

PSALM CXLIII.

TITLE.—A Psalm of David. *It is so much like other Davidic Psalms that we accept the title without a moment's hesitation. David's history illustrates it, and his spirit breathes in it. Why it has been set down as one of the seven Penitential Psalms we can hardly tell; for it is rather a vindication of his own integrity, and an indignant prayer against his slanderers, than a confession of fault. It is true the second verse proves that he never dreamed of justifying himself before the Lord; but even in it there is scarcely the brokenness of penitence. It seems to us rather martial than penitential, rather a supplication for deliverance from trouble than a weeping acknowledgment of transgression. We suppose that seven penitentials were needed by ecclesiastical rabbis, and therefore this was impressed into the service. In truth, it is a mingled strain, a box of ointment composed of divers ingredients, sweet and bitter, pungent and precious. It is the outcry of an overwhelmed spirit, unable to abide in the highest state of spiritual prayer, again and again descending to bewail its deep temporal distress; yet evermore struggling to rise to the best things. The singer moans at intervals; the petitioner for mercy cannot withhold his cries for vindication. His hands are outstretched to heaven, but at his girdle hangs a sharp sword, which rattles in its scabbard as he closes his Psalm.*

DIVISION.—*This Psalm is divided by the Selah. We prefer to follow the natural cleavage, and therefore have made no other dissection of it. May the holy Spirit lead us into its inner meaning.*

EXPOSITION.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.

2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

1. "*Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplication.*" In the preceding Psalm he began by declaring that he had cried unto the Lord; here he begs to be favourably regarded by Jehovah the living God, whose memorial is that he heareth prayer. He knew that Jehovah did hear prayer, and therefore he entreated him to hear his supplication, however feeble and broken it might be. In two forms he implores the one blessing of gracious audience:—"hear" and "give ear." Gracious men are so eager to be heard in prayer that they double their entreaties for that boon. The Psalmist desires to be heard and to be considered; hence he cries, "hear," and then "give ear." Our case is difficult, and we plead for special attention. Here it is probable that David wished his suit against his adversaries to be heard by the righteous Judge; confident that if he had a hearing in the matter whereof he was slanderously accused, he would be triumphantly acquitted. Yet while somewhat inclined thus to lay his case before the Court of King's Bench, he prefers rather to turn it all into a petition, and present it before the Court of Requests, hence he cries rather "hear my prayer" than "hear my suit." Indeed David is specially earnest that he himself, and the whole of his life, may not become the

subject of trial, for in that event he could not hope for acquittal. Observe that he offered so much pleading that his life became one continual *prayer*; but that petitioning was so varied in form that it broke out in many *supplications*.

"In thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness." Saints desire to be answered as well as heard: they long to find the Lord faithful to his promise and righteous in defending the cause of justice. It is a happy thing when we dare appeal even to righteousness for our deliverance; and this we can do upon gospel principles, for "if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Even the sterner attributes of God are upon the side of the man who humbly trusts, and turns his trust into prayer. It is a sign of our safety when our interests and those of righteousness are blended. With God's faithfulness and righteousness upon our side we are guarded on the right hand and on the left. These are active attributes, and fully equal to the answering of any prayer which it would be right to answer. Requests which do not appeal to either of these attributes it would not be for his glory of God to hear, for they must contain desires for things unpromised, and unrighteous.

2. *"And enter not into judgment with thy servant."* He had entreated for audience at the mercy-seat, but he has no wish to appear before the judgment-seat. Though clear before men, he could not claim innocence before God. Even though he knew himself to be the Lord's servant, yet he did not claim perfection, or plead merit; for even as a servant he was unprofitable. If such be the humble cry of a servant, what ought to be the pleading of a sinner? *"For in thy sight shall no man living be justified."* None can stand before God upon the footing of the law. God's sight is piercing and discriminating; the slightest flaw is seen and judged; and therefore pretence and profession cannot avail where that glance reads all the secrets of the soul. In this verse David told out the doctrine of universal condemnation by the law long before Paul had taken his pen to write the same truth. To this day it stands true even to the same extent as in David's day: no man living even at this moment may dare to present himself for trial before the throne of the Great King on the footing of the law. This foolish age has produced specimens of a pride so rank that men have dared to claim perfection in the flesh; but these vain-glorious boasters are no exception to the rule here laid down: they are but men, and poor specimens of men. When their lives are examined they are frequently found to be more faulty than the humble penitents before whom they vaunt their superiority.

