

PSALM CXXXVIII.

TITLE.—A Psalm of David. *This Psalm is wisely placed. Whoever edited and arranged these sacred poems, he had an eye to apposition and contrast; for if in Ps. cxxxvii. we see the need of silence before revilers, here we see the excellence of a brave confession. There is a time to be silent, lest we cast pearls before swine; and there is a time to speak openly, lest we be found guilty of cowardly non-confession. The Psalm is evidently of a Davidic character, exhibiting all the fidelity, courage, and decision of that King of Israel and Prince of Psalmists. Of course the critics have tried to rend the authorship from David on account of the mention of the temple, though it so happens that in one of the Psalms which is allowed to be David's the same word occurs. Many modern critics are to the word of God what blow-flies are to the food of men: they cannot do any good, and unless relentlessly driven away they do great harm.*

DIVISION.—*In full confidence David is prepared to own his God before the gods of the heathen, or before angels or rulers (1—3); he declares that he will instruct and convert kings and nations, till on every highway men shall sing the praises of the Lord (4 and 5). Having thus spoken, he utters his personal confidence in Jehovah, who will help his lowly servant, and preserve him from all the malice of wrathful foes.*

EXPOSITION.

I WILL praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

1. "*I will praise thee with my whole heart.*" His mind is so taken up with God that he does not mention his name: to him there is no other God, and Jehovah is so perfectly realized and so intimately known, that the Psalmist, in addressing him, no more thinks of mentioning his name than we should do if we were speaking to a father or a friend. He sees God with his mind's eye, and simply addresses him with the pronoun "thee." He is resolved to praise the Lord, and to do it with the whole force of his life, even with his whole heart. He would not submit to act as one under restraint, because of the opinions of others; but in the presence of the opponents of the living God he would be as hearty in worship as if all were friends and would cheerfully unite with him. If others do not praise the Lord, there is all the more reason why we should do so, and should do so with enthusiastic eagerness. We need a broken heart to mourn our own sins, but a whole heart to praise the Lord's perfections. If ever our heart is whole and wholly occupied with one thing, it should be when we are praising the Lord. "*Before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.*" Why should these idols rob Jehovah of his praises? The Psalmist will not for a moment suspend his songs because there are images before him, and their foolish worshippers might not approve of his music. I believe David referred to the false gods of the neighbouring nations, and the deities of the surviving Canaanites. He was not pleased that such gods were set up; but he intended to express at once his contempt of *them*, and his own absorption in the worship of the living Jehovah by continuing most earnestly to sing wherever he might be. It would be paying these dead idols too much respect to cease singing because they were perched aloft. In these days when new religions are daily excogitated, and

new gods are set up, it is well to know how to act. Bitterness is forbidden, and controversy is apt to advertise the heresy ; the very best method is to go on personally worshipping the Lord with unvarying zeal, singing with heart and voice his royal praises. Do they deny the Divinity of our Lord ? Let us the more fervently adore him. Do they despise the atonement ? Let us the more constantly proclaim it. Had half the time spent in councils and controversies been given to praising the Lord, the church would have been far sounder and stronger than she is at this day. The Hallelujah Legion will win the day. Praising and singing are our armour against the idolatries of heresy, our comfort under the depression caused by insolent attacks upon the truth, and our weapons for defending the gospel. Faith when displayed in cheerful courage, has about it a sacred contagion : others learn to believe in the Most High when they see his servant

" Calm 'mid the bewildering cry,
Confident of victory."

2. "*I will worship toward thy holy temple,*" or the place of God's dwelling, where the ark abode. He would worship God in God's own way. The Lord had ordained a centre of unity, a place of sacrifice, a house of his indwelling ; and David accepted the way of worship enjoined by revelation. Even so, the true-hearted believer of these days must not fall into the will-worship of superstition, or the wild worship of scepticism, but reverently worship as the Lord himself prescribes. The idol gods had their temples ; but David averts his glance from them, and looks earnestly to the spot chosen of the Lord for his own sanctuary. We are not only to adore the true God, but to do so in his own appointed way : the Jew looked to the temple, we are to look to Jesus, the living temple of the Godhead. "*And praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth.*" Praise would be the main part of David's worship ; the name or character of God the great object of his song ; and the special point of his praise the grace and truth which shone so conspicuously in that name. The person of Jesus is the temple of the Godhead, and therein we behold the glory of the Father, "full of grace and truth." It is upon these two points that the name of Jehovah is at this time assailed—his grace and his truth. He is said to be too stern, too terrible, and therefore "modern thought" displaces the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and sets up an effeminate deity of its own making. As for us, we firmly believe that God is love, and that in the summing up of all things it will be seen that hell itself is not inconsistent with the beneficence of Jehovah, but is, indeed, a necessary part of his moral government now that sin has intruded into the universe. True believers hear the thunders of his justice, and yet they do not doubt his lovingkindness. Especially do we delight in God's great love to his own elect, such as he showed to Israel as a race, and more especially to David and his seed when he entered into covenant with him. Concerning this there is abundant room for praise. But not only do men attack the lovingkindness of God, but the truth of God is at this time assailed on all sides ; some doubt the truth of the inspired record as to its histories, others challenge the doctrines, many sneer at the prophecies ; in fact, the infallible word of the Lord is at this time treated as if it were the writing of imposters, and only worthy to be carped at. The swine are trampling on the pearls at this time, and nothing restrains them ; nevertheless, the pearls are pearls still, and shall yet shine about our Monarch's brow. We sing the lovingkindness and truth of the God of the Old Testament,—"*the God of the whole earth shall he be called.*" David before the false gods first sang, then worshipped, and then proclaimed the grace and truth of Jehovah ; let us do the same before the idols of the New Theology.

"*For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*" The word of promise made to David was in his eyes more glorious than all else that he had seen of the Most High. Revelation excels creation in the clearness, definiteness, and fulness of its teaching. The name of the Lord in nature is not so easily read as in the Scriptures, which are a revelation in human language, specially adapted to the human mind, treating of human need, and of a Saviour who appeared in human nature to redeem humanity. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the divine word will not pass away, and in this respect especially it has a pre-eminence over every other form of manifestation. Moreover, the Lord lays all the rest of his name under tribute to his word : his wisdom, power, love, and all his other attributes combine to carry out his word. It is his word which creates, sustains, quickens, enlightens, and comforts. As a word of command it is supreme ; and in the person of the

incarnate Word it is set above all the works of God's hands. The sentence in the text is wonderfully full of meaning. We have collected a vast mass of literature upon it, but space will not allow us to put it all into our notes. Let us adore the Lord who has spoken to us by his word, and by his Son; and in the presence of unbelievers let us both praise his holy name and extol his holy word.

