

PSALM XLIII.

SUBJECT.—On account of the similarity of the structure of this Psalm to that of Psalm forty-two, it has been supposed to be a fragment wrongly separated from the preceding song; but it is always dangerous to allow these theories of error in Holy Scripture, and in this instance it would be very difficult to show just cause for such an admission. Why should the Psalm have been broken? Its similarity would have secured its unity had it ever been part and parcel of the forty-second. Is it not far more likely that some in their fancied wisdom united them wrongly in the few MSS. in which they are found as one? We believe the fact is that the style of the poetry was pleasant to the writer, and therefore in after life he wrote this supplemental hymn after the same manner. As an appendix it needed no title. David complains of his enemies, and asks the privilege of communion with God as his surest deliverance from them.

DIVISION.—The Psalmist cries to God in prayer, verses 1—3. Promises praise in the anticipation of an answer, verse 4, and chides himself for his despondency, verse 5.

EXPOSITION.

JUDGE me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.

2 For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

3 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

1. "*Judge me, O God.*" Others are unable to understand my motives, and unwilling to give me a just verdict. My heart is clear as to its intent, and therefore I bring my case before thee, content that thou wilt impartially weigh my character, and right my wrongs. If thou wilt judge, thy acceptance of my conduct will be enough for me; I can laugh at human misrepresentation if my conscience knows that thou art on my side; thou art the only one I care for; and besides, thy verdict will not sleep, but thou wilt see practical justice done to thy slandered servant. "*And plead my cause against an ungodly nation.*" One such advocate as the Lord will more than suffice to answer a nation of brawling accusers. When people are ungodly no wonder that they are unjust: those who are not true to God himself cannot be expected to deal rightly with his people. Hating the King they will not love his subjects. Popular opinion weighs with many, but divine opinion is far more weighty with the gracious few. One good word from God outweighs ten thousand railing speeches of men. He bears a brazen shield before him whose reliance in all things is upon his God; the arrows of calumny fall harmlessly from such a buckler. "*O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.*" Deceit and injustice are boon companions: he who fawns will not fear to slander. From two such devils none can deliver us but God. His wisdom can outwit the craft of the vilest serpent, and his power can overmatch the most raging lion. Whether this was Doeg or Ahithophel is small matter, such double distilled villains are plentiful, and the only way of dealing with them is to refer the matter to the righteous Judge of all; if we try to fight them with their own weapons, we shall suffer more serious injury from ourselves than from them. O child of God, leave these thine enemies in better hands, remembering that vengeance belongeth not to thee, but to the Lord. Turn to him in prayer, crying, "O deliver me," and ere long you shall publish abroad the remembrance of his salvation.

2. "*For.*"—Here is argument, which is the very sinew of prayer. If we reasoned more with the Lord we should have more victories in supplication. "*Thou art the God of my strength.*" All my strength belongs to thee—I will not, therefore, use it on my own behalf against my personal foes. All my strength comes from thee, I therefore seek help from thee, who art able to bestow it. All my strength is in thee, I leave therefore this task of combating my foes entirely in thy hands. Faith

which leaves such things alone is wise faith. Note the assurance of David, "*thou art,*" not I hope and trust so, but I know it is so ; we shall find confidence to be our consolation. "*Why dost thou cast me off?*" Why am I treated as if thou didst loathe me ? Am I become an offence unto thee ? There are many reasons why the Lord might cast us off, but no reason shall prevail to make him do so. He hath not cast off his people, though he for awhile treats them as cast-offs. Learn from this question that it is well to enquire into dark providences, but we must enquire of God, not of our own fears. He who is the author of a mysterious trial can best expound it to us.

" Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain ;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

" *Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?*" Why do I wander hither and thither like a restless spirit ? Why wear I the weeds of sorrow on my body, and the lines of grief on my face ? Oppression makes a wise man mad ; why, Lord, am I called to endure so much of it for so long a time ? Here again is a useful question, addressed to the right quarter. The answer will often be because we are saints, and must be made like our Head, and because such sorrow is chastening to the spirit, and yieldeth comfortable fruit. We are not to cross-question the Lord in peevishness, but we may ask of him in humility ; God help us to observe the distinction so as not to sin through stress of sorrow.

