

PSALM XXII.

TITLE.—"To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar. A Psalm of David." This ode of singular excellence was committed to the most excellent of the temple songsters; the chief among ten thousand is worthy to be extolled by the chief Musician; no meaner singer must have charge of such a strain; we must see to it that we call up our best abilities when Jesus is the theme of praise. The words Aijeleth Shahar are enigmatical, and their meaning is uncertain; some refer them to a musical instrument used upon mournful occasions, but the majority adhere to the translation of our margin, "Concerning the hind of the morning." This last interpretation is the subject of much enquiry and conjecture. Calmet believes that the Psalm was addressed to the music master who presided over the band called the "Morning Hind," and Adam Clarke thinks this to be the most likely of all the conjectural interpretations, although he himself inclines to the belief that no interpretation should be attempted, and believes that it is a merely arbitrary and unmeaning title, such as Orientals have always been in the habit of appending to their songs. Our Lord Jesus is so often compared to a hind, and his cruel huntings are so pathetically described in this most affecting psalm, that we cannot but believe that the title indicates the Lord Jesus under a well-known poetical metaphor; at any rate, Jesus is that Hind of the morning concerning whom David here sings.

SUBJECT.—This is beyond all others THE PSALM OF THE CROSS. It may have been actually repeated word by word by our Lord when hanging on the tree; it would be too bold to say that it was so, but even a casual reader may see that it might have been. It begins with, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and ends, according to some, in the original with "It is finished." For plaintive expressions uprising from unutterable depths of woe we may say of this Psalm, "there is none like it." It is the photograph of our Lord's saddest hours, the record of his dying words, the lachrymatory of his last tears, the memorial of his expiring joys. David and his afflictions may be here in a very modified sense, but, as the star is concealed by the light of the sun, he who sees Jesus will probably neither see nor care to see David. Before us we have a description both of the darkness and of the glory of the cross, the sufferings of Christ and the glory which shall follow. Oh for grace to draw near and see this great sight! We should read reverently, putting off our shoes from off our feet, as Moses did at the burning bush, for if there be holy ground anywhere in Scripture it is in this Psalm.

DIVISION.—From the commencement to the twenty-first verse is a most pitiful cry for help, and from verse 21 to 31 is a most precious foretaste of deliverance. The first division may be sub-divided at the tenth verse, from verse 1 to 10 being an appeal based upon covenant relationship; and from verse 10 to 21 being an equally earnest plea derived from the imminence of his peril.

EXPOSITION.

MY God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*

2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.

3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

6 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,

8 He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

9 But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

1. "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" This was the startling cry of Golgotha: Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani. The Jews mocked, but the angels adored when Jesus cried this exceeding bitter cry. Nailed to the tree we behold our great Redeemer in extremities, and what see we? Having ears to hear let us hear, and having eyes to see let us see! Let us gaze with holy wonder, and and mark the flashes of light amid the awful darkness of that midday-midnight. First, our Lord's faith beams forth and deserves our reverent imitation; he keeps his hold upon his God with both hands and cries twice, "*My God, my God!*" The spirit of adoption was strong within the suffering Son of Man, and he felt no doubt about his interest in his God. Oh that we could imitate this cleaving to an afflicting God! Nor does the sufferer distrust the power of God to sustain him, for the title used—"El"—signifies *strength*, and is the name of the Mighty God. He knows the Lord to be the all-sufficient support and succour of his spirit, and therefore appeals to him in the agony of grief, but not in the misery of doubt. He would fain know why he is left, he raises that question and repeats it, but neither the power nor the faithfulness of God does he mistrust. What an enquiry is this before us! "*Why hast thou forsaken me?*" We must lay the emphasis on every word of this saddest of all utterances. "*Why?*" what is the great cause of such a strange fact as for God to leave his own Son at such a time and in such a plight? There was no cause in him, why then was he deserted? "*Hast:*" it is done, and the Saviour is feeling its dread effect as he asks the question; it is surely true, but how mysterious! It was no threatening of forsaking which made the great Surety cry aloud, he endured that forsaking in very deed. "*Thou:*" I can understand why traitorous Judas and timid Peter should be gone, but *thou*, my God, my faithful friend, how canst thou leave me? This is worst of all, yet worse than all put together. Hell itself has for its fiercest flame the separation of the soul from God. "*Forsaken:*" if thou hadst chastened I might bear it, for thy face would shine; but to forsake me utterly, ah! why is this? "*Me:*" thine innocent, obedient, suffering Son, why leavest thou *me* to perish? A sight of self seen by penitence, and of Jesus on the cross seen by faith will best expound this question. Jesus is forsaken because our sins had separated between us and our God.

"*Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*" The Man of Sorrows had prayed until his speech failed him, and he could only utter moanings and groanings as men do in severe sicknesses, like the roarings of a wounded animal. To what extremity of grief was our Master driven! What strong crying and tears were those which made him too hoarse for speech! What must have been his anguish to find his own beloved and trusted Father standing afar off, and neither granting help nor apparently hearing prayer. This was good cause to make him "roar." Yet there was a reason for all this which those who rest in Jesus as their Substitute well know.

2. "*O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not.*" For our prayers to appear to be unheard is no new trial, Jesus felt it before us, and it is observable that he still held fast his believing hold on God, and cried still, "*My God.*" On the other hand his faith did not render him less importunate, for amid the hurry and horror of that dismal day he ceased not his cry, even as in Gethsemane he had agonized all through the gloomy night. Our Lord continued to pray even though no comfortable answer came, and in this he set us an example of obedience to his own words, "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." No daylight is too glaring, and no midnight too dark to pray in; and no delay or apparent denial, however grievous, should tempt us to forbear from importunate pleading.

3. "*But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*" However ill things may look, there is no ill in thee, O God! We are very apt to think and speak hardly of God when we are under his afflicting hand, but not so the obedient Son. He knows too well his Father's goodness to let outward circumstances libel his character. There is no unrighteousness with the God of Jacob, he deserves

no censures; let him do what he will, he is to be praised, and to reign enthroned amid the songs of his chosen people. If prayer be unanswered it is not because God is unfaithful, but for some other good and weighty reason. If we cannot perceive any ground for the delay, we must leave the riddle unsolved, but we must not fly in God's face in order to invent an answer. While the holiness of God is in the highest degree acknowledged and adored, the afflicted speaker in this verse seems to marvel how the holy God could forsake him, and be silent to his cries. The argument is, thou art holy, oh! why is it that thou dost disregard thy holy One in his hour of sharpest anguish? We may not question the holiness of God, but we may argue from it, and use it as a plea in our petitions.

4. "*Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.*" This is the rule of life with all the chosen family. Three times over is it mentioned, they *trusted*, and *trusted*, and *trusted*, and never left off trusting, for it was their very life; and they fared well too, for *thou didst deliver them*. Out of all their straits, difficulties, and miseries faith brought them by calling their God to the rescue; but in the case of our Lord it appeared as if faith would bring no assistance from heaven, he alone of all the trusting ones was to remain without deliverance. The experience of other saints may be a great consolation to us when in deep waters if faith can be sure that their deliverance will be ours; but when we feel ourselves sinking, it is poor comfort to know that others are swimming. Our Lord here pleads the past dealings of God with his people as a reason why he should not be left alone; here again he is an example to us in the skilful use of the weapon of all prayer. The use of the plural pronoun "*our*" shows how one with his people Jesus was even on the cross. We say, "Our Father which art in heaven," and he calls those "*our fathers*" through whom we came into the world, although he was without father as to the flesh.

5. "*They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.*" As if he had said, "How is it that I am now left without succour in my overwhelming griefs, while all others have been helped?" We may remind the Lord of his former lovingkindnesses to his people, and beseech him to be still the same. This is true wrestling; let us learn the art. Observe, that ancient saints *cried* and *trusted*, and that in trouble we must do the same; and the invariable result was that they were not ashamed of their hope, for deliverance came in due time; this same happy portion shall be ours. The prayer of faith can do the deed when nothing else can. Let us wonder when we see Jesus using the same pleas as ourselves, and immersed in griefs far deeper than our own.

6. "*But I am a worm, and no man.*" This verse is a miracle in language. How could the Lord of glory be brought to such abasement as to be not only lower than the angels, but even lower than men. What a contrast between "*I AM*" and "*I am a worm*"! yet such a double nature was found in the person of our Lord Jesus when bleeding on the tree. He felt himself to be comparable to a helpless, powerless, down-trodden worm, passive while crushed, and unnoticed and despised by those who trod upon him. He selects the weakest of creatures, which is all flesh; and becomes, when trodden upon, writhing, quivering flesh, utterly devoid of any might except strength to suffer. This was a true likeness of himself when his body and soul had become a mass of misery—the very essence of agony—in the dying pangs of crucifixion. Man by nature is but a worm; but our Lord puts himself even beneath man, on account of the scorn which was heaped upon him and the weakness which he felt, and therefore he adds, "*and no man.*" The privileges and blessings which belonged to the fathers he could not obtain while deserted by God, and common acts of humanity were not allowed him, for he was rejected of men; he was outlawed from the society of earth, and shut out from the smile of heaven. How utterly did the Saviour empty himself of all glory, and become of no reputation for our sakes! "*A reproach of men*"—their common butt and jest; a byword and a proverb unto them: the sport of the rabble, and the scorn of the rulers. Oh the caustic power of reproach, to those who endure it with patience, yet smart under it most painfully! "*And despised of the people.*" The *vox populi* was against him. The very people who would once have crowned him then contemned him, and they who were benefited by his cures sneered at him in his woes. Sin is worthy of all reproach and contempt, and for this reason Jesus, the Sinbearer, was given up to be thus unworthily and shamefully entreated.

7, 8. "*All they that see me laugh me to scorn.*" Read the evangelistic narrative of the ridicule endured by the Crucified One, and then consider, in the light of this

expression, how it grieved him. The iron entered into his soul. Mockery has for its distinctive description "cruel mockings;" those endured by our Lord were of the most cruel kind. The scornful ridicule of our Lord was universal; all sorts of men were unanimous in the derisive laughter, and vied with each other in insulting him. Priest and people, Jews and Gentiles, soldiers and civilians, all united in the general scoff, and that at the time when he was prostrate in weakness and ready to die. Which shall we wonder at the most, the cruelty of man or the love of the bleeding Saviour? How can we ever complain of ridicule after this?

"*They shoot out the lip, they shake the head.*" These were gestures of contempt. Panting, grinning, shaking of the head, thrusting out of the tongue, and other modes of derision were endured by our patient Lord; men made faces at him before whom angels veil their faces and adore. The basest signs of disgrace which disdain could devise were maliciously cast at him. They punned upon his prayers, they made matter for laughter of his sufferings, and set him utterly at nought. Herbert sings of our Lord as saying,—

"Shame tears my soul, my body many a wound;
Sharp nails pierce this, but sharper that confound;
Reproaches which are free, while I am bound.
Was ever grief like mine?"

"*Saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.*" Here the taunt is cruelly aimed at the sufferer's faith in God, which is the tenderest point in a good man's soul, the very apple of his eye. They must have learned the diabolical art from Satan himself, for they made rare proficiency in it. According to Matthew xxvii. 39—44, there were five forms of taunt hurled at the Lord Jesus; this special piece of mockery is probably mentioned in this psalm because it is the most bitter of the whole; it has a biting, sarcastic irony in it, which gives it a peculiar venom; it must have stung the Man of Sorrows to the quick. When we are tormented in the same manner, let us remember him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, and we shall be comforted. On reading these verses one is ready, with Trapp, to ask, Is this a prophecy or a history? for the description is so accurate. We must not lose sight of the truth which was unwittingly uttered by the Jewish scoffers. They themselves are witnesses that Jesus of Nazareth trusted in God: why then was he permitted to perish? Jehovah had aforetime delivered those who rolled their burdens upon him: why was this man deserted? Oh that they had understood the answer! Note further, that their ironical jest, "*seeing he delighted in him,*" was true. The Lord did delight in his dear Son, and when he was found in fashion as a man, and became obedient unto death, he still was well pleased in him. Strange mixture! Jehovah delights in him, and yet bruises him; is well pleased, and yet slays him.

9. "*But thou art he that took me out of the womb.*" Kindly providence attends with the surgery of tenderness at every human birth; but the Son of Man, who was marvellously begotten of the Holy Ghost, was in an especial manner watched over by the Lord when brought forth by Mary. The destitute state of Joseph and Mary, far away from friends and home, led them to see the cherishing hand of God in the safe delivery of the mother, and the happy birth of the child; that Child now fighting the great battle of his life, uses the mercy of his nativity as an argument with God. Faith finds weapons everywhere. He who wills to believe shall never lack reasons for believing. "*Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.*" Was our Lord so early a believer? Was he one of those babes and sucklings out of whose mouths strength is ordained? So it would seem; and if so, what a plea for help! Early piety gives peculiar comfort in our after trials, for surely he who loved us when we were children is too faithful to cast us off in our riper years. Some give the text the sense of "gave me cause to trust, by keeping me safely," and assuredly there was a special providence which preserved our Lord's infant days from the fury of Herod, the dangers of travelling, and the ills of poverty.

