hand*, etc.] Which brought them out of Egypt, and dashed their enemies in pieces, and which had been so often opened to supply their wants in the wilderness; the Targum renders it, the miracles of his hand:

nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy; Pharaoh king of Egypt; that very memorable day in which they were delivered out of his hands, that selfsame day which had been fixed, by promise and prophecy many hundreds of years before, in which the hosts of the Lord went out of Egypt, (^{<0124>}Exodus 12:41 ^{<0153>}Genesis 15:13,14), times when as well as places where deliverances and salvation have been wrought should not be forgotten; and forgetfulness of the goodness of God in times past is often the cause and occasion of sinning against him, which, by a remembrance of his kind appearances, might be prevented.

Ver. 43. *How he had wrought his signs in Egypt*, etc.] The plagues which he brought upon the Egyptians, for refusing to let Israel go:

and his wonders in the field of Zoan, or in the country of Zoan, that is, Tanis, as the Targum renders it; so the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; (see ^{<0182>}Psalm 78:12), an enumeration of these signs and wonders follows; but not of all, nor in the order in which they were: only seven are mentioned, with which compare the seven vials or last plagues, (^{<0161>}Revelation 6:1).

Ver. 44. *And had turned their rivers into blood*, etc.] The river Nile and its seven streams; this was the first of the plagues of Egypt, (^{<0170>}Exodus

7:20,21), and was a just retaliation for drowning the infants of the Israelites in their river, (^{<002>}Exodus 1:22), a like plague will be inflicted on spiritual Egypt, and with equal justice; (see ^{<008>}Revelation 11:8 16:3-7),

and their floods, that they could not drink; the rivulets that flowed from the Nile, and every spring or confluence of water; or rather by these rivers and floods are meant the canals and ditches, which, as Jarchi ^{f1130} observes, were made by the hands of men, from the banks of the river Nile, to water their fields with.

Ver. 45. *He sent divers sorts of flies among them*, etc.] This was the fourth plague; (see ^{<008>}Exodus 8:24,25), the word signifies a “mixture” ^{f1131}, and the Targum renders it “a mixture of wild beasts;”

so Josephus ^{f1132} understood this plague of various sorts of beasts of different forms, and such as had never been seen before. Aben Ezra, on (^{<008>}Exodus 8:24) interprets it of evil beasts mixed together, as lions, wolves, bears, and leopards; and Jarchi, on the same place, of serpents and scorpions: the Syriac and Arabic versions here, following the Septuagint, render the word “dog flies”; so called because they were, as Pliny ^{f1133} says, very troublesome to dogs, and so might give the Egyptians greater uneasiness, because they worshipped dogs. God can make use of very mean and contemptible instruments, the least of insects, to plague and distress the most powerful enemies of his people;

which devoured them; corrupted their land, (^{<008>}Exodus 8:24), perhaps produced a pestilence, which destroyed many of the inhabitants, or consumed the vegetables of the land; as but a few years ago ^{f1134}, in New England, a sort of insects came out of little holes in the ground, in the form of maggots, and turned to flies, which for the space of two hundred miles poisoned and destroyed all the trees in the country ^{f1135}:

and frogs, which destroyed them; with their stench; (see ^{<008>}Exodus 8:5,6), with this plague compare (^{<008>}Revelation 16:13), this was the second plague.

Ver. 46. *He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar*, etc.] A kind of locust, and the same with the locust in the next clause; for we read but of the locust only in (^{<008>}Exodus 10:13)

and their labour unto the locust; which devoured the increase of the field, all green grass and trees, all sorts of corn, wheat, barley and rye, and the

increase of vineyards, and all fruit trees, on which much labour had been used to manure and cultivate; (see ^(~~6618~~)Revelation 9:3,4) this was the eighth plague.

