

PSALM CXXXI.

TITLE.—A Song of Degrees of David. *It is both by David and of David : he is the author and the subject of it, and many incidents of his life may be employed to illustrate it. Comparing all the Psalms to gems, we should liken this to a pearl : how beautifully it will adorn the neck of patience. It is one of the shortest Psalms to read, but one of the longest to learn. It speaks of a young child, but it contains the experience of a man in Christ. Lowliness and humility are here seen in connection with a sanctified heart, a will subdued to the mind of God, and a hope looking to the Lord alone. Happy is the man who can without falsehood use these words as his own ; for he wears about him the likeness of his Lord, who said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." The Psalm is in advance of all the Songs of Degrees which have preceded it ; for lowliness is one of the highest attainments in the divine life. There are also steps in this Song of Degrees : it is a short ladder, if we count the words ; but yet it rises to a great height, reaching from deep humility to fixed confidence. Le Blanc thinks that this is a song of the Israelites who returned from Babylon with humbled hearts, weaned from their idols. At any rate, after any spiritual captivity let it be the expression of our hearts.*

EXPOSITION.

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty : neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

2 Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother : my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

3 Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever.

1. "*LORD, my heart is not haughty.*" The Psalm deals with the Lord, and is a solitary colloquy with him, not a discourse before men. We have a sufficient audience when we speak with the Lord, and we may say to him many things which were not proper for the ears of men. The holy man makes his appeal to Jehovah, who alone knows the heart : a man should be slow to do this upon any matter, for the Lord is not to be trifled with ; and when anyone ventures on such an appeal he should be sure of his case. He begins with his heart, for that is the centre of our nature, and if pride be there it defiles everything ; just as mire in the spring causes mud in all the streams. It is a grand thing for a man to know his own heart so as to be able to speak before the Lord about it. It is beyond all things deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it ? Who can know it unless taught by the Spirit of God ? It is a still greater thing if, upon searching himself thoroughly, a man can solemnly protest unto the Omniscient One that his heart is not haughty : that is to say, neither proud in his opinion of himself, contemptuous to others, nor self-righteous before the Lord ; neither boastful of the past, proud of the present, nor ambitious for the future. "*Nor mine eyes lofty.*" What the heart desires the eyes look for. Where the desires run the glances usually follow. This holy man felt that he did not seek after elevated places where he might gratify his self-esteem, neither did he look down upon others as being his inferiors. A proud look the Lord hates ; and in this all men are agreed with him ; yea, even the proud themselves hate haughtiness in the gestures of others. Lofty eyes are so generally hateful that haughty men have been known to avoid the manners natural to the proud in order to escape the ill-will of their fellows. The pride which apes humility always takes care to cast its eyes downward, since every man's consciousness tells him that contemptuous glances are the sure ensigns of a boastful spirit. In Psalm cxxi. David lifted up his eyes to the hills ; but here he declares that they were not lifted up in any other sense. When the heart is right, and the eyes are right, the whole man is on the road to a healthy and happy condition. Let us take care that we do not use the language of this Psalm unless, indeed, it be true as to ourselves ; for there is no worse pride than that which claims humility when it does not possess it.

"Neither do I exercise myself in great matters." As a private man he did not usurp the power of the king or devise plots against him : he minded his own business, and left others to mind theirs. As a thoughtful man he did not pry into things unrevealed ; he was not speculative, self-conceited or opinionated. As a secular person he did not thrust himself into the priesthood as Saul had done before him, and as Uzziah did after him. It is well so to exercise ourselves unto godliness that we know our true sphere, and diligently keep to it. Many through wishing to be great have failed to be good : they were not content to adorn the lowly stations which the Lord appointed them, and so they have rushed at grandeur and power, and found destruction where they looked for honour. "*Or in things too high for me.*" High things may suit others who are of greater stature, and yet they may be quite unfit for us. A man does well to know his own size. Ascertaining his own capacity, he will be foolish if he aims at that which is beyond his reach, straining himself, and thus injuring himself. Such is the vanity of many men that if a work be within their range they despise it, and think it beneath them : the only service which they are willing to undertake is that to which they have never been called, and for which they are by no means qualified. What a haughty heart must he have who will not serve God at all unless he may be trusted with five talents at the least ! His looks are indeed lofty who disdains to be a light among his poor friends and neighbours here below, but demands to be created a star of the first magnitude to shine among the upper ranks, and to be admired by gazing crowds. It is just on God's part that those who wish to be everything should end in being nothing. It is a righteous retribution from God when every matter turns out to be too great for the man who would only handle great matters, and every thing proves to be too high for the man who exercised himself in things too high for him. Lord, make us lowly, keep us lowly, fix us for ever in lowliness. Help us to be in such a case that the confession of this verse may come from our lips as a truthful utterance which we dare make before the Judge of all the earth.