10. "*I was cast upon thee from the womb.*" Into the Almighty arms he was first received, as into those of a loving parent. This is a sweet thought. God begins his care over us from the earliest hour. We are dandled upon the knee of mercy, and cherished in the lap of goodness; our cradle is canopied by divine love, and our first totterings are guided by his care. "*Thou art my God from my mother's belly.*" The psalm begins with "*My God, my God,*" and here, not only is the claim repeated, but its early date is urged. Oh noble perseverance of faith, thus to con-

tinue pleading with holy ingenuity of argument ! Our birth was our weakest and most perilous period of existence ; if we were then secured by Omnipotent tenderness surely we have no cause to suspect that divine goodness will fail us now. He who was our God when we left our mother will be with us till we return to mother earth, and will keep us from perishing in the belly of hell.

11 Be not far from me ; for trouble *is* near ; for *there is* none to help
12 Many bulls have compassed me : strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

13 They gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint, my heart is like wax ; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd ; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws ; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have compassed me : the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me : they pierced my hands and my feet.

17 I may tell all my bones : they look *and* stare upon me.

18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD : O my strength, haste thee to help me.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword ; my darling from the power of the dog.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth : for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

The crucified Son of David continues to pour out his complaint and prayer. We need much grace that while reading we may have fellowship with his sufferings. May the blessed Spirit conduct us into a most clear and affecting sight of our Redeemer's woes.

11. "*Be not far from me.*" This is the petition for which he has been using such varied and powerful pleas. His great woe was that God had forsaken him, his great prayer is that he would be near him. A lively sense of the divine presence is a mighty stay to the heart in times of distress. "*For trouble is near ; for there is none to help.*" There are two "*fors,*" as though faith gave a double knock at mercy's gate ; that is a powerful prayer which is full of holy reasons and thoughtful arguments. The nearness of trouble is a weighty motive for divine help ; this moves our heavenly Father's heart, and brings down his helping hand. It is his glory to be our very present help in trouble. Our Substitute had trouble in his inmost heart, for he said, "the waters have come in, even unto my soul ;" well might he cry, "*be not far from me.*" The absence of all other helpers is another telling plea. In our Lord's case none either could or would help him, it was needful that he should tread the winepress alone ; yet was it a sore aggravation to find that all his disciples had forsaken him, and lover and friend were put far from him. There is an awfulness about absolute friendlessness which is crushing to the human mind, for man was not made to be alone, and is like a dismembered limb when he has to endure heart-loneliness.

12. "*Many bulls have compassed me : strong bulls of Basham have beset me round.*" The mighty ones in the crowd are here marked by the tearful eye of their victim. The priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, rulers, and captains bellowed round the cross like wild cattle, fed in the fat and solitary pastures of Bashan, full of strength and fury ; they stamped and foamed around the innocent One, and longed to gore him to death with their cruelties. Conceive of the Lord Jesus as a helpless, unarmed, naked man, cast into the midst of a herd of infuriated wild bulls. They were brutal as bulls, many, and strong, and the Rejected One was all alone, and bound naked to the tree. His position throws great force into the earnest entreaty, "*Be not far from me.*"

13. "*They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.*" Like hungry cannibals they opened their blasphemous mouths as if they were about to swallow the man whom they abhorred. They could not vomit forth their anger fast enough through the ordinary aperture of their mouths, and therefore set the

doors of their lips wide open like those who gape. Like roaring lions they howled out their fury, and longed to tear the Saviour in pieces, as wild beasts raven over their prey. Our Lord's faith must have passed through a most severe conflict while he found himself abandoned to the tender mercies of the wicked, but he came off victorious by prayer; the very dangers to which he was exposed being used to add prevalence to his entreaties.

14. Turning from his enemies, our Lord describes his own personal condition in language which should bring the tears into every loving eye. "*I am poured out like water.*" He was utterly spent, like water poured upon the earth; his heart failed him, and had no more firmness in it than running water, and his whole being was made a sacrifice, like a libation poured out before the Lord. He had long been a fountain of tears; in Gethsemane his heart welled over in sweat, and on the cross he gushed forth with blood; he poured out his strength and spirit, so that he was reduced to the most feeble and exhausted state. "*All my bones are out of joint,*" as if distended upon a rack. Is it not most probable that the fastening of the hands and feet, and the jar occasioned by fixing the cross in the earth, may have dislocated the bones of the Crucified One? If this is not intended, we must refer the expression to that extreme weakness which would occasion relaxation of the muscles and a general sense of parting asunder throughout the whole system. "*My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.*" Excessive debility and intense pain made his inmost life to feel like wax melted in the heat. The Greek liturgy uses the expression, "*thine unknown sufferings,*" and well it may. The fire of Almighty wrath would have consumed our souls for ever in hell; it was no light work to bear as a substitute the heat of an anger so justly terrible. Dr. Gill wisely observes, "*if the heart of Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, melted at it, what heart can endure or hands be strong, when God deals with them in his wrath?*"

15. "*My strength is dried up like a potsherd.*" Most complete debility is here portrayed; Jesus likens himself to a broken piece of earthenware, or an earthen pot, baked in the fire till the last particle of moisture is driven out of the clay. No doubt a high degree of feverish burning afflicted the body of our Lord. All his strength was dried up in the tremendous flames of avenging justice, even as the paschal lamb was roasted in the fire. "*My tongue cleaveth to my jaws;*" thirst and fever fastened his tongue to his jaws. Dryness and a horrible clamminess tormented his mouth, so that he could scarcely speak. "*Thou hast brought me into the dust of death;*" so tormented in every single part as to feel dissolved into separate atoms, and each atom full of misery; the full price of our redemption was paid, and no part of the Surety's body or soul escaped its share of agony. The words may set forth Jesus as having wrestled with Death until he rolled into the dust with his antagonist. Behold the humiliation of the Son of God! The Lord of Glory stoops to lodge in the dust of death. Amid the mouldering relics of mortality Jesus condescends to lodge!

Bishop Mant's version of the two preceding verses is forcible and accurate:—

" Pour'd forth like water is my frame;
My bones asunder start;
As wax that feels the searching flame,
Within me melts my heart.
My wither'd sinews shrink unstrung
Like potsherd dried and dead:
Cleaves to my jaws my burning tongue
The dust of death my bed."

16. We are to understand every item of this sad description as being urged by the Lord Jesus as a plea for divine help; and this will give us a high idea of his perseverance in prayer. "*For dogs have compassed me.*" Here he marks the more ignoble crowd, who, while less strong than their brutal leaders, were not less ferocious, for there they were howling and barking like unclean and hungry dogs. Hunters frequently surround their game with a circle, and gradually encompass them within an ever-narrowing ring of dogs and men. Such a picture is before us. In the centre stands, not a panting stag, but a bleeding, fainting man, and around him are the enraged and un pitying wretches who have hounded him to his doom. Here we have the "hind of the morning" of whom the psalm so plaintively sings, hunted by bloodhounds, all thirsting to devour him. *The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: thus the Jewish people were unchurched, and that which called itself an*

assembly of the righteous is justly for its sins marked upon the forehead as an assembly of the wicked. This is not the only occasion when professed churches of God have become synagogues of Satan, and have persecuted the Holy One and the Just. *They pierced my hands and my feet.* This can by no means refer to David, or to any one but Jesus of Nazareth, the once crucified but now exalted Son of God. Pause, dear reader, and view the wounds of thy Redeemer.

17. So emaciated was Jesus by his fastings and sufferings that he says, "*I may tell all my bones.*" He could count and re-count them. The posture of the body on the cross, Bishop Horne thinks, would so distend the flesh and skin as to make the bones visible, so that they might be numbered. The zeal of his Father's house had eaten him up; like a good soldier he had endured hardness. Oh that we cared less for the body's enjoyment and ease and more for our Father's business! It were better to count the bones of an emaciated body than to bring leanness into our souls.

"*They look and stare upon me.*" Unholy eyes gazed insultingly upon the Saviour's nakedness, and shocked the sacred delicacy of his holy soul. The sight of the agonizing body ought to have ensured sympathy from the throng, but it only increased their savage mirth, as they gloated their cruel eyes upon his miseries. Let us blush for human nature and mourn in sympathy with our Redeemer's shame. The first Adam made us all naked, and therefore the second Adam became naked that he might clothe our naked souls.

18. "*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*" The garments of the executed were the perquisites of the executioners in most cases, but it was not often that they cast lots at the division of the spoil; this incident shows how clearly David in vision saw the day of Christ, and how surely the Man of Nazareth is he of whom the prophets spake: "these things, *therefore*, the soldiers did." He who gave his blood to cleanse us gave his garments to clothe us. As Ness says, "this precious Lamb of God gave up his golden fleece for us." How every incident of Jesus' griefs is here stored up in the treasury of inspiration, and embalmed in the amber of sacred song; we must learn hence to be very mindful of all that concerns our Beloved, and to think much of everything which has a connection with him. It may be noted that the habit of gambling is of all others the most hardening, for men could practise it even at the cross-foot while besprinkled with the blood of the Crucified. No Christian will endure the rattle of the dice when he thinks of this.

19. "*But be not thou far from me, O Lord.*" Invincible faith returns to the charge, and uses the same means, viz., importunate prayer. He repeats the petition so piteously offered before. He wants nothing but his God, even in his lowest state. He does not ask for the most comfortable or nearest presence of God, he will be content if he is not far from him; humble requests speed at the throne. "*O my strength, haste thee to help me.*" Hard cases need timely aid: when necessity justifies it we may be urgent with God as to time and cry, "make haste;" but we must not do this out of wilfulness. Mark how in the last degree of personal weakness he calls the Lord "*my strength*;" after this fashion the believer can sing, "when I am weak, then am I strong."

20. "*Deliver my soul from the sword.*" By the sword is probably meant entire destruction, which as a man he dreaded; or perhaps he sought deliverance from the enemies around him, who were like a sharp and deadly sword to him. The Lord had said, "Awake, O sword," and now from the terror of that sword the Shepherd would fain be delivered as soon as justice should see fit. "*My darling from the power of the dog.*" Meaning his soul, his life, which is most dear to every man. The original is, "my only one," and therefore is our soul dear, because it is our only soul. Would that all men made their souls their darlings, but many treat them as if they were not worth so much as the mire of the streets. *The dog* may mean Satan that infernal Cerberus, that cursed and cursing cur; or else the whole company of Christ's foes, who though many in number were as unanimous as if there were but one, and with one consent sought to rend him in pieces. If Jesus cried for help against the dog of hell, much more may we. *Cave canem*, beware of the dog, for his power is great, and only God can deliver us from him. When he fawns upon us, we must not put ourselves in his power; and when he howls at us, we may remember that God holds him with a chain.

21. "*Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.*" Having experienced deliverance in the past from great enemies, who

were strong as the unicorns, the Redeemer utters his last cry for rescue from death, which is fierce and mighty as the lion. This prayer was heard, and the gloom of the cross departed. Thus faith, though sorely beaten, and even cast beneath the feet of her enemy, ultimately wins the victory. It was so in our Head, it shall be so in all the members. We have overcome the unicorn, we shall conquer the lion, and from both lion and unicorn we shall take the crown.

22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren : in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him ; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him ; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted ; neither hath he hid his face from him ; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

25 My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation : I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied : they shall praise the LORD that seek him : your heart shall live for ever.

27 All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD : and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

28 For the kingdom *is* the LORD's : and he *is* the governor among the nations.

29 All *they that be* fat upon earth shall eat and worship : all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him : and none can keep alive his own soul.

30 A seed shall serve him ; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

31 They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

The transition is very marked ; from a horrible tempest all is changed into calm. The darkness of Calvary at length passed away from the face of nature, and from the soul of the Redeemer, and beholding the light of his triumph and its future results the Saviour smiled. We have followed him through the gloom, let us attend him in the returning light. It will be well still to regard the words as a part of our Lord's soliloquy upon the cross, uttered in his mind during the last few moments before his death.

22. "*I will declare thy name unto my brethren.*" The delights of Jesus are always with his church, and hence his thoughts, after much distraction, return at the first moment of relief to their usual channel ; he forms fresh designs for the benefit of his beloved ones. He is not ashamed to call them brethren, "Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Among his first resurrection words were these, "Go to my brethren." In the verse before us, Jesus anticipates happiness in having communication with his people ; he purposes to be their teacher and minister, and fixes his mind upon the subject of his discourse. The *name, i.e.*, the character and conduct of God are by Jesus Christ's gospel proclaimed to all the holy brotherhood ; they behold the fulness of the God-head dwelling bodily in him, and rejoice greatly to see all the infinite perfections manifested in one who is bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. What a precious subject is the name of our God ! It is the only one worthy of the only Begotten, whose meat and drink it was to do the Father's will. We may learn from this resolution of our Lord, that one of the most excellent methods of showing our thankfulness for deliverances is to tell to our brethren what the Lord has done for us. We mention our sorrows readily enough ; why are we so slow in declaring our deliverances ? "*In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.*" Not in a little household gathering merely does our Lord resolve to proclaim his Father's love, but in the great assemblies of his saints, and in the general assembly and church of the first-born. This the Lord Jesus is always doing by his representatives, who are the heralds of salvation, and labour to praise God. In the great universal church Jesus is the One authoritative teacher, and all others, so far as they are worthy to be called

teachers, are nothing but echoes of his voice. Jesus, in this second sentence, reveals his object in declaring the divine name, it is that God may be praised; the church continually magnifies Jehovah for manifesting himself in the person of Jesus, and Jesus himself leads the song, and is both preceptor and preacher in his church. Delightful are the seasons when Jesus communes with our hearts concerning divine truth; joyful praise is the sure result.