Ver. 47. *He destroyed their vines with hail*, etc.] Or “killed”^{f1136} them; for there is a vegetative life in plants: this was the seventh plague of Egypt, attended with thunder and lightning, and was very terrible to Pharaoh, (^(~~6623~~)Exodus 9:23,28), with this compare (^(~~6621~~)Revelation 16:21),

and their sycamore trees with frost: sycamore trees, according to Kimchi, were a sort of wild figs, and these with the vines are only mentioned; though the plague of hail destroyed all sorts of trees; because there were many of these in Egypt, and are put for all others; and who also observes, that the word **l mnj**, rendered “frost”, which is only used in this place, signifies a kind of hail; and so Aben Ezra interprets it of great hailstones which beat off the fruit of the sycamore trees: but R. Saadiah Gaon explains it by the Arabic word “Al-sakia”, which signifies a strong frost which breaks the buds of trees, and dries up their moisture. Jarchi will have it to be, according to the Midrash, a kind of locust, which comes and sits and cuts off the green of the trees and grass, and eats it. Aben Ezra makes mention of this sense, but rejects it.

Ver. 48. *He gave up their cattle also to the hail*, etc.] For the hail fell upon man and beast, as well as upon herbs and trees, (^(~~6622~~)Exodus 9:22,25),

and their flocks to hot thunderbolts: which were killed by them: this is to be understood of the fire that was mingled with the hail, and ran upon the ground, and destroyed their flocks, (^(~~6623~~)Exodus 9:23,24). Jarchi, out of the Midrash, interprets the words of fowls which devoured the sheep killed by the hail.

Ver. 49. *He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger*, etc.] This with the following words,

wrath, and indignation, and trouble, are thought by some to intend the other plagues, which are not particularly mentioned; or rather they express the manner in which they were all inflicted, in great wrath and hot displeasure for their sins and iniquities, and which particularly were shown

by sending evil angels among them; not evil in themselves, but because they were the instruments God made use of to bring evil things upon the Egyptians, as good angels often are; though some think that demons,

devils, or wicked spirits, were sent among them at that time; the darkness was over all the land, and frightened them; in the Apocrypha:

“3 For while they supposed to lie hid in their secret sins, they were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness, being horribly astonished, and troubled with [strange] apparitions. 4 For neither might the corner that held them keep them from fear: but noises [as of waters] falling down sounded about them, and sad visions appeared unto them with heavy countenances.” (Wisdom 17)

According to Arama, the three last plagues are meant: the words may be rendered “messengers of evil things”^{f1137}, as they are by some, and be understood of Moses and Aaron, who were sent time after time with messages of evil things to Pharaoh, in which were expressed his wrath and fury against them.

Ver. 50. *He made a way to his anger*, etc.] Or, “for” it, so that nothing could obstruct it, or hinder the execution of it; or “he weighed a path for his anger”^{f1138}; he weighed it in the balance of justice, and proportioned his anger to their crimes, and punished them according to their just deserts:

he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence; which some understand of their cattle, and of the murrain that came upon them, by which they were destroyed, and which was the fifth plague of Egypt, (^{400B}Exodus 9:3), so the Targum,

“their beasts he delivered unto death;”

but Aben Ezra interprets it of the slaughter of the firstborn, expressed in the following verse; and so others.

Ver. 51. *And smote all the firstborn in Egypt*, etc.] From the prince to the peasant; and not only the firstborn of men, but of beasts also, (^{402B}Exodus 12:29),

the chief of their strength; or first of it, as the firstborn is called, (^{400B}Genesis 49:3),

in the tabernacles of Ham; in the several cities, towns, villages, and houses of the Egyptians, the descendants of cursed Ham; for Mizraim, from whom the Egyptians have their name, and from whence they sprung, was a son of Ham’s, (^{400B}Genesis 10:6). Perhaps No Ammon may be particularly meant, (Na 3:8), the same with Memphis, and which signifies the mansion or

palace of Ammon, that is, Ham; and so Chemmis, another city in Egypt, signifies the same ^{f1139}; of which (see ^{<9A523>}Psalm 105:23) this was the tenth and last plague: according to Suidas ^{f1140}, the plagues of Egypt continued forty days.