2. "*Surely I have behaved and quieted myself.*" The original bears somewhat of the form of an oath, and therefore our translators exhibited great judgment in introducing the word "*surely*"; it is not a literal version, but it correctly gives the meaning. The Psalmist had been upon his best behaviour, and had smoothed down the roughnesses of his self-will ; by holy effort he had mastered his own spirit, so that towards God he was not rebellious, even as towards man he was not haughty. It is no easy thing to quiet yourself : sooner may a man calm the sea, or rule the wind, or tame a tiger, than quiet himself. We are clamorous, uneasy, petulant ; and nothing but grace can make us quiet under afflictions, irritations, and disappointments. "*As a child that is weaned of his mother.*" He had become as subdued and content as a child whose weaning is fully accomplished. The Easterns put off the time of weaning far later than we do, and we may conclude that the process grows none the easier by being postponed. At last there must be an end to the suckling period, and then a battle begins : the child is denied his comfort, and therefore frets and worries, flies into pets, or sinks into sulks. It is facing its first great sorrow, and it is in sore distress. Yet time brings not only alleviations, but the ending of the conflict ; the boy ere long is quite content to find his nourishment at the table with his brothers, and he feels no lingering wish to return to those dear fountains from which he once sustained his life. He is no longer angry with his mother, but buries his head in that very bosom after which he pined so grievously : he is weaned *on* his mother rather than *from* her.

"My soul doth like a weanling rest,
I cease to weep ;
So mother's lap, though dried her breast,
Can lull to sleep."

To the weaned child his mother is his comfort though she has denied him comfort. It is a blessed mark of growth out of spiritual infancy when we can forego the joys which once appeared to be essential, and can find our solace in him who denies them to us : then we behave manfully, and every childish complaint is hushed. If the Lord removes our dearest delight we bow to his will without a murmuring thought ; in fact, we find a delight in giving up our delight. This is no spontaneous fruit of nature, but a well-tended product of divine grace : it grows out of humility and lowliness, and it is the stem upon which peace blooms as a fair flower. "*My soul is even as a weaned child*"; or it may be read, "as a weaned child on me my

soul," as if his soul leaned upon him in mute submission, neither boasting nor complaining. It is not every child of God who arrives at this weanedness speedily. Some are sucklings when they ought to be fathers; others are hard to wean, and cry, and fight, and rage against their heavenly parent's discipline. When we think ourselves safely through the weaning, we sadly discover that the old appetites are rather wounded than slain, and we begin crying again for the breasts which we had given up. It is easy to begin shouting before we are out of the wood, and no doubt hundreds have sung this Psalm long before they have understood it. Blessed are those afflictions which subdue our affections, which wean us from self-sufficiency, which educate us into Christian manliness, which teach us to love God not merely when he comforts us, but even when he tries us. Well might the sacred poet repeat his figure of the weaned child; it is worthy of admiration and imitation; it is doubly desirable and difficult of attainment. Such weanedness from self springs from the gentle humility declared in the former verse, and partly accounts for its existence. If pride is gone, submission will be sure to follow; and, on the other hand, if pride is to be driven out, self must also be vanquished.

3. "Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever." See how lovingly a man who is weaned from self thinks of others! David thinks of his people, and loses himself in his care for Israel. How he prizes the grace of hope! He has given up the things which are seen, and therefore he values the treasures which are not seen except by the eyes of hope. There is room for the largest hope when self is gone, ground for eternal hope when transient things no longer hold the mastery of our spirits. This verse is the lesson of experience: a man of God who had been taught to renounce the world and live upon the Lord alone, here exhorts all his friends and companions to do the same. He found it a blessed thing to live by hope, and therefore he would have all his kinsmen do the same. Let all the nation hope, let all their hope be in Jehovah, let them at once begin hoping "from henceforth," and let them continue hoping "for ever." Weaning takes the child out of a temporary condition into a state in which he will continue for the rest of his life: to rise above the world is to enter upon a heavenly existence which can never end. When we cease to hanker for the world we begin hoping in the Lord. O Lord, as a parent weans a child, so do thou wean me, and then shall I fix all my hope on thee alone.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN SAYINGS.

