

PSALM XL.

TITLE.—To the Chief Musician. *Well might so exceedingly precious a Psalm be specially committed to the most skilled of the sacred musicians. The noblest music should be made tributary to a subject so incomparable. The dedication shows that the song was intended for public worship, and was not a merely personal hymn, as its being in the first person singular might lead us to suppose. A Psalm of David. This is conclusive as to the authorship: lifted by the Holy Spirit into the region of prophecy, David was honoured thus to write concerning a far greater than himself.*

SUBJECT.—*Jesus is evidently here, and although it might not be a violent wresting of language to see both David and his Lord, both Christ and the church, the double comment might involve itself in obscurity, and therefore we shall let the sun shine even though this should conceal the stars. Even if the New Testament were not so express upon it, we should have concluded that David spoke of our Lord in verses 6—9, but the apostle in Heb. x. 5—9, puts all conjecture out of court, and confines the meaning to Him who came into the world to do the Father's will.*

DIVISION.—*From verses 1—3, is a personal thanksgiving, followed by a general declaration of Jehovah's goodness to his saints, 4, 5. In verses 6—10, we have an avowal of dedication to the Lord's will; verses 11—17, contain a prayer for deliverance from pressing trouble, and for the overthrow of enemies.*

EXPOSITION.

I WAITED patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

1. "*I waited patiently for the Lord.*" Patient waiting upon God was a special characteristic of our Lord Jesus. Impatience never lingered in his heart, much less escaped his lips. All through his agony in the garden, his trial of cruel mockings before Herod and Pilate, and his passion on the tree, he waited in omnipotence of patience. No glance of wrath, no word of murmuring, no deed of vengeance came from God's patient Lamb; he waited and waited on: was patient, and patient to perfection, far excelling all others who have according to their measure glorified God in the fires. Job on the dunghill does not equal Jesus on the cross. The Christ of God wears the imperial crown among the patient. Did the Only Begotten wait, and shall we be petulant and rebellious? "*And he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.*" Neither Jesus the head, nor any one of the members of his body, shall ever wait upon the Lord in vain. Mark the figure of inclining, as though the suppliant cried out of the lowest depression, and condescending love stooped to hear his feeble moans. What a marvel is it that our Lord should have to cry as we do, and wait as we do, and should receive the Father's help after the same process of faith and pleading as must be gone through by ourselves! The Saviour's prayers among the midnight mountains and in Gethsemane expound this verse. The Son of David was brought very low, but he rose to victory; and here he teaches us how to conduct our conflicts so as to succeed after the same glorious pattern of triumph. Let us arm ourselves with the same mind; and panoplied in patience, armed with prayer, and girt with faith, let us maintain the Holy War.

2. "*He brought me up also out of an horrible pit.*" When our Lord bore in his own person the terrible curse which was due to sin, he was so cast down as to be like a prisoner in a deep, dark, fearful dungeon, amid whose horrible glooms the captive heard a noise as of rushing torrents, while overhead resounded the tramp of furious foes. Our Lord in his anguish was like a captive in the *oubliettes*, forgotten of all mankind, immured amid horror, darkness, and desolation. Yet the Lord Jehovah made him to ascend from all his abasement; he retraced his steps from that deep hell of anguish into which he had been cast as our substitute. He who thus delivered our surety *in extremis*, will not fail to liberate us from our far

lighter griefs. "*Out of the miry clay.*" The sufferer was as one who cannot find a foothold, but slips and sinks. The figure indicates not only positive misery as in the former figure, but the absence of solid comfort by which sorrow might have been rendered supportable. Once give a man good foothold, and a burden is greatly lightened, but to be loaded and to be placed on slimy, slippery clay, is to be tried doubly. Reader, with humble gratitude, adore the dear Redeemer who, for thy sake, was deprived of all consolation while surrounded with every form of misery; remark his gratitude at being upborne amid his arduous labours and sufferings, and if thou too hast experienced the divine help, be sure to join thy Lord in this song. "*And set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.*" The Redeemer's work is done. He reposes on the firm ground of his accomplished engagements; he can never suffer again; for ever does he reign in glory. What a comfort to know that Jesus our Lord and Saviour stands on a sure foundation in all that he is and does for us, and his goings forth in love are not liable to be cut short by failure in years to come, for God has fixed him firmly. He is for ever and eternally able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing that in the highest heavens he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Jesus is the true Joseph taken from the pit to be Lord of all. It is something more than a "sip of sweetness" to remember that if we are cast like our Lord into the lowest pit of shame and sorrow, we shall by faith rise to stand on the same elevated, sure, and everlasting rock of divine favour and faithfulness.

3. "*And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.*" At the passover, before his passion, our Lord sang one of the grand old Psalms of praise; but what is the music of his heart now, in the midst of his redeemed! What a song is that in which his glad heart for ever leads the chorus of the elect! Not Miriam's tabour nor Moses' triumphant hymn o'er Mizraim's chivalry can for a moment rival that ever new and exulting song. Justice magnified and grace victorious; hell subdued and heaven glorified; death destroyed and immortality established; sin o'erthrown and righteousness resplendent; what a theme for a hymn in that day when our Lord drinketh the red wine new with us all in our heavenly Father's kingdom! Even on earth, and before his great passion, he foresaw the joy which was set before him, and was sustained by the prospect. "*Our God.*" The God of Jesus, the God of Israel, "my God and your God." How will we praise him, but, ah! Jesus will be the chief player on our stringed instruments; he will lead the solemn hallelujah which shall go up from the sacramental host redeemed by blood. "*Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.*" A multitude that no man can number shall see the griefs and triumphs of Jesus, shall tremble because of their sinful rejection of him, and then through grace shall receive faith and become trusters in Jehovah. Here is our Lord's reward. Here is the assurance which makes preachers bold and workers persevering. Reader, are you one among the many? Note the way of salvation, a sight, a fear, a trust! Do you know what these mean by possessing and practising them in your own soul? Trusting in the Lord is the evidence, nay, the essence of salvation. He who is a true believer is evidently redeemed from the dominion of sin and Satan.

4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

4. "*Blessed.*" This is an exclamation similar to that of the first Psalm, "Oh, the happiness of the man." God's blessings are emphatic, "I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed," indeed and in very truth. "*Is that man that maketh the Lord his trust.*" Faith obtaineth promises. A simple, single-eyed confidence in God is the sure mark of blessedness. A man may be as poor as Lazarus, as hated as Mordecai, as sick as Hezekiah, as lonely as Elijah, but while his hand of faith can keep its hold on God, none of his outward afflictions can prevent his being numbered among the blessed: but the wealthiest and most prosperous man who has no faith is accursed, be he who he may. "*And respecteth not the proud.*" The proud expect all men to bow down and do them reverence, as if the worship of the golden calves were again set up in Israel; but believing men are too noble to honour

mere money-bags, or cringe before bombastic dignity. The righteous pay their respect to humble goodness, rather than to inflated self-consequence. Our Lord Jesus was in this our bright example. No flattery of kings and great ones ever fell from his lips; he gave no honour to dishonourable men. The haughty were never his favourites. "*Nor such as turn aside to lies.*" Heresies and idolatries are lies, and so are avarice, worldliness, and pleasure-seeking. Woe to those who follow such deceptions. Our Lord was ever both the truth and the lover of truth, and the father of lies had no part in him. We must never pay deference to apostates, time-servers, and false teachers; they are an ill leaven, and the more we purge ourselves of them the better; they are blessed whom God preserves from all error in creed and practice. Judged by this verse, many apparently happy persons must be the reverse of blessed, for anything in the shape of a purse, a fine equipage, or a wealthy establishment, commands their reverence, whether the owner be a rake or a saint, an idiot or a philosopher. Verily, were the arch-fiend of hell to start a carriage and pair, and live like a lord, he would have thousands who would court his acquaintance.

5. "*Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done.*" Creation, providence, and redemption, teem with wonders as the sea with life. Our special attention is called by this passage to the marvels which cluster around the cross and flash from it. The accomplished redemption achieves many ends, and compasses a variety of designs; the outgoings of the atonement are not to be reckoned up, the influences of the cross reach further than the beams of the sun. Wonders of grace beyond all enumeration take their rise from the cross; adoption, pardon, justification, and a long chain of godlike miracles of love proceed from it. Note that our Lord here speaks of the Lord as "*my God.*" The man Christ Jesus claimed for himself and us a covenant relationship with Jehovah. Let our interest in our God be ever to us our peculiar treasure. "*And thy thoughts which are to us-ward.*" The divine thoughts march with the divine acts, for it is not according to God's wisdom to act without deliberation and counsel. All the divine thoughts are good and gracious towards his elect. God's thoughts of love are very many, very wonderful very practical! Muse on them, dear reader; no sweeter subject ever occupied your mind. God's thoughts of you are many, let not yours be few in return. "*They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee.*" Their sum is so great as to forbid alike analysis and numeration. Human minds fail to measure, or to arrange in order, the Lord's ways and thoughts; and it must always be so, for he hath said, "*As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*" No maze to lose oneself in like the labyrinth of love. How sweet to be outdone, overcome and overwhelmed by the astonishing grace of the Lord our God! "*If I would declare and speak of them,*" and surely this should be the occupation of my tongue at all reasonable opportunities, "*they are more than can be numbered;*" far beyond all human arithmetic they are multiplied; thoughts from all eternity, thoughts of my fall, my restoration, my redemption, my conversion, my pardon, my upholding, my perfecting, my eternal reward; the list is too long for writing, and the value of the mercies too great for estimation. Yet, if we cannot show forth all the works of the Lord, let us not make this an excuse for silence; for our Lord, who is in this our best example, often spake of the tender thoughts of the great Father.