3. "*In the day when I cried thou answeredst me.*" No proof is so convincing as that of experience. No man doubts the power of prayer after he has received an answer of peace to his supplication. It is the distinguishing mark of the true and living God that he hears the pleadings of his people, and answers them; the gods hear not and answer not, but Jehovah's memorial is—"the God that heareth prayer." There was some special day in which David cried more vehemently than usual; he was weak, wounded, worried, and his heart was weary; then like a child he "cried,"—cried unto his Father. It was a bitter, earnest, eager prayer, as natural and as plaintive as the cry of a babe. The Lord answered it; but what answer can there be to a cry?—to a mere inarticulate wail of grief? Our heavenly Father is able to interpret tears, and cries, and he replies to their inner sense in such a way as fully meets the case. The answer came in the same day as the cry ascended: so speedily does prayer rise to heaven, so quickly does mercy return to earth. The statement of this sentence is one which all believers can make, and as they can substantiate it with many facts, they ought boldly to publish it, for it is greatly to God's glory. Well might the Psalmist say, "I will worship" when he felt bound to say "thou answeredst me." Well might he glory before the idols and their worshippers when he had answers to prayer to look back upon. This also is our defence against modern heresies: we cannot forsake the Lord, for he has heard our prayers.

"*And strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.*" This was a true answer to his prayer. If the burden was not removed, yet strength was given wherewith to bear it, and this is an equally effective method of help. It may not be best for us that the trial should come to an end; it may be far more to our advantage that by its pressure we should learn patience. Sweet are the uses of adversity, and our prudent Father in heaven will not deprive us of those benefits. Strength imparted to the soul is an inestimable boon; it means courage, fortitude, assurance, heroism. By his word and Spirit the Lord can make the trembler brave, the sick whole, the weary bright. This soul-might will continue: the man having been strengthened for one emergency remains vigorous for life, and is prepared for all future labours and sufferings; unless, indeed, he throw away his force by unbelief, or pride, or some other sin. When God strengthens, none can weaken. Then is our soul strong indeed when the Lord infuses might into us.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.

4. "*All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.*" Kings have usually small care to hear the word of the Lord; but King David feels assured that if they do hear it they will feel its power. A little piety goes a long way in courts; but brighter days are coming, in which rulers will become hearers and worshippers: may the advent of such happy times be hastened. What an assembly!—"all the kings of the earth!" What a purpose! Gathered to hear the words of Jehovah's mouth. What a preacher! David himself rehearses the words of Jehovah. What praise! when they all in happy union lift up their songs unto the Lord. Kings are as gods below, and they do well when they worship the God above. The way of conversion for kings is the same as for ourselves: faith to them also cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Happy are those who can cause the word of the Lord to penetrate palaces; for the occupants of thrones are usually the last to know the joyful sounds of the gospel. David, the king, cared for kings' souls, and it will be wise for each man to look first after those who are of his own order. He went to his work of testimony with full assurance of success: he meant to speak only the words of Jehovah's mouth, and he felt sure that the kings would hear and praise Jehovah.

5. "*Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD.*" Here is a double wonder—kings in God's ways, and kings singing there. Let a man once know the ways of

Jehovah, and he will find therein abundant reason for song ; but the difficulty is to bring the great ones of the earth into ways so little attractive to the carnal mind. Perhaps when the Lord sends us a King David to preach, we shall yet see monarchs converted and hear their voices raised in devout adoration. "*For great is the glory of the Lord.*" This glory shall overshadow all the greatness and glory of all kings : they shall be stirred by a sight of it to obey and adore. O that Jehovah's glory were revealed even now ! O that the blind eyes of men could once behold it, then their hearts would be subdued to joyful reverence. David, under a sense of Jehovah's glory, exclaimed, " I will sing " (verse 1), and here he represents the kings as doing the same thing.

6 Though the LORD *be* high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly : but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me : thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me : thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever : forsake not the works of thine own hands.

6. "*Though the Lord be high.*" In greatness, dignity, and power, Jehovah is higher than the highest. His nature is high above the comprehension of his creatures, and his glory even exceeds the loftiest soarings of imagination. "*Yet hath he respect unto the lowly.*" He views them with pleasure, thinks of them with care, listens to their prayers, and protects them from evil. Because they think little of themselves he thinks much of them. They reverence him, and he respects them. They are low in their own esteem, and he makes them high in his esteem. "*But the proud he knoweth afar off.*" He does not need to come near them in order to discover their utter vanity : a glance from afar reveals to him their emptiness and offensiveness. He has no fellowship with them, but views them from a distance ; he is not deceived, but knows the truth about them, despite their blustering ; he has no respect unto them, but utterly abhors them. To a Cain's sacrifice, a Pharaoh's promise, a Rabshakeh's threat, and a Pharisee's prayer, the Lord has no respect. Nebuchadnezzar, when far off from God, cried, " Behold this great Babylon which I have builded ; " but the Lord knew him, and sent him grazing with cattle. Proud men boast loudly of their culture and " the freedom of thought," and even dare to criticize their Maker : but he knows them from afar, and will keep them at arm's length in this life, and shut them up in hell in the next.

7. "*Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me.*" If I am walking there now, or shall be doing so in years to come, I have no cause for fear ; for God is with me, and will give me new life. When we are somewhat in trouble it is bad enough, but it is worse to penetrate into the centre of that dark continent and traverse its midst : yet in such a case the believer makes progress, for he walks ; he keeps to a quiet pace, for he does no more than walk ; and he is not without the best of company, for his God is near to pour fresh life into him. It is a happy circumstance that, if God be away at any other time, yet he is pledged to be with us in trying hours : " when thou passest through the rivers I will be with thee." He is in a blessed condition who can confidently use the language of David,— " thou wilt revive me." He shall not make his boast of God in vain : he shall be kept alive, and made more alive than ever. How often has the Lord quickened us by our sorrows ! Are they not his readiest means of exciting to fulness of energy the holy life which dwells within us ? If we receive reviving, we need not regret affliction. When God revives us, trouble will never harm us. "*Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.*" This is the fact which would revive fainting David. Our foes fall when the Lord comes to deal with them ; he makes short work of the enemies of his people,—with one hand he routs them. His wrath soon quenches their wrath ; his hand stays their hand. Adversaries may be many, and malicious, and mighty ; but our glorious Defender has only to stretch out his arm and their armies vanish. The sweet singer rehearses his assurance of salvation, and sings of it in the ears of the Lord, addressing him with this confident language. He will be saved,—saved dexterously, decidedly, divinely ; he has no doubt about it. God's right hand cannot forget its cunning ; Jerusalem is his chief joy, and he will defend his own elect.

8. "*The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me.*" All my interests are safe in Jehovah's hands.

"The work which his goodness began,
The arm of his strength will complete;
His promise is yea and Amen,
And never was forfeited yet."