Whole Psalm.—This little song is inscribed לְקוֹי because it is like an echo of the answer (2 Sam. vi. 21 sq.) with which David repelled the mocking observation of Michal when he danced before the Ark in a linen ephod, and therefore not in kingly attire, but in the common raiment of the priests. *I esteem myself still less than I now show it, and I appear base in mine own eyes.* In general David is the model of the state of mind which the poet expresses here. He did not push himself forward, but suffered himself to be drawn forth out of seclusion. He did not take possession of the throne violently; but after Samuel has anointed him, he willingly and patiently traverses the long, thorny, circuitous way of deep abasement, until he receives from God's hand that which God's promise had assured to him. The persecution by Saul lasted about ten years, and his kingship in Hebron, at first only incipient, seven years and a half. He left it entirely to God to remove Saul and Ishbosheth. He let Shimei curse. He left Jerusalem before Absalom. Submission to God's guidance, resignation to his dispensations, contentment with that which was allotted to him, are the distinguishing traits of his noble character.—*Franz Delitzsch.*

Whole Psalm.—Psalm cxxx. is a Song of Forgiveness; Psalm cxxx. is a Song of Humility: the former celebrates the blessedness of the man whose transgressions are pardoned; the latter celebrates the blessedness of the man who is of a meek and lowly spirit. Forgiveness *should* humble us. Forgiveness implies sin; and should not the sinner clothe himself with humility? and when not for any desert of his, but simply by the free grace of Heaven, his sins have been pardoned, should he not bind the garments of humility still more closely about him? The man who

is of a nature at once sincere and sweet, will be even more humbled by the sense of an undeserved forgiveness than by the memory of the sins from which it has cleansed him. Very fitly, therefore, does the Psalm of humility follow the Psalm which sings of the Divine lovingkindness and tender mercy.—*Samuel Cox.*

Whole Psalm.—This Psalm, which records the meek and humble spirit of those who are the true worshippers of the Temple, doubtless belongs, as its title announces, to the time of David. It is exactly in the spirit of that humble thanksgiving made by him, after the divine revelation by Nathan of the future blessings of his posterity (1 Chron. xxii. 9—11); and forms a most appropriate introduction to the following Psalm, the theme of which is evidently the dedication of the Temple.—*John Jebb.*

Verse 1.—“*LORD, my heart is not haughty.*” For the truth of his plea he appealeth to God; and from all those who are affected like David, God will accept of the appeal.

Firstly. He could in truth of heart appeal to God: “*LORD, my heart is not haughty.*” He appealeth to him who knoweth all things. “Lord, from whom nothing is hid, thou knowest that this is the very disposition of my soul. If I have anything, it is from thee; it is thy providence which brought me from following the ewes great with young to feed and govern thy people.” Such a holy man would not rashly invoke God, and take his holy name in vain; but knowing his integrity, durst call God to witness. The saints are wont to do so upon like occasions; as Peter (John xxi. 17); “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.” They know they have a God that will not be deceived with any shows, and that he knoweth and approveth them for such as he findeth them to be.

Secondly. From those that are affected like David, God will accept the appeal; for in the account of God we are that which we sincerely desire and endeavour to be, and that which is the general course and tenor of our lives, though there be some intermixture of failing. David saith, “*LORD, my heart is not haughty*”; and yet he was not altogether free from pride. His profession respecteth his sincere purpose and constant endeavour, and the predominant disposition of his soul. God himself confirmeth such appeals by his own testimony: 1 Kings xv. 5, “My servant David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, neither departed from all that which he had commanded him, save only in the matter of Uriah” By all this it is shown that the plea of sincerity is allowed by God, though there be some mixture of failings and weaknesses.

Thirdly. Is not this boasting like the Pharisee? Luke xviii. 9, “God, I thank thee, I am not like other men.” If David were thus humble, why doth he speak of it? Is he not guilty of pride while he seemeth to speak against pride?