6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me.

8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart.

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

6. Here we enter upon one of the most wonderful passages in the whole of the Old Testament, a passage in which the incarnate Son of God is seen not through a glass darkly, but as it were face to face. "*Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire.*" In themselves considered, and for their own sakes, the Lord saw nothing

satisfactory in the various offerings of the ceremonial law. Neither the victim pouring forth its blood, nor the fine flour rising in smoke from the altar, could yield content to Jehovah's mind; he cared not for the flesh of bulls or of goats, neither had he pleasure in corn and wine, and oil. Typically these offerings had their worth, but when Jesus, the Antitype, came into the world, they ceased to be of value, as candles are of no estimation when the sun has arisen. "*Mine ears hast thou opened.*" Our Lord was quick to hear and perform his Father's will; his ears were as if excavated down to his soul; they were not closed up like Isaac's wells, which the Philistines filled up, but clear passages down to the fountains of his soul. The prompt obedience of our Lord is here the first idea. There is, however, no reason whatever to reject the notion that the digging of the ear here intended may refer to the boring of the ear of the servant, who refused out of love to his master to take his liberty at the year of jubilee; his perforated ear, the token of perpetual service, is a true picture of our blessed Lord's fidelity to his Father's business, and his love to his Father's children. Jesus irrevocably gave himself up to be the servant of servants for our sake and God's glory. The Septuagint, from which Paul quoted, has translated this passage, "A body hast thou prepared me:" how this reading arose it is not easy to imagine, but since apostolical authority has sanctioned the variation, we accept it as no mistake, but as an instance of various readings equally inspired. In any case, the passage represents the Only Begotten as coming into the world equipped for service; and in a real and material body, by actual life and death, putting aside all the shadows of the Mosaic law. "*Burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.*" Two other forms of offering are here mentioned; tokens of gratitude and sacrifices for sin as typically presented are set aside; neither the general nor the private offerings are any longer demanded. What need of mere emblems when the substance itself is present? We learn from this verse that Jehovah values far more the obedience of the heart than all the imposing performances of ritualistic worship; and that our expiation from sin comes not to us as the result of an elaborate ceremonial, but as the effect of our great Substitute's obedience to the will of Jehovah.

7. "*Then said I.*" That is to say, when it was clearly seen that man's misery could not be remedied by sacrifices and offerings. It being certain that the mere images of atonement, and the bare symbols of propitiation were of no avail, the Lord Jesus, *in propria persona*, intervened. O blessed "then said I." Lord, ever give us to hear and feed on such living words as these, so peculiarly and personally thine own. "*Lo, I come.*" Behold, O heavens, and thou earth, and ye places under the earth! Here is something worthy of your intensest gaze. Sit ye down and watch with earnestness, for the invisible God comes in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an infant the Infinite hangs at a virgin's breast! Immanuel did not send but *come*; he came in his own personality, in all that constituted his essential self he came forth from the ivory palaces to the abodes of misery; he came promptly at the destined hour; he came with sacred alacrity as one freely offering himself. "*In the volume of the book it is written of me.*" In the eternal decree it is thus recorded. The mystic roll of predestination which providence gradually unfolds, contained within it, to the Saviour's knowledge, a written covenant, that in the fulness of time the divine I should descend to earth to accomplish a purpose which hecatombs of bullocks and rams could not achieve. What a privilege to find our names written in the book of life, and what an honour, since the name of Jesus heads the page! Our Lord had respect to his ancient covenant engagements, and herein he teaches us to be scrupulously just in keeping our word; have we so promised, is it so written in the book of remembrance? then let us never be defaulters.

8. "*I delight to do thy will, O my God.*" Our blessed Lord alone could completely do the will of God. The law is too broad for such poor creatures as we are to hope to fulfil it to the uttermost: but Jesus not only did the Father's will, but found a delight therein; from old eternity he had desired the work set before him; in his human life he was straitened till he reached the baptism of agony in which he magnified the law, and even in Gethsemane itself he chose the Father's will, and set aside his own. Herein is the essence of obedience, namely, in the soul's cheerful devotion to God: and our Lord's obedience, which is our righteousness, is in no measure lacking in this eminent quality. Notwithstanding his measureless griefs, our Lord found delight in his work, and for "the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame." "*Yea, thy law is within my heart.*"

No outward, formal devotion was rendered by Christ ; his heart was in his work, holiness was his element, the Father's will his meat and drink. We must each of us be like our Lord in this, or we shall lack the evidence of being his disciples. Where there is no heart work, no pleasure, no delight in God's law, there can be no acceptance. Let the devout reader adore the Saviour for the spontaneous and hearty manner in which he undertook the great work of our salvation.

9. "*I have preached righteousness in the great congregation.*" The purest morality and the highest holiness were preached by Jesus. Righteousness divine was his theme. Our Lord's whole life was a sermon, eloquent beyond compare, and it is heard each day by myriads. Moreover, he never shunned in his ministry to declare the whole counsel of God ; God's great plan of righteousness he plainly set forth. He taught openly in the temple, and was not ashamed to be a faithful and a true witness. He was the great evangelist ; the master of itinerant preachers ; the head of the clan of open-air missionaries. O servants of the Lord, hide not your lights, but reveal to others what your God has revealed to you ; and especially by your lives testify for holiness, be champions for the right, both in word and deed. "*Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest.*" Never either from love of ease, or fear of men, did the Great Teacher's lips become closed. He was instant in season and out of season. The poor listened to him, and princes heard his rebuke ; Publicans rejoiced at him, and Pharisees raged, but to them both he proclaimed the truth from heaven. It is well for a tried believer when he can appeal to God and call him to witness that he has not been ashamed to bear witness for him ; for rest assured if we are not ashamed to confess our God he will never be ashamed to own us. Yet what a wonder is here, that the Son of God should plead just as we plead, and urge just such arguments as would beset the mouths of his diligent ministers ! How truly is he "*made like unto his brethren.*"

10. "*I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart.*" On the contrary, "*Never man spake like this man.*" God's divine plan of making men righteous was well known to him, and he plainly taught it. What was in our great Master's heart he poured forth in holy eloquence from his lips. The doctrine of righteousness by faith he spake with great simplicity of speech. Law and gospel equally found in him a clear expositor. "*I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation.*" Jehovah's fidelity to his promises and his grace in saving believers were declared by the Lord Jesus on many occasions, and are blessedly blended in the gospel which he came to preach. God, faithful to his own character, law and threatenings, and yet saving sinners, is a peculiar revelation of the gospel. God faithful to the saved ones evermore is the joy of the followers of Christ Jesus. "*I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.*" The tender as well as the stern attributes of God, our Lord Jesus fully unveiled. Concealment was far from the Great Apostle of our profession. Cowardice he never exhibited, hesitancy never weakened his language. He who as a child of twelve years spake in the temple among the doctors, and afterwards preached to five thousand at Gennesaret, and to the vast crowds at Jerusalem on that great day, the last day of the feast, was always ready to proclaim the name of the Lord, and could never be charged with unholy silence. He could be dumb when so the prophecy demanded and patience suggested, but otherwise, preaching was his meat and his drink, and he kept back nothing which would be profitable to his disciples. This in the day of his trouble, according to this Psalm, he used as a plea for divine aid. He had been faithful to his God, and now begs the Lord to be faithful to him. Let every dumb professor, tongue-tied by sinful shame, bethink himself how little he will be able to plead after this fashion in the day of his distress.

11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD : let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about : mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up ; they are more than the hairs of mine head : therefore my heart faileth me.

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me : O LORD, make haste to help me.

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it ; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee : let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

17 But I *am* poor and needy ; *yet* the Lord thinketh upon me : thou *art* my help and my deliverer ; make no tarrying, O my God.

11. "*Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord.*" Alas ! these were to be for awhile withheld from our Lord while on the accursed tree, but meanwhile in his great agony he seeks for gentle dealing ; and the coming of the angel to strengthen him was a clear answer to his prayer. He had been blessed aforetime in the desert, and now at the entrance of the valley of the shadow of death, like a true, trustful, and experienced man, he utters a holy, plaintive desire for the tenderness of heaven. He had not withheld his testimony to God's truth, now in return he begs his Father not to withhold his compassion. This verse might more correctly be read as a declaration of his confidence that help would not be refused ; but whether we view this utterance as the cry of prayer, or the avowal of faith, in either case it is instructive to us who take our suffering Lord for an example, and it proves to us how thoroughly he was made like unto his brethren. "*Let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.*" He had preached both of these, and now he asks for an experience of them, that he might be kept in the evil day and rescued from his enemies and his afflictions. Nothing endears our Lord to us more than to hear him thus pleading with strong crying and tears to him who was able to save. O Lord Jesus, in our nights of wrestling we will remember thee.