Ver. 52. *But made his own people to go forth like sheep*, etc.] The people of Israel, whom the Lord chose to be his peculiar people above all others; these he caused to go forth out of Egypt, with a mighty hand and stretched out arm; like sheep, weak, timorous, unarmed, harmless, and inoffensive, not a dog daring to move his tongue at them: the power of God was wonderfully displayed in the delivery of his poor, helpless, and oppressed people, well may it be ascribed to him; for it was not their arm, but his, that brought them out:

and guided them in the wilderness like a flock; by the hands of Moses and Aaron, (^{<49720>}Psalm 77:20), he also going before them as the Shepherd of the flock, in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night; he kept them together as a flock from scattering, straying, and being lost; and directed their way in the untrodden wilderness, through all the windings and turnings of it, and protected them from all dangers and enemies.

Ver. 53. *And he led them on safely*, etc.] Through the sea, where the waters were on each side; and through the wilderness, in which were serpents and scorpions, and where they were attacked by many powerful enemies:

so that they feared not; for though they feared for a while at the Red sea, yet their fears were soon silenced, and they by faith passed through the Red sea as on dry land; and especially their fears were gone, when they saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore; wherefore it follows:

but the sea overwhelmed their enemies; or “covered” them ^{f1141}; the waters returned, and overflowed and drowned the Egyptians, who were their implacable enemies, and vowed their destruction, and were sure of it; but now the Israelites had nothing to fear from them.

Ver. 54. *And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary*, etc.] Of the land of Canaan, which the Lord had sanctified, and set apart for them; and of Jerusalem, the holy city, the city of the great God, and of the temple where his residence was to be; so the Targum,

“to the border of the place of the house of his sanctuary:”

even to this mountain, which his right hand purchased; the mount Moriah, on which the temple was built; this psalm being composed, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi think, after it was made known to David, by the prophet Gad, the place where the temple should be built; namely, on the very mountain, on part of which David had his palace; and this was obtained and possessed, not by the power nor through the merits of the Israelites, but through the power and goodness of God; (see ^{<944>}Psalm 44:3).

Ver. 55. *He cast out the Heathen also before them,* etc.] The seven nations, the Hittites, Gergashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, (^{<970>}Deuteronomy 7:1)

and divided them an inheritance by line: the land of Canaan was divided among the nine tribes and a half by Joshua, the other two and a half having had their portion assigned them on the other side; this distribution was made very exactly by lot, by line, and measure, so that every tribe had their proper portion and inheritance; (see ^{<6136>}Joshua 13:6-8,32 14:1-5),

and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents; in the cities, towns, villages, and houses of the Heathen cast out before them.

Ver. 56. *Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God,* etc.] After the death of Joshua, and in the times of the judges, by worshipping and serving the gods of the nations, and forsaking the Lord their God, who had done such great things for them, (^{<9021>}Judges 2:11-14),

and kept not his testimonies; the laws of God, which testified and declared his mind and will; nor observed his word and ordinances, which testified of his grace, and of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ.

Ver. 57. *But turned back,* etc.] From God and his worship, apostatized from the true religion, and turned to idols:

and dealt unfaithfully, like their fathers; in the wilderness; (see ^{<9788>}Psalm 78:8,36,37),

they were turned aside like a deceitful bow; that promises well to carry the arrow right, but drops it at the feet of the archer; or carries it another way, so that it misses the mark, The Targum is,

“as a bow casting arrows;”

to the ground, and not to the mark; (see ^{<3716>}Hosea 7:16), or being too much stretched is suddenly broken, and kills the archer; or returns to its own nature; so Arama.

Ver. 58. *For they provoked him to anger with their high places,* etc.] Which they built to Baal, and other Heathen dieties:

and moved him to jealousy with their graven images; which they worshipped, (see ^{<0706>}Judges 10:6), which idolatry was spiritual adultery, and so made the Lord jealous of them, who stood in the relation of a husband to them, as a man becomes jealous by the unchaste and lascivious conduct of his wife; and such a course of life the Israelites lived, throughout the reigns of the judges, at certain seasons, until the times of Eli and Samuel, when the ark was carried captive, of which mention is made in the following verses.