God is concerned in all that concerns his servants. He will see to it that none of their precious things shall fail of completion; their life, their strength, their hopes, their graces, their pilgrimage, shall each and all be perfected. Jehovah himself will see to this; and therefore it is most sure. "*Thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever.*" The refrain of the former Psalm is in his ears, and he repeats it as his own personal conviction and consolation. The first clause of the verse is the assurance of faith, and this second one reaches to the full assurance of understanding. God's work in us will abide unto perfection because God's mercy towards us thus abideth. "*Forsake not the works of thine own hands.*" Our confidence does not cause us to live without prayer, but encourages us to pray all the more. Since we have it written upon our hearts that God will perfect his work in us, and we see it also written in Scripture that his mercy changeth not, we with holy earnestness entreat that we may not be forsaken. If there be anything good in us, it is the work of God's own hands: will he leave it? Why has he wrought so much in us if he means to give us up?—it will be a sheer waste of effort. He who has gone so far will surely persevere with us to the end. Our hope for the final perseverance of the believer lies in the final perseverance of the believer's God. If the Lord begins to build, and does not finish, it will not be to his honour. He will have a desire to the work of his hands, for he knows what it has cost him already, and he will not throw away a vessel upon which he has expended so much of labour and skill. Therefore do we praise him with our whole heart, even in the presence of those who depart from his Holy Word, and set up another God and another gospel; which are not another, but there be some that trouble us.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN SAYINGS.

Psalms cxxxviii.—cxlv.—These eight Psalms are composed in the *first* person, and they follow very happily after the fifteen "*Songs of Up-goings,*" and the three Psalms of praise uttered by the chorus of those who have *gone up* to Sion. Those Psalms were the united utterances of national devotion. These eight Psalms are the devout Israelite's Manual of *private* prayer and praise.—*Christopher Wordsworth.*

Whole Psalm.—This is the first of a series of eight Psalms (cxxxviii.—cxlv.), probably the last composed by David, a kind of commentary on the great Messianic promise in 2 Sam. vii. They are found in this part of the Psalter, in consequence of having been made the basis, or rather the body, of a system or series (cxxxv.—cxlvi.) by a later writer.—*Joseph Addison Alexander.*

Whole Psalm.—If this Psalm refers to the promise in 2 Sam. vii., there can be no doubt of the correctness of the superscription, which ascribes it to David. For he, on whom the promise has been conferred, himself stands forth as the speaker. Proof also of David's authorship is found in the union, so characteristic of him, of bold courage, see especially verse 3, and deep humility, see verse 6. And in proof of the same comes, finally, the near relationship in which it stands with the other Psalms of David, especially those which likewise refer to the promise of the everlasting kingdom; and with David's thanksgiving in 2 Sam. vii., the conclusion of which remarkably agrees with the conclusion of our Psalm: "And now, Lord God, the word which thou hast spoken upon thy servant and upon his house, that fulfil even to eternity, and do as thou hast spoken."—*E. W. Hengstenberg.*

Verse 1.—"I will praise thee with my whole heart." It is a part of our thankfulness to engage our heart to praise God in time to come, since we find that all the thanks we can give for the present are short of our duty or desire to praise him: "I will praise thee," saith David. Sometimes the believer will find his heart set at liberty

In God's worship, which at another time he will find to be in bands, and then he should take the opportunity of an enlarged heart to run in the way of God's service, as David doth here: "*I will praise thee with my whole heart.*"—*David Dickson.*

Verse 1.—"*I will praise thee.*" Up, dear soul! What though thou hast once complained like Israel of thy captivity in Babylon, Ps. cxxxvii. 1, yet now sing once more a song of joy to the Lord. Thou hast been pressed like a cluster of grapes, now give forth thy ripe juice.—*Christoph Starke.*

Verse 1.—"*I will praise thee.*" Alas, for that capital crime of the Lord's people—barrerness in praises! Oh, how fully I am persuaded that a line of praises is worth a leaf of prayer, and an hour of praises is worth a day of fasting and mourning!—*John Livingstone, 1603—1672.*

Verse 1.—"*With my whole heart.*" This expression, as in Ps. ix. 1, points to the surpassing greatness of the benefit received, which filled the whole heart with thankfulness, and did not proceed, as it were, from some particular corner of it. It corresponds also to the greatness of the benefaction, in the expression, "*before the gods,*"—demanding of these, whether they would verify their godhead by pointing to any such boon conferred by them on their servants. The benefit which could afford such a demonstration, and give occasion and ground for raillery, must have been a surpassingly great one.—*E. W. Hengstenberg.*

Verse 1.—"*Before the gods.*" There is much diversity in the meaning assigned to "*gods*" in this verse. It may mean literally in an idolatrous country, in the very temples of false gods, as so many Christian martyrs bore testimony to the faith. The LXX., Vulgate, Ethiopic, and Arabic translate *angels*. The Chaldee has *judges*, the Syriac *kings*, and the earlier Greek fathers explain it as a reference to the choirs of *Priests and Levites* in the Temple.—*Zigabenus, in Neale and Littledale.*

Verse 1.—"*Before the gods.*" Some (LXX., Luther, Calvin, etc.) interpret these words of the angels, and compare Ps. xxix. 1; but it is doubtful if the Hebrew word Elohim, used nakedly and without any explanation, can have this meaning: it is also, as it would seem, in this connection, pointless: others (Rabbins, Flamin., Delitzsch, etc.) interpret "the great ones of the earth," and compare verse 4 below, and Pss. lxxxii. 1, cxix. 46, etc.; but this interpretation, too, seems to give no special force to the passage. Probably (Aq., Symm., Jer., etc.) the meaning is, "Before, or in the presence of, the gods of the heathen, *i.e.*, in scorn of, in sight of, the idols, who can do nothing, I will praise Jehovah, who does miracles for me and his people." For a similar expression, see Ps. xxiii. 5, Heb.: see also Pss. xcv. 3, xcvi. 5, for places in which the Hebrew word "*gods*" is used probably for idols.—*Speaker's Commentary.*

Verse 1.—"*Before the gods,*" etc. The Vulgate hath, *in conspectu angelorum*, "*before the angels*"; their presence should awe men and women, and keep them from all dishonesty, evil words, acts, gestures, secret grudging, all discontents and distempers. For as they are rejoiced to discern a good frame of spirit in you, to see you keep that order God hath set in the church and state, to walk as Christians to the honour of God; so they are grieved to see the contrary, and you must answer for your sins against these great officers in the great family of heaven and earth.—*William Greenhill.*