3. "*O send out thy light and thy truth.*" The joy of thy presence and the faithfulness of thy heart ; let both of these be manifest to me. Reveal my true character by thy light, and reward me according to thy truthful promise. As the sun darts forth his beams, so does the Lord send forth his favour and his faithfulness towards all his people ; and as all nature rejoices in the sunshine, even so the saints triumph in the manifestation of the love and fidelity of their God, which, like the golden sunbeam, lights up even the darkest surroundings with delightful splendour. "*Let them lead me.*" Be these my star to guide me to my rest. Be these my Alpine guides to conduct me over mountains and precipices to the abodes of grace. "*Let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.*" First in thy mercy bring me to thine earthly courts, and end my weary exile, and then in due time admit me to thy celestial palace above. We seek not light to sin by, nor truth to be exalted by it, but that they may become our practical guides to the nearest communion with God : only such light and truth as are sent us from God will do this, common light is not strong enough to show the road to heaven, nor will mere moral or physical truths assist to the holy hill ; but the light of the Holy Spirit, and the truth as it is in Jesus, these are elevating, sanctifying, perfecting ; and hence their virtue in leading us to the glorious presence of God. It is beautiful to observe how David's longing to be away from the oppression of man always leads him to sigh more intensely for communion with God.

4 Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy : yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? and why art thou disquieted within me ? hope in God : for I shall yet praise him, *who* is the health of my countenance, and my God.

4. "*Then will I go unto the altar of God.*" If David might but be favoured with such a deliverance as would permit his return, it would not be his own house of heritage which would be his first resort, but to the altar of God his willing feet should conduct him. His whole heart would go as a sacrifice to the altar, he himself counting it his greatest happiness to be permitted to lie as a burnt offering wholly dedicated to the Lord. With what exultation should believers draw near unto Christ, who is the antitype of the altar ! clearer light should give greater intensity of desire. "*Unto God my exceeding joy.*" It was not the altar as such that the Psalmist cared for, he was no believer in the heathenism of ritualism : his soul desired spiritual fellowship, fellowship with God himself in very deed. What are all the rites of worship unless the Lord be in them ; what, indeed, but empty shells and dry husks ? Note the holy rapture with which David regards his Lord ! He is not his *joy* alone, but his *exceeding* joy ; not the fountain of joy, the giver of joy, or the maintainer of joy, but that joy itself. The margin hath it, "The gladness

of my joy," *i.e.*, the soul, the essence, the very bowels of my joy. To draw near to God, who is such a joy to us, may well be the object of our hungering and thirsting. "Yea, upon the harp will I praise thee." His best music for his best love. When God fills us with joy we ought ever to pour it out at his feet in praise, and all the skill and talent we have should be laid under contribution to increase the divine revenue of glory. "O God, my God." How he dwells upon the name which he loves so well! He already harps on it as though his harp music had begun. What sweeter sounds can music know than these four words? To have God in possession, and to know it by faith, is the heart's heaven—a fulness of bliss lies therein.

5. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" If God be thine, why this dejection? If he uplifts thee, why art thou so near the ground? The dew of love is falling, O withering heart, revive. "And why art thou disquieted within me?" What cause is there to break the repose of thy heart? Wherefore indulge unreasonable sorrows, which benefit no one, fret thyself, and dishonour thy God? Why overburden thyself with foregodings? "Hope in God," or "wait for God." There is need of patience, but there is ground for hope. The Lord cannot but avenge his own elect. The heavenly Father will not stand by and see his children trampled on for ever; as surely as the sun is in the heavens, light must arise for the people of God, though for awhile they may walk in darkness. Why, then, should we not be encouraged, and lift up our head with comfortable hope? "For I shall yet praise him." Times of complaint will soon end, and seasons of praise will begin. Come, my heart, look out of the window, borrow the telescopic glass, forecast a little, and sweeten thy chamber with sprigs of the sweet herb of hope. "Who is the health of my countenance, and my God." My God will clear the furrows from my brow, and the tear marks from my cheek; therefore will I lift up my head and smile in the face of the storm. The Psalm has a blessed ending, such as we would fain imitate when death puts an end to our mortal existence.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS.

