

PSALM 118

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 118

Kimchi says their Rabbins are divided about this psalm. Some understand it of David; others of the Messiah: but, with us Christians, there ought to be no doubt of its belonging to the Messiah; since our Lord has quoted a passage out of it, and applied it to himself, (^{<4182>}Psalm 118:22,23); (see ^{<4124>}Matthew 21:42); and so has the Apostle Peter, (^{<4041>}Acts 4:11). Nor did the Jews of those times object thereunto, which doubtless they would have done, had the psalm respected any other but the Messiah; yea, the common people that attended Christ when he entered into Jerusalem, and the children in the temple, took their “hosanna” from hence, (^{<4182>}Psalm 118:26); (see ^{<4124>}Matthew 21:9,15). It is generally thought to be written by David, after he was established in the kingdom, and had brought the ark of the Lord into the city. It concludes the great “Hallel”, or hymn sung at the Jewish festivals; particularly at the feasts of tabernacle and the passover.

Ver. 1. *O give thanks unto the Lord*, etc.] For all his mercies, temporal and spiritual; as all should, who are partakers of them: this should be done always, and for all things, in the name of Christ; it is but reasonable service;

for [he is] good; in himself, and to others: is essentially and diffusively good; the fountain of all goodness, and the author of all good things;

because his mercy [endureth] for ever; in his own heart, and in his covenant; his grace and lovingkindness displayed in Christ; the blessings and promises of it, which are the sure mercies of David: these always remain, notwithstanding the unworthiness of his people; and though he hides his face sometimes from them, and chastises them; (see ^{<4161>}Psalm 106:1 107:1); the goodness and mercy of God were seen in setting David on the throne; and abundantly more in giving Christ to be the Saviour of his people; for both which thanks should be given, and the kindness acknowledged, by the persons mentioned in the following verses.

Ver. 2. *Let Israel now say, that his mercy [endureth] for ever.*] Let such who have had an experience of it acknowledge and declare it to others; not only believe in it with their hearts, and privately give thanks for it, but with

the mouth make confession of it to the glory of divine grace; not only literal Israel, whom the Lord brought out of Egypt, led and fed in the wilderness, and settled in the land of Canaan; and to whom the law and the services of God, the covenants and promises, word and ordinances, belonged; and who now were so happy under the government of such a king as David; but also the spiritual Israel of God, the whole Israel of God, Jews and Gentiles, under the Gospel dispensation; the Israel whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the Spirit effectually calls and sanctifies; such who are Israelites indeed, who have been encouraged to hope in the Lord, and in his mercy, and are made partakers of it; these should speak of the grace and mercy of God, and the continuance of it, for the encouragement of others.

Ver. 3. *Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy [endureth] for ever.*] The priests and Levites that blessed the people, and taught them the knowledge of divine things; but not these literally, at least not only these, since the priesthood of Aaron is changed, and the law of it abrogated, and all believers are now priests unto God, and offer up spiritual sacrifices to him; and particularly the sacrifice of praise for his grace and mercy, the perpetuity of which they should publish and proclaim all abroad.

Ver. 4. *Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy [endureth] for ever.*] Not the proselytes to the Jewish religion only, but all that feared the Lord among all people, as Aben Ezra observes; such as fear the Lord and his goodness, and have had an experience of his grace and mercy, which has caused them to fear him; and to whom the mercy of God is great, and on whom it is from everlasting to everlasting; and therefore should speak well of it, and set their seal to it, that it abides for ever; (see ^{<49A31B>} Psalm 103:11,17).

Ver. 5. *I called upon the Lord in distress*, etc.] Or “out of that strait” ^{f1619}; when David was encompassed by Saul and his men, or when at the court of Achish, or when his own people talked of stoning him. As this may respect the Messiah, it may design his distresses in the garden, when surrounded with sorrow, and being in an agony prayed the more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood; and may be applied to his members, as it often is their case to be in distress, straits and difficulties, through outward afflictions and pressures, inward corruptions, temptations, and desertions, and through the low exercise of grace; when they are as it were imprisoned, and so straitened they cannot come forth in

the free exercise of it; at all which seasons prayer is necessary; and nothing is more proper than to call upon the Lord, which is both duty and privilege, and often attended with success, as follows;