12. "*For innumerable evils have compassed me about.*" On every side he was beset with evils ; countless woes environed the great Substitute for our sins. Our sins were innumerable, and so were his griefs. There was no escape for us from our iniquities, and there was no escape for him from the woes which we deserved. From every quarter evils accumulated about the blessed One, although in his heart evil found no place. "*Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up.*" He had no sin, but sins were laid on him, and he took them as if they were his. "He was made sin for us." The transfer of sin to the Saviour was real, and produced in him as man the horror which forbade him to look into the face of God, bowing him down with crushing anguish and woe intolerable. O my soul, what would thy sins have done for thee eternally if the Friend of sinners had not condescended to take them all upon himself ? Oh, blessed Scripture ! "The Lord hath made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all." Oh, marvellous depth of love, which could lead the perfectly immaculate to stand in the sinner's place, and bear the horror of great trembling which sin must bring upon those conscious of it. "*They are more than the hairs of mine head : therefore my heart faileth me.*" The pains of the divine penalty were beyond compute, and the Saviour's soul was so burdened with them, that he was sore amazed, and very heavy even unto a sweat of blood. His strength was gone, his spirits sank, he was in an agony.

" Came at length the dreadful night ;
Vengeance with its iron rod
Stood, and with collected might
Bruised the harmless Lamb of God.
See, my soul, thy Saviour see
Prostrate in Gethsemane !

There my God bore all my guilt,
This through grace can be believed ;
But the horrors which he felt
Are too vast to be conceived.
None can penetrate through thee,
Doleful, dark Gethsemane !

Sins against a holy God ;
Sins against his righteous laws ;
Sins against his love, his blood ;
Sins against his name and cause ;
Sins immense as is the sea—
Hide me, O Gethsemane ! "

13. "*Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me : O Lord, make haste to help me.*" How touching! How humble! How plaintive! The words thrill us as we think that after this sort our Lord and Master prayed. His petition is not so much that the cup should pass away undrained, but that he should be sustained while drinking it, and set free from its power at the first fitting moment. He seeks deliverance and help; and he entreats that the help may not be slow in coming; this is after the manner of our pleadings. Is it not? Note, reader, how our Lord was heard in that he feared, for there was after Gethsemane a calm endurance which made the fight as glorious as the victory.

14. "*Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it.*" Whether we read this as a prayer or a prophecy it matters not, for the powers of sin, and death, and hell, may well be ashamed as they see the result of their malice for ever turned against themselves. It is to the infinite confusion of Satan that his attempt to destroy the Saviour destroyed himself; the diabolical conclave who plotted in council are now all alike put to shame, for the Lord Jesus has met them at all points, and turned all their wisdom into foolishness. "*Let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.*" It is even so; the hosts of darkness are utterly put to the rout, and made a theme for holy derision for ever and ever. How did they gloat over the thought of crushing the seed of the woman! but the Crucified has conquered, the Nazarene has laughed them to scorn, the dying Son of Man has become the death of death and hell's destruction. For ever blessed be his name.

15. "*Let them be desolate,*" or amazed; even as Jesus was desolate in his agony, so let his enemies be in their despair when he defeats them. The desolation caused in the hearts of evil spirits and evil men by envy, malice, chagrin, disappointment, and despair, shall be a fit recompense for their cruelty to the Lord when he was in their hands. "*For a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.*" Did the foul fiend insult over our Lord? Behold how shame is now his reward! Do wicked men to-day pour shame upon the name of the Redeemer? Their desolation shall avenge him of his adversaries! Jesus is the gentle Lamb to all who seek mercy through his blood; but let despisers beware, for he is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and "who shall rouse him up?" The Jewish rulers exulted and scornfully said, "Aha, aha;" but when the streets of Jerusalem ran like rivers deep with gore, "and the temple was utterly consumed," then their house was left unto them desolate, and the blood of the last of the prophets, according to their own desire, came upon themselves and upon their children. O ungodly reader, if such a person glance over this page, beware of persecuting Christ and his people, for God will surely avenge his own elect. Your "ahas" will cost you dear. It is hard for you to kick against the pricks.

16. "*Let all those that seek thee, rejoice and be glad in thee.*" We have done with Ebal and turn to Gerizim. Here our Lord pronounces benedictions on his people. Note who the blessed objects of his petitions are: not all men, but some men, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world." He pleads for seekers: the lowest in the kingdom, the babes of the family; those who have true desires, longing prayers, and consistent endeavours after God. Let seeking souls pluck up heart when they hear of this. What riches of grace, that in his bitterest hour Jesus should remember the lambs of the flock! And what does he entreat for them? it is that they may be doubly glad, intensely happy, emphatically joyful, for such the repetition of terms implies. Jesus would have all seekers made happy by finding what they seek after, and by winning peace through his grief. As deep as were his sorrows, so high would he have their joys. He groaned that we might sing, and was covered with a bloody sweat that we might be anointed with the oil of gladness. "*Let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified.*" Another result of the Redeemer's passion is the promotion of the glory of God by those who gratefully delight in his salvation. Our Lord's desire should be our directory; we love with all our hearts his great salvation, let us then, with all our tongues proclaim the glory of God which is resplendent therein. Never let his praises cease. As the heart is warm with gladness let it incite the tongue to perpetual praise. If we cannot do what we would for the spread of the kingdom, at least let us desire and pray for it. Be it ours to make God's glory the chief end of every breath and pulse. The suffering Redeemer regarded the consecration of his people to the service of heaven as a grand result of his atoning death; it is the joy which was set before him; that God is glorified is the reward of the Saviour's travail.

17. "*But I am poor and needy.*"—The man of sorrows closes with another appeal, based upon his affliction and poverty. "*Yet the Lord thinketh upon me.*" Sweet was this solace to the holy heart of the great sufferer. The Lord's thoughts of us are a cheering subject of meditation, for they are ever kind and never cease. His disciples forsook him, and his friends forgot him, but Jesus knew that Jehovah never turned away his heart from him, and this upheld him in the hour of need. "*Thou art my help and my deliverer.*" His unmoved confidence stayed itself alone on God. O that all believers would imitate more fully their great Apostle and High Priest in his firm reliance upon God, even when afflictions abounded and the light was veiled. "*Make no tarrying, O my God.*" The peril was imminent, the need urgent, the suppliant could not endure delay, nor was he made to wait, for the angel came to strengthen, and the brave heart of Jesus rose up to meet the foe.

Lord Jesus, grant that in all our adversities we may possess like precious faith, and be found like thee, more than conquerors.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN'T SAYINGS.

Whole Psalm.—*David's Psalm*, or, *a Psalm of David*; but David's name is here set first, which elsewhere commonly is last: or, *A Psalm concerning David*, that is, *Christ*, who is called *David* in the prophets: Hos. iii. 5; Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, and xxxii. 24. Of him this Psalm entreateth as the apostle teacheth, Heb. x. 5, 6, etc.—*Henry Ainsworth*.

Whole Psalm.—It is plain, from verses 6—8 of this Psalm, compared with Heb. x. 5, that the prophet is speaking in the person of Christ, who, 1—5, celebrateth the deliverance wrought for his mystical body, the church, by his resurrection from the grave, effecting that of his members from the guilt and dominion of sin; for the abolition of which he declareth, 6—8, the inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, and mentioneth his own inclination to do the will of his Father, and 9, 10, to preach righteousness to the world. 11—13. He representeth himself as praying, while under his sufferings, for his own, and his people's salvation; he foretelleth, 14, 15, the confusion and desolation of his enemies, and, 16, the joy and thankfulness of his disciples and servants; for the speedy accomplishment of which, 17, he preferreth a petition.—*George Horne*.

Verse 1.—"I waited patiently for the Lord: and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." I see that the Lord, suppose he drifteth and delayeth the effect of his servant's prayer, and granteth not his desire at the first, yet he heareth him. I shall give a certain argument, whereby thou may know that the Lord heareth thee, suppose he delay the effect of thy prayers. Continueth thou in prayer? Hast thou this strength given thee to persevere in suiting* anything? Thou may be assured he heareth; for this is one sure argument that he heareth thee, for naturallie our impatience carrieth us to desperation; our suddenness is so great, speciallie in spiritual troubles, that we cannot continue in suiting. When thou, therefore, continuest in suiting, thou may be sure that this strength is furnished of God, and cometh from heaven, and if thou have strength he letteth thee see that he heareth thy prayer; and suppose he delay the effect and force thereof, yet pray continuallie. This doctrine is so necessary for the troubled conscience, that I think it is the meekest bridle in the Scripture to refrain our impatience; it is the meekest bit to hold us in continual exercise of patience; for if the heart understand that the Lord hath rejected our prayer altogether, it is not possible to continue in prayer; so when we know that the Lord heareth us, suppose he delay, let us crave patience to abide his good will.—*Robert Bruce*, 1559—1631.