Verse 2.—"*I will worship toward thy holy temple.*" The holy temple was a type and figure of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we find Daniel opening his windows toward the temple, where he prayed three times a day; and we find Jonah saying, "*Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple.*" So looking to Jesus, he is our temple. There is no acceptable worship except through him; but we can offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Then, set the Lord Jesus Christ before your eyes, that you may worship God and draw near to the footstool of mercy through him, that you may offer an acceptable sacrifice, and praise his name for his lovingkindness and for his truth.—*Joseph C. Philpot, 1802—1869.*

Verse 2.—"*Thy holy temple.*" This Psalm is entitled "a Psalm of David," and Calvin considers him to be its author agreeably to the title; but the mention of "the temple" in this verse seems to render such an opinion doubtful. If, however, we translate this word by "mansion," which is the proper rendering of the original—"the mansion of thy sanctity,"—this objection to its composition by David falls to the ground.—*James Anderson's Note to Calvin in loc.*

Verse 2.—"*I will . . . praise thy name for thy lovingkindness.*" There are two

beautiful thoughts brought out here ; one is, " God's condescension in thought ; " the other, " his tenderness in action." These are both included in "*lovingkindness.*" And both of these are shown by God to his own people. He humbleth himself to behold the things of the children of men ; he condescends to men of low estate. Of the blessed Jesus it is said, that " though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich ; " 2 Cor. viii. 9. Who can tell the depths to which God condescends in loving thought ? We are told that the very hairs of our head are all numbered ; and if the hairs of our head, then surely all else beside. God, as the Heavenly Father, takes an interest in everything about his people ; he takes this interest in matters which they think beneath his notice, or of which they, from their ignorance, do not know the importance. The mother may draw whole stores of comfort from a realization of the *condescending thoughtfulness of God*. He will be interested about her babe ; if she commit it to him, he who made the universe will, with his infinite mind, think upon her cradle and the helpless creature that is rocked to sleep therein. The sick man may draw whole stores of comfort from the same source, for he can believe the ONE by whom the body was fearfully and wonderfully made will think over the sufferings of that body, and alleviate them, or give strength for the endurance of them if they must be borne. Condescension of thought marks all the dealings of God with his people. And hard following upon it comes *tenderness in action*. Now this " tenderness in action " is a great part of the lovingkindness of God ; it is meet that a thoughtful mind and tender hand should go together in the perfection of love. God is not only energetic, but tender also in action ; he is the God of the dew-drops, as well as the God of the thunder showers ; the God of the tender grass blade, as much as of the mountain oak. We read of great machines, which are able to crush iron bars, and yet they can touch so gently as not to break the shell of the smallest egg ; as it is with them, so is it with the hand of the Most High ; he can crush a world, and yet bind up a wound. And great need have we of tenderness in our low estate ; a little thing would crush us : we have such bruised and feeble souls, that unless we had One who would deal tenderly with us we must soon be destroyed.—*Philip Bennett Power, in "The 'I Wills' of the Psalms," 1861.*

Verse 2.—"*Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*" His "*word*" being here annexed to "*lovingkindness and truth,*" must needs be that part of his word to which these two are applicable, *i. e.*, his promise, the matter whereof is *mercy or lovingkindness*, and in the performance of which is *truth or fidelity*. And then to " magnify " this " word " of promise seems to signify two things ; 1, the making very great and excellent promises, and then, 2, the performing them most punctually ; and the doing it *above all his name* is promising and performing most superlative mercies above all that is famed or spoken or believed of God. Then thus it will run ; *I will worship, etc., and praise thy name above thy lovingkindness and above thy truth ; i. e.*, it will be too low, too short a compellation, to call thee merciful or veracious, or style thee after any other of thy attributes ; thou art all these, and more than so, "*thou hast magnified thy word,*" given and performed most glorious promises, "*above all thy name,*" above all that men have apprehended or spoken of thee.

This verse and Psalm may easily be interpreted of God's mercies in Christ, so far above what could be famed, or said, or believed, or apprehended of him.—*Condensed from H. Hammond.*

Verse 2.—"*Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*" Beyond all question there are higher and clearer manifestations of himself, of his being, of his perfection, of his purposes in the volume of revelation, than any which his works have disclosed or can disclose. There are very many points in relation to God, of the highest interest to mankind, on which the disclosures of science shed no light ; there are many things which it is desirable for man to know, which cannot be learned in the schools of philosophy ; there are consolations which man needs in a world of trouble which cannot be found in nature ; there is especially a knowledge of the method by which sin may be pardoned, and the soul saved, which can never be disclosed by the blow-pipe, the telescope, or the microscope. These things, if learned at all, must be learned from revelation, and these are of more importance to man as a traveller to another world than all the learning which can be acquired in the schools of philosophy—valuable as that learning is.—*Albert Barnes.*

Verse 2.—"*For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name,*" etc. This is a dark sentence at the first view, but as a judicious expositor upon the place well

observes, the words may be thus read, and will better agree with the Hebrew; "*thou hast magnified thy name above all things, in thy word,*" that is, in fulfilling thy word thou hast magnified thy name above all things, in that thou hast fulfilled thy word. What thou freely promisedst, thou hast faithfully performed; what thou hast spoken with thy mouth thou hast fulfilled with thy hand; for which thy name is wonderfully to be magnified.—*James Natton, 1664.*

Verse 2.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." Every creature bears the name of God; but in his word and truth therein contained it is written at length, and therefore he is more choice of this than of all his other works; he cares not much what becomes of the world and all in it, so that he keeps his word, and saves his truth. Ere long we shall see the world in flames; the heavens and earth shall pass away, "but the word of the Lord endures for ever." When God will, he can make more such worlds as this; but he cannot make another truth, and therefore he will not lose one jot thereof. Satan, knowing this, sets all his wits on work to deface this and disfigure it by unsound doctrine. The word is the glass in which we see God, and seeing him are changed into his likeness by his Spirit. If this glass be cracked, then the conceptions we have of God will misrepresent him unto us; whereas the word, in its native clearness, sets him out in all his glory unto our eye.—*William Gurnall.*

Verse 2.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." Thou hast bestowed the promise of perpetuity to my house and to my kingdom, which rises in grandeur and goodness above all thy past manifestations of thyself in behalf of thy people (2 Sam. vii. 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 21, 22, 24—26, 29: ver. 21 especially, "For thy Word's sake . . . hast thou done all these great things"; ver. 26, "And let thy name be magnified for ever"—an undesigned coincidence of language between the history and the Psalm). In the Messiah alone the greatness of the promise finds, and shall hereafter more fully find, its realization for Israel and the whole world.—*Andrew Robert Fausset.*

Verse 2.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." God has sent his word to us,