Whole Psalm.—This Psalm is evidently a continuation or supplement to the preceding. In some MSS. of Kennicott and de Rossi's, they are united, and make one Psalm.—*George Phillips, B.D.*

Verse 1.—"Judge me, O God, and plead my cause," etc.—Believers may appeal to God's justice, and plead God's righteousness. I. Touching suffering wrongs of men. II. Touching sin in relation to God's wrath. 1. Touching suffering wrongs of men, believers may appeal upon these three grounds: 1. The injustice that men do to believers, is as well against *God's just nature*, as against the believers' ease. So their appeals to God are agreeable to God's enmity against injustice; therefore, his enmity concurs with their appeals. Romans i. 18. 2. Justice in men is according to God's nature, as well as for the believer's welfare, and, therefore, the disposition and inclination of God's nature concurs with their prayers for deliverance. Psalm xi. 7; Luke xxiii. 6, 7. 3. Such wrong God who do wrong his people (2 Chron. xiv. 11; Zech. ii. 8; Acts ix. 4, 5); so that in deliverance God vindicates himself as well as the believers. II. Touching sin in relation to God's wrath, a true believer may plead God's justice or righteousness on these three grounds: 1. Christ our Advocate or Attorney so pleads. John xvii. 24, etc. Now, the client may plead the same as the advocate, seeing it is in relation to the same party and the same issue. 2. Christ hath satisfied God's justice, so that on Christ was laid all the sins of all believers. He was "wounded" for them. Now, God cannot in justice punish twice: therefore, seeing Christ was wounded, believers must be healed. Isaiah liii. 3. Believers have God's righteousness imputed to them (2 Cor. v.); therefore, God must deal with believers as he will deal with his own righteousness.

Useful is this doctrine two ways. I. For terror to the enemies of believers. How many prevailing cries to the justice of God are against such enemies? 1. Their

own sins cry. 2. Believers' injuries cry. 3. Believers' prayers cry. 4. Christ's intercession cries over again their prayers and desires (Rev. vi. 9 compared with Rev. viii. 3). II. The second use is for comfort to believers, that as God's mercy is for them, so is his justice to deliver them, not only from *men*, but from *sin*; and in and through Christ they may humbly plead justice as against sinners, so against sin; not only against the guilt but against the power, that seeing Christ died, sin should not live.—*Condensed from Nathanael Homes, 1652.*

Verse 1.—"Ungodly . . . deceitful . . . unjust." There are *ungodly* men who, being destitute of religious principle, will not scruple to injure us, when they can thereby gratify their passions or advance their worldly interests. There are *deceitful* men who will put on the garb of friendship, and acquire our confidence and esteem, and then treacherously cheat us out of our property, or our reputation, or our peace. There are *unjust* men, who by fraud or by violence, would rob us of our dearest rights and most valuable possessions, and not only reduce our powers and opportunities of doing good, but even diminish our means of comfortable subsistence. And there are *oppressors*, who taking advantage of our weakness or dependence, and trampling alike on the maxims of equity and humanity, may exact from us unreasonable services, impose upon us heavy burdens and cruel restraints, and ply us with insults, and harrassments, and deprivations, from which we can make no escape, and for which we can find no redress.—*Andrew Thomson, D.D., in "Lectures on Portions of the Psalms," 1826.*

Verse 2.—"Thou art the God of my strength." The godly man hath from God a threefold strength, namely: natural, providential, and spiritual. I. *Natural*, Acts xvii. 28. This is twofold: of body, of mind. Of robustness, hardness, and agility of body; of wit, invention, and valour of mind. Now, these donations of corporal and mental natural endowments are God's gifts. Psalm xviii. 43, 39. . . . II. *Providential* strength, which is threefold: 1. God's donation of strengthening mercies. (1) Corporal: wine to make glad, and bread to strengthen. Psalm civ. 15. (2) Mental, common gifts; as Paul had a singular gift of language and single life; Apollos of elocution, argument, power of convincing. 2. Providential strength is God's making way for his people to act and put forth their strength. Psalm lxxviii. 50. 3. Providential strength is God's concurrence with our lawful human acting. Psalm xviii. 29.