Verse 1.—"I waited for the Lord." The infinite $\pi\eta$ being placed first brings the action strongly out: *I waited*. This strong emphasis on the waiting, has the force of an *admonition*; it suggests to the sufferer that everything depends on *waiting*.—*E. W. Hengstenberg*.

* Petitioning for or praying for.

Verse 1.—“*I waited patiently* :” rather *anxiously* ; the original has it, *waiting I waited* ; a Hebraism, which signifies vehement solicitude.—*Daniel Cresswell*.

Verse 1.—“*I waited*.” The Saviour endured his sufferings *waitingly*, as well as patiently and prayerfully. He “waited for the Lord.” He expected help from Jehovah ; and he waited for it until it came.—*James Frame*, in “*Christ and his Work : an Exposition of Psalm XL*.” 1869.

Verse 1.—“*Patiently*.” Our Lord’s patience under suffering was an element of perfection in his work. Had he become impatient as we often do, and lost heart, his atonement would have been vitiated. Well may we rejoice that in the midst of all his temptations, and in the thickest of the battle against sin and Satan, he remained patient and willing to finish the work which his Father had given him to do.—*James Frame*.

Verse 1.—“*Heard my cry*.” Our Saviour endured his sufferings *prayerfully* as well as *patiently*.—*James Frame*.

Verse 2.—“*An horrible pit*.” Some of the pits referred to in the Bible were prisons, one such I saw at Athens, and another at Rome. To these there were no openings, except a hole at the top, which served for both door and window. The bottoms of these pits were necessarily in a filthy and revolting state, and sometimes deep in mud. “*He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay* ;” one of these filthy prisons being in the Psalmist’s view, in Isaiah xxxviii. 17, called “the pit of corruption,” or putrefaction and filth.—*John Gadsby*.

Verse 2.—“*An horrible pit* ;” or, as it is in the Hebrew, *a pit of noise* ; so called because of waters that falling into it, with great violence, make a roaring dreadful noise ; or because of the strugglings and outcries they make that are in it ; or because when anything is cast into deep pits, it will always make a great noise ; and where he stuck fast in “*miry clay*,” without a seeming possibility of getting out. And some refer this to the greatness of Christ’s terrors and sufferings, and his deliverance from them both.—*Arthur Jackson*.

Verse 2.—Three things are stated in verse two. First, resurrection as the act of God, “*He brought me up*,” etc. Secondly, the justification of the name and title of the Sufferer, “*and set my feet upon a rock*.” Jesus is set up, as alive from the dead, upon the basis of accomplished truth. Thirdly, there is his ascension, “*He establisheth my goings*.” The Son of God having trodden, in gracious and self-renouncing obedience the passage to the grave, now enters finally as Man the path of life. “He is gone into heaven,” says the Spirit. And again, “He ascended on high, and led captivity captive.”—*Arthur Pridham* in “*Notes and Reflections on the Psalms*,” 1869.

Verse 3.—“*A new song*.” See Notes on Psalm xxxiii. verse 3.

Verse 3.—“*Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord*.” The terms *fear*, and *hope*, or *trust*, do not seem at first view to harmonise ; but David has not improperly joined them together, for no man will ever entertain the *hope* of the favour of God but he whose mind is first imbued with the *fear* of God. I understand *fear*, in general, to mean the feeling of piety which is produced in us by the knowledge of the power, equity, and mercy of God.—*John Calvin*.

Verse 3.—“*Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord*.” First of all they “*see*.” Their eyes are opened ; and their opened eyes see and survey *what* they are, *where* they are, *whence* they came, and *whither* they are going. When the attention of sinners is really and decisively arrested by the propitiation of Jesus, not only are their eyes opened to their various moral relations, not only do they “*see*” but they “*fear*” too. They “*see*” and “*fear*.” Conviction follows illumination. But while the sinner only sees and fears, he is but in the initial stage of conversion, only in a state of readiness to flee from the city of destruction. He may have set out on his pilgrimage, but he has not yet reached his Father to receive the kiss of welcome and forgiveness. The consummating step has not yet been taken. He has seen indeed ; he has feared too ; but he still requires to *trust*, to trust in the Lord, and banish all his fears. This is the culminating point in the great change ; and, unless this be reached, the other experiences will either die away, like an untimely blossom, or they will only be fuel to the unquenchable fire.—*James Frame*.

Verse 5.—“*Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done*,” etc. Behold God in the magnificence and wisdom of the works which his hands

have made, even this immense universe, which is full of his glory. What art and contrivance! What regularity, harmony, and proportion, are to be seen in all his productions, in the frame of our own bodies, or those that are about us! And with what beams of majestic glory do the sun, moon, and stars proclaim how august and wonderful in knowledge their Maker is! And ought not all these numberless beauties wherewith the world is stored, which the minds of inquisitive men are ready to admire, lead up our thoughts to the great Parent of all things, and inflame our amorous souls with love to him, who is infinitely brighter and fairer than them all?

Cast abroad your eyes through the nations, and meditate on the mighty acts which he hath done, and the wisdom and power of his providence, which should charm all thy affections. Behold his admirable patience, with what pity he looks down on obstinate rebels; and how he is moved with compassion when he sees his creatures polluted in their blood, and bent upon their own destruction; how long he waits to be gracious; how unwillingly he appears to give up with sinners, and execute deserved vengeance on his enemies; and then with what joy he pardons for "with him is plenteous redemption." And what can have more force than these to win thy esteem, and make a willing conquest of thy heart? so that every object about thee is an argument of love, and furnishes fuel for this sacred fire. And whether you behold God in the firmament of his power, or the sanctuary of his grace, you cannot miss to pronounce him "altogether lovely."—*William Dunlop.*

Verse 5.—"Thy thoughts which are to us-ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee:" i.e., there is no one can digest them in order; for although that may be attempted according to the comprehension and meaning of men, yet *not before thee*, every attempt of that nature being infinitely beneath thy immeasurable glory.—*Victorinus Bylthner's "Lyre of David;" translated by T. Dee: new edition, by N. L. Benmohel, 1847.*

Verse 5.—"Us-ward." It is worthy of notice that while addressing his Father, as Jehovah and his God, our Saviour speaks of the members of the human family as his fellows. This is implied in the expressions "to us-ward." He regarded himself as most intimately associated with the children of men.—*James Frame.*

Verse 5.—"They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee." They are "in order" in themselves, and if they could be "reckoned up" as they are, they would be "reckoned in order." Created mind may not be able to grasp the principle of order that pervades them, but such a principle there is. And the more we study the whole series in its interrelations, the more shall we be convinced that as to time and place all the preparations for the mediatorial work of Christ, all the parts of its accomplishment, and all the divinely appointed consequents of its acceptance throughout all time into eternity, are faultlessly in order; they are precisely what and where and when they should be.—*James Frame.*

Verse 5.—"They are more than can be numbered." The pulses of Providence are quicker than those of our wrists or temples. The soul of David knew right well their multiplicity, but could not multiply them aright by any skill in arithmetic; nay, the very sum or chief heads of divine kindnesses were innumerable. His "wonderful works" and "thoughts" towards him could not be reckoned up in order by him, they were *more than could be numbered.*—*Samuel Lee (1625—1691), in "The Triumph of Mercy in the Chariot of Praise."*

Verse 5.—It is Christ's speech, of whom the Psalm is made, and that relating unto his Father's resolved purposes and contrivements from eternity, and those continued unto his sending Christ into the world to die for us, as verses 6, 7. It follows so, as although his thoughts and purposes were but one individual act at first, and never to be altered; yet they became many, through a perpetuated reiteration of them, wherein his constancy to himself is seen. . . . My brethren, if God have been thinking thoughts of mercy from everlasting to those that are his, what a stock and treasury do these thoughts arise to, besides those that are in his nature and disposition! This is in his actual purposes and intentions, which he hath thought, and doth think over, again and again, every moment. "*Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward,*" saith Jesus Christ; for Psalm xl. is a Psalm of Christ, and quoted by the apostle, and applied unto Christ in Heb. x., "*How many are thy thoughts to us-ward!*"—he speaks it in the name of the human nature—that is, to me and mine. "*If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.*" And what is the reason? Because God hath studied mercies, mercies for his

children, even from everlasting. And then, "He reneweth his mercies every morning;" not that any mercies are new, but he actually thinketh over mercies again and again, and so he brings out of his treasury, mercies both new and old, and the old are always new. What a stock, my brethren, must this needs amount unto!—*Thomas Goodwin.*

Verse 6.—"Sacrifice and offering burnt-offering and sin-offering." Four kinds are here specified, both by the Psalmist and apostle: namely, sacrifice, זֶבַח *zebhash*, θυσία; offering, מִנְחָה *minchah*, προσφορά; burnt-offering, ὀlah, ὀλοκαύτωμα; sin-offering, חַטָּאת *chataah*, περὶ ἁμαρτίας. Of all these we may say with the apostle, it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats, etc., should take away sin.—*Adam Clarke.*

Verse 6.—"Mine ears hast thou opened." The literal translation is, *mine ears hast thou digged* (or *pierced*) *through*; which may well be interpreted as meaning, "Thou hast accepted me as thy slave," in allusion to the custom (Exod. xxi. 6) of masters boring the ear of a slave, who had refused his offered freedom, in token of retaining him.—*Daniel Cresswell.*

Verse 6.—John Calvin, in treating upon the interpretation, "mine ears hast thou bored," says, "this mode of interpretation appears to be too forced and refined."