23. "*Ye that fear the Lord praise him.*" The reader must imagine the Saviour as addressing the congregation of the saints. He exhorts the faithful to unite with him in thanksgiving. The description of "fearing the Lord" is very frequent and very instructive; it is the beginning of wisdom, and is an essential sign of grace. "I am a Hebrew and I fear God" was Jonah's confession of faith. Humble awe of God is so necessary a preparation for praising him that none are fit to sing to his honour, but such as reverence his word; but this fear is consistent with the highest joy, and is not to be confounded with legal bondage, which is a fear which perfect love casteth out. Holy fear should always keep the key of the singing pew. Where Jesus leads the tune none but holy lips may dare to sing. "*All ye the seed of Jacob glorify him.*" The genius of the gospel is praise. Jew and Gentile saved by sovereign grace should be eager in the blessed work of magnifying the God of our salvation. All saints should unite in the song; no tongue may be silent, no heart may be cold. Christ calls us to glorify God, and can we refuse? "*And fear him all ye the seed of Israel.*" The spiritual Israel all do this, and we hope the day will come when Israel after the flesh will be brought to the same mind. The more we praise God the more reverently shall we fear him, and the deeper our reverence the sweeter our songs. So much does Jesus value praise that we have it here under his dying hand and seal that all the saints must glorify the Lord.

24. "*For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted.*" Here is good matter and motive for praise. The experience of our covenant Head and Representative should encourage all of us to bless the God of grace. Never was man so afflicted as our Saviour in body and soul from friends and foes, by heaven and hell, in life and death; he was the foremost in the ranks of the afflicted, but all those afflictions were sent in love, and not because his Father despised and abhorred him. 'Tis true that justice demanded that Christ should bear the burden which as a substitute he undertook to carry, but Jehovah always loved him, and in love laid that load upon him with a view to his ultimate glory and to the accomplishment of the dearest wish of his heart. Under all his woes our Lord was honourable in the Father's sight, the matchless jewel of Jehovah's heart. "*Neither hath he hid his face from him.*" That is to say, the hiding was but temporary, and was soon removed; it was not final and eternal. "*But when he cried unto him, he heard.*" Jesus was heard in that he feared. He cried *in extremis* and *de profundis*, and was speedily answered; he therefore bids his people join him in singing a *Gloria in excelsis*.

Every child of God should seek refreshment for his faith in this testimony of the Man of Sorrows. What Jesus here witnesses is as true to-day as when it was first written. It shall never be said that any man's affliction or poverty prevented his being an accepted suppliant at Jehovah's throne of grace. The meanest applicant is welcome at mercy's door:—

"None that approach his throne shall find
A God unfaithful or unkind."

25. "*My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation.*" The one subject of our Master's song is the Lord alone. The Lord and the Lord only is the theme which the believer handleth when he gives himself to imitate Jesus in praise. The word in the original is "from thee,"—true praise is of celestial origin. The rarest harmonies of music are nothing unless they are sincerely consecrated to God by hearts sanctified by the Spirit. The clerk says, "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God;" but the choir often sing to the praise and glory of themselves. Oh when shall our service of song be a pure offering? Observe in this verse how Jesus loves the public praises of the saints, and thinks with pleasure of the great congregation. It would be wicked on our part to despise the twos and threes; but, on the other hand, let not the little companies snarl at the greater assemblies as though they were necessarily less pure and less approved, for Jesus loves the praise of the great congregation. "*I will pay my vows before them that fear him.*" Jesus dedicates himself anew to the carrying out of the divine purpose in fulfilment of his vows

made in anguish. Did our Lord when he ascended to the skies proclaim amid the redeemed in glory the goodness of Jehovah? And was that the vow here meant? Undoubtedly the publication of the gospel is the constant fulfilment of covenant engagements made by our Surety in the councils of eternity. Messiah vowed to build up a spiritual temple for the Lord, and he will surely keep his word.

26. "*The meek shall eat and be satisfied.*" Mark how the dying Lover of our souls solaces himself with the result of his death. The spiritually poor find a feast in Jesus, they feed upon him to the satisfaction of their hearts; they were famished until he gave himself for them, but now they are filled with royal dainties. The thought of the joy of his people gave comfort to our expiring Lord. Note the characters who partake of the benefit of his passion; "*the meek,*" the humble, and lowly. Lord make us so. Note also the certainty that gospel provisions shall not be wasted, "*they shall eat;*" and the sure result of such eating, "*and be satisfied.*" "*They shall praise the Lord that seek him.*" For a while they may keep a fast, but their thanksgiving days must and shall come. "*Your heart shall live for ever.*" Your spirits shall not fail through trial, you shall not die of grief, immortal joys shall be your portion. Thus Jesus speaks even from the cross to the troubled seeker. If his dying words are so assuring, what consolation may we not find in the truth that he ever liveth to make intercession for us! They who eat at Jesus' table receive the fulfilment of the promise, "Whosoever eateth of this bread shall live for ever."

27. In reading this verse one is struck with the Messiah's missionary spirit. It is evidently his grand consolation that Jehovah will be known throughout all places of his dominion. "*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord.* Out from the inner circle of the present church the blessing is to spread in growing power until the remotest parts of the earth shall be ashamed of their idols, mindful of the true God, penitent for their offences, and unanimously earnest for reconciliation with Jehovah. Then shall false worship cease, "*and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee,*" O thou only living and true God. This hope which was the reward of Jesus is a stimulus to those who fight his battles.

It is well to mark the order of conversion as here set forth; they shall "*remember*"—this is reflection, like the prodigal who came unto himself; "*and turn unto Jehovah*"—this is repentance, like Manasseh who left his idols and "*worship*"—this is holy service, as Paul adored the Christ whom once he abhorred.

28. "*For the kingdom is the Lord's.*" As an obedient Son the dying Redeemer rejoiced to know that his Father's interests would prosper through his pains. "The Lord reigneth" was his song as it is ours. He who by his own power reigns supreme in the domains of creation and providence, has set up a kingdom of grace, and by the conquering power of the cross that kingdom will grow until all people shall own its sway and proclaim that "*he is the governor among the nations.*" Amid the tumults and disasters of the present the Lord reigneth; but in the halcyon days of peace the rich fruit of his dominion will be apparent to every eye. Great Shepherd, let thy glorious kingdom come.

29. "*All they that be fat upon earth,*" the rich and great are not shut out, Grace now finds the most of its jewels among the poor, but in the latter days the mighty of the earth "*shall eat,*" shall taste of redeeming grace and dying love, and shall "*worship*" with all their hearts the God who deals so bountifully with us in Christ Jesus. Those who are spiritually fat with inward prosperity shall be filled with the marrow of communion, and shall worship the Lord with peculiar fervour. In the covenant of grace Jesus has provided good cheer for our high estate, and he has taken equal care to console us in our humiliation, for the next sentence is, "*all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him.*" There is relief and comfort in bowing before God when our case is at its worst; even amid the dust of death prayer kindles the lamp of hope.

While all who come to God by Jesus Christ are thus blessed, whether they be rich or poor, none of those who despise him may hope for a blessing. "*None can keep alive his own soul.*" This is the stern counterpart of the gospel message of "*look and live.*" There is no salvation out of Christ. We must hold life, and have life as Christ's gift, or we shall die eternally. This is very solid evangelical doctrine, and should be proclaimed in every corner of the earth, that like a great hammer it may break in pieces all self-confidence.

30. "*A seed shall serve him.*" Posterity shall perpetuate the worship of the Most High. The kingdom of truth on earth shall never fail. As one generation

is called to its rest, another will arise in its stead. We need have no fear for the true apostolic succession; that is safe enough. "*It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.*" He will reckon the ages by the succession of the saints, and set his accounts according to the families of the faithful. Generations of sinners come not into the genealogy of the skies. God's family register is not for strangers, but for the children only.

31. "*They shall come.*" Sovereign grace shall bring out from among men the bloodbought ones. Nothing shall thwart the divine purpose. The chosen shall come to life, to faith, to pardon, to heaven. In this the dying Saviour finds a sacred satisfaction. Toiling servant of God, be glad at the thought that the eternal purpose of God shall suffer neither let nor hindrance. "*And shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born.*" None of the people who shall be brought to God by the irresistible attractions of the cross shall be dumb, they shall be able to tell forth the righteousness of the Lord, so that future generations shall know the truth. Fathers shall teach their sons, who shall hand it down to their children; the burden of the story always being "*that he hath done this,*" or, that "*It is finished.*" Salvation's glorious work is done, there is peace on earth, and glory in the highest. "*It is finished,*" these were the expiring words of the Lord Jesus, as they are the last words of this Psalm. May we by living faith be enabled to see our salvation finished by the death of Jesus!

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS.

Title.—Aijeeth Shahar. The title of the twenty-second Psalm is Aijeeth Shahar—the morning hart. The whole Psalm refers to Christ, containing much that cannot be applied to another: parting his garments, casting lots for his vesture, etc. He is described as a kindly, meek and beautiful hart, started by the huntsmen at the dawn of the day. Herod began hunting him down as soon as he appeared. Poverty, the hatred of men, and the temptation of Satan, joined in the pursuit. There always was some "dog," or "bull," or "unicorn," ready to attack him. After his first sermon the huntsmen gathered about him, but he was too fleet of foot, and escaped. The church had long seen the Messiah "like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains," had "heard the voice of her Beloved," and had cried out, "Behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills;" sometimes he was even seen with the dawn of the day, in the neighbourhood of the temple, and beside the enclosures of the vineyards. The church requested to see him "on the mountains of Bether," and upon "the mountains of spices." The former probably signifying the place of his sufferings, and the latter the sublime acclivities of light, glory, and honour, where the "hart" shall be hunted no more. But in the afternoon, the huntsmen who had been following the "young roe" from early day-break, had succeeded in driving him to the mountains of Bether. Christ found Calvary a craggy, jagged, and fearful hill—"a mountain of division." Here he was driven by the huntsmen to the edges of the awful precipices yawning destruction from below, while he was surrounded and held at bay by all the beasts of prey and monsters of the infernal forest. The "unicorn," and the "bulls of Bashan," gored him with their horns; the great "lion" roared at him; and the "dog" fastened himself upon him. But he foiled them all. In his own time he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. He was buried in a new grave; and his assailants reckoned upon complete victory. They had not considered that he was a "morning hart." Surely enough, at the appointed time, did he escape from the hunter's net, and stand forth on the mountains of Israel ALIVE, and never, NEVER to die again. Now he is with Mary in the garden, giving evidence of his own resurrection; in a moment he is at Emmaus, encouraging the too timid and bewildered disciples. Nor does it cost him any trouble to go thence to Galilee to his friends, and again to the Mount of Olives, "on the mountains of spices," carrying with him the day-dawn, roused in life and beauty for evermore.—*Christmas Evans, 1766—1838.*

Title.—It will be very readily admitted that the *hind* is a very appropriate emblem of the suffering and persecuted righteous man who meets us in this Psalm. . . . That the *hind* may be a figurative expression significant of suffering innocence, is put

beyond a doubt by the fact, that the wicked and the persecutors in this Psalm, whose peculiar physiognomy is marked by emblems drawn from the brute creation, are designed by the terms *dogs, lions, bulls, etc.*—*E. W. Hengstenberg.*

Title.—"The hind." Much extraordinary symbolism has by old authors been conjured up and clustered around the hind. According to their curious natural history, there exists a deadly enmity between the deer and the serpent, and the deer by its warm breath draws serpents out of their holes in order to devour them. The old grammarians derived *Elaphas*, or hart, from *elaunein tous ophis*, that is, of driving away serpents. Even the burning a portion of the deer's horns was said to drive away all snakes. If a snake had escaped the hart after being drawn out by the hart by its breath, it was said to be more vehemently poisonous than before. The timidity of the deer was ascribed to the great size of its heart, in which they thought was a bone shaped like a cross.—*Condensed from Wood's "Bible Animals," by C. H. S.*

Whole Psalm.—This is a kind of gem among the Psalms, and is peculiarly excellent and remarkable. It contains those deep, sublime, and heavy sufferings of Christ, when agonizing in the midst of the terrors and pangs of divine wrath and death which surpass all human thought and comprehension. I know not whether any Psalm throughout the whole book contains matter more weighty, or from which the hearts of the godly can so truly perceive those sighs and groans, inexpressible by man, which their Lord and Head, Jesus Christ, uttered when conflicting for us in the midst of death, and in the midst of the pains and terrors of hell. Wherefore this Psalm ought to be most highly prized by all who have any acquaintance with temptations of faith and spiritual conflicts.—*Martin Luther.*