the Lord answered me, [and set me] in a large place; as he did David, when he delivered him from all his troubles, placed him on the throne of Israel, and gave him rest from all his enemies round about; (see ^{<BIB>}Psalm 31:8). And so he did the Messiah, when he raised him from the dead, received him to heaven, where he sits at the right of God in human nature: this is a large place indeed, large enough for the innumerable company of angels, and for all the saints, for whom everlasting habitations and mansions of bliss are preparing by him; and which is the glories liberty of the children of God; (see ^{<BIB>}Psalm 18:19); and these also, upon calling on the Lord in distress, are heard and answered, and brought into large places, where they walk at liberty; so at first conversion, when distressed about their souls, and cry for help, they are answered and brought out of the pit, and have their feet set upon a rock and their goings established; and when at other times their grace is drawn forth into exercise, their souls are enlarged in duty, are favoured with large views of the love of God, with an increase of spiritual light, knowledge, peace, and joy; and are delivered from their troubles, and out of the hands of their enemies. Or it may be rendered, “the Lord answered me largely”^{f1620}; as he did Solomon, when he gave him more than he asked for; and as he does his people, when he gives them a sufficiency, and an abundance of his grace, and even not only above their deserts, but above their thoughts and expectations; (see ^{<BIB>}Ephesians 3:20).

Ver. 6. *The Lord [is] on my side*, etc.] Or “for me”^{f1621}; he was on the side of David, hence all his prosperity and victories, the wonderful things done by him, his exaltation to the throne, and the establishment of it; and so he was on the side of Christ, he was near unto him, at his right hand, to guide, direct, and assist him as man; and he is likewise on the side of his people, to fight their battles for them, to support them under all their afflictions, to supply all their wants, to deliver them from all evil, to carry on the work of grace in their souls, and to bring them to glory, The Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord is for my help.”

I will not fear: what can man do unto me? David did not; he was not afraid of ten thousands of men, no, not of a whole army that encamped against him, God being for him, the strength of his life, and his salvation,

(^{<4986>}Psalm 3:6 27:1-3); nor did the Messiah; he was not afraid of Herod when he was told he would kill him; nor of the high priests, Scribes and Pharisees, though he knew he should fall into their hands, and they would deliver him to the Gentiles, to be scourged and crucified; nor of Judas and his band of men, who came to take him; nor of Pilate his judge, who had no power against him but what was given him. Nor have the saints any reason to fear what man can do unto them, when grace is in exercise; for what is man to God, who is but flesh, and that flesh grass? Nor can he do anything without a divine permission; is often frustrated in his attempt; and what he is suffered to do is overruled for good; and the utmost he can do is to kill the body; he cannot destroy the soul, or hinder the happiness of it; (see ^{<4504>}Psalm 56:4,9,11).

Ver. 7. *The Lord taketh my part with them that help me*, etc.] With the four hundred men that were with David, and stood by him in his troubles, (^{<4927>}1 Samuel 22:2); (see ^{<4504>}Psalm 54:4); and with those who ministered unto Christ as man, (^{<4983>}Luke 8:3). Or, “the Lord [is] for me, with” or “among my helpers”^{f1622}; he is the principal helper, he is one for all; he is in the room and stead of other helpers; having him, there is no need of any other: the Lord is the only helper of his people, vain is the help of man; he helps them out of all their troubles and difficulties, in the exercise of every grace, and in the discharge of every duty; he helps them to all their mercies temporal and spiritual, to grace here, and glory hereafter. The Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord is to help me;”

therefore shall I see [my desire] upon them that hate me; see “vengeance” on them, as the Targum; which was desired by David, by the Messiah, and by the saints; not for the sake of that itself, but for the glory of divine justice. David saw this, (^{<4547>}Psalm 54:7); so will the Messiah, when all his enemies, that will not have him to reign over them, will be slain before him; and so will the people of God, when antichrist is destroyed.