This is spoken either as, (1) A necessary vindication; or (2) A necessary instruction. 1. As a necessary vindication against the censures and calumnies of his adversaries. Saul’s courtiers accused him as aspiring after the kingdom; yea, his own brother taxed him with pride when he came first abroad: 1 Sam. xvii. 28, “I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.” If his brother would calumniate his actions, much more might others. Now it is for the honour of God that his children, as they would not commit a fault, so they should not be under the suspicion of it; therefore he appealeth to God. 2. A necessary instruction; for whatsoever David said or wrote here, he said or wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that Israel may learn how to hope in God. Herein David is a notable pattern of duty both to superiors and inferiors.—*Thomas Manton.*

Verse 1.—“*My heart is not haughty.*” Albeit pride is a common vice, which attendeth vain man in every degree of excellency and supposed worth in him, yet the grace of God is able to keep humble a wise, rich, and potent man, yea, to keep humble a king and conqueror; for it is no less a person than David who saith here, “*Lord, my heart is not haughty.*”—*David Dickson.*

Verse 1.—“*Nor mine eyes lofty.*” Pride has its seat in the heart; but its principal expression is in the eye. The eye is the mirror of the soul; and from it mental and moral characteristics may be ascertained, with no small degree of precision. What a world of meaning is sometimes concentrated in a single glance! But of all the passions, pride is most clearly revealed in the eyes. There can scarcely be a mistake here. We are all familiar with a class of phrases, which run in pairs. We speak of sin and misery; holiness and happiness; peace and prosperity; war and desolation. Among these may be numbered, the proud heart and the haughty

look. "There is a generation, Oh, how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up." "Him that hath an high look and a proud heart I will not suffer." . . . A proud look is one of the seven things which are an abomination unto the Lord. It is said of him, "Thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks." And hence David makes the acknowledgment: Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that pride has no existence in my heart. Thou knowest that no pride flashes forth from mine eyes.—*N. M'Michael*.

Verse 1.—"Nor mine eyes lofty." He had neither a scornful nor an aspiring look. "My eyes are not lofty," either to look with envy upon those that are above me, or to look with disdain upon those that are below me. Where there is a proud heart, there is commonly a proud look (Prov. vi. 17); but the humble publican will not so much as lift up his eyes.—*Matthew Henry*.

Verse 1.—"Neither have I occupied myself," etc. One cannot admire enough the prayer of Anselm, a profound divine of our own country, in the eleventh century. "I do not seek, O Lord, to penetrate thy depths. I by no means think my intellect equal to them: but I long to understand in some degree thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may believe; but I believe, that I may understand."—*N. M'Michael*.

Verse 1.—"Great matters . . . things too high for me." The great and wonderful things meant are God's secret purposes, and sovereign means for their accomplishment, in which man is not called to co-operate, but to acquiesce. As David practised this forbearance by the patient expectation of the kingdom, both before and after the death of Saul, so he here describes it as a characteristic of the chosen people.—*Joseph Addison Alexander*.

Verses 1, 2.—Our Father is our superior; it is fit therefore that we be resigned to his will. "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exod. xx. 12); how much more our heavenly Father! (Heb. xii. 9). See David's spirit in the case: "*LORD, my heart is not haughty,*" etc.: Ps. cxxx. 1, 2. As if he had said, "I will keep within my own sphere; I will not stretch beyond my line, in prescribing to God; but submit to his will, 'as a weaned child,' taken from its dear breasts": intimating that he would wean himself from whatever God removed from him. How patiently did Isaac permit himself to be bound and sacrificed by Abraham! Gen. xxii. 9. And yet he was of age and strength sufficient to have struggled for his life, being twenty-five years old; but that holy young man abhorred the thought of striving with his father. And shall not we resign ourselves to our God and Father in Christ Jesus?—*John Singleton* (—1706), in "*The Morning Exercises*."

Verses 1, 2.—It has always been my aim, and it is my prayer, to have no plan as regards myself; well assured as I am that the place where the Saviour sees meet to place me must ever be the best place for me.—*Robert Murray M'Cheyne*, 1813—1843.