3. *"For the enemy hath persecuted my soul."* He has followed me up with perseverance, and has worried me as often as I have been within his reach. The attack was upon the soul or life of the Psalmist: our adversaries mean us the worst possible evil, their attacks are no child's play, they hunt for the precious life. *"He hath smitten my life down to the ground."* The existence of David was made bitter by the cruelty of his enemy; he was as one who was hurled down and made to lie upon the ground, where he could be trampled on by his assailant. Slander has a very depressing effect upon the spirits; it is a blow which overthrows the mind as though it were knocked down with the fist. *"He hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead."* The enemy was not content with felling his life to the ground—he would lay him lower still, even in the grave; and lower than that if possible, for the enemy would shut up the saint in the darkness of hell if he could. David was driven by Saul's animosity to haunt caverns and holes, like an unquiet ghost; he wandered out by night, and lay hid by day like an uneasy spirit which had long been denied the repose of the grave. Good men began to forget him, as though he had been long dead; and bad men made ridicule of his rueful visage, as though it belonged not to a living man, but was dark with the shadow of the sepulchre. Poor David! He was qualified to bless the house of the living, but he was driven to consort with the dead! Such may be our case, and yet we may be very dear to the Lord. One thing is certain, the Lord who permits us to dwell in darkness among the dead, will surely bring us into light, and cause us to dwell with those who enjoy life eternal.

4. *"Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate."* David was no stoic: he felt his banishment, and smarted under the cruel assaults which were made upon his character. He felt perplexed and overturned, lonely and afflicted. He was a man of thought and feeling, and suffered both in spirit and in heart from the undeserved and unprovoked hostility of his persecutors. Moreover, he laboured under the sense of fearful loneliness: he was for a while forsaken of his God, and his soul was exceeding heavy, even unto death. Such

words our Lord Jesus might have used : in this the Head is like the members, and the members are as the Head.

5. "*I remember the days of old.*" When we see nothing new which can cheer us, let us think upon old things. We once had merry days, days of deliverance, and joy and thanksgiving ; why not again ? Jehovah rescued his people in the ages which lie back, centuries ago ; why should he not do the like again ? We ourselves have a rich past to look back upon ; we have sunny memories, sacred memories, satisfactory memories, and these are as flowers for the bees of faith to visit, from whence they may make honey for present use. "*I meditate on all thy works.*" When my own works reproach me, thy works refresh me. If at the first view the deeds of the Lord do not encourage us, let us think them over again, ruminating and considering the histories of divine providence. We ought to take a wide and large view of *all* God's works ; for as a whole they work together for good, and in each part they are worthy of reverent study. "*I muse on the work of thy hands.*" This he had done in former days, even in his most trying hours. Creation had been the book in which he read of the wisdom and goodness of the Lord. He repeats his perusal of the page of nature, and counts it a balm for his wounds, a cordial for his cares, to see what the Lord has made by his skilful hands. When the work of our own hand grieves us, let us look to the work of God's hands. Memory, meditation, and musing are here set together as the three graces, ministering grace to a mind depressed and likely to be diseased. As David with his harp played away the evil spirit from Saul, so does he here chase away gloom from his own soul by holy communion with God.

6. "*I stretch forth my hands unto thee.*" He was eager for his God. His thoughts of God kindled in him burning desires, and these led to energetic expressions of his inward longings. As a prisoner whose feet are bound extends his hands in supplication when there is hope of liberty, so does David. "*My soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land.*" As the soil cracks, and yawns, and thus opens its mouth in dumb pleadings, so did the Psalmist's soul break with longings. No heavenly shower had refreshed him from the sanctuary : banished from the means of grace, his soul felt parched and dry, and he cried out, "My soul to thee" ; nothing would content him but the presence of his God. Not alone did he extend his hands, but his heart was stretched out towards the Lord. He was athirst for the Lord. If he could but feel the presence of his God he would no longer be overwhelmed or dwell in darkness ; nay, everything would turn to peace and joy.

Selah.—It was time to pause, for the supplication had risen to agony point. Both harp-strings and heart-strings were strained, and needed a little rest to get them right again for the second half of the song.

7 Hear me speedily, O LORD : my spirit faileth : hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning ; for in thee do I trust : cause me to know the way wherein I should walk ; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies : I flee unto thee to hide me.