1. As a *mirror*, to reflect his glory. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work"; from them may his eternal power and Godhead be clearly seen. Ps. xix. 1, 3, 4. In his providential dealings, also, is much of his wisdom and goodness exhibited. But of his perfections, generally, we can form no idea from these things; of his purposes we can know nothing. The state of the Heathen world clearly attests this; for they behold the wonders of Creation and Providence, as well as we: "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world": Ps. xix. 3, 4. But in the sacred volume all the glory of the Godhead shines: there we are admitted, so to speak, even to the council-chamber of the Most High; to hear the covenant entered into between the Father and the Son; the Father engaging to give to him a seed, whom he should have for his inheritance, if he, on his part, would "make his soul an offering for their sins," and in their nature, expiate the guilt of their iniquities. This mysterious transaction having taken place in the incarnation and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, we behold all the perfections of God united and harmonizing in a way that they never did, or could, by any other means: we see justice more inexorable, than if it had executed vengeance on the whole human race; and mercy more abundant, than if it had spared the whole human race without any such atonement. There, as it is well expressed, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other": Ps. lxxxv. 10. Of this great mystery we find not a trace in the whole creation besides: but in the word it is reflected, as in a mirror (2 Cor. iii. 18); and it shines so brightly, that the very angels around the throne are made wiser by the revelation of it to the Church: Eph. iii. 10.

2. As a *standard*, to which everything may be referred. Of God's will we know nothing, but from the word: "we know neither good nor evil from all that is before us." What God requires of us, nothing in Creation or Providence can inform us: what he will do for us, we cannot ascertain: how he will deal with us, we cannot ascertain. But, in the sacred volume, all is written as with a sunbeam. There is nothing which God expects us to do for him, which is not there most explicitly declared: nothing which he engages to do for us, that does not form the subject of a distinct promise. The whole of his procedure in the day of judgment is there laid open: the laws by which we shall be judged; the manner in which the testimony,

whether against us or in our favour, shall be produced ; the grounds on which the sentence of condemnation or acquittal shall be passed ; yea, the very state to which every person, either as acquitted or condemned, shall be consigned ; all is so clearly made known, that every person, who will judge himself with candour now, may assuredly anticipate his fate. There is nothing left to conjecture. Every man has a standard to which he may refer, for the rectifying of his judgment in every particular : so that nothing can be added for the instruction of our minds, or the regulation of our future expectations.

3. As a *fountain*, from whence all his blessings emanate. Great blessings, beyond all doubt, flow down to us through the works of Creation and Providence : in fact, they are incessantly administering to our welfare ; for " God opens his hands, and fills all things living with plenteousness." Still, however, the benefits derived from them are only temporal ; whereas those which the inspired volume imparts are spiritual and eternal ; from whence we derive all our knowledge of Divine truth, and all our hopes of everlasting salvation. Nor is it the knowledge only of truth that we obtain, but the operation and efficacy of it on our souls. There is in Divine truth, when applied by the Holy Spirit, a power to wound, to sanctify, to save : Ps. xix. 7—11. When it comes to the soul with power, the stoutest heart in the universe is made to tremble : when it is poured out as balm, the most afflicted creature under heaven is made to leap for joy. Look over the face of the globe, and see how many, who were once under the unrestrained dominion of sin, are now transformed into the image of their God. And then ascend to heaven, and behold the myriads of the redeemed around the throne of God, uniting their hallelujahs to God and to the Lamb ; to this state were they all brought by that blessed word, which alone could ever prevail for so great a work. Thus it is that God has magnified his word ; and thus it is that he *will* magnify it, to the end of time ; yea, through eternity will it be acknowledged as the one source of all blessings that shall ever be enjoyed.—*Charles Simeon, in Horæ Homileticæ.*

Verse 2.—"For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." This is one of those expressions of Scripture that seem so comprehensive, and yet so amazing. To my mind it is one of the most remarkable expressions in the whole book of God. "*Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*" The name of God includes all the perfections of God ; everything that God is, and which God has revealed himself as having—his justice, his majesty, holiness, greatness, and glory, and whatever he is in himself, that is God's name. And yet he has "*magnified*" something "*above his name*"—his word—his truth. This may refer to the Incarnate Word, the Son of God, who was called "*the Word.*" "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one" 1 John v. 7, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God" : John i. 1. You may take the words either as meaning that God has magnified his Word, his eternal Son—above all his great name, that is, he has set Jesus on high above all the other perfections of his majesty ; or take it as meaning his written word, which is written in the sacred Scriptures. So, in that case, not only the Incarnate Word in the person of Jesus ; but also the written word in the Scriptures of truth. He has magnified it above all his name in the fulfilment of it : God's faithfulness being so dear to him, he has exalted his faithfulness above all his other perfections. We see this in nature. Here is a man so to be depended upon, so faithful to his word, that he will sacrifice anything sooner than depart from it : that man will give up his property, or life itself, rather than forfeit his word. So God has spoken of magnifying his word above all his name. He would sooner allow all his other perfections to come to naught, than for his faithfulness to fail. He has so magnified his faithfulness, that his love, his mercy, his grace, would all sooner fail than his faithfulness—the word of his mouth and what he has revealed in the Scripture. What a firm salvation, then, is ours, which rests upon his word, when God has magnified that word above all his name ! What volumes of blessedness and truth are contained therein ! so that, if God has revealed his truth to your soul, and given you faith to anchor in the word of promise, sooner than that should fail, he would suffer the loss of all ; for, he has magnified his word above all his name.—*Joseph C. Philpot.*

Verse 2.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." God has a greater regard unto the words of his mouth, than to the works of his hand : heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of what he hath spoken shall never fall to the ground. Some do understand this of Christ the essential Word, in whom

he has set his name, and whom he has so highly exalted, that he has given him "a name above every name."—*Ebenezer Erskine*, 1680—1754.

Verse 2.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." Meaning that his word or promise shall have, as it were, and exercise a kind of sovereignty over all his prerogatives and attributes, wisdom, justice, power, etc. So that men need not fear that any of them shall at any time, or in any case whatsoever, move in the least contrariety thereunto.—*John Goodwin*, 1593—1665.

Verse 2.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." It may be when there are some extraordinary works of God in the world, thunder and lightning, etc., we are ready to be afraid, and oh! the great God that doth appear in these great works! Were our hearts as they ought to be when we read the *Word*, we would tremble at that more than at any manifestation of God since the world began in all his works; and if so be thou dost not see more of the glory of God in his *Word* than in his works, it is because thou hast little light in thee.—*Jeremiah Burroughs*, 1599—1646.

Verse 2.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." But mightier far is the word by which a lost world is redeemed. This is the "word" that he hath "magnified above all his name," as displaying at once the exceeding greatness of his power, the resources of his manifold wisdom, and the blended glories of holiness and love.—*John Lillie*.