Verse 6.—"Mine ears hast thou opened." If it be said that the apostle to the Hebrews read this differently, I answer, this does not appear to me. It is true, he found a different, but corrupted translation (ὠρία, *ears*, as the learned have observed, having been changed into σῶμα, *body*) in the LXX, which was the version then in use; and he was obliged to quote it as he found it, under the penalty, if he altered it, of being deemed a false quoter. He therefore took the translation as he found it, especially as it served to illustrate his argument equally well. Upon this quotation from the LXX the apostle argues, verse 9, "He (Christ) taketh away the first (namely, legal sacrifices), that he may establish the second" (namely, obedience to God's will), in offering himself a sacrifice for the sins of mankind; and thus he must have argued upon a quotation from the Hebrew text as it stands at present.—*Green, quoted in S. Burder's "Scripture Expositor."*

Verse 6.—The apostle's reading (Heb. x. 5), though it be far distant from the letter of the Hebrew, and in part from the LXX (as I suppose it to have been originally), yet is the most perspicuous interpretation of the meaning of it: *Christ's body* comprehended the *ears*, and that assumed on purpose to perform in it the utmost degree of obedience to the will of God, to be obedient even to death, and thereby to be as the priest.—*Henry Hammond.*

Verse 6.—

Nor sacrifice thy love can win.
Nor offerings from the stain of sin
Obnoxious man shall clear:
Thy hand my mortal frame prepares,
(Thy hand, whose signature it bears,
And opes my willing ear.

James Merrick, M.A., 1720—1769.

Verses 6, 7.—In these words an allusion is made to a custom of the Jews to bore the ears of such as were to be their perpetual servants, and to enrol their names in a book, or make some instrument of the covenant. "Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldst not have;" but because I am thy vowed servant, bored with an awl, and enrolled in thy book, "I said, Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will, O my God." These words of the Psalm are alleged by S. Paul, Heb. x. But the first of them with a most strange difference. For whereas the Psalmist hath, according to the Hebrew verity, "Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldst not: mine ears thou hast bored or digged," עָבַד; S. Paul reads with the LXX, σῶμα κατηρτίσω μοι, "A body thou hast prepared or fitted me." What equipollency can be in sense between these two? This difficulty is so much the more augmented because most interpreters make the life of the quotation to lie in those very words where the difference is, namely, That the words, "A body thou hast prepared me," are brought by the apostle to prove our Saviour's incarnation; whereunto the words in the Psalm itself ("Mine ears hast thou bored, or digged, or opened"), take them how you will, will in no wise suit. I answer, therefore, That the life of the quotation lies not in the words of difference, nor can do, because this epistle was written to

the Hebrews, and so first in the Hebrew tongue, where this translation of the LXX could have no place. And if the life of the quotation lay here, I cannot see how it can possibly be reconciled. It lies therefore in the words where there is no difference, namely, That Christ was such a High Priest as came to sanctify us, not with legal offerings and sacrifices, but by his obedience in doing like a devoted servant the will of his Father. Thus, the allegation will not depend at all upon the words of difference, and so they give us liberty to reconcile them: "*Mine ears hast thou bored,*" saith the Psalmist, *i.e.*, Thou hast accepted me for a perpetual servant, as masters are wont, according to the law, to bore such servants' ears as refuse to part from them. Now the LXX, according to whom the apostle's epistle readeth, thinking perhaps the meaning of this speech would be obscure to such as knew not that custom, chose rather to translate it generally $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha\ \delta\epsilon\ \kappa\alpha\tau\eta\rho\iota\sigma\omega\ \mu\omicron\iota$, "*Thou hast fitted my body,*" namely, to be thy servant in such a manner as servants' bodies are wont to be. And so the sense is all one, though not specified to the Jewish custom of boring the ear with an awl, but left indifferently applicable to the custom of any nation in marking and stigmatising their servants' bodies.—*Joseph Mede, B.D., 1586—1638.*

Verses 6—10.—Here we have in Christ for our instruction, and in David also (his type) for our example; 1. A firm purpose of obedience, in a bored ear, and a yielding heart. 2. A ready performance thereof: "*Lo, I come.*" 3. A careful observance of the word written: "*In the volume of the book it is written of me,*" verse 7. 4. A hearty delight in that observance, verse 8. 5. A public profession and communication of God's goodness to others, verses 9, 10. Now, we should labour to express Christ to the world, to walk as he walked (1 John ii. 6): our lives should be in some sense parallel with his life, as the transcript with the original: he left us a copy to write by, saith Saint Peter, 1st Epistle ii. 21.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 7.—"Then said I, *Lo, I come.*" As his name is above every name, so this coming of his is above every coming. We sometimes call our own births, I confess, a coming into the world; but properly, none ever came into the world but he. For, 1. He only truly can be said to come, who is before he comes; so were not we, only he so. 2. He only strictly comes who comes willingly; our crying and struggling at our entrance into the world, shows how unwillingly we come into it. He alone it is that sings out, "*Lo, I come.*" 3. He only properly comes who comes from some place or other. Alas! we had none to come from but the womb of nothing. He only had a place to be in before he came.—*Mark Frank.*

Verse 7.—"Then said I, *Lo, I come,*" to wit, as surety, to pay the ransom, and to do thy will, O God. Every word carrieth a special emphasis as, 1. The time, "*then,*" even so soon as he perceived that his Father had prepared his body for such an end, then, without delay. This speed implieth forwardness and readiness; he would lose no opportunity. 2. His profession in this word, "*said I;*" he did not closely, secretly, timorously, as being ashamed thereof, but he maketh profession beforehand. 3. This note of observation, "*Lo,*" this is a kind of calling angels and men to witness, and a desire that all might know his inward intention, and the disposition of his heart; wherein was as great a willingness as any could have to anything. 4. An offering of himself without any enforcement or compulsion; this he manifesteth in this word, "*I come.*" 5. That very instant set out in the present tense, "*I come;*" he puts it not off to a future and uncertain time, but even in that moment, he saith, "*I come.*" 6. The first person twice expressed, thus, "*I said,*" "*I come.*" He sendeth not another person, nor substituteth any in his room; but he, even he himself in his own person, cometh. All which do abundantly evidence Christ's singular readiness and willingness, as our surety, to do his Father's will, though it were by suffering, and by being made a sacrifice for our sins.—*Thomas Brooks.*

Verse 7.—"Lo, I come," *i.e.*, to appear before thee; a phrase used to indicate the coming of an inferior into the presence of a superior, or of a slave before his master, Num. xxii. 38; 2 Sam. xix. 20: as in the similar expression, "Behold, here I am," generally expressive of willingness.—*J. J. Stewart Perowne.*

Verse 7.—"Lo, I come." Christ's coming in the spirit is a joyful coming. I think this, "*Lo, I come,*" expresses, 1. *Present joy.* 2. It expresses *certain joy*: the "*Lo,*" is a note of certainty; the thing is certain and true; and his joy is certain; certain, true, solid joy. 3. It expresses *communicative joy*; designing his people shall share of his joy, "*Lo, I come!*" The joy that Christ has as Mediator

is a fulness of joy, designed for his people's use, that *out of his fulness we may receive, and grace for grace, and joy for joy*; grace answering grace in Jesus, and joy answering joy in him. 4. It expresses *solemn* joy. He comes with a solemnity; "*Lo, I come!*" according to the council of a glorious Trinity. Now, when the purpose of heaven is come to the birth, and the decree breaks forth, and the fulness of time is come, he makes heaven and earth witness, as it were, to his solemn march on the errand: he says it with a loud, "*Lo!*" that all the world of men and angels may notice, "*Lo, I come!*" And, indeed, all the elect angels brake forth into joyful songs of praise at this solemnity; when he came in the flesh, they sang, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill towards man."—*Ralph Erskine, 1685—1752.*

Verse 7.—"*Lo, I come,*" or, *am come,* to wit, *into the world* (Heb. x. 5), and particularly to *Jerusalem*, to give myself a sacrifice for sin.—*Henry Ainsworth.*

Verse 7.—"*The volume of the book.*" What book is meant, whether the Scripture, or the book of life, is not certain, probably the latter.—*W. Wilson, D.D.*