Whole Psalm.—This Psalm, as it sets out the sufferings of Christ to the full, so also his three great offices. His sufferings are copiously described from the beginning of the Psalm to verse 22. The prophetic office of Christ, from verse 22 to verse 25. That which is foretold about his vows (verse 25), hath respect to his priestly function. In the rest of the Psalm the kingly office of Christ is set forth. *William Gouge, D.D (1575—1653), in "A Commentary on the whole Epistle to the Hebrews."**

Whole Psalm.—This Psalm seems to be less a prophecy than a history. *Cassiodorus.*

Whole Psalm.—This Psalm must be expounded, word for word, entire and in every respect, of Christ only; without any allegory, trope, or *anagoge.*—*Bakius, quoted by F. Delitzsch, D.D., on Hebrews, ii. 12.*

Whole Psalm.—A prophecy of the passion of Christ, and of the vocation of the *Gentiles.*—*Eusebius of Cæsarea.*

Verse 1.—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We contrast this with John xvi. 32, "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." That these words in David were not withstanding the words of Christ, there is no true believer ignorant; yet how cross our Lord's words in John! Answer:—It is one thing to speak out of present sense of misery, another thing to be confident of a never-separated Deity. The condition of Christ in respect of his human state (not the divine), is in all outward appearances, like ours; we conceive the saints' condition very lamentable at times, as if God were for ever gone. And Christ (to teach us to cry after God the Father, like children after the mother, whose very stepping but at the door, oftentimes makes the babe believe, and so saith that his father is gone for ever), presents in his own sufferings how much he is sensible of ours in that case. As for his divine nature, he and his Father can never sunder in that, and so at no time is he alone, but the Father is always with him.—*William Streat, in "The Dividing of the Hoof," 1654.*

Verse 1.—"My God, my God," etc. There is a tradition that our Lord, hanging on the cross, began, as we know from the gospel, this Psalm; and repeating it and those that follow gave up his most blessed spirit when he came to the fifth verse of the thirty-first Psalm. However that may be, by taking these first words on his lips he stamped the Psalm as belonging to himself.—*Ludolph, the Carthusian (ci ca. 1350), in J. M. Neale's Commentary.*

Verse 1.—"My God, my God," etc. It was so sharp, so heavy an affliction to Christ's soul, that it caused him who was meek under all other sufferings as a lamb,

* Reprinted in Nichol's Series of Commentaries.

to roar under this like a lion. For so much those words of Christ signify, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*" It comes from a root that signifies to howl or roar as a lion, and rather signifies the noise made by a wild beast than the voice of a man. And it is as much as if Christ had said, O my God, no words can express my anguish, I will not speak, but roar, howl out my complaints. Pour it out in volleys of groans. I roar as a lion. It's no small matter will make that majestic creature to roar. And sure so great a spirit as Christ's would not have roared under a slight burden.

Did God really forsake Jesus Christ upon the cross? then from the desertion of Christ singular consolation springs up to the people of God; yea, manifold consolation. Principally it's a support in these two respects, as it is *preventive* of your final desertion and a comfortable pattern to you in your present sad desertions. 1. Christ's desertion is *preventive* of your final desertion. Because he was forsaken for a time you shall not be forsaken for ever. For he was forsaken for you. It is every way as much for the dear Son of God, the darling delight of his soul, to be forsaken of God for a time, as if such a poor inconsiderable thing as thou art shouldst be cast off to eternity. Now, this being equivalent and borne in thy room, must needs give thee the highest security in the world that God will never finally withdraw from thee. 2. Moreover, this sad desertion of Christ becomes a comfortable *pattern* to poor deserted souls in divers respects; and the proper business of such souls, at such times, is to eye it believably. Though God deserted Christ, yet at the same time he powerfully supported him. His omnipotent arms were under him, though his pleased face was hid from him. He had not indeed his smiles, but he had his supportations. So, Christian, just so shall it be with thee. Thy God may turn away his face, he will not pluck away his arm. When one asked of holy Mr. Baines how the case stood with his soul, he answered, "Supports I have, though suavities I want." Our Father in this deals with us as we ourselves sometimes do with a child that is stubborn and rebellious. We turn him out of doors and bid him begone out of our sight, and there he sighs and weeps; but however for the humbling of him, we will not presently take him into house and favour; yet we order, at least permit the servants to carry him meat and drink: here is fatherly care and support, though no former smiles or manifested delights. . . . Though God forsook Christ, yet at that time he could justify God. So you read, "O my God (saith he), I cry in the day time; but thou hearest not, and in the night season, and am not silent; but thou art holy." Is not thy spirit according to thy measure, framed like Christ's in this; canst thou not, say even when he writes bitter things against thee, he is a holy, faithful and good God for all this! I am deserted but not wronged. There is not one drop of injustice in all the sea of my sorrows. Though he condemned me I must and will justify him: this also is Christ-like.—*John Flavel*.

Verse 1.—"*My God, my God.*" The repetition is expressive of fervent desire—"My God," in an especial sense, as in his words after the resurrection to Mary Magdalene, "I ascend unto my God, and your God;" "My God," not as the Son of God only, but in that nature which he hath assumed, as the beloved Son in whom the Father is well pleased; who is loved of the Father and who loveth the Father more than the whole universe. It is observed that this expression, "My God," is three times repeated.—*Dionysius, quoted by Isaac Williams*.

Verse 1.—"*My God.*" It was possible for Christ by *faith* to know that he was beloved of God, and he did know that he was beloved of God, when yet as to *sense* and *feeling* he tasted of God's *wrath*. Faith and the want of sense are not inconsistent; there may be no present sense of God's love, nay, there may be a present sense of his wrath, and yet there may be faith at the same time.—*John Row's "Emmanuel,"* 1680.

Verse 1.—This word, "*My God,*" takes in more than all the philosophers in the world could draw out of it.—*Alexander Wedderburn, 1701*.

Verse 1.—That there is something of a singular force, meaning, and feeling in these words is manifest from this—the evangelists have studiously given us this verse in the very words of the Hebrew, in order to show their emphatic force. And moreover I do not remember any one other place in the Scriptures where we have this repetition, ELI, ELI.—*Martin Luther*.

Verse 1.—"*Why?*" Not the "*why*" of impatience or despair, not the sinful questioning of one whose heart rebels against his chastening, but rather the cry of a lost child who cannot understand why his father has left him, and who longs to see his father's face again.—*J. J. Stewart Perowne*.

Verse 1.—"My roaring." רעף seems primarily to denote the roaring of a lion; but, as applied to intelligent beings, it is generally expressive of profound mental anguish poured forth in audible and even vehement strains. Psalm xxxviii. 9; xxxiii. 3; Job iii. 24. Thus did the suffering Messiah pour forth strong crying and tears, to him that was able to save him from death. Heb. v. 7.—*John Morison.*

Verse 1.—When Christ complains of having been forsaken by God, we are not to understand that he was forsaken by the First Person, or that there was a dissolution of the hypostatic union, or that he lost the favour and friendship of the Father; but he signifies to us that God permitted his human nature to undergo those dreadful torments, and to suffer an ignominious death, from which he could, if he chose, most easily deliver him. Nor did such complaints proceed either from impatience or ignorance, as if Christ were ignorant of the cause of his suffering, or was not most willing to bear such abandonment in his suffering; such complaints were only a declaration of his most bitter sufferings. And whereas, through the whole course of his passion, with such patience did our Lord suffer, as not to let a single groan or sigh escape from him, so now, lest the bystanders may readily believe that he was rendered impassible by some superior power; therefore, when his last moments were nigh, he protests that he is true man, truly passible: forsaken by his Father in his sufferings, the bitterness and acuteness of which he then intimately felt. *Robert Bellarmine (Cardinal), 1542—1621.*

Verse 1.—Divines are wont commonly to say, that Christ, from the moment of his conception, had the sight of God, his human soul being immediately united to the Deity, Christ from the very moment of his conception had the sight of God. Now for our Saviour, who had known experimentally how sweet the comfort of his Father's face had been, and had lived all his days under the warm beams and influences of the Divinity, and had had his soul all along refreshed with the sense of the Divine presence, for him to be left in that horror and darkness, as to have no taste of comfort, no glimpse of the Divinity breaking in upon his human soul, how great an affliction must that needs be unto him!—*John Row.*

Verse 1.—Desertion is in itself no sin; for Christ endured its bitterness, ay, he was so deep in it, that when he died, he said, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" A total, a final desertion ours is not; partial the best we had and have. God turns away his face, David himself is troubled: "The just shall live by faith," and not by feeling.—*Richard Capel.*

Verse 1.—Oh! how will our very hearts melt with love, when we remember that as we have been distressed for our sins against him; so he was in greater agonies for us? We have had gall and wormwood, but he tasted a more bitter cup. The anger of God has dried up our spirits, but he was scorched with a more flaming wrath. He was under violent pain in the garden, and on the cross; ineffable was the sorrow that he felt, being forsaken of his Father, deserted by his disciples, affronted and reproached by his enemies, and under a curse for us. This Sun was under a doleful eclipse, this living Lord was pleased to die, and in his death was under the frowns of an angry God. The face was then hid from him that had always smiled before; and his soul felt that horror and that darkness which it had never felt before. So that there was no separation between the divine and human nature, yet he suffered pains equal to those which we had deserved to suffer in hell for ever. God so suspended the efficacities of his grace that it displayed in that hour none of its force and virtue on him. He had no comfort from heaven, none from his angels, none from his friends, even in that sorrowful hour when he needed comfort most. Like a lion that is hurt in the forest, so he roared and cried out, though there was no despair in him; and when he was forsaken, yet there was trust and hope in these words, "My God, my God."—*Timothy Rogers.*

Verse 1.—Here is comfort to *deserted souls*; Christ himself was deserted; therefore, if thou be deserted, God dealeth no otherwise with thee than he did with Christ. Thou mayst be beloved of God and not feel it; Christ was so, he was beloved of the Father, and yet had no present sense and feeling of his love. This may be a great comfort to holy souls under the suspension of those comforts and manifestations which sometimes they have felt; Christ himself underwent such a suspension, therefore such a suspension of divine comfort may consist with God's love. Thou mayst conclude possibly, "I am a hypocrite, and therefore God hath forsaken me;" this is the complaint of some doubting Christians, "I am a hypocrite, and therefore God hath forsaken me;" but thou hast no reason so to conclude: there was no failure in Christ's obedience, and yet Christ was forsaken in point of comfort; there-

fore desertion, in point of comfort, may consist with truth of grace, yea, with the highest measure of grace; so it did in our Saviour.—*John Row.*

Verse 1.—Lord, thou knowest what it is for a soul to be forsaken, it was sometime thine own case when thou complainedst, “*My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” not, O my Lord! but that thou hadst a divine supportment, but thou hadst not (it seemeth) that inward joy which at other times did fill thee; now thou art in thy glory, pity a worm in misery, that mourns and desires more after thee than all things: Lord, thou paidst dear for my good, let good come unto me.—*Joseph Symonds, 1658.*

Verse 1.—The first verse expresses a species of suffering that never at any other time was felt in this world, and never will be again—the vengeance of the Almighty upon his child—“*My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*”—*R. H. Ryland.*

Verse 2.—“*O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not,*” etc. How like is this expostulation to that of a human child with its earthly parent! It is based on the ground of relationship—“*I am thine; I cry day and night, yet I am not heard. Thou art my God, yet nothing is done to silence me. In the daytime of my life I cried; in this night season of my death I intreat. In the garden of Gethsemane I occupied the night with prayers; with continual ejaculations have I passed through this eventful morning. O my God, thou hast not yet heard me, therefore am I not yet silent; I cannot cease till thou answerest.*” Here Christ urges his suit in a manner which none but filial hearts adopt. The child knows that the parent yearns over him. His importunity is strengthened by confidence in paternal love. He keeps not silence, he gives him no rest because he confides in his power and willingness to grant the desired relief. This is natural. It is the argument of the heart, an appeal to the inward yearnings of our nature. It is also scriptural, and is thus stated, “*If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*” Luke xi. 13. *John Stevenson, in “Christ on the Cross,” 1842.*

Verse 2.—The princely prophet says, “*Lord, I cry unto thee in the daytime, but thou hearest not, also in the night time, and yet this is not to be thought folly to me.*” * Some perhaps would think it a great point of folly for a man to cry and call unto him who stops his ears, and seems not to hear. Nevertheless, this folly of the faithful is wiser than all the wisdom of the world. For we know well enough, that howsoever God seem at the first not to hear, yet the Lord is a sure refuge in due time—in affliction. Psalm ix. 9.—*Thomas Playfere.*

Verses 2, 3.—Well, what hears God from him, now he hears nothing from God, as to the deliverance prayed for? No murmuring at God’s proceedings; nay, he hears quite the contrary, for he justifies and praises God: “*But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*” Observe whether thou canst not gather something from the manner of God’s denying the thing prayed for, which may sweeten it to thee! Haply thou shalt find he denies thee, but it is with a smiling countenance, and ushers it in with some expressions of grace and favour, that may assure thee his denial proceeds not from displeasure. As you would do with a dear friend, who, may be, comes to borrow a sum of money of you; lend it you dare not, because you see plainly it is not for his good; but in giving him the denial, lest he should misinterpret it, as proceeding from want of love and respect, you preface it with some kind of language of your hearty affection to him, as that you love him, and therefore deny him, and shall be ready to do for him more than that comes to. Thus God sometimes wraps up his denials in such sweet intimations of love, as prevents all jealousies arising in the hearts of his people.—*William Gurnall.*

Verses 2, 3.—They that have conduit-water come into their houses, if no water come they do not conclude the spring to be dry, but the pipes to be stopped or broken. If prayer speed not, we must be sure that the fault is not in God, but in ourselves; were we but ripe for mercy, he is ready to extend it to us, and even waits for the purpose.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 3.—“*But thou art holy.*” Here is the triumph of faith—the Saviour stood like a rock in the wide ocean of temptation. High as the billows rose, so did his faith, like the coral rock, wax greater and stronger till it became an island of salvation to our shipwrecked souls. It is as if he had said, “*It matters not what I endure.*”

* Septuagint version.