Ver. 8. *[It is] better to trust in the Lord*, etc.] This, with what follows in (^{<4989>}Psalm 118:9), is the conclusion from the above premises and experience; it is good to trust in the Lord; such enjoy peace, are in safety, shall not want any good thing, nor ever be ashamed and confounded: the Targum is,

“it is better to trust in the Word of the Lord;”

than to put confidence in man; it is not good to put confidence in man at all; it is trusting to a broken staff, to a mere shadow, which can yield no support or relief: it is best to trust in the Lord; he is able to help, as well as willing; he is faithful to his word, and unchangeable in his promises; whereas man, though he may have a will to help, oftentimes has it not in his power; and when it is in his power, and has promised it, he disappoints, being changeable or unfaithful. Wherefore trust not in man, but in the Lord; yea, cursed is the man that trusts in man; (see ^{<417B>}Jeremiah 17:5).

Ver. 9. [*It is*] *better to trust in the Lord*, etc.] The Targum is,

“in the Word of the Lord.”

This is repeated for the sake of what follows:

than to put confidence in princes; who have greater ability to help, and whose honour should engage them to keep their word; and yet it is better to trust in the Lord than in them; (see ^{<418B>}Psalms 146:3). Two different words being used in this verse and (^{<438B>}Psalms 118:8); for trust and confidence, Jarchi has observed, that the one signifies a lesser, the other a stronger confidence; as if the sense was this, “It is better lightly to trust in the Lord than to put the strongest confidence in men and princes.” But the observation is scarcely solid enough.

Ver. 10. *All nations compassed me about*, etc.] Not all the nations of the world, but all the neighbouring nations about Judea; as the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites, and Syrians; and these not all at one time, but sometimes one, and sometimes another, whom David fought with and subdued: and these, applied to Christ, design Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel; who were gathered together against him, to do what God had determined should be done, (^{<407>}Acts 4:27,28); (see ^{<421>}Psalms 22:12,16). And this is sometimes the case of the church and people of God: at the first setting up of the interest of Christ, the whole world was against it; and in such circumstances was the church of Christ, when the whole world wondered after the beast, the Romish antichrist; as it will be when the kings of the earth and of the whole world will be gathered to the battle at Armageddon; and also when the Gog and Magog army shall compass the camp of the saints and the beloved city; (see ^{<613B>}Revelation 13:3 16:14 20:8,9); and so Jarchi interprets this of Gog and Magog. Yea, it is applicable to particular believers, who are attacked by Satan, the god of this world; and who are hated and persecuted by the

men of it in general; and who are beset on all hands, at times, with the temptations of the devil, and the corruptions of their own hearts, and the snares of the world; that it is as if all nations compassed them about;

but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them; that is, calling upon the name of the Lord; as Asa, Jehoshaphat, and others did besides David: or trusting in the name of the Lord; and so the Targum,

“in the name of the Word of the Lord I trusted, therefore will I cut them off.”

Or, going forth in the name and strength of the Lord, as David did against Goliath; and so against all nations that gathered together against him, whose armies he vanquished and destroyed, and made the nations tributary to him. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ, his antitype, as Mediator stood in the strength and in the majesty of the name of the Lord, calling upon him to glorify him; and, trusting in his help and power, he attacked all his and our enemies, and obtained an entire victory over them, to the utter demolition of them; sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell. The word ^{f1623} used has the signification of concision or circumcision; and may have a peculiar regard to the Jews, who boasted of their circumcision, and were the implacable enemies of Christ; and who were destroyed by him, when wrath came upon them to the uttermost.

Ver. 11. *They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about*, etc.] Which is repeated not only for the confirmation of, it, but to denote the frequency and fury of their attacks, and their obstinate persisting therein; (see Gill on “⁻⁴⁹⁸¹⁰Psalm 118:10”);

but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them; which also is repeated to show the strength of his faith, and the continuance of it, notwithstanding his numerous enemies, and their violent efforts against him.