10 Teach me to do thy will ; for thou *art* my God : thy spirit *is* good ; lead me into the land of uprightness.

11 Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake : for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul : for I *am* thy servant.

7. "*Hear me speedily, O LORD : my spirit faileth.*" If long delayed, the deliverance would come too late. The afflicted suppliant faints, and is ready to die. His life is ebbing out ; each moment is of importance ; it will soon be all over with him. No argument for speed can be more powerful than this. Who will not run to help a suppliant when his life is in jeopardy ? Mercy has wings to its heels when misery is in extremity. God will not fail when our spirit fails, but the rather he will hasten his course and come to us on the wings of the wind. "*Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.*" Communion with God is so dear to a true heart that the withdrawal of it makes the man

feel as though he were ready to die and perish utterly. God's withdrawals reduce the heart to despair, and take away all strength from the mind. Moreover, his absence enables adversaries to work their will without restraint; and thus, in a second way, the persecuted one is like to perish. If we have God's countenance we live, but if he turns his back upon us we die. When the Lord looks with favour upon our efforts we prosper, but if he refuses to countenance them we labour in vain.

8. "*Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust.*" Lord, my sorrow makes me deaf,—cause me to hear: there is but one voice that can cheer me—cause me to hear thy lovingkindness; that music I would fain enjoy at once—cause me to hear it in the morning, at the first dawning hour. A sense of divine love is to the soul both dawn and dew; the end of the night of weeping, the beginning of the morning of joy. Only God can take away from our weary ears the din of our care, and charm them with the sweet notes of his love. Our plea with the Lord is our faith; if we are relying upon him, he cannot disappoint us: "in thee do I trust" is a sound and solid argument with God. He who made the ear will cause us to hear: he who is love itself will have the kindness to bring his lovingkindness before our minds. "*Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.*" The Great First Cause must cause us to hear and to know. Spiritual senses are dependent upon God, and heavenly knowledge comes from him alone. To know the way we ought to take is exceedingly needful, for how can we be exact in obedience to a law with which we are not acquainted? or how can there be an ignorant holiness? If we know not the way, how shall we keep in it? If we know not wherein we should walk, how shall we be likely to follow the right path? The Psalmist lifts up his soul; faith is good at a dead lift: the soul that trusts will rise. We will not allow our hope to sink, but we will strive to get up and rise out of our daily griefs. This is wise. When David was in any difficulty as to his way he lifted his soul towards God himself, and then he knew that he could not go very far wrong. If the soul will not rise of itself we must lift it, lift it up unto God. This is good argument in prayer: surely the God to whom we endeavour to lift up our soul will condescend to show us what he would have us to do. Let us attend to David's example, and when our heart is low, let us heartily endeavour to lift it up, not so much to comfort as to the Lord himself.

9. "*Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies.*" Many foes beset us, we cannot overcome them, we cannot even escape from them; but Jehovah can and will rescue us if we pray to him. The weapon of all-prayer will stand us in better stead than sword and shield. "*I flee unto thee to hide me.*" This was a good result from his persecutions. That which makes us flee to our God may be an ill wind, but it blows us good. There is no cowardice in such flight, but much holy courage. God can hide us out of reach of harm, and even out of sight of it. He is our hiding-place; Jesus has made himself the refuge of his people: the sooner, and the more entirely we flee to him the better for us. Beneath the crimson canopy of our Lord's atonement believers are completely hidden; let us abide there and be at rest. In the seventh verse our poet cried, "Hide not thy face," and here he prays, "Hide me." Note also how often he uses the words "unto thee"; he is after his God; he must travel in that direction by some means, even though he may seem to be beating a retreat; his whole being longs to be near the Lord. It is possible that such thirstings for God will be left unsupplied? Never, while the Lord is love.