III. The third sort of power is *spiritual*: God is the godly man's spiritual power. I John ii. 14: "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong," namely, with spiritual strength, for it follows, "The word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." This is the main strength of a godly man; as that text hints, namely, young men are naturally strong, but St. John takes no notice of that, but commends them for their spiritual strength. This spiritual strength is from the word of the Spirit, and from the Spirit of the word, that is, from the Spirit accompanying the word. 1. From *the word of the Spirit*, the word of God. Psalm cxix. 50: "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." To be "*quickened*," *i.e.*, enlivened, is to be full of vigour and spirit and to act mightily, and to "*comfort*" is, as the word signifies, to make strong; for when a man is most cheerful with sobriety, he is most strong. St. John in that place fore-quoted, saith the young men to whom he wrote were strong because the word of God abode in them. For (Prov. xii. 25) "whereas sorrow in the heart of man maketh it stoop"—makes it sickly, weak, drooping—"a good word maketh it glad," cheerful, strong, vigorous. And so if the word of a wise friend, how much more the word of God, with its many strengthening promises? Psalm xx. 2; cxix. 28. The word of God is the very mind and will of God, and power of God, and with the word God created the world, therefore, he that receives this word must needs receive a great deal of strength. Romans i. 16.

2. *The Spirit of the word*, the Holy Spirit that useth to accompany the word to them that receive it. By his Spirit God is in a believer (1 Cor. vi. 9; Eph. ii.); and this is the spirit of strength and power. Eph. iii. 16; 2 Tim. i. 7. As a powerful, active soul makes a vigorous body, so the Spirit in the soul makes the soul powerful and strong, being the soul of the soul of a believer. We read more than once or twice in the Scriptures, that when believers did any eminent act, it is said, *the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they did* so and so, *i.e.*, the Spirit of God in them did then put forth its power to make them act powerfully.—*Condensed from Nathanael Homes.*

Verse 3.—“*O send out thy light and thy truth.*” Possibly there may be an allusion to the Urim and Thummim, as the symbol of light and truth.—*J. J. Stewart Perowne.*

Verse 3.—“*Light and Truth.*” Delightful and all-comprehensive words. They contain all the salvation and all the desire of a believing, confiding soul. But it is only when thus combined—separated they are no longer a ground of trust and joy. For what would favour avail without faithfulness? It would be no more than the uncertain friendship of men, who smile to-day and reproach to-morrow; who make large promises, but do not perform them. Even the “*light*” which angels and glorified spirits enjoy in heaven would be insufficient to banish all fear and to fill them with satisfaction, were it not for their confidence in the “*truth*” of God. How much more, then, must this be the case with erring, sinful mortals on earth? When the humble spirit is bowed down under a sense of its utter unworthiness and innumerable weaknesses and defilements, its negligences, follies, and wanderings, what should save from despair but the confidence that he who has been merciful will also be faithful; that God is truth as well as light; that he hath said, “*I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;*” that he “*cannot lie,*” and that, therefore, “*his mercy endureth for ever?*” On the other hand, *truth* without *light*, faithfulness without grace, would be only the dreadful execution of terrible but just denunciations on the transgressors of the holy law. “*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*” Adam ate, and in that day became the subject of sin and death. This was *truth* executing judgment. But *light* arose around the darkness; beams of mercy tempered the heavy cloud. The promise of the Great Deliverer was given; then faithfulness was enlisted on the side of grace, and became engaged for its bestowment; “*mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace kissed each other.*” Since then, all humble and trusting souls have beheld them united, and have made their union the ground of their confidence and joy.—*Henry March.*

Verse 3.—“*Thy tabernacles.*” There were two tabernacles, one at Zion, where the ark stood, and another at Gibeon. 1 Chron. xvi. 37, 39. It is not to this fact that the Psalmist alludes, however, but to the circumstance, in all probability of the different parts of the tabernacle. There was, first the holiest of all, then the sanctuary, and then the tabernacle of the convocation. Heb. ix. 1—8.—*John Morison.*

Verse 4.—“*Then will I go unto the altar of God.*” Let us remember that the approach to God in the holy place is by means of the altar, whence eternally ascendeth the fragrance and the preciousness of the one whole, perfect burnt-offering, and where for ever and ever the divine holiness resteth and feedeth with its pure fire with infinite satisfaction, with inconceivable delight. Oh, what a holy, a divine, a wondrous place is this “*altar of God!*” That altar now means all the value and everlasting efficacy of the one offering of Christ unto God for us; and it is in the full power and blessedness thereof that we draw nigh to God. To this point, to this unspeakably blessed position, the light and the truth of God will attract the child of God. Toward this altar all the rays of the light of divine favour and grace, and of divine truth, and holiness, have from eternity converged; and from this point they shine forth toward and upon the soul and heart of the poor, far-off penitent, attracting him to that altar where he may meet his God. Let us then come to the altar of God; let us enter the cloud of holy incense that filleth the tabernacle of the Most High; let us realise how perfectly God is satisfied with that which Christ has done, with his obedience in dying to meet the claims of divine justice on the sinner, and to complete the perfect surrender of himself as our “*exceeding joy,*” even the gladness of our joy, the heart, essence, substance, and reality of our joy.—*John Offord, 1868.*