Ver. 12. *They compassed me about like bees*, etc.] In great numbers ^{f1624}; as a swarm of bees, which, being irritated and provoked, will fly upon persons in a body, and with great fury; to which the Amorites and the Assyrian army were compared, (⁻⁶¹⁴⁴Deuteronomy 1:44 ⁻²³⁷⁸Isaiah 7:18). They will attack horses and kill them, as Aristotle ^{f1625} says; and places besieged have been delivered by throwing out hives of bees among the besiegers ^{f1626}; and yet as they are feeble creatures, so by striking they lose their sting; and either die very quickly, or however become useless. All which denotes the numbers of the enemies of David and of Christ, and of

his church and people, and the wrath and fury of them against them, as well as their fruitless and unsuccessful attempts upon them; for though they rage, what they contrive and endeavour to put in execution are vain things, and in the issue end in their own ruin and destruction;

they are quenched as the fire of thorns; which make a blaze, a noise, for a while; but are soon consumed, and leave only a few ashes behind. Wicked men are often compared to thorns, they being like them, unfruitful in themselves, unprofitable to others, harmful to the saints, and whose end is to be burnt; and whose destruction is certain and sudden, and easily effected as the burning of thorns; (see ^{<4880>}Psalm 58:9) (^{<2006>}Ecclesiastes 7:6). The Targum renders it,

“they burned as fire among thorns;”

which is easily kindled and soon quenched: and so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions; as if it was expressive of their wrath and fury, which was soon over; which agrees with what follows:

for; or “but”, or “verily” ^{f1627},

in the name of the Lord I will destroy them; (see Gill on “^{<4880>}Psalm 118:10”) and (see Gill on “^{<4881>}Psalm 118:11”).

Ver. 13. *Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall*, etc.] Or “pushing, thou hast pushed me ^{f1628}, that I might fall”: an apostrophe to some particular enemy, as Saul was to David; who thrust sore at him to take away his life, by casting a javelin at him; speaking to his servants to kill him; sending messengers to watch his house and slay him, and by, pursuing him from place to place. And such an one was Judas to Christ, who lifted up his heel against him, and betrayed him into the hands of his enemies; or the devil in him, and by him; and who thrust sore at Christ by others; by Herod in his infancy, who sought to take away his life; and by the Scribes and Pharisees, who attempted it in different ways, and at last got him nailed to the cross; as well as Satan thrust sore at him, by his temptations in the wilderness, and when in his agonies in the garden, and when on the cross: and so the same enemy thrusts sore at the members of Christ, to cause them to fall from him, and the steadfastness of their faith in him to fail; that they may fall into temptation, and by it into sin, and that finally and totally, and into hell itself, could he obtain it;

but the Lord helped me; helped David, so that he perished not by the hand of Saul, he sometimes feared he should; helped Christ, as man and Mediator, in the day of salvation, and raised him from the dead, and gave him glory: and he helps his people against all their enemies; holds them with his right hand; helps them to fight against them; maintains his own work of grace in them, and keeps them from a total and final falling away, by his power unto salvation. The Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord helped me.”

Ver. 14. *The Lord [is] my strength and song*, etc.] It being in the name of the Lord the enemies of the psalmist were destroyed; and having obtained help of him when sore thrust at, he gives him all the glory, and ascribes nothing to himself. It was the Lord that strengthened him, helped him, and gave him the victory. The Lord is the author and giver of strength, natural and spiritual; he is the “strength” of the hearts and lives of his people, and of their salvation; and therefore is their “song”, the matter of it: they sing of his nature and perfections, of his works of providence and grace, of his righteousness and salvation, as follows:

and is become my salvation; the author of temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation; which the psalmist saw his interest in, and was assured of, and therefore sung praise on that account; (see ^{<211D>}Exodus 15:2) (^{<211D>}Isaiah 12:2).

Ver. 15. *The voice of rejoicing and salvation [is] in the tabernacles of the righteous*, etc.] In all the dwellings of good men, throughout the land of Israel, was heard nothing but the voice of joy, on account of David’s accession to the throne; the deliverance of him from a persecuting Saul, and of them from his real administration; and the victories David obtained over all his enemies: for, “when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice”, (^{<211D>}Proverbs 29:2). And still much more occasion is there of joy, in the dwelling places of the saints, though but cottages, and in the churches of God, the tabernacles of the most High, on account of the spiritual and eternal salvation Christ is the author of which joy is inwardly felt in the heart, and outwardly expressed by one saint to another; and in vocal prayer to God, and in singing his praises; which may be done in the houses of the saints, as well as in the house of God. What this voice, or the righteous with their voice, expressed in each of their dwelling houses, is as follows; for the word “saying” may be supplied, and the words connected thus:

[saying], the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly; or “acts powerfully”^{f1629}; in helping and assisting David, in protecting and defending him, in raising him to the throne, and in giving him rest from all his enemies; and so in supporting the Messiah, his antitype, as man and Mediator, in his work and under his sufferings; in raising him from the dead, and exalting: him at his right hand; and which was done with his right hand, (~~413~~Acts 2:33 5:31). Jarchi refers this joy here expressed to future times, the times of the Messiah: and in an ancient^{f1630} writing of the Jews the right hand of the Lord, three times mentioned in this verse and (~~1816~~Psalm 118:16), is interpreted of the Messiah, the sort of David.

Ver. 16. *The right hand of the Lord is exalted,* etc.] Lifted up, very eminent and conspicuous, easily to be observed in the instances before given, and become great and glorious in power; (see ~~1256~~Exodus 15:6). The power of God is superior to all enemies; and is beyond conception and expression; and is able to do for his people above all they are able to ask or think;

the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly: or “acts powerfully”. This is repeated for the confirmation of it, and to show how much the righteous were affected with it, and how desirous they were of glorifying of it; “the right hand of the Lord”, being three times mentioned, may have respect to the three divine Persons in the Godhead, whose right hand or power is the same: and as the right hand of the Father has done powerfully in the instances given, so the right hand of the Son has worked mightily in vanquishing all enemies, sin, Satan, death, and the world; in obtaining the salvation of his people, and in raising himself from the dead: and so the right hand of the Holy Spirit has wrought powerfully on Christ, on whom he rested as the Spirit of might, and through whom Christ offered himself to God, and by whom he was raised from the dead; and also in the conversion of sinners, and in helping, assisting, strengthening, and protecting the saints.

Ver. 17. *I shall not die, but live,* etc.] Not that he should never die, David knew he should; but that his present afflictions would not issue in death; or he should not die by the hands of his enemies, he sometimes feared he should; but now believed he should live, as he did, to a good old age: he knew he should live spiritually and eternally, and not die a second death; and so may all true believers and members of Christ say. Yea, these words may be considered as the words of Christ; who, though he came into the

world to die, and did die for the sins of his people; yet he knew he should not die before his time, nor should he continue long under the power of death; but should live again, and live for evermore, and not die; death should have no more dominion over him; (see ^{<19160>}Psalm 16:10 ^{<19169>}Romans 6:9);

and declare the works of the Lord; the wonderful appearances of God in a providential way, and all his marvellous works of grace; as David did, and as all the people of God more or less do; and which is the end of their living; not to eat and drink, and gratify their carnal senses, but to glorify God, by declaring what he has done for themselves and others. So the Messiah declared the name of God, his nature, perfections, mind and will, word and works, among his brethren in the great congregation, (^{<19222>}Psalm 22:22).

Ver. 18. *The Lord hath chastened me sore*, etc.] Or, “in chastening hath chastened me”^{f1631}. David was exercised with many afflictions; and though these were sore ones to the flesh, yet they were only the chastenings of a Father, and were all in love and for his good; as are all the afflictions of God’s people; for whom he loves he chastens. Indeed the chastisement of the Messiah was a proper punishment for sin, and so a sore one indeed; he being the surety of his people, on whom “the chastisement [of] their peace was laid”; that is, the punishment of their sin, (^{<2815>}Isaiah 53:5);

but he hath not given me over unto death; as yet, or to the power of it, so as to continue under it. This is to be understood in the sense as before; (see Gill on ^{<19187>}Psalm 118:17”).

Ver. 19. *Open to me the gates of righteousness*, etc.] The doors of the sanctuary or tabernacle, so called, because none but righteous persons might enter in at them, or who were clean in a ceremonial sense; and because sacrifices of righteousness were here offered. The words are addressed to the porters, or Levites, that kept the doors of the tabernacle, to open them. The Targum is,

“open to me the gates of the city of righteousness;”

Jerusalem, so called (^{<23026>}Isaiah 1:26); the gates of which were opened to David, when he took it from the Jebusites. An emblem of the church or city of God, the gates of which are opened to the righteous to enter into now; and of the New Jerusalem, and of the heavenly glory, into which the saints will have an abundant entrance hereafter; (see ^{<23018>}Isaiah 26:1,2

<6214> Revelation 22:14). Moreover, these may be the words of the Messiah, requiring the gates of heaven to be opened to him by his blood, he having obtained redemption for his people; (see <6247> Psalm 24:7-10);

I will go in to them, [and] I will praise the Lord: at the gates of the tabernacle David entered, and praised the Lord for his deliverance and salvation, and for the many favours and honours bestowed on him; and in the church of God do the saints praise him, as they will do in heaven to all eternity; and where Christ, as man, is praising his divine Father, (<6222> Psalm 22:22,25).