10. "*Teach me to do thy will.*" How childlike—"teach me"! How practical—"Teach me to do"! How undivided in obedience—"to do thy will"! To do all of it, let it be what it may. This is the best form of instruction, for its source is God, its object is holiness, its spirit is that of hearty loyalty. The man is hidden in the Lord, and spends his peaceful life in learning the will of his Preserver. A heart cannot long be desolate which is thus docile. "*For thou art my God.*" Who else can teach me as thou canst? Who else will care to do it but my God? Thou hast given me thyself, thou wilt surely give me thy teaching. If I have thee, may I not ask to have thy perfect mind? When the heart can sincerely call Jehovah "my God," the understanding is ready to learn of him, the will is prepared to obey him, the whole man is eager to please him. "*Thy spirit is good.*" God is all spirit and all good. His essence is goodness, kindness, holiness: it is his nature to do good, and what greater good can he do to us than to hear such a prayer as that which follows—"Lead me into the land of uprightness"? David would fain be among

the godly, in a land of another sort from that which had cast him out. He sighed for the upland meadows of grace, the table-lands of peace, the fertile plains of communion. He could not reach them of himself; he must be led there. God, who is good, can best conduct us to the goodly land. There is no inheritance like a portion in the land of promise, the land of precept, the land of perfectness. He who teaches us must put us into leading-strings, and guide and conduct us to his own dwelling-place in the country of holiness. The way is long, and steep, and he who goes without a divine leader will faint on the journey; but with Jehovah to lead, it is delightful to follow, and there is neither stumbling nor wandering.

11. "*Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake.*" Oh for more life as well as more light! Teaching and leading call for invigoration, or we shall be dull scholars and slow pilgrims. Jehovah, the Lord and giver of life, is the only one from whom life can come to renew and revive us;—hence, the prayer is to him only. Perchance a servant might teach and lead, but only the Master can enliven. We are often near to death, and hence each one may fitly cry, "*Quicken me*"; but what is there in us which we can plead as a reason for such a favour? Nothing, literally nothing. We must beg it for his name's sake. He must quicken us because he is the living God, the loving God, the Lord who delighteth in mercy. What blessed arguments lie clustered together in his glorious name! We need never cease praying for want of acceptable pleas; and we may always fall back upon the one before us—"thy name's sake." It will render the name of Jehovah the more glorious in the eyes of men if he creates a high degree of spiritual life in his servants; and this is a reason for his doing so, which we may urge with much confidence.

"*For thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.*" Let men see that thou art on the side of the right, and that thou wilt not allow the wicked to ride rough-shod over those who trust in thee. Thou hast promised to succour thy people; thou art not unrighteous to forget their work of faith; thou art, on the contrary, righteous in answering sincere prayer, and in comforting thy people. David was heavily afflicted. Not only was there trouble in his soul, but his soul was in trouble; plunged in it as in a sea, shut up in it as in a prison. God could bring him out of it, and especially he could at once lift up his soul or spirit out of the ditch. The prayer is an eager one, and the appeal a bold one. We may be sure that trouble was soon over when the Lord heard such supplications.

12. "*And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul.*" He believes that it will be so, and thus prophesies the event; for the words may be read as a declaration, and it is better so to understand them. We could not *pray* just so with our Christian light; but under Old Testament arrangements the spirit of it was congruous to the law. It is a petition which justice sanctions, but the spirit of love is not at home in presenting it. We, as Christians, turn the petition to spiritual use only. Yet David was of so generous a mind, and dealt so tenderly with Saul, that he could hardly have meant all that his words are made in our version to say. "*For I am thy servant*;" and therefore I hope that my Master will protect me in his service, and grant me victory while I fight his battles. It is a warrior's prayer, and smells of the dust and smoke of battle. It was heard, and therefore it was not asking amiss. Still there is a more excellent way.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN'T SAYINGS.

Whole Psalm.—This Psalm of David most aptly answereth to that Psalm which precedeth it; for in Ps. cxlii. he showeth that he prayed, repeating it twice (verse 1); and here he twice saith, "Hear my prayer, give ear to my supplication." In Psalm cxlii. (verse 3) he saith, "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me"; here (verse 4), "My spirit is overwhelmed within me."—*John Mayer.*

Whole Psalm.—The promise referred to throughout this octave of Psalms [cxxxviii—cxlv.] is that recorded in 2 Sam. vii. 12, etc., "When thy days be fulfilled I will set up thy seed after thee and I will establish his kingdom If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him But my mercy shall not depart away from him; and thine house and thy kingdom shall

be established for ever." What fixes the connection of the Psalm with the history is the frequent application of the term "*Thy* (Jehovah's) *servant*," by David to himself in the latter, as in verses 2 and 12 of the former. Jehovah had first used it of David, "Tell to my servant, to David;" David therefore fastens on it as his plea again and again (2 Sam. vii. 5, 9—21, 25—29). David's plea, "For I am thy servant," is no boast of his service, but a magnifying of God's electing grace: "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" 2 Sam. vii. 18.

