

PSALM 88

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 88

A Song [or] Psalm for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.

Of the word “maalath”, (see Gill on “^{<4501>}Psalm 53:1”). “Leannoth” signifies “to answer”. Perhaps this song was to be sung alternately, or by responses. Both words are thought by some, as Aben Ezra, to be the beginning of a song, to the tune of which this was set; and by others a musical instrument, on which it was sung; a hollow one, as the word “maalath” seems to signify, a wind instrument: others are of opinion that they intend the subject matter of the psalm, and render them, “concerning the disease to afflict”, or “the afflicting disease”^{f1238}; either a bodily one, which threatened with death, under which the psalmist now was; or a soul disorder, being under desertions, and a sense of divine wrath, which were very afflicting. The psalm is called “Maschil”, which may be translated “causing to understand”; it being instructive to persons in a like case to apply to God, as he did; and if it respects Christ, it teaches many things concerning him, his sorrows and his sufferings: the author of it is said to be Heman the Ezrahite; the Targum calls him Heman the native, and the Septuagint render it Heman the Israelite, and Arama says this is Abraham. There were two of this name, one the son of Zerah, the son of Judah, and so might be called the Zerahite, and with the addition of a letter the Ezrahite; he is mentioned along with others as famous for wisdom, (^{<1306>}1 Chronicles 2:6 ^{<1061>}1 Kings 4:31), but this man seems to be too early to be the penman of this psalm: though Dr. Lightfoot^{f1239} is of opinion that this psalm was penned by this Heman many years before the birth of Moses; which and the following psalm are the oldest pieces of writing the world has to show, being written by two men who felt and groaned under the bondage and affliction of Egypt, which Heman here deploras, and therefore entitles his elegy “Maalath Leannoth, concerning sickness by affliction”; and accordingly he and his brethren are called the sons of Mahali, (^{<1041>}1 Kings 4:31). There was another Heman, who was both a singer in David’s time, and the king’s seer, who seems most likely to be the person, (^{<1363>}1

Chronicles 6:33 15:17,19 25:1,5), he was when he wrote this psalm under sore temptations, desertions, and dejections, though not in downright despair; there is but one comfortable clause in it, and that is the first of it; many interpreters, both ancient and modern, think he is to be considered throughout as a type of Christ, with whom everything in it more exactly agrees than with anyone man else. The Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it of the people of Israel in captivity; and so the Syriac version entitles it,

“concerning the people that were in Babylon;”

but a single person only is designed throughout. Spinosa^{f1240} affirms, from the testimony of Philo the Jew, that this psalm was published when King Jehoiachin was a prisoner in Babylon, and the following psalm when he was released: but this is not to be found in the true Philo, but in Pseudo-Philo^{f1241}.

Ver. 1. *O Lord God of my salvation*, etc.] The author both of temporal and spiritual salvation; (see ^{<1984>}Psalm 18:46 24:5) from the experience the psalmist had had of the Lord's working salvation for him in times past, he is encouraged to hope that he would appear for him, and help him out of his present distress; his faith was not so low, but that amidst all his darkness and dejection he could look upon the Lord as his God, and the God of salvation to him; so our Lord Jesus Christ, when deserted by his Father, still called him his God, and believed that he would help him, (^{<1921>}Psalm 22:1 ^{<2107>}Isaiah 1:7-9).

I have cried day and night before thee, or “in the day I have cried, and in the night before thee”; that is, as the Targum paraphrases it,

“in the night my prayer was before thee.”

prayer being expressed by crying shows the person to be in distress, denotes the earnestness of it, and shows it to be vocal; and it being both in the day and in the night, that it was without ceasing. The same is said by Christ, (^{<1921>}Psalm 22:2) and is true of him, who in the days of his flesh was frequent in prayer, and especially in the night season, (^{<1162>}Luke 6:12 21:37) and particularly his praying in the garden the night he was betrayed may be here referred to, (^{<1163>}Matthew 26:38,39).

Ver. 2. *Let my prayer come before thee*, etc.] Not before men, as hypocrites desire, but before the Lord; let it not be shut out, but be

admitted; and let it come with acceptance, as it does when it ascends before God, out of the hands of the angel before the throne, perfumed with the much incense of his mediation, (^{<618B>}Revelation 8:3,4),

incline thine ear unto my cry; hearken to it, receive it, and give an answer to it; Christ's prayers were attended with strong crying, and were always received and heard, (^{<380B>}Hebrews 5:7 ^{<614B>}John 11:41,42).