Ver. 20. *This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.*] This seems to be spoken by some other person or persons, distinct from David and the Messiah, pointing at some particular and principal gate, upon hearing the above word: by which is meant, not the gate of the house of the sanctuary of the Lord, as the Targum; but the Messiah himself, afterwards spoken of as the stone rejected by the builders, and made the head of the corner; who is the way of access to God; the door into the church or sheepfold; the strait gate that leads to eternal life; by which none but righteous persons enter into heaven; even such who are made righteous, through the imputation of his righteousness to them; (see <6106> John 10:1,9 14:4 <6074> Matthew 7:14).

Ver. 21. *I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me,* etc.] Here the psalmist reassumes his part in this song, and determines to praise the Lord for hearing him when in distress, and when he was encompassed with his enemies, and for delivering him out of their hands;

and art become my salvation; the author of it, and therefore deserving of praise; and who is no other than the Messiah Jesus, who is described in the next verse.

Ver. 22. *The stone [which] the builders refused,* etc.] This is not Zerubabel, according to the sense of some Jews, as Theodoret suggests; nor the people of Israel, as Jarchi and Kimchi; nor David, as the Targum, which paraphrases the words,

“the child the builders despised was among the sons of Jesse, and deserved to be appointed a king and a governor.”

He doubtless was a type of Christ, and there was some shadow of what is here said in him: he was refused by all the tribes but Judah; Ishbosheth, the

son of Saul, was set upon the throne, though afterwards all Israel and Judah united in making David king, (~~1018~~ 2 Samuel 2:8-10 5:3). But the Messiah is intended, as some ancient Jewish writers ^{f1632} own, and Jarchi himself elsewhere ^{f1633} confesses; and which is certain from the quotation and application of this passage to Christ, in (~~4142~~ Matthew 21:42) (~~4411~~ Acts 4:11,12); who is compared to a stone for his strength and duration; and because of his usefulness in the spiritual building of the church, as a foundation and corner stone; (see Gill on “~~4212~~ Matthew 21:42”). Him the Jewish builders refused; their political ones, their rulers, that believed not on him; the princes of this world, that rose up against him and crucified him; even those who were the support of their civil state, and the maintainers of it: but more especially their ecclesiastical builders, the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, who built the people, or directed them to build on their carnal privileges, the traditions of the elders, and their own legal righteousness. These refused to receive Jesus as the Messiah, and to believe in him; they refused to own and honour him as King of Zion; they refused his doctrines and ordinances; they refused to hear him preach, or suffer others to hear him; they refused to make use of him in the spiritual building, either to preach him themselves, or allow others to do it; they rejected him with contempt; they set him at nought, and preferred a thief and a robber to him;

is become the head [stone] of the corner; Christ is the corner stone, that unites elect angels and elect men together, Jews and Gentiles, Old and New Testament saints, saints above and below, saints in all ages and places; and he is the head stone, or chief corner stone, for strength and beauty, and the head of the corner; or of persons most eminent, who are sometimes called the corner, (~~0710~~ Judges 20:2 ~~3810~~ Zechariah 10:4). Christ is exalted above all; he is the head of principalities and powers, the angels; he is made higher than the kings of the earth; and is the head of the body, the church, an head both of eminence and influence.