Storms may howl upon me; men depise; devils tempt; circumstances overpower; and God himself forsake me, still God is holy; there is no unrighteousness in him."—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 3.—"But thou art holy." Does it seem strange that the heart in its darkness and sorrow should find comfort in this attribute of God? No, for God's holiness is but another aspect of his faithfulness and mercy. And in that remarkable name, "the Holy One of Israel," we are taught that he who is the "holy" God is also the God who has made a covenant with his chosen. It would be impossible for an Israelite to think of God's holiness without thinking also of that covenant relationship. "Be ye holy; for I, the Lord your God am holy," were the words in which Israel was reminded of their relation to God. See especially Lev. xix. 1. We see something of this feeling in such passages as Psalm lxxxix, 16—19; xcix. 5—9; Hosea xi. 8, 9; Isaiah xli. 14; xlvii. 4.—*J. J. Stewart Perowne.*

Verse 3.—Were temptations never so black, faith will not hearken to an ill word spoken against God, but will justify God always.—*David Dickson.*

Verses 4, 5.—Those who look upon this Psalm as having a primary reference to the King of Israel, attribute great beauty to these words, from the very pleasing conjecture that David was, at the time of composing them, sojourning at Mahanaim, where Jacob, in his distress, wrestled with the angel, and obtained such signal blessings. That, in a place so greatly hallowed by associations of the past, he should make his appeal to the God of his fathers, was alike the dictate of patriarchal feeling and religion.—*John Morison, D.D., in "Morning Meditations."*

Verse 5.—"Thou didst deliver them," but thou wilt not deliver me; nay, rather thou didst deliver them because thou wilt not deliver me.—*Gerhohus.*

Verse 6.—"But I am a worm, and no man." A fisherman, when he casts his angle into the river, doth not throw the hook in bare, naked, and uncovered, for then he knows the fish will never bite, and therefore he hides the hook within a worm, or some other bait, and so, the fish, biting at the worm, is caught by the hook. Thus Christ, speaking of himself, saith, "*Ego vermis et non homo.*" He, coming to perform the great work of our redemption, did cover and hide his God-head within the worm of his human nature. The grand water-serpent, Leviathan, the devil, thinking to swallow the worm of his humanity, was caught upon the hook of his divinity. This hook stuck in his jaws, and tore him very sore. By thinking to destroy Christ, he destroyed his own kingdom, and lost his own power for ever.—*Lancelot Andrews.*

Verse 6.—"I am a worm." Christ calls himself "*a worm*" . . . on account of the opinion that men of the world had of him. . . . The Jews esteemed Christ as a worm, and treated him as such; he was loathsome to them and hated by them; every one trampled upon him, and trod him under foot as men do worms. . . . The Chaldee paraphrase renders it here *a weak worm*; and though Christ is the mighty God, and is also the Son of man, whom God made strong for himself; yet there was a weakness in his human nature, and he was crucified through it, 2 Cor. xiii. 4: and it has been observed by some, that the word *תולדה* there used signifies the scarlet worm, or the worm that is in the grain or berry with which scarlet is dyed; and like this scarlet worm did our Lord look, when by way of mockery he was clothed with a scarlet robe; and especially when he appeared in his dyed garments, and was red in his apparel, as one that treadeth in the wine fat: when his body was covered with blood when he hung upon the cross, which was shed to make crimson and scarlet sins as white as snow.—*John Gill.*

Verse 6.—"I am a worm." An humble soul is emptied of all swelling thoughts of himself. Bernard calls humility a self-annihilation. Job xxii. 29. "Thou wilt save the humble;" in the Hebrew it is, "Him that is of low eyes." An humble man hath lower thoughts of himself than others can have of him; David, though a king, yet looked upon himself as "*a worm*:" "*I am a worm, and no man.*" Bradford a martyr, yet subscribes himself "*a sinner.*" Job x. 15. "If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head:" like the violet, a sweet flower, but hangs down the head.—*Thomas Watson.*

Verse 6.—"A worm." So trodden under foot, trampled on, maltreated, buffeted and spit upon, mocked and tormented, as to seem more like a worm than a man. Behold what great contempt hath the Lord of Majesty endured, that his confusion

may be our glory; his punishment our heavenly bliss! Without ceasing impress this spectacle, O Christian, on thy soul!—*Dionysius, quoted by Isaac Williams.*

Verse 6.—“*I am a worm.*” Among the Hindoos, when a man complains and abhors himself, he asks: “What am I? A worm! a worm!” “Ah, the proud man! he regarded me as a worm, well should I like to say to him, ‘We are all worms.’” “Worm, crawl out of my presence.”—*Joseph Roberts.*

Verse 7.—“*All they that see me laugh me to scorn,*” etc. Imagine this dreadful scene. Behold this motley multitude of rich and poor, of Jews and Gentiles! Some stand in groups and gaze. Some recline at ease and stare. Others move about in restless gratification at the event. There is a look of satisfaction on every countenance. None are silent. The velocity of speech seems tardy. The theme is far too great for one member to utter. Every lip, and head, and finger, is now a tongue. The rough soldiers, too, are busied in their coarse way. The work of blood is over. Refreshment has become necessary. Their usual beverage of vinegar and water is supplied to them. As they severally are satisfied, they approach the cross, hold some forth to the Saviour, and bid him drink as they withdraw it. Luke xxiii. 36. They know he must be suffering an intense thirst, they therefore aggravate it with the mockery of refreshment. Cruel Romans! and ye, O regicidal Jews! Was not death enough? Must mockery and scorn be added? On this sad day Christ made you *one* indeed! Dreadful unity—which constituted you the joint mockers and murderers of the Lord of glory!—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 7.—“*All they that see me laugh me to scorn,*” etc. There have been persons in our own days, whose crimes have excited such detestation that the populace would probably have torn them in pieces, before, and even after their trial, if they could have had them in their power. Yet when these very obnoxious persons have been executed according to their sentence, if, perhaps, there was not one spectator who wished them to escape, yet neither was one found so lost to sensibility as to insult them in their dying moments. But when Jesus suffers, *all that see him laugh him to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head; they insult his character and his hope.*—*John Newton.*

Verse 7.—“*They shoot out the lip.*” To protrude the lower lip is, in the East, considered a very strong indication of contempt. Its employment is chiefly confined to the lower orders.—*Illustrated Commentary.*

Verses 7, 8.—It was after his crucifixion, and during the hours that he hung upon the cross, that his sufferings in this way—the torment of beholding and hearing the scorn and mockery which was made of the truth of his person and doctrine—exceedingly abounded, and in such and so many kinds of mockery and insult that some consider this to have been the chiefest pain and sorrow which he endured in his most sacred passion. For as, generally, those things are considered the most painful to endure of which we are most sensible, so it seems to these persons, that sufferings of this kind contain in them more cause for feeling than any other sufferings. And, therefore, although all the torments of the Lord were very great, so that each one appears the greatest, and no comparison can be made between them; yet, nevertheless, this kind of suffering appears to be the most painful. Because in other troubles, not only the pain and suffering of them, but the troubles themselves, in themselves, may be desired by us, and such as we suffer for love’s sake, in order by them to evince that love. Wherefore, the stripes, the crown of thorns, the buffetings, the cross, the gall, the vinegar, and other bodily torments, besides that they torment the body, are often a means for promoting the divine honour, which it holds in esteem above all else. But to blaspheme God, to give the lie to eternal truths, to deface the supreme demonstrations of the divinity and majesty of the Son of God (although God knoweth how to extract from these things the good which he intends), nevertheless are, in their nature, things, which, from their so greatly affecting the divine honour, although they may be, for just considerations, endured, can never be desired by any one, but must be abhorrent to all. Our Lord then, being, of all, the most zealous for the divine honour, for which he also died, found in this kind of suffering, more than in all other, much to abhor and nothing to desire. Therefore with good reason it may be held to be the greatest of all, and that in which, more than in all other, he exhibited the greatest suffering and patience. *Fra Thomé de Jesu, in “The Sufferings of Jesus,” 1869.*

Verses 7—9.—All that see me made but a laughynge stocke on me, they mocked me wyth their lypes, and wagged their heades at me. Sayenge, thys

vylayne referred all thynges to the Lord, let him now delyver hym yf he wyll, for he loveth hym well. But yet thou arte he whyche ledest me oute of my mother's wombe myne one refuge, even from my mother's teates. As none as I came into this worlde, I was layde in thy lappe, thou art my God even from my mother's wombe.—From "*The Psalter of David in English, truly translated out of Latyn,*" in "*Devout Psalms,*" etc., by E. Whitchurche, 1547.

Verse 8.—Here are recorded some of those very words, by which the persecutors of our Lord expressed their mockery and scorn. How remarkable to find them in a Psalm written so many hundred years before!—*John Stevenson.*

Verses 9, 10.—Faith is much strengthened by constant evidences of God's favour. Herewith did he support his faith that said to God, "*Thou art he that took me out of the womb : thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb : thou art my God from my mother's belly.*" "Thou art my trust from my youth. By thee have I been holden up from the womb : thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels." Psalm lxxi. 5, 6. It was not only the disposition of Obadiah towards God, but also the evidence that thereby he had of God's affection towards him, that made him with confidence say to Elijah, "I fear the Lord from my youth." 1 Kings xviii. 12. By long continuance of ancient favour, many demonstrations are given of a fast, fixed and unremovable affection. So as if, by reason of temptations, one or more evidences should be questioned, yet others would remain to uphold faith, and to keep it from an utter languishing, and a total falling away. As when a house is supported by many pillars, though some be taken away, yet by the support of them which remain, the house will stand.—*William Gouge.*

Verses 9, 10.—David acknowledges ancient mercies, those mercies which had been cast upon him long ago, these were still fresh and new in his memory, and this is one affection and disposition of a thankful heart—to remember those mercies which another would have quite forgotten, or never thought of. Thus does David here ; the mercies of his *infancy*, and his *childhood*, and his *younger years*, which one would have imagined, that now in his age had been quite out of his mind ; yet these does he here stir up himself to remember and bring to his thoughts. "*Took me out of the womb :*" when was that ? It may have been threescore years ago when David penned the Psalms. He thinks of those mercies which God vouchsafed him *when he was not capable of thinking*, nor considering what was bestowed upon him ; and so are we taught hence to do, in an imitation of his holy example which is here set before us : those mercies which God hath bestowed in our minority we are to call to mind and acknowledge in our riper years.—*Thomas Horton.*

Verses 9, 10.—Here the tribulation begins to grow lighter, and hope inclines towards victory ; a support, though small, and sought out with deep anxiety, is now found. For after he had felt that he had suffered without any parallel or example, so that the wonderful works of God as displayed toward the fathers afforded him no help, he comes to the wonderful works of God toward himself, and in these he finds the goodwill of God turned towards him, and which was displayed towards him alone in so singular a way.—*Martin Luther.*

Verses 9, 10.—The bitter severity of the several taunts with which his enemies assailed our Lord, had no other effect than to lead the Saviour to make a direct appeal to his Father. . . . That appeal is set before us in these two verses. It is of an unusual and remarkable nature. The argument on which it is founded is most forcible and conclusive. At the same time, it is the most reasonable and appropriate that can be urged. We may thus paraphrase it, "I am now brought as a man to my extremity. It is said that God disowns me ; but it cannot be so. My first moment of existence he tenderly cared for. When I could not even ask for, or think of his kindness, he bestowed it upon me. If, of his mere good pleasure he brought me into life at first, he will surely not forsake me when I am departing out of it. In opposition, therefore, to all their taunts, I can and I will appeal to himself. Mine enemies declare, O God, that thou hast cast me off—but thou art he that took me out of the womb. They affirm that I do not, and need not trust in thee ; but thou didst make me hope (or, keptest me in safety, margin) when I was upon my mother's breasts. They insinuate that thou wilt not acknowledge me as thy Son ; but I was cast upon thee from the womb ; thou art my God from my mother's belly."—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 10.—"I was cast upon thee from the womb : thou art my God from my mother's belly." There is a noble passage in Eusebius, in which he shows the connection between our Lord's incarnation and his passion : that he might well comfort himself while hanging on the cross by the remembrance that the very same body then "marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (Isaiah lli. 14), was that which had been glorified by the Father with such singular honour, when the Holy Ghost came upon Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her. That this body, therefore, though now so torn and so mangled, as it had once been the wonder, so it would for ever be the joy, of the angels ; and having put on immortality, would be the support of his faithful people to the end of time—*J. M. Neale, in loc.*