Verse 4.—“*Then will I go unto the altar of God.*” He would with cheerfulness run and offer up the sacrifices of thanksgiving to his gracious deliverer; he would take his own soul as the burnt-offering, and kindle and burn it up with the fire of a vigorous love and raised affections terminating upon God, the flames whereof should ascend to him alone. . . . “*Unto God my exceeding joy,*” or, as the Hebrew is more exactly translated, *unto God the gladness of his joy*—that which gave a relish to every other comfort, which was the soul and life of his pleasures, and could only make them real and lasting; it was God who raised his joy to fulness of satisfaction and contentment.—*William Dunlop.*

Verse 4.—“*Then will I go . . . unto God.*” The expression of *going*

to God implies SUBMISSION and FRIENDSHIP. I. *Submission*. I will go and pay my homage to him, as my Sovereign ; I will go and hear what he says ; I will go and receive his orders. II. *Friendship*. I will go and consult him, and converse with him as a friend ; and be thankful that, in such a troublesome and ensnaring world, I have such a friend to advise with. 1. I will go and tell him my *griefs* ; how greatly I am distressed with some particular disorder in my body, or with some disturbance in my family, or with some disappointment in my worldly circumstances, or (which is worse than all of them together) with a sad darkness in my soul. 2. I will go and tell him my *joys*, for even in this vale of tears " my heart is " sometimes " glad, and my glory rejoiceth." 3. I will go and tell him of my *sins*. He knows them, indeed, already, but he shall hear them from me. 4. I will go and tell him my *fears* ; how greatly I am distressed at times, when I perceive this or the other corruption so strong, which I thought had received its death wound. . . . how I tremble when I have by my folly provoked the Lord to leave me, for fear he will never return again, etc. 5. I will go and tell him my *hopes*, for some hope I have amidst all my discouragements. . . . I will go and tell him all this ; I will unbosom and unburthen my whole heart to him ; and if my *necessities* did not drive me to him, I should go to him from inclination.—*Condensed from Samuel Lavington.*

Verse 4.—" *Unto God.*" Believers are not satisfied in the use of religious duties, unless they arrive at God himself in those duties. We speak not here of that arrival at God himself which is by and after all duties, to a beatifical vision of God in glory, but we speak of that arrival at God himself which is to be had *in* duties, while we are in the exercise of duties ; namely, to attain to God's special presence in them, in an actual communion, communication and conversing with God, so that we are spiritually sensible he is with us therein. I say God's *special* presence and actual communion, to distinguish it from that ordinary habitual presence and communion of God's being with a believer at all times. John xiv. 16.—*Nathanael Homes.*

Verse 4.—" *My exceeding joy.*" The Psalmist might well call God his *exceeding* joy, for it infinitely exceeds all other joy in its nature, degree, and duration.—*Samuel Lavington.*

Verse 4.—" *My exceeding joy.*" As faith acquires more strength we come to think of God and address him in more endearing terms.—*J. P. Lange.*

Verse 4.—" *Exceeding joy.*" This can be said of no other joy. All other beauties have their boundaries, all other glories have their glooms. This is that illimitable sea, *God*.—*E. Paxton Hood.*

Verse 5.—" *Why art thou cast down O my soul.*" He comes to his former remedy ; he had stilled his grief once before with the same meditation and upbraiding of his own soul, and chiding himself ; but he comes to it here as a *probatum est*, as a tried remedy ; he takes up his soul very short, " *Why art thou so cast down, O my soul ? and why art thou disquieted within me ?*" You see how David's passions here are interlaced with comforts, and his comforts with passions, till at last he gets the victory of his own heart. Beloved, neither sin nor grief for sin, are stilled and quieted at the first. You have some short-spirited Christians, if all be not quiet at the first, all is lost with them ; but it is not so with a true Christian soul, with the best soul living. It was not so with David when he was in distemper ; he checks himself, the distemper was not yet stilled ; he checks himself again, then the distemper breaks out again ; he checks himself again, and all little enough to bring his soul to a holy, blessed, quiet, temper, to that blessed tranquillity and rest that the soul should be in before it can enjoy its own happiness, and enjoy sweet communion with God. As you see in physic, perhaps one purge will not carry away the peccant humour, then a second must be added ; perhaps that will not do it, then there must be a third ; so when the soul hath been once checked, perhaps it will not do, we must fall to it again, go to God again. And then it may be there will be breaking out of the grief and malady again ; we must to it again, and never give over, that is the right temper of a Christian.—*Richard Sibbes.*