Ver. 23. *This is the Lord's doing*, etc.] This stone is from the Lord, (~~0423~~ Genesis 49:24); it is of his choosing, appointing, and laying: the rejection of it by the builders is through his permission and will; they did no other things than what his hand and counsel determined should be done, (~~4423~~ Acts 2:23 4:27,28); and the exaltation of it, or the making it the head of the corner, was of him; he highly exalted him at his right hand, above every name, creature, and thing;

it [is] marvellous in our eyes; the stone itself is wonderful to look at, for its beauty, strength, and usefulness; the wisdom, love, care, and power of God, in laying it, are astonishing; the distinguishing grace of God in selecting some stones out of the common quarry, making them lively stones, and building them on this foundation stone, is exceeding marvellous: and so are both the rejection and exaltation of it; that so precious a stone should be refused, and, when treated with so much neglect and contempt, should be exalted. The Targum is,

“from the Lord was this, said the builders; this is marvellous in our sight, said the sons of Jesse.”

Ver. 24. *This [is] the day [which] the Lord hath made*, etc.] Famous and remarkable for the above events. Meaning either the day of Christ’s entrance into Jerusalem, in order to be delivered up to the Jews, and suffer and die in the place of his people; to which the following words agree: or the day of his resurrection^{f1634} from the dead; when God gave him glory, and was matter of joy to those for whose justification he rose; or the Lord’s day, kept in commemoration of it: or rather the whole Gospel dispensation, made a bright day by the sun of righteousness; and which is the now present day of salvation;

we will rejoice and be glad in it; because of the blessings of grace, peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation, which came through the humiliation and exaltation of Christ, and are published in the everlasting Gospel. The Targum is,

“this day the Lord hath made, said the builders; let us rejoice and be glad in it, said the sons of Jesse.”

Ver. 25. *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord*, etc.] Or, “we beseech thee”; for they are the words of the people, wishing all health and happiness to their king; and it is as if they had said, “vivat rex”, that is, “let the king live”, or, “God save the King”: and no doubt these words were used by the people, when all the tribes united and made David king over all Israel, and when he became the head of the corner; which was attended with the shouts and acclamations of the people, expressing themselves after this manner, And certain it is that these words were used by the followers of Christ, and applied to him, when he made his public entry into Jerusalem, crying, “hosanna” to the son of David. The word “hosanna” is the same

with “save now”; and is compounded of the two words in the text thus translated, (^{<4210>}Matthew 21:9);

O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity; to our King: give him success in all his undertakings, and victory over all his enemies; may the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hands; may his Gospel run and be glorified, and be spread all over the world, and multitudes bow to the sceptre of his kingdom; may his kingdom be enlarged, and his dominion be from sea to sea; and may this spiritual building rise, and be brought to perfection, of which he is the foundation and chief corner stone. The allusion may be to the shouts usually made at the laying of the foundation or corner stone of any considerable edifice, and at the bringing in the head stone of it; (see ^{<3311>}Ezra 3:11 ^{<3047>}Zechariah 4:7).

Ver. 26. *Blessed [be] he that cometh in the name of the Lord,* etc.] These words were used by the multitude that followed Christ, as he went into Jerusalem, in order to eat his last passover, and suffer and die for his people, and are applied to him; as also by his disciples, who expressed them thus, “Blessed be the King that cometh”, etc. (^{<2138>}Luke 19:38); the King Messiah, who came from heaven to earth, from his Father into this world, to save the chief of sinners; who now came to Jerusalem on that errand, and into the temple, as the proprietor of it; where he showed his power, and exercised his authority: he came not in his own name, but in his Father’s name; and not to do his own will, but his; nor did he seek his own glory, but his Father’s: he came as his servant to do his work; he came with a commission from him, by his order, and to obey his commands, which he did; he came with his full consent and will, and, as man and Mediator, was helped and assisted by him; and as such he is pronounced blessed: all blessing, happiness, and honour, are wished for him, and ascribed unto him, as his just due; being Lord and King, Saviour and Redeemer, of his people;

we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord; these are the words of the priests, one part of whose office it was to bless the people, (^{<0163>}Numbers 6:23-27); but these were not the chief priests of the Jews in Christ’s time; for they were displeased with the multitude, and with the children in the temple, for crying “hosanna” to the son of David, and wishing well to him, (^{<4215>}Matthew 21:15,16). But the disciples of Christ, or ministers of the Gospel, who blessed the people that blessed their Lord and Master; or wished well to them, and prayed for them that wished well to him. The sense is, either we who are of the house of the Lord bless you; we

who stand there, and serve him, are rulers of the household of God, and stewards of the mysteries of grace: or we bless you, and pray for your welfare, who are of the household of faith; who are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: or we bless you with provisions out of the house of God; with the goodness and fatness of his house, the word and ordinances, by administering them to you: or we pray that the Lord would bless you out of Zion, or out of the highest heavens, where he is; even with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; (see ~~<401>~~Psalm 134:1-3). The Targum of this verse (~~<482>~~Psalm 118:25), is,