Ver. 59. *When God heard this,* etc.] Their building high places, and sacrificing on them, their making and worshipping graven images, and the language which such actions spoke; who also heard what they said to their idols, when they paid their devotion to them, acknowledging them to be their gods; he took notice of and observed all this, for nothing could pass his all seeing eye and hearing ear; and who acted as a righteous Judge, first heard, and then proceeded to give and execute the sentence; by which he let them know that he did hear and observe what they said and did:

he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel; not his remnant among them, according to the election of grace, which he in all ages had; for this would be contrary to his everlasting love, which always continues; to the immutability of his nature, who changes not; to his Word, who says, fury is not in me; and to his oath, who hath sworn that he will not be wroth with his people: he may indeed, and does, abhor their sins, but not their persons; he may seem to them and others, in the dispensations of his providence, to be wroth with them and abhor them; but does not in reality. This is to be understood of the bulk of the people in general, and is to be explained and illustrated by those several instances of his displeasure with them in the times of the judges; when his anger waxed hot against them for their idolatries and other sins, and he delivered them up into the hands of their enemies, (^{<0708>}Judges 3:7,8,12-14 4:1,2 10:6-8 13:1).

Ver. 60. *So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh* etc.] The tabernacle which Moses built in the wilderness by the command of the Lord, and

according to the pattern showed him; and which, when the Israelites were settled in the land of Canaan, was set up in Shiloh; (see ^{<688D>}Joshua 18:1), and here it was in the times of Eli and Samuel, which are here referred to:

the tent which he placed among men; it was as a tent moveable from place to place, and was to continue at longest but for a while, as the whole tabernacle worship and service was to do; here the divine Majesty dwelt, and among men, vile, sinful, wicked, and ungrateful men; which was a wonderful instance of his condescension and goodness, (^{<108Z>}1 Kings 8:27), but when their iniquities grew to such a degree as were intolerable, he forsook it and removed it elsewhere; (see ^{<347D>}Jeremiah 7:12,14), rather the words may be rendered, “the tent”, or “tabernacle, which he had fixed in Adam”; as they are by Doctor Lightfoot ^{f1142}; that is, in the city Adam, which was in the centre of the parting of the waters of Jordan, and where was the station of the tabernacle and ark of the covenant, when Israel entered into them, and passed through them; which is mentioned as a wonderful circumstance, both with respect to the tabernacle and to the people of Israel.

Ver. 61. *And delivered his strength into captivity*, etc.] That is, the ark, called his strength, and the ark of his strength, (^{<9A5D>}Psalms 105:4 132:8), because it was a token of his strength, and by means of which he displayed it, as when the Israelites passed through Jordan into Canaan’s land, and encompassed the city of Jericho; and besides, it was typical of Christ, the man of God’s right hand, made strong for himself, and in whom is strength as well as righteousness for his people; now this was delivered up into the hands of the Philistines, and carried captive, (^{<004D>}1 Samuel 4:11). The Targum renders it, “his law”, because the two tables of the law were in the ark; so Jarchi interprets it, the ark and the tables:

and his glory into the enemy’s hand; which designs the same thing, the ark being the glory of God, over which upon the mercy seat the glorious majesty of the Lord was; hence Phinehas’s wife, when she heard the ark was taken, fell into labour, her time being near, and brought forth a son, and called him Ichabod, saying, the glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken, (^{<002D>}1 Samuel 4:21,22).

Ver. 62. *He gave his people over also to the sword*, etc.] To those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; that is, to the Philistines, when there fell of them thirty thousand men at once, (^{<000D>}1 Samuel 4:10)

and was wroth with his inheritance; and the above showed that he was, though they were his inheritance, his portion and possession, and he had chosen them for it, (~~4912~~ Psalm 33:12).

Ver. 63. *The fire consumed their young men*, etc.] Not Nadab and Abihu, as some of the Jewish Rabbins interpret it, of which Jarchi makes mention; but the young men, the choice, the flower, of the Israelitish army, which engaged with the Philistines in the times of Eli; and the fire that consumed them is not to be understood of material fire, or of extraordinary fire from heaven, but either of the wrath of God, as Jarchi, or of the flaming glittering sword of the enemy, which consumed them like fire; (see ~~4928~~ Numbers 21:28 ~~2351~~ Isaiah 26:11)

and their maidens were not given to marriage; the young men to whom they should have been married, and to whom they might have been espoused, being slain in battle: or, “were not honoured” ^{f1143}; that with marriage, which is honourable to all, (~~3804~~ Hebrews 13:4), or “were not praised” ^{f1144}; were not attended with epithalamies and nuptial songs, such as used to be sung at the time of marriage; hence, as Kimchi observes, the nuptial chamber is called *al wl h tyb*, “the house of praise”; and so frequently, when a great calamity is threatened or described, it is said, the voice of the bride and bridegroom is not heard; (see ~~2440~~ Jeremiah 16:9 25:10 ~~6182~~ Revelation 18:23).