Verse 10.—I was like one forsaken by his parent, and wholly cast upon Providence. I had no father upon earth, and my mother was poor and helpless.—*Matthew Poole.*

Verse 11.—"Be not far from me ; for trouble is near ;" and so it is high time for thee to put forth a helping hand. *Hominibus profanis mirabilis videtur hæc ratio*, to profane persons, this seemeth to be a strange reason, saith an interpreter ; but it is a very good one, as this prophet knew, who therefore makes it his plea.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 12.—"Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round." These animals are remarkable for the proud, fierce, and sullen manner in which they exercise their great strength. Such were the persecutors who now beset our Lord. These were first, human, and secondly, spiritual foes ; and both were alike distinguished by the proud, fierce, and sullen manner in which they assaulted him.—*John Stevenson.*

Verses 12, 13.—"Bashan" was a fertile country (Numb. xxxii. 4), and the cattle there fed were fat and "strong." Deut. xxxii. 14. Like them, the Jews in that good land "waxed fat and kicked," grew proud and rebelled ; forsook God "that made them, and lightly esteemed the rock of their salvation."—*George Horne.*

Verse 13.—A helpless infant, or a harmless lamb, surrounded by furious bulls and hungry lions, aptly represented the Saviour encompassed by his insulting and bloody persecutors.—*Thomas Scott, 1747—1881.*

Verse 14.—"I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint : my heart is like wax ; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." He was faint. Such a feeling of languor and faintness supervened that language fails to express it, and the emblem of "water poured out" is employed to represent it. As the water falls from the vessel to the earth, see how its particles separate farther and farther from each other. Its velocity increases as it falls. It has no power to stay itself midway, much less to return to its place. It is the very picture of utter weakness. So did our Lord feel himself to be when hanging on the cross. He was faint with weakness. The sensations experienced when about to faint away are very overpowering. We appear to our own consciousness to be nothing but weakness, as water poured out. All our bones feel relaxed and out of joint ; we seem as though we had none. The strength of bone is gone, the knitting of the joints is loosened, and the muscular vigour fled. A sickly giddiness overcomes us. We have no power to bear up. All heart is lost. Our strength disappears like that of wax, of melting wax, which drops upon surrounding objects, and is lost. Daniel thus describes his sensations on beholding the great vision, "There remained no strength in me : for my vigour was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength." Dan. x. 8. In regard, however, to the faintness which our Lord experienced, we ought to notice this additional and remarkable circumstance, that he did not altogether faint away. The relief of insensibility he refused to take. When consciousness ceases, all perception of pain is necessarily and instantly terminated. But our Lord retained his full consciousness throughout this awful scene ; and patiently endured for a considerable period, those, to us, insupportable sensations which precede the actual swoon.—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 14.—"I am poured out like water : " that is, in the thought of my enemies I am utterly destroyed. "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." 2 Sam. xiv. 14. "What marvel," asks St. Bernard, "that the name of the Bridegroom should be as ointment poured forth, when he himself, for the greatness of his love, was poured forth like water !"—*J. M. Neale.*

Verse 14.—“*I am poured out like water,*” i.e., I am almost past all recovery, as water spilt upon the ground.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 14.—“*All my bones are out of joint.*” The rack is devised as a most exquisite pain, even for terror. And the cross is a rack, whereon he was stretched till, saith the Psalm, “*all his bones were out of joint.*” But even to stand, as he hung, three long hours together, holding up but the arms at length, I have heard it avowed of some that have felt it, to be a pain scarce credible. But the hands and the feet being so cruelly nailed (part, of all other, most sensible, by reason of the texture of sinews there in them most) it could not but make his pain out of measure painful. It was not for nothing, that *dolores acerrimi dicuntur cruciatus* (saith the heathen man), that the most sharp and bitter pains of all other have their name from hence, and are called *cruciatus*—pains like those of the cross. It had a meaning, that *they gave him*, that he had (for his welcome to the cross) a cup mixed with gall or myrrh; and (for his farewell) a sponge of vinegar; to show by the one the bitterness, and by the other the sharpness of the pains of this painful death.—*Lancelot Andrewes.*

Verse 14.—“*All my bones are out of joint.*” We know that the greatest and most intolerable pain that the body can endure, is that arising from a bone out of its place, or dislocated joint. Now when the Lord was raised up upon the cross, and his sacred body hung in the air from the nails, all the joints began to give, so that the bones were parted the one from the other so visibly that, in very truth (as David had prophesied) *they might tell all his bones*, and thus, throughout his whole body, he endured acute torture. Whilst our Lord suffered these torments, his enemies, who had so earnestly desired to see him crucified, far from pitying him, were filled with delight, as though celebrating a victory.—*Fra Thomè de Jesu.*

Verse 15.—“*My strength is dried up,*” etc. Inflammation must have commenced early and violently in the wounded parts—then been quickly imparted to those that were strained, and have terminated in a *high degree of feverish burning over the whole body.* The animal juices would be thus dried up, and the watery particles of the blood absorbed. The skin parched by the scorching sun till midday would be unable to supply or to imbibe any moisture. The loss of blood at the hands and feet would hasten the desiccation. Hence our Lord says, “*My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws.*” The fever would devour his small remaining strength. And THIRST, that most intolerable of all bodily privations, must have been overpowering. His body appeared to his feeling like a potsherd that had been charred in the potter’s kiln. It seemed to have neither strength nor substance left in it. So feeble had he become, so parched and dried up that CLAMMINESS OF THE MOUTH, one of the forerunners of immediate dissolution, had already seized him; “*My tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.*”—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 15.—“*My strength is dried up;*” not as in the trial of gold and silver, but “*like a potsherd,*” as the earthen vessel dried up by the heat, spoken in humiliation.—*Isaac Williams, in loc.*

Verse 15.—“*A potsherd.*” פֶּתֶר, rendered *potsherd*, is a word which denotes a piece of earthenware, frequently in a broken state. As employed in the verse under consideration, it seems to derive considerable illustration from the corresponding word in ARABIC, which expresses roughness of skin, and might well convey to the mind an idea of the bodily appearance of one in whom the moisture of the fluids had been dried up by the excess of grief.—*John Morison.*

Verse 15.—That hour what his feelings were it is dangerous to define: we know them not; we may be too bold to determine of them. To very good purpose it was that the ancient Fathers of the Greek church in their liturgy, after they had recounted all the particular pains, as they are set down in his passion, and by all and by everyone of them called for mercy, do, after all, shut up with this *Δι αγνωστων κοπιών κλ βαδάων ελέησον κλ σπασον ημάς.* By thine unknown sorrows and sufferings, felt by thee, but not distinctly known by us, have mercy upon us and save us.—*Lancelot Andrewes.*

Verse 16.—“*Dogs have compassed me.*” So great and varied was the malignity exhibited by the enemies of our Lord, that the combined characteristics of two species of ferocious animals were not adequate to its representation. Another emblematical figure is therefore introduced. The assembly of the wicked is compared to that of “*dogs*” who haunt about the cities, prowl in every corner sual

over the carrion, and devour it all with greediness—like “dogs,” with their wild cry in full pursuit, with unfailing scent tracking their victim, with vigilant eye on all its movements, and with a determination which nothing can falter, they run it on to death. The Oriental mode of hunting, both in ancient and modern times, is murderous and merciless in the extreme. A circle of several miles in circumference is beat round; and the men, driving all before them, and narrowing as they advance, inclose the prey on every side. Having thus made them prisoners, the cruel hunters proceed to slaughter at their own convenience. So did the enemies of our Lord: long before his crucifixion it is recorded that they used the most treacherous plans to get him into their power.—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 16.—“*Dogs have compassed me.*” At the hunting of the lion, a whole district is summoned to appear, who, forming themselves first into a circle, enclose a space of four or five miles in compass, according to the number of the people and the quality of the ground which is pitched upon for the scene of action. The footmen advance first, rushing into the thickets with their dogs and spears, to put up the game; while the horsemen, keeping a little behind, are always ready to charge upon the first sally of the wild beast. In this manner they proceed, still contracting their circle, till they all at last close in together, or meet with some other game to divert them.—*Dr. Shaw's Travels, quoted in Parton's "Illustrations of Scripture."*

Verse 16.—“*They pierced my hands and my feet;*” namely, when they nailed Christ to the cross. Matt. xxvii. 35; John xx. 25. Where let me simulate, saith a learned man, the orator's gradation, *Facinus vincire civem Romanum*, etc. It was much for the Son of God to be bound, more to be beaten, most of all to be slain; *Quid dicam in cruce[m] tolle?* but what shall I say to this, that he was crucified? That was the most vile and ignominious; it was also a cruel and cursed kind of death, which yet he refused not; and here we have a clear testimony for his cross. *John Trapp.*

Verse 16.—“*They pierced my hands and my feet.*” Of all sanguinary punishments, that of crucifixion is one of the most dreadful—no vital part is immediately affected by it. The hands and feet which are furnished with the most numerous and sensitive organs, are perforated with nails, which must necessarily be of some size to suit their intended purpose. The tearing asunder of the tender fibres of the hands and feet, the lacerating of so many nerves, and bursting so many blood-vessels, must be productive of intense agony. The nerves of the hand and foot are intimately connected, through the arm and leg, with the nerves of the whole body; their laceration therefore must be felt over the entire frame. Witness the melancholy result of even a needle's puncture in even one of the remotest nerves. A spasm is not unfrequently produced by it in the muscles of the face, which locks the jaws inseparably. When, therefore the hands and feet of our blessed Lord were transfixed with nails, he must have felt the sharpest pangs shoot through every part of his body. Supported only by his lacerated limbs, and suspended from his pierced hands, our Lord had nearly six hours' torment to endure.—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 16.—“*They pierced my hands and my feet.*” That evangelical prophet testifies it, “Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.” Isaiah xlix. 16. Were we not engraven there when his hands were pierced for us? “They digged my hands and my feet.” And they digged them so deep, that the very prints remained after his resurrection, and their fingers were thrust into them for evidence sake. Some have thought that those scars remain still in his glorious body, to be showed at his second appearing: “They shall see him whom they have pierced.” That is improbable, but this is certain; there remains still an impression upon Christ's hands and his heart, the sealing and wearing of the elect there, as precious jewels.—*Thomas Adams.*

Verse 17.—“*I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.*” The skin and flesh were distended by the posture of the body on the cross, that the bones, as through a thin veil, became visible, and might be counted.—*George Horne.*

Verse 17.—“*I may tell all my bones.*” For, as the first Adam by his fall, lost the robe of innocence, and thence forth needed other garments, so the second Adam vouchsafed to be stripped of his earthly vestments, to the end it might hereafter be said to us, “Bring forth the first robe, and put it on him.” Luke xv. 22.—*Gerhohus, quoted by J. M. Neale.*

Verse 17.—“*They look and stare upon me.*” Sensitively conscious of his condition

upon the cross, the delicate feelings of the holy Saviour were sorely pained by the gaze of the multitude. With impudent face they looked upon him. To view him better they halted as they walked. With deliberate insolence they collected in groups, and made their remarks to each other on his conduct and appearance. Mocking his naked, emaciated, and quivering body, they "looked and stared upon him."—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 17.—"They look and stare upon me." Oh, how different is that look which the awakened sinner directs to Calvary, when faith lifts up her eye to him who agonised, and bled, and died, for the guilty! And what gratitude should perishing men feel, that from him that hangs upon the accursed tree there is heard proceeding the inviting sound, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and besides me there is none else."—*John Morison.*

Verse 18.—"They part my garments," etc. Perfectly naked did the cruciari hang upon the cross, and the executioners received their clothes. There is nothing to show that there was a cloth even round the loins. The clothes became the property of the soldiers, after Roman usage. The outer garment was divided probably into four, by ripping up the seams. Four soldiers were counted off as a guard, by the Roman code. The under garment could not be divided, being woven; and this led the soldiers to the dice-throwing.—*J. P. Lange, D.D., on Matthew xxvii. 35.*

Verse 18.—"They part my garments," etc. Instruments will not be wanting to crucify Christ, if it were but for his old clothes, and those but little worth; for these soldiers crucify him, though they got but his garments for their reward. Christ did submit to suffer naked, hereby to teach us:—1. That all flesh are really naked before God by reason of sin (Exodus xxxii. 25; 2 Chron. xxviii. 19), and therefore our Surety behoved to suffer naked. 2. That he offered himself a real captive in his sufferings, that so he might fully satisfy justice by being under the power of his enemies, till he redeemed himself by the strong hand, having fully paid the price; for therefore did he submit to be stripped naked, as conquerors use to do with prisoners. 3. That by thus suffering naked he would expiate our abuse of apparel, and purchase to us a liberty to make use of suitable raiment, and such as becometh us in our station. 4. That by this suffering naked he would purchase unto them who flee to him to be covered with righteousness and glory, and to walk with him in white for ever, and would point out the nakedness of those who, not being found clothed with his righteousness, shall not be clothed upon with immortality and glory. 2 Cor. v. 2, 3. 5. He would also by this, teach all his followers to resolve on nakedness in their following of him, as a part of their conformity with their Head (1 John iv. 17; Rom. viii. 35; Heb. xi. 37), and that therefore they should not dote much on their apparel when they have it.—*George Hutcheson, 1657.*