Verse 2.—It is not with the truth merely excogitated, but with the truth expressed, that we have any concern; not with the truth as seen by our inspired teacher, but with the truth as by him spoken to us. It is not enough that the Spirit hath made him to see it aright—this is not enough if he have not also made him to speak it aright. A pure influx into the mind of an apostle is no sufficient guarantee for the instruction of the world, unless there be a pure efflux also; for not the doctrine that has flowed in, but the doctrine that has flowed out, is truly all that we have to do with. Accordingly, it is to the doctrine in efflux, that is to the *word*, that we are bidden to yield ourselves. It is the word that is a light unto our feet and a lamp unto our path; it is his word that God hath exalted above all his name; it is the word that he hath settled fast in heaven, and given to it a stability surer and more lasting than to the ordinances of nature. We can take no cognizance of the doctrine that is conveyed from heaven to earth, when it has only come the length of excogitation in the mind of an apostle; and it is not till brought the farther length of expression, either by speech or by writing, that it comes into contact with us. In short our immediate concern is with, not what apostles conceive inwardly, but what they bring forth outwardly not with the schemes or the systems which they have been made to apprehend, but with the books which they have written; and had the whole force and effect of this observation been sufficiently pondered, we feel persuaded that the advocates of a mitigated inspiration would not have dissevered, as they have done, the inspiration of sentiment from the inspiration of language.—*Thomas Chalmers*.

Verse 2.—"Thy word," or "Thy promise." So great are God's promises, and so faithful and complete is his performance of them, as even to surpass the expectations which the greatness of his name has excited.—*Annotated Paragraph Bible*.

Verse 3.—"In the day when I cried," etc. God granted him a speedy answer: for it was in the very day that he cried that he was heard: and it was a spiritual answer; he was *strengthened with strength in his soul*. Would you have soul strength for the work you have in view? then cry unto him who is the "strength of Israel" for it; for "he giveth power to the faint, and he increaseth strength to them that have no might."—*Ebenezer Erskine*.

Verse 3.—"In the day when I cried thou answeredst me," etc. That part of an army which is upon action in the field is sure to have their pay, if their masters have any money in their purse, or care of them; yea, sometimes when their fellows left in their quarters are made to wait. I am sure there is more gold and silver (spiritual joy, I mean, and comfort) to be found in Christ's camp, among his suffering ones, than their brethren at home in peace and prosperity ordinarily can show. What are the promises but vessels of cordial wine, tunned on purpose against a groaning hour, when God usually broacheth them! "Call upon me," saith God, "in the day of trouble." Ps. I. 15. And may we not do so in the day of peace? Yes; but he would have us most bold with him in the day of trouble. None find

such quick despatch at the throne of grace as suffering saints. "*In the day that I cried,*" said David, "*thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.*" He was now in a strait, and God comes in haste to him. Though we may keep a well friend waiting should he send for us, yet we will give a sick friend leave to call us up at midnight. In such extremities we usually go with the messenger that comes for us; and so doth God with the prayer. Peter knocked at their gate, who were assembled to seek God for him, almost as soon as their prayer knocked at heaven gate in his behalf. And truly it is no more than needs, if we consider the temptations of our afflicted condition; we are prone then to be suspicious that our best friends forget us, and to think every stay a delay, and neglect of us; therefore God chooseth to show himself most kind at such a time. "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ:" 2 Cor. i. 5. As man laid on trouble, so Christ laid in consolation: both tides rose and fell together; when it was spring-tide with him in affliction, it was so with him in his joy. We relieve the poor as their need increaseth; so Christ comforts his people as their troubles multiply. And now, Christian, tell me, doth not thy dear Lord deserve a ready spirit in thee to meet any suffering with, for, or from him, who gives his sweetest comforts where his people are put to bear their saddest sorrows? Well may the servant do his work, cheerfully when his master is so careful of him as with his own hands to bring him his breakfast into the fields. The Christian stays not till he comes to heaven for all his comfort. There indeed shall be the full supper, but there is a breakfast, Christian, of previous joys, more or less, which Christ brings to thee into the field, to be eaten on the place where thou endurest thy hardship.—*William Gurnall.*

Verse 3.—"Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." It is one gracious way of answering our prayers when God doth bestow upon us spiritual strength in our souls; if he do not give the things we desire, yet if he gives us strength in our souls, he graciously answers our prayers. What is this spiritual strength? I answer, it is a work of the Spirit of God, enabling a man to do and suffer what God would have him without fainting or backsliding.—*James Natton.*

Verse 3.—"Thou strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." Other masters cut out work for their servants, but do not help them in their work; but our Master in heaven doth not only give us work, but strength. God bids us serve him, and he will enable us to serve him, Ezek. xxxvi. 27: "I will cause you to walk in my statutes." The Lord doth not only fit work for us, but fits us for our work; with his command he gives power.—*Thomas Watson.*

Verse 3.—"Thou makest me brave in my soul (with) strength." The common version of this clause ("*strengthenedst me with strength in my soul*") contains a paronomasia not in the original, where the verb and noun have not even a letter in common. The verb is by some translated *made me proud*, i.e., elated me, not with a vain or selfish pride, but with a lofty and exhilarating hope.—*Joseph Addison Alexander.*

Verse 4.—"All the kings of the earth shall praise thee." In a sense sufficiently striking this promise was fulfilled to David, and to the nation of Israel, as surrounding monarchs beheld the wonderful dispensations of divine providence which attended their steps (2 Sam. v. 11; viii. 10); but in its completest sense, it shall realize its accomplishment in the future conquests of Messiah, when the princes and potentates of the earth receive his word, learn by divine grace to celebrate the glorious methods of his love, and see in the light of faith the greatness of Jehovah's glory as the God of salvation. "*All the kings of the earth*" shall yet praise the Lord, and shall hasten with their numerous subjects to hail the triumphs of his grace.—*John Morison.*

Verse 5.—"Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD." There will come a time when the praise of Jahve, which according to cxxxvii. 4 was obliged to be dumb in the presence of the heathen, will be sung by the kings of the heathen themselves.—*Franz Delitzsch.*

Verse 5.—"Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD." Walking with God is a pleasant walk: the ways of wisdom are called "ways of pleasantness": Prov. iii. 17. Is not the light pleasant? Ps. lxxxix. 15: "They shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance." Walking with God is like walking among beds of spices, which send forth a fragrant perfume. This is it which brings peace,

Acts ix. 31 : "Walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." While we walk with God, what sweet music doth the bird of conscience make in our breast ! "*They shall sing in the ways of the Lord.*"—*Thomas Watson.*