Verse 7.—"*The volume of the book.*" But what volume of manuscript roll is here meant? Plainly, the one which was already extant when the Psalmist was writing. If the Psalmist was David himself (as the title of the Psalm seems to affirm), the only parts of the Hebrew Scriptures then extant, and of course, the only part to which he could refer, must have been the Pentateuch, and perhaps the book of Joshua. Beyond any reasonable doubt, then, the κεφαλὴ βιβλίον (תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה) was the Pentateuch. . . . But I apprehend the meaning of the writer to be, that the *book of the law*, which prescribes sacrifices that were merely σκιάι or παραβολαί of the great atoning sacrifice by Christ, did itself teach, by the use of these, that something of a higher and better nature was to be looked for than Levitical rites. In a word, it pointed to the Messiah; or, some of the contents of the *written law* had respect to him.—*Moses Stuart, M.A., in "A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews," 1851.*

Verse 7.—"*The volume of the book,*" etc. When I first considered Rom. v. 14 and other Scriptures in the New Testament which make the first Adam, and the whole story of him both before and after, and in his sinning or falling, to be the type and lively shadow of Christ, the second Adam; likewise observing that the apostle Paul stands admiring at the greatness of this mystery or mystical type, the Christ, the second Adam should so wonderfully be shadowed forth therein, as Eph. v. 32, he cries out, "This is a great mystery," which he speaks applying and fitting some passages about Adam and Eve unto Christ and his church; it made me more to consider an interpretation of a passage in Heb. x. 7, out of Psalm xl. 7, which I before had not only not regarded, but wholly rejected, as being too like a postil* gloss. The passage is, that "when Christ came into the world," to take our nature on him, he alleged the reason of it to be the fulfilling of a Scripture written in "the beginning of God's book," ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου, so out of the original the words may be, and are by many interpreters, translated, though our translation reads them only thus, "*In the volume of the book it is written of me.*" It is true, indeed, that in the fortieth Psalm, whence they are quoted, the words in the Hebrew may signify no more than that in God's book (the manner of writing which was anciently in rolls of parchment, folded up in a volume) Christ was everywhere written and spoken of. Yet the word κεφαλὴς, which out of the Septuagint's translation the apostle took, signifying, as all know, the beginning of a book; and we finding such an emphasis set by the apostle in the fifth chapter of the Ephesians, upon the history of Adam in the beginning of Genesis, as containing the mystery, yea, the great mystery about Christ, it did somewhat induce, though not so fully persuade, me to think, that the Holy Ghost in those words might have some glance at the story of Adam in the first of the first book of Moses. And withal the rather because so, the words so understood do intimate a higher and further inducement to Christ to assume our nature, the scope of the speech, Heb. x., being to render the reason why he so willingly took man's nature: not only because God liked not sacrifice and burnt-offering, which came in but upon occasion of sin, and after the fall, and could not take sins away, but further, that he was prophesied of, and his assuming a body prophetically foresignified as in the fortieth Psalm, so even by Adam's story before the fall, recorded in the very beginning of Genesis, which many other Scriptures do expressly apply it unto.—*Thomas Goodwin.*

* A marginal note.

Verse 8.—“ *I delight to do thy will, O my God.*” The will of God to redeem sinners by the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, was most grateful and pleasing to the very heart of Christ. It is said, Prov. viii. 31, when he was solacing himself in the sweetest enjoyment of his Father, whilst he lay in that blessed bosom of delights, yet the very prospect of this work gave him pleasure, then his “delights were with the sons of men.” And when he was come into the world, and had endured many abuses and injuries, and was even now come to the most difficult part of the work; yet, “how am I straitened, or pained (saith he), till it be accomplished!” Luke xii. 50. Two things call our thoughts to stay upon them in this point. First.—The *decency* of it— why it ought to be so. 1.—It became Christ to go about this work with cheerfulness and delight, that thereby he might give his death the nature and formality of a sacrifice. In all sacrifices you shall find that God had still a regard, a special respect to the will of the offerer. See Exod. xxxv. 5, 21, and Levit. i. 3. 2.—It ought to be so in view of the unity of Christ’s will with the Father’s. 3.—This was necessary to commend the love of Jesus Christ to us for whom he gave himself. That he came into the world to die for us is a mercy of the first magnitude; but that he came in love to our souls, and underwent all his sufferings with such willingness for our sakes, this heightens it above all apprehension. 4.—It was necessary to be so for the regulating of all our obedience to God, according to this pattern; that seeing and setting this great example of obedience before us, we might never grudge nor grumble at any duty or suffering that God should call us to. *Secondly.*—Let us consider and examine whence it came to be so pleasant and acceptable to Jesus Christ, to come into the world and die for poor sinners. 1.—That in his sufferings there would be made a glorious display and manifestation of the divine attributes. 2.—Another delightful prospect Christ had of the fruit of his sufferings, was the recovery and salvation of all the elect by his death; and though his sufferings were exceedingly bitter, yet such fruit of them as this was exceedingly sweet. 3.—Add to this, the glory which would redound to him from his redeemed ones to all eternity, for it will be the everlasting employment of the saints in heaven to be ascribing glory, praise, and honour to the Redeemer. Did Christ find pleasure in abasement and torment, in suffering and dying for me, and can I find no pleasure in praying, hearing, meditating, and enjoying the sweet duties of communion with him? Did he come so cheerfully to die for me, and do I go so deadheartedly to prayers and sacraments to enjoy fellowship with him? Was it a pleasure to him to shed his blood, and is it none to me to apply it, and reap the benefits of it? O let there be no more grumblings, lazy excuses, shiftings of duty, or dead-hearted and listless performances of them, after such an example as this. Be ready to do the will of God, be ye also ready to suffer it. And as to sufferings for Christ, they should not be grievous to Christians that know how cheerfully Christ came from the bosom of the Father to die for them. What have we to leave or lose, in comparison with him? What are our sufferings to Christ’s. Alas! there is no compare; there was more bitterness in one drop of his sufferings than in a sea of ours. To conclude: your delight and readiness in the paths of obedience is the very measure of your sanctification.—*Condensed from John Flavel.*

Verse 8.—Now, saith Christ, “ *I delight to do thy will, O my God;* ” it is the joy and rejoicing of my heart to be a-seeking and a-saving lost sinners. When Christ was an hungry, he went not into a victualling house but into the temple, and taught the people most part of the day, to show how much he delighted in the salvation of sinners, etc. Christ did so much delight, and his heart was so much set upon the conversion and salvation of the Samaritans, that he neglected his own body to save their souls, as you may clearly see in John iv.—*Thomas Brooks.*

Verse 8.—“ *To do.*” It was Jesus who was the doer of the work. The Father willed it; but he did not do it. It was Jesus who did it, who wrought it out; who brought it in: who carried it within the veil, and laid it as an acceptable and meritorious offering at the feet of his well-pleased Father. The work then is done; it is finished. We need not attempt to do it. We cannot do it. We cannot do that which is already done; and we could not do it, though it were yet undone. There is much that man can do, but he cannot make a propitiation.—*James Frame.*

Verse 8.—“ *Thy will.*” The covenant between the Father and the Son, as elsewhere, so it is most clearly expressed (Heb. x. 7, from Ps. xl. 7, 8), “Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.” And what will? Verse 10, “The will by which we are sanctified through the offering

of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." The will of God was, that Jesus should be offered; and to this end, that we might be sanctified and saved. It is called "The offering of the body of Jesus Christ," in answer to what was said before, "A body hast thou prepared me," or a human nature, by a synecdoche. "My will," says God the Father, "is that thou have a body, and that thy body be offered up; and all to this end, that the children, the elect, might be sanctified." Says the Son to this, "Lo, I come to do thy will;"—"I accept of the condition, and give up myself to the performance of thy will."—*John Owen*.

Verse 8.—"Thy law is within my heart." The law of God is not to be kept in books, but in the midst of our hearts, that we may rightly understand the same, admire it, and observe it.—*Martin Geier*.

Verse 8.—"Thy law is within my heart." The will of God in which Christ delighted, was (as appears by the coherence, and the quotation of Heb. x. 5) that Christ should make his soul an offering for sin, as more acceptable to God than all other burnt-offerings and sin-offerings. This law was *in his heart*, *בְּמִתְּנוֹתָיו*, in the midst of his bowels. He did as much delight in it as we do in following those inclinations which nature has implanted in our hearts, as we do in eating and drinking. So he expresses it (John iv. 34), "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." He was as willing to bleed and die for thee as thou art to eat when hungry. He was delighted as much to be scourged, wounded, crucified, as thou delightest in meat when most delicious.—*David Clarkson*.

Verse 8.—"Within my heart," margin, *my bowels*. The intestines or viscera are here mentioned as the place of the most profound spiritual occupation.—*Franz Delitzsch*.