The cry (verse 6) "*My soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land*," answers to David's own words in Psalm lxxiii. 1, when he was fleeing from Absalom, and still in the wilderness of Judah (title, Ps. lxxiii.) on the near side of Jordan: "My soul *thirsteth* for thee." The history here again is an undesigned agreement with the Psalm: (2 Sam. xvi. 2, 14.) "The King, and all the people with him, came *weary*, and refreshed themselves" with Ziba's fruits; also xvii. 2. The Hebrew for "*thirsty*" in Psalm cxliii. is the same as for "*weary*" in lxxiii. 1, and in 2 Sam. xvi. 14, and means "panting," "weary," "thirsting."—*Andrew Robert Fausset*, in "*Studies in the CL. Psalms*," 1876.

Whole Psalm.—At the making of this Psalm (as it plainly appeareth) David was cast into some desperate danger; whether by Saul when he was forced to flee into the cave, as in the former Psalm, or by Absalom his son, or by any other, it is uncertain. Howsoever, in this he complaineth grievously to God of the malice of his enemies, and desireth God to hear his prayers, he acknowledgeth that he suffereth those things by God's just judgment, most humbly craving mercy for his sins; desiring not only to be restored, but also to be governed by God's Spirit, that he may dedicate and consecrate the rest of his life to God's service. This worthy Psalm, then, containeth these three things. First, a confession of his sins. Secondly, a lamentation over his injuries. Thirdly, a supplication for temporal deliverance and spiritual graces.—*Archibald Symson*.

Whole Psalm.—It is not without some use to observe in this Psalm how the heart of its devout composer turned alternately from spiritual to temporal, and again from temporal to spiritual subjects. He first complains of *his sins*, and begs for *mercy*; then of *his enemies*, and prays for *deliverance*. Then he laments his darkness and pleads for the light of God's countenance, and for wisdom, and understanding. After this, the thought of his enemies rushes in again upon his soul, and he flees to God for protection. Lastly, he again puts up his prayer for wisdom and holiness: "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness." This is a peculiarly important petition: before he had prayed to know the way in which he should walk, he now prays that he may walk in it.—*John Fawcett*, 1769—1851.

Whole Psalm.—This is appointed by the Church for Ash-Wednesday, and is the seventh and last of the Penitential Psalms. These seven Penitential Psalms are also sometimes called "the Special Psalms," and have long been used in the Church as the completest and most spiritual acts of repentance which she possesses. They have sometimes been considered as directed against the seven deadly sins; as, for instance, Psalm vi. against Wrath; Ps. xxxii. against Pride; Ps. xxxviii. against Gluttony; Ps. li. against Impurity; Ps. cii. against Covetousness; Ps. cxxx. against Envy; and the present Psalm against Indifference, or Carelessness.—*J. W. Burgon*.

Verse 1.—"Hear my prayer, O LORD," etc. Alas, O Lord, if thou hear not my prayer, I were as good not pray at all; and if thou hear it, and give not ear unto it, it were as good thou didst not hear it at all. O, therefore, "*hear my prayer, O God, and give ear to my supplications*"; that neither my praying may be lost for want of thy hearing it, nor thy hearing it be lost for want of thy attending it. When I only make a prayer to God, it seems enough that he hear it; but when I make a supplication, it requires that he give ear unto it; for seeing a supplication hath a greater intention in the setting out, it cannot without a greater attention be entertained.

But what niceness of words is this? as though it were not all one "*to hear*" and "*to give ear*"? or as though there were any difference between a prayer and a supplication? Is it not perhaps so indeed? for hearing sometimes may be only passive, where giving ear is always active; and seeing Christ, we doubt not, heard the woman of Canaan's first cry, while it was a prayer; but gave no ear till her

second cry, when it was grown to a supplication. However it be, as thy hearing, O God, without giving ear would be to no purpose, so thy giving ear without giving answer would do me no good; O, therefore, "answer me," O God; for if thou answer not my prayer, how canst thou answer my expectation? My prayer is but the seed; it is thy answer that makes the harvest. If thou shouldst not answer me at all, I could not hope for any harvest at all; and if thou shouldst answer me, and not "in thy righteousness," that would be a harvest indeed, but nothing but of blasted corn. Therefore, answer me, O God, but "in thy righteousness"; for thy righteousness never made an unpleasing answer. It was an answer in thy righteousness which thou madest to Noah: "My spirit shall not always strive with man; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his infancy." It was an answer in thy righteousness which thou madest to Abraham: "Fear not; I will be thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." It was an answer in thy righteousness which thou madest to the thief upon the cross: "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." Oh, then, answer me also in thy righteousness, O God, and then the harvest of my hope will be as plentiful as the seven years of plenty foretold by Joseph.—*Sir Richard Baker.*