“We beseech thee, O Lord, “save” now, said the builders; We beseech thee, O Lord, send now prosperity, said Jesse and his wife. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord, said the builders; Let us bless you out of the house of the sanctuary of the Lord, said David.”

Ver. 27. *God [is] the Lord, which hath showed us light*, etc.] These are the words of the people, acknowledging divine favours; particularly that the Lord had caused his face to shine upon them, as the priest wished for, (~~<412>~~Numbers 6:25). The Lord might be said to show them light, by sending the Messiah to them, who came a light into the world; by making a Gospel day, for which they expressed their gladness, (~~<483>~~Psalm 118:24); by causing the light of his glorious Gospel to shine into their hearts; by making them who were darkness light, the darkness of ignorance and unbelief to pass away, and the true light to shine; by lifting up the light of his countenance upon them, and giving them hopes of the light of glory and happiness, and making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light; for all which they are thankful, and call for sacrifices;

bind the sacrifice with cords, [even] unto the horns of the altar; that is, the lamb, as the Targum and Aben Ezra. Take a lamb for sacrifice, and bind it with cords; and being bound, lead it to the altar; there slay it, and then pour the blood upon the horns of it; which were the usual rites in sacrifice. Or bring a large number of sacrifices bound, as many as will fill the court, even up to the horns of the altar, upon this joyful occasion: for the sacrifice was not bound to the horns of the altar; but it denotes here such a number of sacrifices as would fill the court, and reach thither; so Gussetius ^{f1635} interprets it very rightly. But we are not to think of slain beasts, but of holy and living sacrifices, even the persons of God’s people; their bodies and souls, and their sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; since this refers to

Gospel times; whose hearts in such service are to be united to fear the Lord, and fixed trusting in him; and are to be drawn to it with the cords of love, which are more than all whole burnt offerings; and which sacrifices are to be brought to the altar, Christ; which is most holy, and sanctifies gifts and persons, and renders them acceptable to God; and which is to be compassed about with songs of deliverance and salvation, by persons from every quarter, the four corners of the earth. Luther renders it,

“adorn the feast with leaves;”

and others,

“bind on the feast day branches,”

of trees, as was usual on the feast of tabernacles; (see ^{<0234>}Leviticus 23:40); and it was usual with the Heathens to strew their altars with green herbs and flowers ^{f1636}, particularly vervain, put for all other sweet herbs ^{f1637}: hence Ovid ^{f1638} calls them “herbosas aras”; which the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions seem to countenance.

Ver. 28. *Thou [art] my God, and I will praise thee*, etc.] These are the words of David, asserting his interest in God as his covenant God; and which is the great blessing of the covenant, and the greatest happiness of men, and will always continue; and for which there is abundant reason for praise: it is an instance of distinguishing grace, all evidence or everlasting love, and the foundation of all comfort and happiness here and hereafter;

[thou art] my God, one will exalt thee; in my heart, and with my lips; and call upon others to join with me in it, as in (^{<0189>}Psalm 118:29). The Targum is,

“thou art my God, and I will confess before thee; thou art my God, and I will praise thee, said David: Samuel replied, and said, Praise, O ye congregation of Israel;”

who are addressed in the next words.

Ver. 29. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for [he is] good*, etc.] And thus the psalm ends as it began; there having been given many instances of the divine goodness, in hearing and delivering the psalmist when in distress; saving him from his enemies, when compassed about with them; sparing his life, when in great danger; and especially in making the stone rejected by the builders the head of the corner;

for his mercy [endureth] for ever; the above instances are proofs of it; and still it continues, and will for evermore. Here ends the great “Hallel”, or hymn, sung at the passover and other festivals.