Verse 9.—"I have preached righteousness," etc. It is Jesus who speaks, and he speaks of himself as a PREACHER. He was a preacher, and a great preacher too. He was great—1. In *genuine eloquence*. All the handmaids of the choicest rhetoric ministered to him as he spake. His mind touched the minds of his auditors on all sides. 2. He was great in *knowledge*. Many who have an astonishing command of words, and who can use their words with astonishing rhetorical adroitness, spoil their influence by their "lack of knowledge." They go blunderingly onward when they attempt to think for themselves, or to guide their hearers into fields of thought which have not been tracked by minds of the pioneer order. 3. He was great also in *goodness*. There is a greatness in goodness, and the greatness of goodness is an important element in the greatness of a preacher. 4. Jesus was great, too, in *official status*. Official status, whether in things civil, literary, or sacred, when conferred on worthy individuals, confers, in its turn, undoubted weight and moral authority. Now Jesus was the highest official in the universe. His authority extended to all other office-bearers, his office exceeded all other offices. He came from above, and was "above all." He was Lord of lords, and King of kings. 5. Another element still in the greatness of Jesus, as a preacher, consisted in the greatness of his *essential dignity*. He was God as well as man. Such was Christ as a preacher. True he was more than a preacher; he was likewise a pattern, and a priest, and a propitiator; and as pattern, priest, and propitiator, he stands without a peer. But he was a preacher, too, and as a preacher, he has never had, and never will have an equal.—*Condensed from James Frame*.

Verse 9.—"The great congregation." The "congregation" here referred to was "great" not only in numbers, but "great" also in the necessities of its individual members, and great in pollution.—*James Frame*.

Verses 9, 10.—"I have published . . . I would not refrain . . . I have not covered . . . I have uttered . . . I have not hid:" words are heaped upon words to express the eager forwardness of a heart burning to show forth its gratitude. No elaborate description could so well have given us the likeness of one whose "life was a thanksgiving."—*J. J. Stewart Perowne*.

Verses 9, 10.—The true way of justification of sinners by faith is a jewel so precious and necessary for poor souls, that it should not be concealed: "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart." One sermon on this subject is not sufficient; it is necessary to make this mystery plain, how by faith in Christ the man that flieth to him is justified from his sins, and saved according to the covenant passed between the suffering Mediator and God the faithful promiser, to justify and save by his own way. "I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation."—*David Dickson*.

Verses 9, 10.—" *Thy.*" The adding *thy* to every one of them is emphatical; it was *thy* righteousness I had commission to declare, *thy* faithfulness I had order to proclaim, *thy* mercy I had charge to publish; *thou* wert as much interested in all that I did as I myself was. I shall be counted false and a liar, thou wilt be counted unjust and cruel, if all be not fulfilled as I have spoken. Since it was thy rule I observed, and thy glory I aimed at in declaring it, disgrace not thyself and me in refusing the petition of such a suppliant, who believes in my word which I gave out by thy authority.—*Stephen Charnock.*

Verse 10.—" *I have not hid.*" This intimates, that whoever undertook to preach the gospel of Christ would be in great temptation to hide it, and conceal it, because it must be preached with great contention, and in the face of great opposition.—*Matthew Henry.*

Verse 10.—" *I have not hid,*" etc. What God has done for us, or for the church, we should lay to heart; but not lock up in our heart.—*Carl Bernhard Moll in Lange's "Bibelwerk,"* 1869.

Verse 11.—" *Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me.*" Do not hinder them from coming showering down upon me. " *Let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me;*" or, do thou employ them in preserving me.—*John Diodati.*

Verse 12.—" *For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head.*" We lose ourselves when we speak of the sins of our lives. It may astonish any considering man to take notice how many sins he is guilty of any one day; how many sins accompany any one single act; nay, how many bewray themselves in any one religious duty. Whensoever ye do anything forbidden, you omit the duty at that time commanded; and whenever you neglect that which is enjoined, the omission is joined with the acting of something forbidden; so that the sin, whether omission or commission, is always double; nay, the apostle makes every sin tenfold. James ii. 10. That which seems one to us, according to the sense of the law, and the account of God, is multiplied by ten. He breaks every command by sinning directly against one, and so sins ten times at once; besides that swarm of sinful circumstances and aggravations which surround every act in such numbers, as atoms use to surround your body in a dusty room; you may more easily number these than those. And though some count these but fractions, incomplete sins, yet even from hence it is more difficult to take an account of their number. And, which is more for astonishment, pick out the best religious duty that ever you performed, and even in that performance you may find such a swarm of sins as cannot be numbered. In the best prayer that ever you put up to God, irreverence, lukewarmness, unbelief, spiritual pride, self-seeking, hypocrisy, distractions, etc., and many more, that an enlightened soul grieves and bewails; and yet there are many more that the pure eye of God discerns, than any man does take notice of.—*David Clarkson.*

Verse 12.—" *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me.*" They seized him as the sinner's substitute, to deal with him as regards their own penalty, according to the sinner's desert.—*James Frame.*

Verse 13.—The remaining verses of this Psalm are almost exactly identical with Psalm LXX.

Verse 14.—" *Let them be ashamed and confounded,*" etc. Even this prayer carried benevolence in its bosom. It sought from the divine Father, such a manifestation of what was glorious and God-like as might unnerve each rebel arm, and overawe each rebel heart in the traitor's company. If each arm were for a little unnerved, if each heart were for a little unmanned, there might be time for the better principles of their nature to rise and put an arrest upon the prosecution of their wicked design. Such being the benevolent aim of the prayer, we need not wonder that it issued from the same heart that by-and-by exclaimed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" neither need we marvel that it was answered to the very letter, and that as soon as he said to the traitor band, "I am he," they went backward and fell to the ground.—*James Frame.*

Verse 15.—“*Aha, aha.*” An exclamation which occurs three times in the Psalms ; and in each case there seems to be reference to the mockery at the Passion. See xxxv. 21 ; and lxx. 3, which appear to belong to the same time as the present Psalm.—*Christopher Wordsworth.*

Verse 16.—“*Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee.*” As every mercy to every believer giveth a proof of God’s readiness to show the like mercy to all believers, when they stand in need ; so should every mercy shown to any of the number, being known to the rest, be made the matter and occasion of magnifying the Lord.—*David Dickson.*

Verse 16.—“*Such as love thy salvation.*” To love God’s salvation is to love God himself, the Saviour, or Jesus.—*Martin Geier.*

Verse 16.—“*Such as love thy salvation.*” One would think that self-love alone should make us love salvation. Ay, but they love it because it is his, “*that love thy salvation.*” It is the character of a holy saint to love salvation itself ; not as his own only, but as God’s, as God’s that saves him.—*Thomas Goodwin.*

Verse 16.—“*Let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified.*” Jesus who gave us our capacity of happiness and our capacity of speaking, realised the relation which he had established between them ; and hence in praying for his friends, he prayed that in the joy and gladness of their souls they might say, “*The Lord be magnified.*” He desired them to speak of their holy happiness ; and it was his wish that when they did speak of it they should speak in terms of laudation of Jehovah, for he was the source of it. He desired them to say continually, “*The Lord be magnified.*”—*James Frame.*

Verse 17.—In Dr. Malan’s memoir, the editor, one of his sons, thus writes of his brother Jocelyn, who was for some years prior to his death, the subject of intense bodily sufferings :—“*One striking feature in his character was his holy fear of God, and reverence for his will. One day I was repeating a verse from the Psalms, ‘As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord careth for me : thou art my helper and deliverer ; O Lord, make no long tarrying.’ He said, ‘Mamma, I love that verse, all but the last bit, it looks like a murmur against God. He never ‘tarries’ in my case.’—From ‘The Life, Labours, and Writings of Cæsar Malan (1787—1864) : By one of his sons,’ 1689.*

Verse 17.—“*Yet the Lord thinketh upon me.*” Sacred story derives from heaven the kindness of Abimelech to Abraham, of Laban and Esau to Jacob, of Ruth to Naomi, of Boaz to Ruth, and Jonathan to David. When others think of kindness to us, let us imitate David, ’tis the Lord that thinketh upon me, and forms those thoughts within their hearts. This should calm our spirits when a former friend’s heart is alienated by rash admissions of false suggestions, or when any faithful Jonathan expires his spirit into the bosom of God. It should not be lost what Hobson, the late noted carrier of Cambridge, said to a young student receiving a letter of the sad tidings of his uncle’s decease (who maintained him at the University), and weeping bitterly, and reciting the cause of his grief, he replied, *Who gave you that friend ?* Which saying did greatly comfort him, and was a sweet support to him afterwards in his ministry. The Everliving God is the portion of a living faith, and he can never want that hath such an ocean. He that turns the hearts of kings like rivers at his pleasure, turns all the little brooks in the world into what scorched and parched ground he pleases.—*Samuel Lee.*

Verse 17.—“*The Lord thinketh upon me.*” There are three things in God’s thinking upon us, that are solacing and delightful. Observe the frequency of his thoughts. Indeed, they are incessant. You have a friend, whom you esteem and love. You wish to live in his mind. You say when you part, and when you write, “*Think of me.*” You give him, perhaps, a token to revive his remembrance. How naturally is Selkirk, in his solitary island, made to say :