Verse 2.—"Surely I have behaved and quieted myself," etc. Oh, how sapless and insipid doth the world grow to the soul that is making meet for heaven! "I am crucified to the world, and this world to me." Gal. vi. 14. In vain doth this harlot think to allure me by her attractions of profit and pleasure. "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child." There is no more relish in these gaudy things to my palate, than in the white of an egg; everything grows a burden to me, were it not my duty to follow my calling, and be thankful for my enjoyments. Methinks I have my wife, husband, and dearest relations, as if I had none; I weep for outward losses, as if I wept not; rejoice in comforts below as if I rejoiced not (1 Cor. vii. 29, 30); my thoughts are taken up with other objects. The men of the world slight me, many seem to be weary of me, and I am as weary of them. It is none of these earthly things that my heart is set upon; my soul is set on things above, my treasure is in heaven, and I would have my heart there also: I have sent before me all my goods into another country, and am shortly for removing; and when I look about me, I see a bare, empty house, and am ready to say with Monica, What do I here? my father, husband, mother (Jerusalem above), my brethren, sisters, best friends are above. Methinks, I grudge the world any portion of my heart, and think not these temporal visible things worth a cast of my eye compared with things invisible and eternal: 2 Cor. iv. 18.—*Oliver Heywood*, 1629—1702.

Verse 2 (first clause).—"If I have not restrained," or quieted, and compelled to silence, "*my soul*." It is a Hebrew phrase of asseveration and of swearing: as

if he would say, I have thoroughly imposed silence on my soul, that it should be tranquil, and should bear patiently the divinely imposed cross. Just as in the following Psalm we hear a like form of asseveration: "If I will come into the tabernacle of my house," meaning "I will not come," etc.—*Solomon Gesner*.

Verse 2.—"I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned." Weaned from what? Self-sufficiency, self-will, self-seeking. From creatures and the things of the world—not, indeed, as to their use, but as to any dependence upon them for his happiness and portion. . . . Yet this experience is no easy attainment. The very form of expression—"I have behaved and quieted myself," reminds us of some risings which were with difficulty subdued. There is a difference here between Christ and Christians. In him the exercise of grace encountered no adverse principles; but in them it meets with constant opposition. The flesh lusteth against the spirit; and when we would do good, evil is present with us; hence the warfare within. So it is with "the child that is weaned." The task to the mother is trying and troublesome. The infant cries, and seems to sob out his heart. He thinks it very hard in her, and knows not what she means by her seeming cruelty, and the mother's fondness renders all her firmness necessary to keep her at the process; and sometimes she also weeps at the importunity of his dear looks, and big tears, and stretched-out hands. But it must be done, and therefore, though she pities, she perseveres; and after a while he is soothed and satisfied, forgets the breast, and no longer feels even a hankering after his former pleasure. But how is the weaning of the child accomplished? By embittering the member to his lips; by the removal of the object in the absence and concealment of the mother; by the substitution of other food; by the influence of time. So it is with us. We love the world, and it deceives us. We depend on creatures, and they fail us, and pierce us through with many sorrows. We enter forbidden paths, and follow after our lovers; and our way is hedged up with thorns; and we then say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; and now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee." The enjoyment of a greater good subdues the relish of a less. What are the indulgences of sin, or the dissipations of the world to one who is abundantly satisfied with the goodness of God's house, and is made to drink of the river of his pleasures?—*William Jay* (1769—1853), in "*Evening Exercises for the Closet*."

Verse 2.—"As a child that is weaned of his mother." Though the weaned child has not what it would have, or what it naturally most desireth, the milk of the breast—yet it is contented with what the mother giveth—it rests upon her love and provision. So are we to be content with what providence alloweth us: Heb. xiii. 5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have"; and Phil. iv. 11, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Whatever pleaseth our heavenly Father should please us. The child that is put from the breast to a harder diet is yet contented at last. The child doth not prescribe what it will eat, drink or put on. Children are in no care for enlarging possessions, heaping up riches, aspiring after dignities and honours; but meekly take what is provided for them. The child, when it has lost the food which nature provideth for it, is not solicitous, but wholly referreth itself to the mother, hangeth upon the mother. So for everything whatsoever should we depend upon God, refer ourselves to God, and expect all things from him: Ps. lxii. 5, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." With such a simplicity of submission should we rest and depend upon God. Let us take heed of being over wise and provident for ourselves, but let us trust our Father which is in heaven, and refer ourselves to his wise and holy government.—*Thomas Manton*.