Verse 18.—"And cast lots upon my vesture." Trifling as this act of casting the lot for our Lord's vesture may appear, it is most significant. It contains a double lesson. It teaches us how greatly that seamless shirt was valued; how little he had to whom it belonged. It seemed to say, this garment is more valuable than its owner. As it was said of the thirty pieces of silver, "A godly price at which I was prized at of them;" so may we say regarding the casting of the lot, "How cheaply Christ was held!"—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 20.—"My darling" had better be rendered "my lonely, or solitary one." For he wishes to say that his soul was lonely and forsaken by all, and that there was no one who sought after him as a friend, or cared for him, or comforted him: as we have it, Psalm cxlii. 4, "Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul; I looked on my right hand, but there was no one who would know me;" that is, solitude is of itself a certain cross, and especially so in such great torments, in which it is most grievous to be immersed without an example and without a companion. And yet, in such a state, everyone of us must be, in some suffering or other, and especially in that of death; and we must be brought to cry out with Psalm xxv. 16, "Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and afflicted."—*Martin Luther.*

Verse 20.—"The dog." It is scarcely possible for a European to form an idea of the intolerable nuisance occasioned in the villages and cities of the East, by the multitude of dogs that infest the streets. The natives, accustomed from their earliest years to the annoyance, come to be regardless of it; but to a stranger, these creatures are the greatest plague to which he is subjected; for as they are never allowed to enter a house, and do not constitute the property of any particular

owner, they display none of those habits of which the domesticated species among us are found susceptible, and are destitute of all those social qualities which often render the dog the trusty and attached friend of man. . . . The race seems wholly to degenerate in the warm regions of the East, and to approximate to the character of beasts of prey, as in disposition they are ferocious, cunning, bloodthirsty, and possessed of the most insatiable voracity: and even in their very form there is something repulsive; their sharp and savage features; their wolf-like eyes; their long hanging ears; their straight and pointed tails; their lank and emaciated forms, almost entirely without a belly, give them an appearance of wretchedness and degradation, that stands in sad contrast with the general condition and qualities of the breed in Europe. . . . These hideous creatures, dreaded by the people for their ferocity, or avoided by them as useless and unclean, are obliged to prowl about everywhere in search of a precarious existence. . . . They generally run in bands, and their natural ferocity, inflamed by hunger, and the consciousness of strength, makes them the most troublesome and dangerous visitors to the stranger who unexpectedly finds himself in their neighbourhood, as they will not scruple to seize whatever he may have about him, and even, in the event of his falling, and being otherwise defenceless, to attack and devour him. . . . These animals, driven by hunger, greedily devour everything that comes in their way; they glut themselves with the most putrid and loathsome substances that are thrown about the cities, and of nothing are they so fond as of human flesh, a repast, with which the barbarity of the despotic countries of Asia frequently supplies them, as the bodies of criminals slain for murder, treason, or violence, are seldom buried, and lie exposed till the mangled fragments are carried off by the dogs.—From *“Illustrations of Scripture, by the late Professor George Paxton, D.D., revised and enlarged by Robert Jamieson,”* 1843.

Verse 21.—“*Save me from the lion’s mouth.*” Satan is called a lion, and that fitly; for he hath all the properties of the lion: as bold as a lion, as strong as a lion, as furious as a lion, as terrible as the roaring of a lion. Yea, worse: the lion wants subtlety and suspicion; herein the devil is beyond the lion. The lion will spare the prostrate, the devil spares none. The lion is full and forbears, the devil is full and devours. He seeks all; let not the simple say, He will take no notice of me; nor the subtle, He cannot overreach me; nor the noble say, He will not presume to meddle with me; nor the rich, He dares not contest with me; for he seeks to devour all. He is our common adversary, therefore let us cease all quarrels amongst ourselves, and fight with him.—*Thomas Adams.*

Verse 21.—“*Save me . . . from the horns of the unicorns.*” Those who are in great trouble from the power or cruelty of others, often cry out to their gods, “Ah! save me from the tusk of the elephant from the mouth of the tiger and the tusks of the boar, deliver me, deliver me!” “Who will save me from the horn of the *Kindam*?” This animal is now extinct in these regions, and it is not easy to determine what it was; the word in the Sathur—*Agarāthe*—is rendered “jungle cow.”—*Joseph Roberts.*

Verse 21.—“*The horns of the unicorns.*” On turning to the Jewish Bible we find that the word *קַרְנֵי* is translated as buffalo, and there is no doubt that this rendering is nearly the correct one, and at the present day naturalists are nearly agreed that the reem of the Old Testament must have been now the extinct urus. . . . The presence of these horns affords a remarkable confirmation to a well-known passage in Julius Cæsar’s familiar “Commentaries.” “The uri are little inferior to elephants in size” (“*magnitudine paulo infra elephantos;*”) “but are bulls in their nature, colour, and figure. Great is their strength, and great their swiftness; nor do they spare man or beast when they have caught sight of them.”—*J. G. Wood, M.A., F.L.S., in “Bible Animals,”* 1869.

Verse 22.—“*I will declare thy name unto my brethren.*” Having thus obtained relief from the oppressive darkness, and regained conscious possession of the joy and light of his Father’s countenance, the thoughts and desires of the Redeemer flow into their accustomed channel. The glory of God in the salvation of his church.—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 22.—“*My brethren.*” This gives evidence of the low condescension of the Son of God, and also of the high exaltation of sons of men; for the Son of God to be a brother to sons of men is a great degree of humiliation, and for sons of men to be made brethren with the Son of God is a high degree of exaltation; for *Christ’s*

brethren are in that respect sons of God, heirs of heaven, or kings, not earthly, but heavenly; not temporary, but everlasting kings This respect of Christ to his brethren is a great encouragement and comfort to such as are despised and scorned by men of this world for Christ's professing of them.—*William Gouge*.

Verse 24.—"For he hath not despised nor abhorred the prayer of the poor, neither hath he hid his face from me; but when I cried unto him, he heard me." Let him, therefore, that desires to be of the seed of Israel, and to rejoice in the grace of the gospel, become poor, for this is a fixed truth, our God is one that has respect unto the poor! And observe the fulness and diligence of the prophet. He was not content with having said "will not despise," but adds, "and will not abhor;" and again, "will not turn away his face;" and again, "will hear." And then he adds himself as an example, saying "When I cried," as our translation has it. As if he had said, "Behold ye, and learn by my example, who have been made the most vile of all men, and numbered among the wicked; when I was despised, cast out, rejected, behold! I was held in the highest esteem, and taken up, and heard. Let not this state of things, therefore, after this, my encouraging example, frighten you; the gospel requires a man to be such a character before it will save him." These things, I say, because our weakness requires so much exhortation, that it might not dread being humbled, nor despair when humbled, and thus might, after the bearing of the cross, receive the salvation.—*Martin Luther*.

Verse 25.—"My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation," etc. The joy and gratitude of our adorable Lord rise to such a height at this great deliverance, his heart so overflows with fresh and blessed consciousness of his heavenly Father's nearness, that he again pours forth the expression of his praise. By its repetition, he teaches us that this is not a temporary burst of gratitude, but an abiding determination, a full and settled resolution.—*John Stevenson*.

Verse 25.—"In the great congregation." Saints are fittest witnesses of sacred duties. That which, in Psa. cxvi. 14, is implied under this particle of restraint, "his," in "the presence of all his people," is in Psa. xxii. 25, more expressly noted by a more apparent description, thus: "I will pay my vows before them that fear him." None but true saints do truly fear God. 1. This property of God's people, that they fear the Lord, showeth that they will make the best use of such sacred, solemn duties performed in their presence. They will glorify God for this your zeal; they will join their spirits with your spirit in this open performance of duty; they will become followers of you, and learn of you to vow and pay unto the Lord, and that openly, publicly. 2. As for others, they are no better than such hogs and dogs as are not meet to have such precious pearls and holy things cast before them, lest they trample them under their feet.—*William Gouge*.

Verse 26.—"The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever." A spiritual banquet is prepared in the church for the "meek" and lowly in heart. The death of Christ was the sacrifice for sin; his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. The poor in spirit feed on this provision, in their hearts by faith, and are satisfied, and thus, whilst they "seek" the Lord, they "praise" him also, and their "hearts" (or souls), are preserved unto eternal life.—"*Practical Illustrations of the Book of Psalms*," 1836.

Verse 26.—"The meek." Bonaventure engraved this sweet saying of our Lord, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart," in his study. O that this saying was engraved upon all your foreheads, and upon all your hearts!—*Charles Bradbury*.

Verse 26.—"They shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever." Now, I would fain know the man that ever went about to form such laws as should bind the hearts of men, or prepare such rewards as should reach the souls and consciences of men! Truly, if any mortal man should make a law that his subjects should love him with all their hearts and souls, and not dare, upon peril of his greatest indignation, to entertain a traitorous thought against his royal person, but presently confess it to him, or else he would be avenged on him, he would deserve to be more laughed at for his pride and folly, than Xerxes for casting his fetters into the Hellespont, to chain the waves into his obedience; or Caligula, that threatened the air, if it durst rain when he was at his pastimes, who durst not himself so much as look into the air when it thundered. Certainly a madhouse would be more fit for such a person than a throne, who should so far forfeit his reason,

as to think that the thoughts and hearts of men were within his jurisdiction.—*William Gurnall*.

Verse 26.—“*Your heart*,” that is, not your outward man, but the hidden man of the heart (Ezek. xxxvi. 26); the new man which is created after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, “*shall live for ever*.” The life which animates it is the life of the Spirit of God.—*John Stevenson*.

Verse 27.—“*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord ; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.*” This passage is a prediction of the conversion of the Gentiles. It furnishes us with two interesting ideas; the nature of true conversion—and the extent of it under the reign of the Messiah.

1. The NATURE of true conversion:—It is to “*remember*”—to “*turn to the Lord*”—and to “*worship before him.*” This is a plain and simple process. Perhaps the first religious exercise of mind of which we are conscious is reflection. A state of unregeneracy is a state of forgetfulness. God is forgotten. Sinners have lost all just sense of his glory, authority, mercy, and judgment; living as if there were no God, or as if they thought there was none. But if ever we are brought to be the subjects of true conversion, we shall be brought to remember these things. This divine change is fitly expressed by the case of the prodigal, who is said to have *come to himself*, or to his right mind. But further, true conversion consists not only in remembering but in “*turning to the Lord.*” This part of the passage is expressive of a cordial relinquishment of our idols, whatever they have been, and an acquiescence in the gospel way of salvation by Christ alone. Once more, true conversion to Christ will be accompanied with the “*worship*” of him. Worship, as a religious exercise, is the homage of the heart, presented to God according to his revealed will

2. The EXTENT of conversion under the kingdom or reign of the Messiah: “*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord ; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.*” It was fit that the accession of the Gentiles should be reserved for the gospel day, that it might grace the triumph of Christ over his enemies, and appear to be what it is, “*the travail of his soul.*” This great and good work, begun in the apostles’ days, *must go on*, and “*must increase,*” till “*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn,*” and “*all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.*” Conversion work has been *individual*; God has gathered sinners one by one. Thus it is at present with us; but it will not be thus always. People will flock to Zion as doves to their windows. Further, conversion work has hitherto been circumscribed within certain parts of the world. But the time will come when “*all the kindreds of the earth*” shall worship. These hopes are not the flight of an ardent imagination; they are founded on the true sayings of God. Finally, while we are concerned for the world, let us not forget our own souls. So the whole world be saved and we lost, what will it avail us?—*Condensed from Andrew Fuller*.

Verse 27.—“*All the ends of the world shall REMEMBER*”—this is a remarkable expression. It implies that man has forgotten God. It represents all the successive generations of the world as but *one*, and then it exhibits that one generation, as if it had been once in paradise, suddenly remembering the Lord whom it had known there, but had long forgotten The converted nations, we learn by this verse, will not only obtain remembrance of their past loss, but will also be filled with the knowledge of present duty.—*John Stevenson*.

Verse 27.—“*All the nations of the world*” (יִזְכְּרוּ *jizkeru*, the same Hebrew root with אָזְכֵּר *azkir*) “*shall remember* ;” why? what is that? or what shall they remember? Even this: they shall turn to the Lord, and worship him, in his name, in his ordinances; as is explained in the words following of the verse: “*And all the families of the nations*” (יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ *jishtachavu*, “*shall bow*” down themselves, or) “*worship before thee,*” etc. And so in Psalm lxxxvi. 9, “*All nations whom thou hast made shall come*” (יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ *vejishtachavu*) “*and they shall worship before thee;*” and how shall they do so? Even by recording, remembering, and making mention of the glory of thy name; as in the words following (יִשְׁבְּחוּ *vicabbedu lisimecha*,) “*and shall glorify thy name.*”—*William Strong’s “Sants’ Communion with God,”* 1656.