Ver. 3. *For my soul is full of troubles*, etc.] Or "satiated or glutted"^{f1242} with them, as a stomach full of meat that can receive no more, to which the allusion is; having been fed with the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, so that he had his fill of trouble: every man is full of trouble, of one kind or another, (^{<3840B>}Job 14:1) especially the saint, who besides his outward troubles has inward ones, arising from indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, and divine desertions, which was now the case of the psalmist: this may be truly applied to Christ, who himself said, when in the garden, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death", (^{<418B>}Matthew 26:38), he was a man of sorrows all his days, but especially at that time, and when upon the cross, forsaken by his Father, and sustaining his wrath: "his soul" was then "filled with evil things"^{f1243}, as the words may be rendered:

innumerable evils compassed him about, (^{<3902>}Psalm 40:12), the sins of his people, those evil things, were imputed to him; the iniquity of them all was laid upon him, as was also the evil of punishment for them; and then he found trouble and sorrow enough:

and my life draweth nigh unto the grave: a phrase expressive of a person's being just ready to die, (^{<3822>}Job 33:22) as the psalmist now thought he was, (^{<388B>}Psalm 88:5,15), it is in the plural number "my lives"^{f1244}; and so may not only denote the danger he was in of his natural life, but of his spiritual and eternal life, which he might fear, being in darkness and desertion, would be lost, though they could not; yea, that he was near to "hell" itself, for so the word^{f1245} may be rendered; for when the presence of God is withdrawn, and wrath let into the conscience, a person in his own apprehension seems to be in hell as it were, or near it; (see Jon 2:2). This was true of Christ, when he was sorrowful unto death, and was brought to the dust of it, and under divine dereliction, and a sense of the wrath of God, as the surety of his people.

Ver. 4. *I am counted with them that go down into the pit*, etc.] With the dead, with them that are worthy of death, with malefactors that are judicially put to death, and are not laid in a common grave, but put into a pit together: thus Christ was reckoned and accounted of by the Jews; the sanhedrim counted him worthy of death; and the common people cried out Crucify him; and they did crucify him between two malefactors; and so he was numbered or counted with transgressors, and as one of them, (^{<251B>}Isaiah 53:3,4,12).

I am as a man that hath no strength; for his “strength” was “dried up like a potsherd”, (^{<9215>}Psalm 22:15), though he was the mighty God, and, as man, was made strong by the Lord for himself.

Ver. 5. *Free among the dead*, etc.] If he was a freeman, it was only among the dead, not among the living; if he was free of any city, it was of the city of the dead; he looked upon himself as a dead man, as one belonging to the state of the dead, who are free from all relations, and from all business and labour, and removed from all company and society; he thought himself quite neglected, of whom there was no more care and notice taken than of a dead man:

like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more; in a providential way, as in life, to clothe them, and feed them, and protect and preserve them; in which sense God is said to be mindful of men, (^{<1004>}Psalm 8:4), who when dead have no need to be minded, and remembered in such a manner; otherwise God does remember the dead, and takes care of their dust, and will raise them again; and especially he remembers his own people, those that sleep in Jesus, who will be thought of in the resurrection morn, and will be raised first, and brought with Christ; (see ^{<8143>}Job 14:13,14),

and they are cut off from thy hand; that is, the slain that lie in the grave, the dead that are buried there; these are cut off from the hand of Providence, they needing no supplies from thence as in the time of life. The Targum is,

“and they are separated from the face of thy majesty.”

or “they are cut off by thine hand” ^{f1246}; by the immediate hand of God, in a judicial way; so Christ in his death was like one of these, he was cut off in a judicial way, not for his own sins, but for the transgressions of his people, (^{<251B>}Isaiah 53:8 ^{<208B>}Daniel 9:26).