Verse 6.—"Though the LORD be high." We have here God's transcendent greatness ; he is the high Lord, or Jehovah : he is "the high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity, and who dwells in the high and lofty place, to which no man can approach." Who can think or speak of his highness in a suitable manner ? It dazzles the eyes of sinful mortal worms to behold "the place where his honour dwells." Oh how infinite is the distance between him and us ! "There are none of the sons of the mighty that can be compared unto him ;" yea, "the inhabitants of the earth are before him but as the drop in the bucket, and the small dust in the balance." He is not only "high" above men, but above angels : cherubims and seraphims are his ministering spirits. He is "high" above the heavens ; for "the heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens cannot contain him" ; and he "humbleth himself" when "he beholds things that are in heaven." Oh, sirs, study to entertain high and admiring thoughts and apprehensions of the glorious majesty of God ; for "honour and majesty are before him ; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary."—*Ebenezer Erskine.*

Verse 6.—"The LORD hath respect unto the lowly." God has such a respect unto the lowly, not as if this frame of soul were meritorious of any good at his hand, but because,—

1. This is a disposition that best serves God's great design of lifting up and glorifying his free grace. What think you, sirs, was God's design in election, in redemption, in the whole of the gospel dispensation, and in all the ordinances thereof ? His grand design in all was to rear up a glorious high throne, from which he might display the riches of his free and sovereign grace ; this is that which he will have magnified through eternity above all his other name. Now, this lowliness and humility of spirit suits best unto God's design of exalting the freedom of his grace. It is not the legalist, or proud Pharisee, but the poor humble publican, who is smiting on his breast, and crying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," that submits to the revelation of grace.

2. God has such respect unto the humble soul because it is a fruit of the Spirit inhabiting the soul, and an evidence of the soul's union with the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone we are accepted.

3. This is a disposition that makes the soul like Christ ; and the like that a person is to Christ, God loves him ay the better. We are told that Christ was "meek and lowly" ; "he did not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets" ; though he was "the brightness of his Father's glory," yet he was content to appear "in the form of a servant" ; though he was rich, yet he was content to become poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. Now, the humble soul, being the image of Christ, who is the express image of his Father, God cannot but have a regard unto him.—*Ebenezer Erskine.*

Verse 6.—"He hath respect unto the lowly." Give me the homely vessel of humility, which God shall preserve, and fill with the wine of his grace ; rather than the varnished cup of pride, which he will dash in pieces, like a potter's vessel. Where humility is the corner stone, there glory shall be the topstone.—*William Secker, in "The Nonsuch Professor in his Meridian Splendour,"* 1660.

Verse 6.—"The proud he knoweth afar off." He that meets a spectacle or person which he cannot endure to look upon, avoids it, or turns from it while he is yet afar off ; whereas, if the object be delightful, he draweth near and comes as close as he can. When therefore it is said, *the Lord knoweth a proud man afar off*, it shows his disdain of him : he will scarce touch him with a pair of tongs (as we say) ; he cannot abide to come near him. He knows well enough how vile he is even at the greatest distance.—*Joseph Caryl.*

Verse 6.—"The proud he knoweth afar off." By punishing them in hell.—*Richard Rolle, 1340.*

Verse 7.—"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." So as to the three youths in the fiery furnace, their persecutor, Nebuchadnezzar, said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."—*Andrew Robert Fausset.*

Verse 7.—"In the midst of trouble thou wilt revive me." The wisdom of God

is seen in helping in desperate cases. God loves to show his wisdom when human help and wisdom fail. Exquisite lawyers love to wrestle with niceties and difficulties in the law, to show their skill the more. God's wisdom is never at a loss; but when providences are darkest, then the morning star of deliverance appears. Sometimes God melts away the spirits of his enemies. Josh. ii. 24. Sometimes he finds them other work to do, and sounds a retreat to them, as he did to Saul when he was pursuing David. "The Philistines are in the land." "In the mount God will be seen." When the church seems to be upon the altar, her peace and liberty ready to be sacrificed, then the angel comes.—*Thomas Watson.*

Verse 7.—"Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand," etc. Thou shalt interpose thine help betwixt me and them, and save me harmless; as the poets feign their gods did those whom they favoured. *Thou shalt strike them with thy left hand, and save me with thy right;* so Tremellius senseth it.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 8.—"The Lord will perfect," etc. God's work is perfect, man's is clumsy and incomplete. God does not leave off till he has finished. When he rests, it is because, looking on his work, he sees it all "very good." His Sabbath is the Sabbath of an achieved purpose, of a fulfilled counsel. The palaces which we build are ever like that in the story, where one window remains dark and unjewelled, while the rest blaze in beauty. But when God builds none can say, "He was not able to finish." In his great palace he makes her "windows of agates," and all her "borders of pleasant stones."

I suppose that if the mediæval dream had ever come true, and an alchemist had ever turned a grain of lead into gold, he could have turned all the lead in the world, in time, and with crucibles and furnaces enough. The first step is all the difficulty, and if you and I have been changed from enemies into sons, and had one spark of love to God kindled in our hearts, that is a mightier change than any that yet remains to be effected in order to make us perfect. One grain has been changed, the whole mass will be in due time.—*Alexander Maclaren, Sermon in "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," 1879.*

Verse 8.—"Forsake not the works of thine own hands." When we are under such afflictions as threaten to ruin us, 'tis seasonable to tell the Lord he made us. David strengthens prayer upon this argument: "*Forsake not the works of thine own hands.*" All men love their own works, many dote upon them: shall we think God will forsake his? See how the people of God plead with God in greatest distress. (Isa. lxiv. 8): "But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are all the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O LORD."—*Joseph Cary.*

Verse 8.—"Forsake not the works of thine own hands." Look upon the wounds of thine hands, and forsake not the works of thine hands, prayed Queen Elizabeth. And Luther's usual prayer was, Confirm, O God, in us that thou hast wrought, and perfect the work that thou hast begun in us, to thy glory. So be it.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 8.—"Forsake not the works of thine own hands." Behold in me thy work, not mine: for mine, if thou seest, thou condemnest; thine, if thou seest, thou crownest. For whatever good works there be of mine, from thee are they to me; and so they are more thine than mine. For I hear from thine apostle, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus:" Eph. ii. 8—10.—*Augustine.*

Verse 8.—"Thine own hands." His creating hands formed our souls at the beginning; his nail-pierced hands redeemed them on Calvary; his glorified hands will hold our souls fast and not let them go for ever. Unto his hands let us commend our spirits, sure that even though the works of our hands have made void the works of his hands, yet his hands will again make perfect all that our hands have unmade.—*J. W. Burgon.*

HINTS TO PREACHERS.