Verses 27, 28.—The one undeviating object of the Son all through was, the glory of the Father: he came to do his will, and he fulfilled it with all the unvarying intensity of the most heavenly affection. What, then, will not be the exuberant joy of his heart, when in his glorious kingdom, he shall see the Father beyond all measure glorified? . . . The praise and honour and blessing which will be yielded

to the Father in that day through him, so that God shall be all in all, will make him feel he underwent not a sorrow too much for such a precious consummation. . . . Every note of thanksgiving which ascends to the Father, whether from the fowls of the air, or the beasts of the field, or the fishes of the sea, or the hills, or the mountains, or the trees of the forest, or the rivers of the valleys—all shall gladden his heart, as sweet in the ears of God, for the sake of him who redeemed even them from the curse, and restored to them a harmony more musical than burst from them on the birthday of their creation. And man! renewed and regenerated man! for whose soul the blood was spilt, and for the redemption of whose body death was overcome, how shall the chorus of his thanksgiving, in its intelligent and articulate hallelujahs, be the incense which that Saviour shall still love to present unto the Father, a sweet-smelling savour through himself, who, that he might sanctify his people by his own blood, suffered without the camp. How are the channels choked up or impaired in this evil world, wherein the praises and glory of our God should flow as a river! How will Christ then witness, to the delight of his soul, all cleared and restored! No chill upon the heart, no stammering in the tongue, in his Father's praises! No understanding dull, or eye feeble, in the apprehension of his glory! No hand unready, or foot stumbling, in the fulfilling of his commandments. God, the glory of his creatures: his glory their service and their love; and all this the reward to Jesus of once suffering himself.—C. J. Goodhart, M.A., in "*Bloomsbury Lent Lectures*," 1848.

Verse 29.—"And they shall bow that go down into the dust; their soul liveth not:" that is, *whose soul liveth not*, by an Hebraism; it being meant, that he who is of most desperate condition, being without hope of life and salvation, his sins are so notorious, shall "eat" also of this feast, and be turned to God to "worship" and serve him; being thus plucked out of the jaws of death and everlasting destruction, as it were, being before this very hour ready to seize upon him. The new translation, "*None can keep alive his own soul*," as it agreeth not with the Hebrew, so it makes the sense more perplexed. By "*him that goeth down to the dust, whose soul liveth not*," some understand the most miserably poor, who have nothing to feed upon, whereby their life may be preserved, yet shall feed also of this feast as well as the rich, and praise God. Ainsworth is for either spiritually poor and miserable, because most wicked, or worldly poor; and there is an exposition of Basil's, understanding by the rich, the rich in faith and grace, touching which, or the rich properly so called, he is indifferent. But because it is said, "*The fat of the earth*," I prefer the former, and that the close of the verse may best answer to the first part; the latter by "*those that are going to the dust*," understand the miserably poor. So that there is a commonplace of comfort for all, both richest, and poorest, if they be subjects of God's kingdom of grace: their souls shall be alike fed by him and saved.—John Mayer.

Verse 29.—"All they that go down to the dust;" either those who stand quivering on the brink of the grave, or those who occupy the humble, sequestered walks of life. As the great and opulent of the earth are intended in the first clause, it is not by any means unnatural to suppose that the image of going "*down to the dust*," is designed to represent the poor and mean of mankind, who are unable to support themselves, and to provide for their multiplied necessities. If the grave be alluded to, as is thought by many eminent divines, the beautiful sentiment of the verse will be, that multitudes of dying sinners shall be brought to worship Jehovah, and that those who cannot save or deliver themselves shall seek that shelter which none can find but those who approach the mercy-seat. "Rich and poor," as Bishop Horne, observes, "are invited"—that is, to "worship God;" "and the hour is coming when all the race of Adam, as many as sleep in the 'dust' of the earth, unable to raise themselves from thence, quickened and called forth by the voice of the Son of Man, must bow the knee to King Messiah."—John Morison.

Verse 29.—To be brought to the dust, is, first, a circumlocution or description of death: "*Shall the dust praise thee, shall it declare thy truth?*" Psalm xxx. 9. That is shall I praise thee when I am among the dead? "*What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?*" Not that profit, sure, I cannot bring thee in the tribute of praise when my life's gone out. Secondly, to be brought to the dust is a description of any low and poor condition. "*All they that be fat upon earth* (that is, the great and mighty), "*shall eat and worship*" "*all they that go down to the dust*" (that is, the mean and base), "*shall bow before him*." As if he had said,

rich and poor, high and low, the king and the beggar, have alike need of salvation by Jesus Christ, and must submit unto him, that they may be saved, for, as it there follows, "none can keep alive his own soul." The captivity of the Jews in Babylon is expressed under those notions of death, and of dwelling in the dust (Isaiah xxvi. 19); to show how low, that no power but his who can raise the dead, could work their deliverance.—*Joseph Caryl.*

Verse 29.—"None can keep alive his own soul." And yet we look back to our conversion, and its agonies of earnestness, its feelings of deep, helpless dependence—of Christ's being absolutely our daily, hourly need—supplier—as a past something—a stage of spiritual life which is over. And we are satisfied to have it so. The Spirit of God moved over our deadness, and breathed into us the breath of life. My soul became a living soul. But was this enough? God's word says, No. "None can keep alive his own soul." My heart says, No. Truth must ever answer to truth. I cannot (ah! have I not tried, and failed?) I cannot keep alive my own soul. We cannot live upon ourselves. Our physical life is kept up by supply from without—air, food, warmth. So must the spiritual life. Jesus gives, Jesus feeds us day by day, else must the life fade out and die. "None can keep alive his own soul." It is not enough to be made alive. I must be fed, and guided, and taught, and kept in life. Mother, who hast brought a living babe into the world, is your work done? Will you not nurse it, and feed it, and care for it, that it may be kept alive? Lord, I am this babe. I live indeed, for I can crave and cry. Leave me not, O my Saviour. Forsake not the work of thine own hands. In thee I live. Hold me, carry me, feed me, let me abide in thee. "For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul." In our work for God, we need to remember this. Is not the conversion, the arousing of sinners, the great, and with many, the sole aim in working for God? Should it be so? Let us think of this other work. Let us help to keep alive. Perhaps it is less distinguished, as it may be less distinguished to feed a starving child than to rescue a drowning man. But let us walk less by sight, more by faith. Let us not indeed neglect to call to life those who are spiritually dead. But oh! let us watch for the more hidden needs of the living—the fading, starving, fainting souls, which yet can walk and speak, and cover their want and sorrow. Let us be fellow-workers with God in all his work. And with a deep heart-feeling of the need of constant life supplies from above, let us try how often, how freely, we may be made the channels of those streams of the "water of life,"—for "none can keep alive his own soul."—*Mary B. M. Duncan, in "Bible Hours," 1866.*

Verse 29.—Having considered the vastness and glory of the prospect, our Lord next contemplates the reality and minuteness of its accomplishment. He sets before his mind individual cases and particular facts. He appears to look upon this picture of the future as we do upon a grand historical painting of the past. It seems natural to gaze with silent admiration on the picture as a whole, then to fix the attention on particular groups, and testify our sense of the general excellence, by expatiating on the truth and beauty of the several parts.—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 30.—"A seed shall serve him." This figurative expression signifies Christ and his people, who yield true obedience to God—they are called by this name in a spiritual and figurative, but most appropriate sense. The idea is taken from the operations of the husbandman who carefully reserves every year a portion of his grain for seed. Though it be small, compared with all the produce of his harvest, yet he prizes it very highly and estimates it by the value of that crop which it may yield in the succeeding autumn. Nor does he look only to the quantity, he pays particular regard to the quality of the seed. He reserves only the best, nay, he will put away his own if spoiled, that he may procure better. The very smallest quantity of really good seed, is, to him, an object of great desire, and if by grievous failure of crops, he should not be able to procure more than a single grain, yet would he accept it thankfully, preserve it carefully, and plant it in the most favourable soil. Such is the source from which the metaphor is taken.—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 31.—"And shall declare his righteousness." The occupation of the seed is to "declare," to testify from their own experience, from their own knowledge and convictions, that grand subject, theme, or lesson, which they have learned. . . . They will declare the righteousness of God the Holy Ghost in his convictions of

sin, in his reproofs of conscience, in his forsaking of the impenitent, and in his abiding with the believer. And in a special manner, they will declare the righteousness of God the Son, during his human life, in his sufferings, and death, as man's surety, by which he "magnified the law, and made it honourable" (Isa. xlii. 21), and on account of which they are able to address him by this name, "The Lord our Righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 6.)—*John Stevenson.*

Verse 31.—"A people that shall be born." What is this? What people is there that is not born? According to my apprehensions I think this is said for this reason—because the people of other kings are formed by laws, by customs, and by manners; by which, however, you can never move a man to true righteousness: it is only a fable of righteousness, and a mere theatrical scene or representation. For even the law of Moses could form the people of the Jews unto nothing but unto hypocrisy. But the people of this King are not formed by laws to make up an external appearance, but they are begotten by water and by the Spirit unto a new creature of truth.—*Martin Luther.*

HINTS TO PREACHERS.

Whole Psalm.—The volume entitled "Christ on the Cross," by Rev. J. Stevenson, has a sermon upon every verse. We give the headings, they are suggestive.
 Verse 1. The Cry. 2. The Complaint. 3. The Acknowledgment. 4-6. The Contrast. 6. The Reproach. 7. The Mockery. 8. The Taunt. 9, 10. The Appeal. 11. The Entreaty. 12, 13. The Assault. 14. The Faintness. 15. The Exhaustion. 16. The Piercing. 17. The Emaciation. 17. The Insulting Gaze. 18. The Partition of the Garments and Casting Lots. 19-21. The Impurity. 21. The Deliverance. 22. The Gratitude. 23. The Invitation. 24. The Testimony. 25. The Vow. 26. The Satisfaction of the Meek; the Seekers of the Lord praising Him; the Eternal Life. 27. The Conversion of the World. 28. The Enthronement. 29. The Author of the Faith. 30. The Seed. 31. The Everlasting Theme and Occupation. The Finish of the Faith.

Verse 1.—The Saviour's dying cry.

Verse 2.—*Unanswered prayer.* Enquire the reasons for it; encourage our hope concerning it; urge to continuance in impurity.

Verse 3.—Whatever God may do, we must settle it in our minds that he is holy and to be praised.

Verse 4.—God's faithfulness in past ages a plea for the present.

Verses 4, 5.—Ancient saints. I. Their life. "*They trusted.*" II. Their practice. "*They cried.*" III. Their experience. "*Were not confounded.*" IV. Their voice to us.

Verses 6-18.—Full of striking sentences upon our Lord's sufferings.

Verse 11.—A saint's troubles, his arguments in prayer.

Verse 20.—"*My darling.*" A man's soul to be very dear to him.

Verse 21 (*first clause*).—"Lion's mouth." Men of cruelty. The devil. Sin. Death. Hell.

Verse 22.—Christ as a brother, a preacher, and a precentor.

Verse 22.—A sweet subject, a glorious preacher, a loving relationship, a heavenly exercise.

Verse 23.—A *threefold duty*, "praise him," "glorify him;" "fear him;" *towards one object*, "the Lord;" "for three characters," "ye that fear him, seed of Jacob, seed of Israel," which are but one person.

Verse 23.—Glory to God the fruit of the tree on which Jesus died.

Verse 24.—A consoling fact in history attested by universal experience.

Verse 24 (*first clause*).—A common fear dispelled.

Verse 25.—Public praise. I. A delightful exercise—"praise." II. A personal participation—"My praise." III. A fitting object—"of thee." IV. A special source—"from thee." V. An appropriate place—"in the great congregation."

Verse 25 (*second clause*).—Vows. What vows to make, when and how to make them, and the importance of paying them.

Verse 26.—*Spiritual feasting.* The guests, the food, the host, and the satisfaction.

Verse 26 (second clause).—Seekers who shall be singers. Who they are? What they shall do? When? and what is the reason for expecting that they shall?

Verse 27 (last clause).—Life everlasting. What lives? Source of life. Manner of life. Why for ever? What occupation? What comfort to be derived from it?

Verse.—Nature of true conversion, and extent of it under the reign of the Messiah.—*Andrew Fuller.*

Verse 27.—The universal triumph of Christianity certain.

Verse 27.—The order of conversion. See the Exposition.

Verse 28.—The empire of the Kings of kings as it is, and as it shall be.

Verse 29.—Grace for the rich, grace for the poor, but all lost without it.

Verse 29 (last clause).—A weighty text upon the vanity of self-confidence.

Verse 30.—The perpetuity of the church.

Verse 30 (last clause).—Church history, the marrow of all history.

Verse 31.—Future prospects for the church. I. Conversions certain. II. Preachers promised. III. Succeeding generations blest. IV. Gospel published. V. Christ exalted.