Ver. 6. *Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit*, etc.] The Targum interprets it of

“captivity which was like unto the lowest pit;”

and so Jarchi and Kimchi. Some understand it of a prison or dungeon, into which the psalmist was put; it may be interpreted of the pit of the grave, into which Christ was laid; though he continued in it not so long as to see corruption; from that prison and judgment he was quickly taken, (^{<9160>}Psalm 16:10 ^{<2518>}Isaiah 53:8), “in darkness”; both corporeal and spiritual, (^{<4275>}Matthew 27:45,46), and it is in the Hebrew text “in darknesses” ^{f1247}, denoting both:

in the deeps; in the deep waters of affliction, sorrows, and sufferings; (see ^{<991>}Psalm 69:1,2). The allusion is to a dark and deep pit, under ground, such as in the eastern countries they used to put their captives and prisoners into in the night, and take them out in the morning; and which custom continues still among the Turks. Leo Africanus ^{f1248} says he has seen three thousand Christian captives together, clothed in a woollen sack, and chained to one another; and in the night put into pits or ditches under ground; (see ^{<3911>}Zechariah 9:11).

Ver. 7. *The wrath lieth hard upon me*, etc.] So some good men apprehend, when they are under afflictive dispensations of Providence, and are left of God, and have not his immediate presence, and the discoveries of his love; though fury is not in him, nor does any wrath in reality fall upon them, only it seems so to them; (see ^{<491>}Psalm 38:1,2 ^{<2511>}Lamentations 3:1), but the wrath of God did really lie with all the effects of it upon Christ, as the surety of his people, when he was made sin, and a curse for them; (see ^{<4938>}Psalm 89:38),

and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves; the afflictions of God’s people are compared to waves and billows of the sea, which are many, and come one upon the back of another, and threaten to overwhelm and sink; (see ^{<9417>}Psalm 42:7) and so the sufferings of Christ are signified by waters coming into him, and floods overflowing him; and hence they are called a baptism, (^{<4901>}Psalm 69:1,2 ^{<4251>}Luke 12:50), and these were brought upon him by the Lord; he spared him not; he laid the whole chastisement, all the punishment due to the sins of his people, on him; he caused every wave to come upon him, and him to endure all sorrows and sufferings the law and justice of God could require.

Selah. (See Gill on “^{<3982>}Psalm 3:2”).

Ver. 8. *Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me*, etc.] His familiar friends, who were well known to him, and he to them: it is a mercy and privilege to have good acquaintance, and hearty faithful friends, to converse and advise with, whether about things civil or religious; and it is an affliction to be deprived of them; and oftentimes in distress and adversity they drop and fail, which is an additional trouble: this was the ease of Job and of David, (^{<3893>}Job 19:13,14 ^{<3811>}Psalm 31:11) and here of Heman, who attributes it to God, as done by him; as also Job does, in the place referred to; for as it is the Lord that gives favour in the sight of men, he can take it away when he pleases: this is true of Christ, and the like is said of him, (^{<3908>}Psalm 69:8), and by his “acquaintance”, familiars, and friends, may be meant his apostles, who, upon his being apprehended, forsook him, and fled; who, though they were not all alienated in their affections, yet stood at a distance from him; Peter, though he followed him, it was afar off, and at last he denied him; and others of acquaintance and intimates stood afar off, beholding was done to him on the cross; and his familiar friend, Judas, lifted up his heel against him, and basely betrayed him, (^{<4160>}Matthew 26:50,56,58 ^{<4230>}Luke 23:49 ^{<3940>}Psalm 41:9),

thou hast made me an abomination unto them; to some of them, as to Judas, and to many that hosanna’d him into Jerusalem, and within a few days cried “Crucify him, crucify him”, (^{<4020>}Matthew 21:9 27:22,23) compare with this (^{<2638>}Isaiah 53:3).

I am shut up, and I cannot come forth; the Targum renders it, “shut up in the house of prison,”

in a prison; and so some literally understand it of the author of the psalm being in a prison, or dungeon, in the time of the captivity: but it is rather to be understood of some bodily disease, by which he was detained a prisoner at home, and of his being bound in fetters, and held in the cords of affliction; which was as a prison to him, and in which when the Lord “shuts up a man, there can be no opening”, (^{<3838>}Job 36:8 12:14), or else of soul troubles, being in great darkness and desertion; so that his soul was as in a prison, and could not come forth in the free exercise of grace, and needed the free Spirit of God to set him at liberty; (see ^{<3927>}Psalm 142:7 51:12), this may be applied to Christ, when in the hands of Judas, and the hand of soldiers with him, who took him, and bound him, and led him to the high priest; and when he was encompassed with bulls of Bashan, and enclosed

by the assembly of the wicked, as he hung on the cross, (^{<1927>}Psalm 22:12,16).