Verse 2.—"As a child that is weaned of his mother." Weaned from the world, the riches, honours, pleasures, and profits of it; as well as from nature, from self, from his own righteousness, and all dependence upon it; and as a child that is weaned from the breast wholly depends on its nurse for sustenance, so did he wholly depend upon God, his providence, grace, and strength; and as to the kingdom, he had no more covetous desires after it than a weaned child has to the breast, and was very willing to wait the due time for the enjoyment of it. The Targum has it, "as one weaned on the breasts of its mother, I am strengthened in the law." This is to be understood not of a child whilst weaning, when it is usually peevish, fretful, and froward, but when it is weaned, and is quiet and easy in its mother's arms without the breast.—*John Gill*.

Verse 2.—"My soul is even as a weaned child." In its nature, weanedness of

soul differs essentially from that disgust with the world, to which its ill-usage and meanness sometimes give rise. It is one thing to be angry with the world, or ashamed of it, and another to be weaned from it. Alter the world, ennoble it, and many a proud mind that now despises, would court it. It is different also from that weariness of spirit which generally follows a free indulgence in earthly enjoyments. There is such a thing as wearing out the affections. Solomon appears to have done this at one period of his life. "I have not a wish left," said a well-known sensualist of our own country, who had drunk as deeply as he could drink of the world's cup. "Were all the earth contains spread out before me, I do not know a thing I would take the trouble of putting out my hand to reach."

This weanedness of soul presupposes a power left in the soul of loving and desiring. It is not the destruction of its appetite, but the controlling and changing of it. A weaned child still hungers, but it hungers no more after the food that once delighted it; it is quiet without it; it can feed on other things: so a soul weaned from the world, still pants as much as ever for food and happiness, but it no longer seeks them in worldly things, or desires to do so. There is nothing in the world that it feels necessary for its happiness. This thing in it it loves, and that thing it values; but it knows that it can do without them, and it is ready to do without them whenever God pleases.

Let us inquire now into the sources of this frame of mind—how we get it. One thing is certain—it is not our work. We do not bring ourselves to it. No infant weans itself. The truth is, it is God that must wean us from the world. We shall never leave it of our own accord. It is God's own right hand that must draw us from it. And how? The figure in the text will partly tell us. 1. *By embittering the world to us.* 2. *At other times the Lord removes from us the thing we love.* 3. But he weans us most from the earth by giving us better food.—*Condensed from a Sermon by Charles Bradley, entitled "Weanedness of Soul," 1836.*

Verse 2.—"As a weaned child." That is, meek, modest, humble, submissive, simple, etc. See Matt. xviii. 1, 2, 3, 4.—*Henry Ainsworth, —1622.*

Verse 2.—Here is David's picture of himself . . . Observe, the "child"—which is drawn for us to copy—is "weaned": the process is complete; it has been truly disciplined; the lesson is learned; and now it rests in its "weaning." The whole image expresses a repose which follows a struggle. "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother"; or, more literally, "on his mother"; now content to lie still on the very place of its privation,—“as a child that is weaned on his mother.”

That obedience would be a tame and valueless thing, which was not the consequence of quiet control. A mere apathetic state is the very opposite of obedience that may be truly so called. But this is the point of the similitude,—there has been a distress, and a battle, and a self-victory; and now the stilled will is hushed into submission and contentment; ready to forego what is most liked, and to take just whatever is given it—"a weaned child."

I do not believe that it was ever the intention of God that any man should so merge and lose his will in the Divine, that he should have no distinct will of his own. There have been many who have tried to attain this annihilation of will; and they have made it the great aim and end of life. But the character of the dispensation does not allow it. I do not believe it to be a possible thing; and if it were possible, I do not believe that it would be after the mind of God. It is not man's present relation to his Maker. None of the saints in the Bible did more than submit a strong existing will. The Lord Jesus Christ himself did no more. "What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Not my will, but thine be done." Evidently two things—"My will," "Thy will." It was an instantly and perfectly subjugated will,—nevertheless, a will.