Ver. 64. *Their priests fell by the sword*, etc.] Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, and other priests; which shows the cruelty of the enemy, not to spare men unarmed, as the priests were; and the justice of God, which pursued these men, who were very wicked, and whose character and office could not secure them from divine wrath:

and their widows made no lamentation; for their husbands the priests, who fell by the sword; particularly the widow of Phinehas, who upon the news fell into labour, and as soon as she brought forth her child died, and while she lived took no notice of the death of her husband, nor lamented that, only that the ark of the Lord was taken, (~~9049~~ 1 Samuel 4:19-22), and which might be the case of others; nor could they attend their funerals, or follow them to the grave with lamentations, they falling in battle; and such was their concern for the public loss, that their private sorrow was swallowed up in it. Some understand it of the disrespect and neglect of others, who

came not to lament with them, and comfort them, as was usual: one of the Targums paraphrases the whole thus,

“at the time that the Philistines carried captive the ark of the Lord, the priests of Shiloh, Hophni, and Phinehas, fell by the sword; and at the time they brought their wives the news of it, they wept not, for they died even the same day.”

Ver. 65. *Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep*, etc.] He seemed to be asleep, while he suffered the ark to be taken, and the Israelites to be slain; and he may be said to awake when he exerted his power in smiting the Philistines, and causing their idol to fall before his ark; (see ^{<4006>}Psalm 7:6 44:23),

and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine; who having taken a free draught of generous wine, not to excess, goes forth with great courage and cheerfulness to meet his adversary, shouting as he goes, being sure of victory; which must be applied to God with decency, consistent with the glory of his majesty, and the perfections of his nature; and seems designed to express his power and readiness to help his people, and avenge himself on his enemies; (see ^{<2321>}Isaiah 42:13 ^{<3015>}Zechariah 9:15).

Ver. 66. *And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts*, etc.] Not the Israelites, as Kimchi interprets it, but the Philistines, who in another battle were put to flight, and turned their backs, and so were smitten in their hinder parts; or rather this has reference to the Philistines being smitten with haemorrhoids, or piles in their posteriors, while the ark was retained a captive by them, (^{<0916>}1 Samuel 5:6,12), and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“and he smote them that troubled them with haemorrhoids in their posteriors;”

the Greek version, as quoted by Suidas ^{f1145}, is, “he smote his enemies on the back parts of the seat”; signifying, he says, a disease, modestly expressed:

he put them to a perpetual reproach; either by causing their idol Dagon to fall before his ark, and be broken upon the threshold of the house of the idol; in memory of which the priests ever after, nor any that came in thither, trod upon the threshold, (^{<0916>}1 Samuel 5:3-5), or rather through their sending golden images of their haemorrhoids, and golden mice along with the ark, which were reserved to their perpetual reproach: other

instances of the Lord's regard to Israel follow, in providing a proper place for the ark, and appointing a suitable governor over the people.

Ver. 67. *Moreover, he refused the tabernacle of Joseph*, etc.] That is, the tabernacle of Moses, which had been for a long time at Shiloh, a city in the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph; when the ark was brought back by the Philistines, it was not returned to Shiloh, but carried to Kirjathjearim, where it remained twenty years, and after that was had to Zion, the city of David, (~~BOOK~~ 1 Samuel 7:1,2 ~~BOOK~~ 2 Samuel 6:3,4,12), so the Targum,