“*My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me ?
O tell me, I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.*

*Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial, endearing report.
Of a land I shall visit no more.’*”

But the dearest connexion in the world cannot be always thinking upon you. Half his time he is in a state of unconsciousness ; and how much during the other half, is he engrossed ! But there is no remission in the Lord's thoughts. . . . Observe in the next place, the *wisdom* of his thoughts. You have a dear child, absent from you, and you follow him in your mind. But you know not his present circumstances. You left him in such a place ; but where is he now ? You left him in such a condition. But what is he now ? Perhaps, while you are thinking upon his health, he is groaning under a bruised limb, or a painful disorder. Perhaps, while you are thinking of his safety, some enemy is taking advantage of his innocency. Perhaps, while you are rejoicing in his prudence, he is going to take a step that will involve him for life. But when God thinketh upon you, he is perfectly acquainted with your situation, your dangers, your wants. He knows all your walking through this great wilderness, and can afford you the seasonable succour you need. For again, observe the *efficiency* of his thoughts. You think upon another, and you are anxious to guide, or defend, or relieve him. But in how many cases can you think only ? Solicitude cannot control the disease of the body, cannot dissipate the melancholy of the mind. But with God all things are possible. He who thinks upon you is a God at hand and not afar off ; he has all events under his control ; he is the God of all grace. If, therefore, he does not immediately deliver, it is not because he is unable to redress, but because he is waiting to be gracious.—*William Jay.*

HINTS TO PREACHERS.

Verse—I. *My part*—praying and waiting. II. *God's part*—condescension and reply.

Verse 2.—I. The *depth* of God's goodness to his people. It finds them often in a horrible pit and miry clay. There is a certain spider which forms a pit in sand, and lies concealed at the bottom, in order to seize upon other insects that fall into it. Thus David's enemies tried to bring him into a pit. II. The *height* of his goodness. He brought me out, and set my feet upon a rock. That rock is Christ. Those feet are faith and hope. III. The *breadth* of his goodness established my *goings*, restored me to my former place in his love, showing me still to have been his during my low estate. He was the same to me, though I felt not the same to him. My *goings* refer both to the past and the future. IV. The *strength* of his goodness *esta lished* my *goings*, making me stand firmer after every fall.—*George Rogers.*

Verses 2, 3.—The sinner's position by nature, and his rescue by grace.

Verses 2, 3.—By one and the same act the Lord works our salvation, our enemies' confusion, and the church's edification.—*J. P. Lange's Commentary.*

Verse 3.—The new song, the singer, the teacher.

Verse 4 (last clause).—I. Find out who turn aside to lies—Atheists, Papists, self-righteous, lovers of sin. II. Show their folly in turning aside from God and truth, and in turning to fallacies which lead to death. III. Show how to be preserved from the like folly, by choosing truth, truthful persons, and above all the service of God.

Verse 5.—1. *There are works of God in his people and for his people.* There are his works of creation, of providence, and of redemption, and also his works of grace, wrought in them by his Spirit, and around them by his providence, as well as for them by his Son. II. *These are wonderful works ;* wonderful in their variety, their tenderness, their adaptation to their need, their co-operation with outward means and their power. III. *They are the result of the divine thoughts respecting us.* They come not by chance, not by men, but by the hand of God, and that hand is moved by his will, and that will by his thought respecting us. Every mercy, even the least, represents some kind thought in the mind of God respecting us. God thinks of each one of his people, and every moment. IV. They are innumerable. "*They cannot be reckoned up.*" Could we see all the mercies of God to us and his wonderful works wrought for us individually, they would be countless

as the sands, and all these countless mercies represent countless thoughts in the mind and heart of God to each one of his people.—*George Rogers.*

Verse 5.—The multitude of God's thoughts, and deeds of grace, beginning in eternity, continuing for ever; and dealing with this life, heaven, hell, sin, angels, devils, and indeed all things.

Verse 6.—Here David goes beyond himself, and speaks the language of David's Son. This was naturally suggested by God's wonderful works, and innumerable thoughts of love to man. I. *The sacrifices that were not required.* These were the sacrifices and burnt-offerings under the law. 1. When required? From Adam to the coming of Christ. 2. When not required? 3. Why required before? As types of the one method of redemption. 4. Why not now required? Because the great Antetype had come. II. *The sacrifice that was required.* This was the sacrifice offered on Calvary. 1. It was required by God by his justice, his wisdom, his faithfulness, his love, his honour, his glory. 2. It was required by man to give him salvation and confidence in that salvation. 3. It was required for the honour of the moral government of God throughout the universe. III. *The person by whom this sacrifice was offered.* "*Mine ears hast thou opened.*" This is the language of Christ, prospectively denoting—1. Knowledge of the sacrifice required. 2. Consecration of himself as a servant for that end.—*George Rogers.*

Verse 6.—"*Mine ears hast thou opened.*" Readiness to hear, fixity of purpose, perfection of obedience, entireness of consecration.

Verses 6—8.—The Lord gives an ear to hear his word, a mouth to confess it, a heart to love it, and power to keep it.

Verse 7.—I. The time of Christ's coming. "*Then said I.*" When types were exhausted, when prophecies looked for their fulfilment, when worldly wisdom had done its utmost, when the world was almost entirely united under one empire, when the time appointed by the Father had come. II. The design of his coming. "*In the volume*" was written—1. The constitution of his person. 2. His teaching. 3. The manner of his life. 4. The design of his death. 5. His resurrection and ascension. 6. The kingdom he would establish. III. The voluntariness of his coming, "*Lo, I come.*" Though sent by the Father, he came of his own accord. "*Christ Jesus came into the world.*" Men do not come into the world, they are sent into it. "*Lo, I come,*" denotes pre-existence, pre-determination, pre-operation.—*George Rogers.*

Verse 8.—"*To do thy will, O God.*" I. The will of God is seen in the fact of salvation. It has its origin in the will of God. II. The will of God is seen in the plan of salvation. All things have proceeded, are proceeding, and will proceed according to that plan. III. It is seen in the provision of salvation, in the appointment of his own Son to become the mediator, the atoning sacrifice, the law-fulfiller, the head of the church, that his plan required. IV. It is seen in the accomplishment of salvation.

Verse 9.—Referring to our Lord; a great preacher, a great subject, a great congregation, and his great faithfulness in the work.

Verse 10 (first clause).—I. The righteousness possessed by God. II. The righteousness prescribed by God. III. The righteousness provided by God.—*James Frame.*

Verse 10.—I. The preacher must reveal his whole message. II. He must not conceal any part. 1. Not of the righteousness of the law or the gospel. 2. Not of the lovingkindness of grace. 3. Not of any portion of the truth. 1. To omit is to conceal. 2. To entangle with human reasonings. 3. To cover with flowers of rhetoric. 4. To give a partial representation. 5. To put one truth in the place of another. 6. To give the letter without the spirit.—*G. R.*

Verse 10.—The great sin of concealing what we know of God.

Verse 11.—Enrichment and preservation sought. The true riches are from God, gifts of his sovereignty, fruits of his mercy, marked with his tenderness. The best preservations are divine love and faithfulness.

Verse 12.—Compare this with verse 5. The number of our sins, and the number of his thoughts of love.

Verse 12 (second clause).—I. The soul arrested—"taken hold." II. The soul bewildered—"cannot look up." III. The soul's only refuge—prayer, ver. 13.

Verse 13.—I. The language of believing prayer—deliver me, help me; looking for deliverance and help to God only. II. Of earnest prayer—make haste to help me. III. Of submissive prayer—be pleased, O Lord, if according to thy good

pleasure. IV. Of consistent prayer. Help me, which implies efforts for his own deliverance, putting his own shoulder to the wheel.

Verses 11—13.—As an instance of clerical ingenuity, it may be well to mention that Canon Wordsworth has a sermon from these verses upon “The duty of making responses in public prayer.”

Verse 14.—*Honi soit qui mal y pense*; or, the reward of malignity.

Verse 16 (*last clause*).—An every-day saying. Who can use it? What does it mean? Why should *they* say it? Why say it continually?

Verse 17.—The humble “*But*,” and the believing “*Yet*.” The little “*I am*,” and the great “*Thou art*.” The fitting prayer.

Verse 17.—“*The Lord thinketh upon me*.” Admire the condescension, and then consider that this is—I. A promised blessing. II. A practical blessing—he thinks upon us to supply, protect, direct, sanctify, etc. III. A precious blessing—kind thoughts, continual, greatly good. He thinks of us as his creatures with pity, as his children with love, as his friends with pleasure. IV. A present blessing—promises, providences, visitations of grace.

Verse 17.—I. The less we think of ourselves the more God will think upon us. II. The less we put trust in ourselves the more we may trust in God for help and deliverance. III. The less delay in prayer and active efforts the sooner God will appear for us.