Verse 5.—" *Hope in God.*" The more terrible the storm, the more necessary is the anchor. Heb. vi. 19.—*William S. Plumer.*

Verse 5.—" *Hope in God.*" The complete and perfect state of God's children here is not in *re*, but in *spe* : as Christ's kingdom is not of this world, so is not our hope. The worldling's motto is, " a bird in the hand." Give me to-day, say they,

and take to-morrow whoso will. But the word of believers is, *spero meliora*—my hopes are better than my present possessions.—*Elnathan Parr.*

Verse 5.—The varied conflicts of the soul afford occasion for the exercise of the graces, and thus, through the divine wisdom and goodness, are made the means of eventual good.—*Henry March.*

HINTS TO PREACHERS.

Verse 1.—We apply to God—I. As our *Judge*: “*Judge me.*” II. As our *Advocate*: “*Plead my cause.*” III. As our *Deliverer*: “*O deliver me.*”

Verse 1.—Popular opinion outweighed by divine approbation.

Verse 1.—How the Lord pleads the cause of his people.

Verse 1.—Deceit and injustice twin vipers; their origin, their character, their folly, their end.

Verses 1, 2, 4, 5.—*Five mys*: 1. My cause—“*plead it.*” 2. My strength—“*thou art.*” 3. My joy—God is. 4. My soul—“*why disquieted.*” 5. My God.

Verse 2.—“*The God of my strength.*” From whom it is derived, to whom it is dedicated, in whom it resides, by whom it shall be perfected.

Verse 2 (*first clause*).—1. From thee it comes. 2. By thee it is sustained. 3. To thee it is dedicated. 4. By thee it will be perfected. 5. By thee it will be rewarded.

Verse 2 (*second clause*).—I. *The nature of apparent forsaking.* Painful, protracted, perplexing. II. *The cause of it.* Secret sin to be laid bare, past sin chastised, graces tried, faith ultimately strengthened, etc. II. *The best conduct under it.* Appeal to God, confess, submit, pray, trust, etc.

Verse 2 (*last clause*).—The two “*whys.*” The questions themselves; the spirit in which they may be asked. The answers which may be given.

Verse 3.—“*O send out thy light and thy truth.*” I. What is truth? II. How truth is to be diffused. III. Why it should be diffused. IV. Who must be the main agent of it.—*Varied from Dr. Bogue. 1800.*

Verse 3.—The blessings desired; the guidance sought; the end longed for.

Verse 3.—Under what influence we should resort to divine worship.

Verse 4.—I. The good man’s duty—expressed by *going to God.* II. His *blessedness*—expressed by *rejoicing in God.*—*Samuel Lavington.*

Verse 4 (*first clause*).—When? “*Then.*” Where? “*Altar of God.*” Who? “*I.*” Why? “*My exceeding joy.*”

Verse 4 (*second clause*).—It is God alone who can be an exceeding joy to his creatures.—*W. Dunlop’s Sermons.*

Verse 4.—The joy of joy. The soul of soul joy.

Verse 4.—The great object of public worship, its bliss, and the praise resulting from attaining it.

Verse 4.—I. *The medium of joy, the altar of God, or God in Christ Jesus.* II. *The springs of joy, or the attributes of God—mercy, justice, power, holiness, as seen in the atonement.* III. *The value of joy, as comfort, strength, etc.*

Verse 4.—“*God my exceeding joy.*” A most rich and precious title.

Verse 4 (*last clause*).—Possession, praise, resolution.

Verse 5.—Discouragement’s recovery.—*R. Sibbes’s Sermons.*

Verse 5.—“*I shall yet praise him.*” *I, even I; shall sooner or later, most assuredly; “yet,”* despite troubles, foes, devils; “*praise*” with gratitude, confidence, exultation; “*him*” above all other helpers, though now afflicting me.

Verse 5.—“*Health of my countenance,*” removing that which mars it—sin, shame, fear, care, sorrow, weakness, etc.