Verse 1.—"Hear my prayer," . . . "give ear to my supplications," . . . "answer me." He doth here three times repeat his earnest desire to be heard, as in the fifth Psalm four times he doubleth and ingeminateth this same suit to be heard. . . . When he doubleth his request of hearing, he would have God hear him with both his ears, that is, most attentively and readily: so instant is a troubled mind that he desireth the prayer he putteth up to be remembered, as was said by the angel to the centurion: "Thy prayer and almsdeeds are come up before God": Acts x. 4.—*Archibald Symson.*

Verse 1.—"In thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness." It was thy righteousness that thou didst make the promise, but it is thy faithfulness that thou wilt keep thy promise: and seeing I am certain of thy making it, how can I be doubtful of thy keeping it? If thou shouldst not answer me in thy righteousness, yet thou shouldst be righteous still; but if thou shouldst not answer me in thy faithfulness, thou shouldst not be faithful still.—*Sir Richard Baker.*

Verse 1.—"Answer me in thy righteousness." Forgiveness is not inconsistent with the truth or righteousness, and the pardon which in mercy God bestows upon the sinner is bestowed in justice to the well-beloved Son who accepted and discharged the sinner's obligations. This is an infinitely precious truth, and the hearts of thousands in every age have been sustained and gladdened by it. A good old Christian woman in humble life so fully realized this, that when a revered servant of God asked her, as she lay on her dying pillow, the ground of her hope for eternity, she replied, with great composure, "I rely on the justice of God"; adding, however, when the reply excited surprise, "justice, not to me, but to my Substitute, in whom I trust.—*Robert Macdonald, in "From Day to Day; or, Helpful Words for Christian Life," 1879.*

Verse 2.—"Enter not into judgment with thy servant." The Divine justice has been invoked in the first verse; and now the appellant suddenly seems to deprecate it. These verses really sum up the apparent paradox of the Book of Job (See Job iv. 17, ix. 2, 32, xiv. 3, seq., xv. 14, xxii. 4, etc.) In one breath Job frequently pours forth pathetic protestations of his innocence, and a dread lest God should take him at his word, and arraign him for trial. The godly man, in his desire to have his character vindicated before man, appeals to the just Judge, but instantly falls back with a guilty sense that before his tribunal none can stand:

"For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee."

A. S. Aglen.

Verse 2.—He doth not pray absolutely that God "would not enter into judgment with him," for this were to forego his government of the world; but that he would not do so on account of his own duties and obedience. But if so be these duties and obedience did answer, in any sense or way, what is required of us as a righteousness unto justification, there was no reason why he should deprecate a trial by them, or upon them.—*John Owen.*

Verse 2.—He doth not say, "with an enemy, a rebel, a traitor, an impenitent sinner;" but "with thy servant," one that is devoted to thy fear, one that is

consecrated to thy service, one that is really and indeed "wholly thine, as much and as fully as he can be." As if he had said, "Lord, if the holiest, purest, best of men should come and stand before thee in judgment, or plead with thee, they must needs be cast in their cause. 'If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities,' alas! 'O Lord, who shall stand?'" Psalm cxxx. 3.—*Thomas Lye* (1621—1684), in *"The Morning Exercises."*

Verse 2.—"*Enter not into judgment with thy servant,*" for thou hast already entered into judgment with thy Son, and laid upon him the iniquity of us all. "*Enter not into judgment with thy servant,*" for thy servant enters into judgment with himself; and "if we will judge ourselves we shall not be judged."—*Matthew Henry.*