Verses 1, 2, 3.—David vexed with rival gods, as we are with rival gospels. How will he act? I. *Sing with whole-hearted praise.* 1. It would generously show his contempt of the false. 2. It would evince his strong faith in the true. 3. It would declare his joyful zeal for God. 4. It would shield him from evil from those about him. II. *Worship by the despised rule.* 1. Quietly ignoring all will-worship. 2. Looking to the person of Christ, which was typified by the temple. 3. Trusting in sacrifice. 4. Realizing God himself, for it is to God he speaks. III. *Praise the questioned attributes.* 1. Lovingkindness in its universality, in its speciality. Grace in everything. 2. Truth. Historic accuracy. Certainty of promises. Correctness of prophecies. Assured of the love of God and the truth of his word, let us cling the closer to these. IV. *Reverence the honoured word.* It is beyond all revelation by creation and providence, for it is—1. More clear. 2. More sure. 3. More sovereign. 4. More complete, unique. 5. More lasting. 6. More glorifying to God. V. *Prove it by experience.* 1. By offering prayer. 2. By narrating the answer. 3. By exhibiting the strength in soul which was given in answer to prayer.

Verse 2.—The Christward position. I. Worship and praise are to be blended. II. They are to be presented with an eye to God in Christ, for he is the temple: the place of divine indwelling, sacrifice, intercession, priesthood, oracle, and manifestation.

Verse 2 (first clause).—I. The soul's noblest attitude: "Toward thy holy temple." II. The soul's noblest exercise: "worship," "praise."—W. W.

Verse 2.—I. *The worshipper's contemplation.* Gaze fixed on Holy Temple. Material temple not yet built. Christ the sanctuary. Heb. viii. 2. All worship through him. Eye of worshippers fixed on him. II. *The worshipper's song.* Love and truth. Note the combination. Truth by Moses. Grace and truth by Jesus Christ. III. *The worshipper's argument.* Because Christ "The Word" is the embodiment and most glorious manifestation of God. Heb. i. 2, 3.—Archibald G. Brown.

Verse 3.—I. Prayer answered in the day. II. Prayer answered by giving strength for the day. See 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.—A. G. B.

Verse 3.—I. Answers to prayer should be noted and acknowledged: "Thou answeredst me." II. Speedy answers should have special praise: "In the day when I cried, thou," etc. III. A strengthened soul is sometimes the best answer to prayer: "Strengthened me with strength."—J. F.

Verse 3.—Remarkable answer to prayer. I. The prayer: feeble, earnest, sorrowful, inarticulate. II. The answer: prompt, divine, effectual, certain. III. The praise deserved by such grace. See preceding verses.

Verse 3.—I. A special day. II. A specific form of prayer: "I cried." III. A special method of response.—W. W.

Verse 4.—I. A royal audience. II. A royal orchestra.

Verses 4, 5.—I. They who hear the words of God will know God. II. They who know God will praise him, however exalted they may be amongst men: "All the kings," etc. III. They who praise God will walk in his ways. IV. They who walk in the ways of the Lord will glorify him, and he will be glorified in them.—G. R.

Verse 5.—See "Spurgeon's Sermons," No. 1615: "Singing in the Ways of the Lord."

Verse 5.—This is spoken of kings, but it is true of the humblest pilgrims. The Lord hath respect unto the lowly, and will make them sing. I. *They shall sing in the ways.* 1. They take pleasure in them. 2. They do not go out of them to find pleasure. 3. They sing as they proceed in service, in worship, in holiness, in suffering. 4. They are in a case for singing. They have strength, safety, guidance, provision, comfort. II. *They sing of the ways of the Lord.* 1. Of God's ways to them. 2. Of their way to God. They know whence they came out. They know where they are going. It is a good road; prophets went by it, and the Lord of the prophets. Therein we have good company, good accommodation, good prospects, good daylight. III. *They sing of the Lord of the way.* His lovingkindness. His truth. Answers to prayer. His condescension. His reviving us in trouble. His delivering us. His perfecting us. His everlasting mercy. IV. *They shall sing to the Lord of the way.* 1. To his honour. 2. To the extending of that honour. 3. As a preparation to eternally honouring him.

Verse 6.—Divine inversions. I. Lowliness honoured to its great surprise. II. Pride passed by to its eternal mortification.—*W. B. H.*

Verse 7 (first clause).—I. The Psalmist's dismal excursion: walking "in the midst of trouble;" this is not a spectator, but one assailed. Troubles—personal, social, ecclesiastical, national. II. His cheering anticipation—of revival, defence, deliverance.—*W. J.*

Verse 7.—I. Good men are sometimes in the midst of troubles: these are many, and continue long. II. They interfere not with their progress. They "walk in the midst" of them; faint, yet pursuing; sometimes they "run with patience," etc. III. They have comfort in them: "Though I walk," etc., "thou wilt revive me." IV. They are benefited by them. 1. Their enemies are overthrown. 2. Their deliverance is complete.—*G. R.*

Verse 7.—The child of God often revived *out* of trouble; more frequently *in* trouble; not seldom *through* trouble. Delivered from, sustained in, sanctified through, trouble.—*A. G. B.*

Verse 7.—An incident of the road to the city. I. Pilgrim beset by thieves and struck down. II. The arrival of Greatheart and flight of the enemy. III. The flask to the lips: "thou wilt revive me." Sweet awakening to know the beauty of his face and strength of his hand.—*W. B. H.*

Verse 7 (third clause).—Right-hand salvation. I. It shall be wrought of God. II. He shall throw his strength into the deed. III. His utmost dexterity shall be displayed.

Verse 8 (first clause).—I. A wide subject—"That which concerneth me." Not necessarily that which gives me concern. II. A promise that covers it: "the Lord will perfect."—*A. G. B.*

Verse 8 (first and last clauses).—Faith in divine purpose no hindrance to prayer, but rather an encouragement in it: "The Lord will perfect." "Forsake not."—*A. G. B.*

Verse 8.—See "Spurgeon's Sermons," Nos. 231 and 1506: "Faith in Perfection," and, "Choice Comfort for a Young Believer."

Verse 8.—The grace of God makes a man thoughtful, and leads him to concern about himself, his life, his future, and the completeness of the work of grace. This might lead us to sadness and despair, but the Lord worketh in us for other ends. I. *He fills us with assurance.* 1. That the Lord will work for us. 2. That he will complete his work. 3. That he will do this in providence; if it be properly a concern of ours. 4. That he will do this within us. Our graces shall grow. Our soul shall become Christly. Our whole nature perfect. 5. That he will do this with our work for him. II. *He gives us rest in his mercy.* 1. Thou wilt forgive my sins. 2. Thou wilt bear with my nature. 3. Thou wilt support me in suffering. 4. Thou wilt supply me in need. 5. Thou wilt succour me in death. III. *He puts prayer into our hearts.* 1. That he will not forsake me. 2. That he will not leave his own work in me undone. 3. Nor his work by me unfinished. Why did he begin? Why carry so far? Why not complete?

Verse 8.—I. Faith's full assurance: "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." II. Faith's firm foundation: "Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever." III. Faith's fervent prayer: "Forsake not the works of thine own hands."—*W. H. J. P.*