“and he rejected the tabernacle which he had stretched out in the border of Joseph;”

he did not refuse the tabernacle, or remove his presence from it; but he refused the place it had been in, or refused that it should be any more there:

and chose not the tribe of Ephraim: the same thing is designed as before; the meaning is, not that he rejected the tribe of Ephraim from being one of the tribes of Israel; nor does it refer to the revolt of Ephraim, or the ten tribes, from the pure worship of God to idolatry, and their separation from the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; or to their being carried captive into Assyria; since this historical narration reaches no further than the reign of David, or the time of Solomon at furthest; whereas the facts mentioned were a long time afterwards; nor does it regard the removal of government from the tribe of Ephraim, which was the seat of it in the times of Joshua, of which tribe he was, (~~BOOK~~ Numbers 13:8), though this tribe was overlooked in the choice of a king, one of the tribe of Benjamin being first chosen; and when he was rejected, then one of the tribe of Judah; but this purely, at least principally, intends that it was the will of God that the seat of worship should not be in this tribe any longer; that the ark and tabernacle should be no more there: perhaps the Ephraimites were more culpable, and more provoked the Lord with their idolatry, than the other tribes, since they are first and last taken notice of as the objects of the divine resentment in this account; (see ~~BOOK~~ Psalm 78:9-11).

Ver. 68. *But chose the tribe of Judah*, etc.] Both to be the seat of kingly power and government, and of religious worship; the latter is chiefly designed. Jerusalem was, at least part of it, in the tribe of Judah: here David, who was of that tribe, dwelt, and Solomon his son, and all the kings of Judah afterwards; here the temple was built, into which the ark of the covenant was put, and whither the tribes went up to worship

the mount Zion, which he loved; where was the city of David; into which the ark was brought when removed from Gibeah, and on part of which the temple was built: the choice of this place, for such a purpose, was from love, (~~1870~~ Psalm 87:2), it was typical of the church, the choice of which also arises from the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to it.

Ver. 69. *And he built his sanctuary like high palaces*, etc.] The temple at Jerusalem, called a sanctuary, or holy place, because separated and dedicated to holy use and service; where the holy God had his residence, and was worshipped, and was a figure of the holy place not made with hands: this is said to be built by the Lord, because the materials provided for it, and which David and his people so willingly offered, were his own; “of his own” they gave him; as well as the pattern after which it was made was had from the Spirit of God; and it was the Lord that put it into the heart of David to set such a work afoot, and encouraged Solomon to begin and finish it, and gave wisdom, health, and strength, to the workmen to accomplish it; and in reference to this are the words in (~~1870~~ Psalm 127:1), “except the Lord build the house”, etc. and this he built not like the “high places”, where idolatry was committed; the temple was not built in imitation of them; but like what high and eminent men, like such buildings as: they erect; like stately palaces, so Aben Ezra and Kimchi, built for kings and great personages; and such a building was the temple, the most magnificent in all the world, as built by Solomon, and even as rebuilt by Zerubbabel, and repaired by Herod; (see ~~4100~~ Mark 13:1) or it was built “on high”, as the Syriac version, on a high hill, Mount Moriah: the Targum is,

“as the horn of the unicorn;”

and so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions. Jarchi interprets it as the high heavens, of which it was a figure; it was like them for magnificence and glory, and like the earth for stability, as follows:

like the earth, which he hath established for ever; as to the substance of it; though as to the qualities of it, it will be done away, and a new one arise; otherwise it will abide for ever, (~~2100~~ Ecclesiastes 1:4), this respects the continuance of the temple during the Jewish dispensation, when the Gospel temple, or Gospel church, should take place, which will continue to the end of the world: this is opposed to the frequent moves of the tabernacle and ark before the temple was built, when there was no abiding habitation provided for it.

Ver. 70. *He chose David also his servant*, etc.] To be king of Israel, the youngest of his father's family, when he rejected all the rest; (see ^{<0961>}1 Samuel 16:6,11), an eminent type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is called by his name, (^{<0808>}Psalm 89:3,19 ^{<2623>}Ezekiel 34:23 37:24 ^{<2806>}Hosea 3:5) and the signification of his name "Beloved" agrees with him, who is beloved of God, as his Son, and as man and Mediator; and beloved of men, of all the saints: and so likewise his character as a servant suits with him; who not only frequently has the name of a servant, (^{<0809>}Psalm 89:19,20 ^{<2301>}Isaiah 42:1 ^{<2808>}Zechariah 3:8), but appeared in the form of one, (^{<2307>}Philippians 2:7), had the work of a servant to do, which he has accomplished, even the great work of our salvation, (^{<2174>}John 17:4), in doing which, and all things leading on and appertaining to it, he took the utmost delight and pleasure, and used the greatest diligence and assiduity, (^{<0434>}John 4:34 9:4) and justly acquired the character of a faithful and righteous servant, (^{<2311>}Isaiah 53:11), and to this work and office he was chosen and called by his Father, (^{<2301>}Isaiah 42:1 49:3),