Ver. 9. *Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction*, etc.] Or dropped tears, as the Targum, by which grief was vented; (see ^{<1910>}Psalm 6:7).

Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee; in prayer, as the Targum adds, this being a prayer gesture: notwithstanding his troubles continued and increased, he did not leave off praying, though he was not immediately heard and answered, which is what is tacitly complained of, as in (^{<1927>}Psalm 22:2). Christ, in his troubles in the garden, and on the cross, prayed for himself, for divine support and assistance, as man; for his friends, disciples, and apostles, and for all that should believe in him through them; and even for his enemies.

Ver. 10. *Wilt thou show wonders to the dead?* etc.] The Lord does show wonders to some that are spiritually dead, dead in Adam, dead in law, dead in trespasses and sins, by quickening them; whereby the wonders of his grace and love, and of his power, and the exceeding greatness of it, are displayed; for the conversion and quickening of a dead sinner is a marvellous event, like that of; raising Lazarus from the dead, and causing Ezekiel's dry bones to live: likewise the Lord will show wonders to those that are corporeally dead, by raising them from the dead; which work, though not incredible, yet is very wonderful, and can only be accounted for by the attributes of Divine Omniscience and Omnipotence: yea, he would, and he has shown wonders to Christ, when dead, by raising him up again, and giving him glory, and that before he saw corruption, and as the head and representative of his people; and by raising many of the saints also, after his resurrection:

shall the dead arise and praise thee? the spiritually dead, when they are made alive, and rise out of their graves of sin, praise the Lord for the exertion of his grace and power upon them; which is one end of their being formed anew, quickened, and converted; and those that are corporeally dead, such of them as shall rise again to everlasting life, their mouths will be filled with everlasting praise: but here the author of the psalm suggests, that in a little time he should be among the dead, unless he had speedy help and deliverance from his troubles; to whom wonders are not shown, but to the living; and who ordinarily do not rise again to this mortal state, to praise the Lord in it: or, considering them as the words of Christ, he suggests, that none of the above things would be done, unless he was a

conqueror over death and the grave, and was raised from thence himself; and so these expostulations carry in them the nature of a prayer, even of the prayer of Christ, as man, to be assisted in overcoming all his enemies, and to be raised from the dead, as Cocceius and others think: the Greek and Vulgate Latin versions are,

“shall physicians rise again?”

of whom the Jews had a bad opinion; (see Gill on “~~4462~~2 Chronicles 16:12”).

Selah. (See Gill on “~~3000~~Psalm 3:2”).

Ver. 11. *Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave?* etc.] Where he saw himself now going, and where should he be detained, and not raised out of it, the lovingkindness of God to him, as his Son, and as man and Mediator, and to his people in the gift and mission of him to be their Saviour and Redeemer, how would that be declared and made known? now it is, Christ being raised, and his ministers having a commission from him to preach the Gospel, in which the lovingkindness of God is abundantly manifested:

or thy faithfulness in destruction? the grave, so called from dead bodies being cast into it, and wasted, consumed, and destroyed in it: the meaning may be, that should he be laid in the grave, and there putrefy and rot, and not be raised again, where would be the faithfulness of God to his purposes, to his covenant and promises, to him his Son, and to his people?

Ver. 12. *Shall thy wonders be known in the dark?* etc.] A description of the grave again; (see ~~1800~~Job 10:21,22), The sense may be, should he continue in the dark and silent grave, how would the wonders of the grace of God, of electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace, be made known; the wonders of Christ’s person and offices, and the wondrous things, and doctrines of the Gospel, relating thereunto? as the glory of these would be eclipsed, there would be none to publish them:

and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? the grave, where the dead lie, who, having lost all sense of things, forget what were done in this world, and they themselves are quickly forgotten by the living; and had Christ continued in this state, and had not risen again to our justification, how would his justifying righteousness have been revealed, as it is from

faith to faith in the Gospel, which is therefore called the word and ministration of righteousness?