And this is what is required of us; and what the nature of our manhood, and the provisions of our religion have to assume. A will, decidedly a will: the more decided the will, the stronger the character, and the greater the man. But a will that is always being given up, separated, conformed, constantly, increasingly conformed. The unity of the two wills is heaven.—*Condensed from a Sermon by James Vaughan.*

Verse 3.—"Let Israel hope in the Lord." After the example, therefore, of the King of Israel, who thus demeaned himself in his afflictions, lowly, contented, and

resigned, casting all his care upon the Father who cared for him, and patiently waiting his time for deliverance and salvation; after this their example and pattern, let his faithful people hope and trust, not in themselves, their wisdom, or their power, but in Jehovah alone, who will not fail to exalt them, as he hath already exalted their Redeemer, if they do but follow his steps.—*George Horne.*

Verse 3.—“*Let Israel hope in the LORD.*” Though David could himself wait patiently and quietly for the crown designed him, yet perhaps Israel, the people whose darling he was, would be ready to attempt something in favour of him before the time; he therefore endeavours to quiet them too, and bids them “*hope in the LORD*” that *they* should see a happy change of the face of affairs in due time. Thus “it is good to hope, and quietly to wait for the salvation of the Lord.”—*Matthew Henry.*

Verse 3.—“*Let Israel hope in the LORD,*” etc. Remember that he is *Jehovah*. 1. Wise to plan. 2. Good to purpose. 3. Strong to execute, and that he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. 4. Trust “*from henceforth.*” If you have not begun before, begin now. 5. And do not be weary; trust “*for ever.*” Your case can never be out of the reach of God’s power and mercy.—*Adam Clarke.*

HINTS TO PREACHERS.

Verse 1.—*Humility.* I. A profession which ought to befit every child of God. II. A profession which nevertheless many children of God cannot truthfully make. Point out the prevalence of pride and ambition even in the church. III. A profession which can only be justified through the possession of the spirit of Christ (Matt. xi. 29, 30; xviii. 1—5).—*C. A. D.*

Verse 2.—The soul is as a weaned child: I. In conversion. II. In sanctification, which is a continual weaning from the world and sin. III. In bereavement. IV. In affliction of every kind. V. In death.—*G. R.*

Verse 2.—I. The soul has to be weaned as well as the body. 1. It is first nourished by others. 2. It is afterwards thrown upon its own resources. II. The soul is weaned from one thing by giving its attention to another. 1. From worldly things by heavenly. 2. From self-righteousness by the righteousness of another. 3. From sin to holiness. 4. From the world to Christ. 5. From self to God.—*G. R.*

Verse 2.—I. A desirable condition: “As a weaned child.” II. A difficult task—to subdue and quiet self. III. A delightful result: “Surely . . . my soul is as a weaned child.”—*W. H. J. P.*

Verse 2.—I. Soul-fretfulness: weak, dishonourable, rebellious. II. Soul-government; throne often abdicated; God gives each the sceptre of self-rule; necessary to successful life. III. Soul-quiet; its sweetness; its power. Come, Holy Spirit, breathe it upon us!—*W. B. H.*

Verse 2.—See “*Spurgeon’s Sermons,*” No. 1,210: “*The Weaned Child.*”

Verses 2, 3.—The weaned child hoping in the Lord: I. The first weaning of the soul, the grand event of a man’s history. II. The joy in the Lord that springs up in every weaned soul: “My soul is even as a weaned child; let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.” III. The daily weaning of the soul through life. IV. The earnest desires and the fruitful work of every weaned soul.—*A. Moody Stuart.*

Verse 3.—I. The encouragement to hope in God. 1. As a covenant God, “the God of Israel.” 2. As a covenant-keeping God: “From henceforth,” etc. II. The effect of this hope. 1. The humility and dependence in the first verse. 2. The contentment and weaning in the second verse. Would Israel be thus humble and obedient as a little child? “Let Israel hope,” etc.—*G. R.*

Verse 3.—*The Voice of Hope heard in the Calm.* I. Calmed souls appreciate God. Quiet favours contemplation. God’s majesty, perfection, and praise so discovered. II. Calmed souls confide in God; seen to be so worthy of trust. III. Calmed souls look fearlessly into eternity; “from henceforth and for ever.”—*W. B. H.*

Verse 3.—*Hope on, hope ever.* I. For the past warrants such confidence. II. For the present demands such confidence. III. For the future will justify such confidence.—*W. H. J. P.*