and took him from the sheepfolds; from whence he was fetched when Samuel was sent by the Lord to anoint him, (^{<0961>}1 Samuel 16:11), so Moses, while he was feeding his father's sheep, was called to be the saviour and deliverer of Israel, (^{<0101>}Exodus 3:1-10), and Amos was taken from following the flock to be a prophet of the Lord, (^{<2073>}Amos 7:13,14), and as David was a type of Christ, this may express the mean condition of our Lord, in his state of humiliation, previous to his exaltation, and the more open exercise of his kingly office.

Ver. 71. *From following the ewes great with young*, etc.] Or, "from after" them ^{f1146}; it was usual with the shepherd to put them before him, and to follow them, and gently drive them, which is expressive of his care and tenderness of them; (see ^{<0333>}Genesis 33:13,14), the same is observed of David's antitype, the great and good Shepherd of the sheep, (^{<2301>}Isaiah 40:11). David was a type of Christ as a shepherd; as he kept his father's sheep, so Christ keeps those that the Father has given him, (^{<2129>}John 10:29), as David kept his flock with great care and courage, and in safety, (^{<0173>}1 Samuel 17:34-36), so does the Lord Jesus Christ keep his flock in safety, and preserves it from Satan, the roaring lion, and from grievous wolves that enter into it, and every beast of prey that would devour it; and particularly as David took special care of those that were with young, so does the Lord take special care of such that are newborn babes, that have Christ formed in them, and are big with desires after him, carry a burden,

and are weary, and heavy laden: the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret the word ^{f1147} of such that give suck, and so it most properly signifies:

he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance; that is, to rule over them: this is said in allusion to his having been a shepherd; and nothing is more common than for kings to be represented as shepherds, and their acts of government by leading and feeding; and one and the same word in the Greek language signifies to feed and rule: and so the Targum,

“he brought him to rule over Jacob his people:”

this was a great honour indeed, to be the governor of the Lord’s people, a special people above all people on the face of the earth, and whom he had chosen to be his inheritance; and in this also he was a type of Christ, who has the throne of his father David given him, and who reigns over the house of Jacob, one of whose titles is King of saints; for as the government of the world in general, so of the church in particular, is on his shoulders, (~~4013~~ Luke 1:32,33 ~~6654~~ Revelation 15:4 ~~2396~~ Isaiah 9:6,7).

Ver. 72. *So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart*, etc.] Or, “reigned over them”, as the Targum; that is, over the people of Israel, and which he did in such manner as showed uprightness of heart, and that he was, as his character is, a man after God’s own heart: it appeared, by his administration of government, that he sought not his own honour and interest, and the aggrandizing of his family, but the good of his people, and the glory of God; and this character, in the fullest extent, and highest sense of it, best agrees with Christ, the righteous branch raised unto David, (~~2425~~ Jeremiah 23:5 ~~6653~~ Revelation 15:3,4 ~~4378~~ John 7:18),

and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands; or “by the prudencies” of his hands, as the Targum; or, by the prudencies ^{f1148}, as in the original text; with the most consummate wisdom and skill: hands are made mention of, partly in allusion to the shepherd, as David had been, who carries a staff in his hand, and guides his flock with it; and partly with respect to the acts and administration of government, which were wisely performed by him: he made wise laws for his people and soldiers, and put them in execution; he behaved wisely in the court and in the camp; but was greatly and infinitely exceeded by his antitype, the servant of the Lord, that should deal prudently, (~~2603~~ Isaiah 52:13), and who is abundantly qualified for it, as being not only the Wisdom of God, and the all wise God, but even, as

Mediator, has the spirit of wisdom on him, and the treasures of wisdom in him.