Ver. 13. *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord*, etc.] Formerly, and had been heard, answered, and relieved, and which was an encouragement to cry again to him in his distress; Christ was always heard, (~~414E~~ John 11:42), or, now, in his present case, yet was not heard, at least not immediately answered; which was the case of the Messiah, when forsaken by his God and Father, (~~420E~~ Psalm 22:1,2), yet still determines to continue praying, as follows:

and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee; not before the Lord is awake, and can hear; for he neither slumbers nor sleeps, and he always hears: but the meaning is, that he would pray before he entered upon another business; this should be the first thing in the morning he would do, and this he would do before others did, or he himself used to do; before the usual time of morning prayer; signifying, he would pray to him very early, which is expressive of his vehemency, fervency, and importunity and earnestness, and what a sense he had of his case, and of his need of divine help: so Christ rose early in the morning, a great while before day, to pray, (~~401E~~ Mark 1:35). (See Gill on "~~490E~~ Psalm 5:4").

Ver. 14. *Lord, why castest thou off my soul?* etc.] Here begins his prayer, which he determined to present early in the morning, and consists of expostulations, and a representation of his distressed case: this shows that he was under soul desertion, and which was what so greatly afflicted him; imagining that his soul was cast off by the Lord, and had no more share in his affection, and was no more under his care, and in his sight: such expostulations of the saints, the church, and people of God, in a like case, are elsewhere met with, (~~498E~~ Psalm 43:3 74:1) and may be applied to Christ, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death, and was made an offering for sin; and particularly when he was forsaken by his Father: the Targum is,

“why hast thou forsaken my soul?”

and rises the word “sabachtha”, which Christ did when on the cross, (~~474E~~ Matthew 27:46), the Septuagint version is,

“wherefore, O Lord, dost thou reject my prayers?”

“why hidest thou thy face from me?” which is a denial of sensible communion, a withdrawing the influences and communications of divine grace for a time; and which sometimes is the case of the best of men, as Job, David, and others; and is very grieving and distressing to them; and, for the most part, is on account of sin; it is sin which separates between God and his people, and causes him to hide his face from them, or not grant them his gracious presence: this was the case of Christ, who knew no sin, while he was suffering for the sins of his people; (see ^{<3997>}Psalm 69:17) compared with (^{<4746>}Matthew 27:46).

Ver. 15. *I am afflicted*, etc.] In body and mind, from within and from without, by Satan, by the men of the world, and by the Lord himself; which is the common lot of God’s people, (^{<3849>}Psalm 34:19 ^{<3812>}Zephaniah 3:12) and was the case of the Messiah, who was afflicted both with the tongues and hands of men, by words, by blows, and by the temptations of Satan; and was smitten and afflicted of God, by divine justice, as the sinner’s surety: (see ^{<4224>}Psalm 22:24 ^{<2804>}Isaiah 53:4) or

I am poor ^{f1249}; which as it is a character, which, for the most part, agrees with the saints, who are the poor of this world God has chosen, to whom the Gospel is sent, and by whom it is received, and who are effectually called by it, so likewise belongs to Christ, (^{<3889>}Zechariah 9:9 ^{<4789>}2 Corinthians 8:9),

and ready to die, from my youth up; a sickly unhealthful person from his infancy, and often in danger of death; which last was certainly the case of Christ in his infancy, through the malice of Herod; and many times afterwards, when grown up, through the attempts of the Jews to take away his life: some render it, “I am ready to die through concussion”, or “shaking” ^{f1250}; meaning some very rough and severe dispensation of Providence, such an one as Job expresses by shaking him to pieces, (^{<3862>}Job 16:12) and was literally true of Christ, when his body was so shaken by the jog of the cross, that all his bones were put out of joint, (^{<4924>}Psalm 22:14)

while I suffer thy terrors; or “bear” ^{f1251} them, or “carry”, even terrible afflictions, in which he had terrible apprehensions of the wrath of God in them, of death they would issue in, and of an awful judgment that should follow that; all which are called the terrors of the Lord, (^{<3804>}Job 6:4 ^{<4894>}Psalm 55:4 ^{<4750>}2 Corinthians 5:10,11), and which the saints, when left to God, have some dreadful apprehensions of: such were the terrors of the Lord the Messiah endured, when in a view of the sins of his people being

laid upon him, and of the wrath of God coming on him for them, his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground, (~~4224~~Luke 22:44). Compare with this (~~4904~~Psalms 18:4,5).

I am distracted: not out of his mind, deprived of his senses, and without the use of reason; but his thoughts were distracted and confused, and his mind discomposed with the terrors of God upon him: the Hebrew word “aphunah” is only used in this place, and is difficult of interpretation, and is variously derived and rendered: some take it to be of the same root with “pen”, which signifies “lest, perhaps” ^{f1252}; seeing persons in a panic are apt to use such expressions; perhaps, or it may be, such and such things will befall me; forming and framing in their minds ten thousand dreadful things, which they fear are coming upon them; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi; and is applied by Cocceius ^{f1253} to the solicitous care and fear of Christ concerning his body, the church, (~~3807~~Hebrews 5:7) others derive it from “ophen”, which signifies a wheel, and so may be rendered, “I am wheeled about” ^{f1254}; always in motion, and have no rest day nor night; as Christ was after his apprehension, being carried from place to place, and from bar to bar: others derive it from the Arabic word “aphan” ^{f1255}, which signifies to be in want of counsel and advice: Christ though, as God, needed no counsel, nor did he take counsel with any; and, as Mediator, is the wonderful Counsellor; yet, as man, he needed it, and had it from his Father, for which he blesses him, (~~4907~~Psalms 16:7), others from the Hebrew root “phanah”, which signifies to look unto, as persons in a panic look here and there; and as Christ did when suffering, who looked, and there was none to help, (~~2365~~Isaiah 63:5). The Syriac and Arabic versions render it “amazed”, or “astonished”, which is said of Christ, (~~4143~~Mark 14:33), the Vulgate Latin version is “troubled”, which also agrees with Christ, (~~4827~~John 12:27 ~~4038~~Matthew 26:38) as he must needs be, when his enemies surrounded him, the sins of his people were upon him, the sword of justice awaked against him, and the wrath of God on him, as follows.

Ver. 16. *Thy fierce wrath goeth over me*, etc.] Or “wraths” ^{f1256}, burning wrath; the whole of divine wrath, in all its fierceness, due to the sins of his people: these, like the mighty waves of the sea, passed over him, threatening to overwhelm him, (~~4838~~Psalms 89:38),

thy terrors have cut me off; from the presence of God, and out of his sight; as sometimes the Lord’s people are ready to imagine, when forsaken by him, (~~4812~~Psalms 31:22) or from the land of the living, as the Messiah was,

and in a judicial way, though not for any sin of his own, (^{<2508>}Isaiah 53:8
^{<2086>}Daniel 9:26).

Ver. 17. *They came round about me daily like water*, etc.] That is, the terrors of the Lord, the sorrows of death and hell, (^{<19804>}Psalm 18:4,5), this was the Messiah's case, when it was with him as is expressed (^{<19901>}Psalm 69:1,2),

they compassed me about together; as waters coming from many places, from all quarters, meet together, and together surround a person or place in such circumstances was Christ, when the bulls of Bashan beset him around, and the assembly of the wicked enclosed him, and innumerable evils encompassed him about, (^{<19212>}Psalm 22:12,16 40:12).

Ver. 18. *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me*, etc.] This is mentioned in (^{<18818>}Psalm 88:8), and is here repeated; and the account is closed with it, to show that this was a most aggravating circumstance of his affliction, and which bore exceeding hard upon him; and this must be a very uncomfortable case, to be in distress, whether of body or mind, and to have no kind friend near to yield the least help, relief, and comfort; so Christ's lovers and friends, his disciples, who loved him and he loved them, and reckoned them as his friends, and was a friend to them, when he was taken by his enemies, they all forsook him, and fled, (^{<1116>}Matthew 26:56),

and mine acquaintance into darkness; either by death into the dark grave, which Job calls the land of darkness and shadow of death, (^{<18021>}Job 10:21,22), or being removed from him, so that he could not see them, it was all one to him as if they had been put into darkness, into some dark dungeon, or into the grave itself: or the words may be rendered, mine acquaintance are darkness^{f1257}: this was the case of Christ, when on the cross; he had none near him, no acquaintance about him, but darkness; and darkness was over all the land for the space of three hours; and a darkness was on his soul, being forsaken by his Father; and the prince of darkness, with all the fiends of hell, were throwing their fiery darts at him, (^{<1175>}Matthew 27:45,46). Thus ends this sorrowful and mournful song; a joyful one follows.