Verse 2.—Not the proudest philosopher among the Gentiles, nor the most precise Pharisee among the Jews; we may go yet further and say, not the holiest saint that ever lived, can stand righteous before that bar. God hath nailed that door up, that none can for ever enter by a law-righteousness into life and happiness. This way to heaven is like the northern passage to the Indies, whoever attempts it is sure to be frozen up before he gets half way thither.—*William Gurnall.*

Verse 2.—"*Enter not into judgment,*" &c. Some years ago I visited a poor young woman dying with consumption. She was a stranger in our town, and had been there a few weeks before, some time in her girlhood, and had attended my Sabbath-school class. What did I find was her only stay, and hope, and comfort in the view of the dark valley of the shadow of death, which was drawing down upon her? One verse of a Psalm she had learned at the class, and never forgot. She repeated it with clasped hands, piercing eyes, and thin voice trembling from her white lips:

"Thy servant also bring thou not
In judgment to be tried:
Because no living man can be
In thy sight justify'd."

No—no sinner can endure sight of thee, O God, if he tries to be self-justified.—*James Comper Gray*, in *"The Biblical Museum,"* 1879.

Verse 2.—"*Enter not into judgment with thy servant.*" We read of a certain Dutch divine, who being to die, was full of fears and doubts. And when some said to him, "You have been so active and faithful, why should you fear?" Oh, said he, the judgment of man and the judgment of God are different.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 2.—"*Enter not into judgment.*" A metaphor taken from the course pursued by those who seek to recover the very utmost to which they are entitled by strict legal process. Compare Job xxii. 4, 5. In a similar sense we are commanded to pray to God that he will forgive us our debts.—*Daniel Cresswell.*

Verse 2.—There is probably here a tacit reference to the great transgression, the consequences of which followed David all his days.—*William Walford.*

Verse 2.—"*Thy servant.*" A servant is one who obeys the will of another. . . . There were these four ways in which one might come to be a servant,—by birth, by purchase, by conquest, and by voluntary engagement. Some were servants in one of the ways, and some in another. There were servants who were born in the master's house, servants who were bought with the master's money, servants who were the captives of his sword and bow, and servants who had freely engaged themselves to do his work. . . . In the case of the believer there is something that is peculiar and remarkable. He is God's servant by birth. But he is more—he is God's servant by purchase. And that is not all: he is God's servant by conquest. Yes, and by voluntary engagement too. He is the servant of God, not in some one of the four ways, but in all of them together.—*Andrew Gray* (1805—1861), in *"Gospel Contrasts and Parallels."*

Verse 2.—Not only the worst of my sins, but the best of my duties speak me a child of Adam.—*William Beveridge.*

Verse 2.—So far from being able to answer for my sins, I cannot answer even for my righteousness.—*Bernard of Clairvaux*, 1091—1153.

Verse 2.—A young man once said to me: "I do not think I am a sinner." I asked him if he would be willing his mother or sister should know all he had done, or said, or thought,—all his motions and all his desires. After a moment he said: "No, indeed, I should not like to have them know; no, not for the world." "Then can you dare to say, in the presence of a holy God, who knows every thought of your heart, 'I do not commit sin?'"—*John B. Gough*, in *"Sunlight and Shadow,"* 1881.

Verse 3.—"For the enemy," etc. If ever trouble be just cause for calling upon thee, how can mine but be most just, when "*the enemy hath persecuted my soul, hath smitten my life down to the ground, and hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead*" ? All this "*the enemy*" hath done unto me : but what enemy ? Is it not the enemy of all mankind, who hath singled me out, as it were to a duel ? And can I resist him myself alone, whom the whole army of mankind cannot ? But it is not the enemy of thyself, O God, who is but my enemy because I am thy servant ? And wilt thou see thy servants persecuted—in thy cause persecuted—and not protect them ? Shall I suffer, grievously suffer, for thy sake, and wilt thou forsake me ? Alas, O Lord ; if they were but some light evils that are inflicted upon me I would bear them without complaining, and never make my moan to thee about them ; but they are the three greatest miseries that can be thought of ; the greatest persecution, the greatest overthrow, and the greatest captivity. For what persecution so grievous as to be persecuted in my soul ? for he plays no less a game than for souls : he casts indeed at the body sometimes, and sometimes at goods, yet these are but the bye ; the main of his aim is at the soul ; for if he can otherwise win the soul he cares not much for either body or goods, but rather makes use of them to keep men in security ; for whatsoever he doth, whatsoever he leaves undone, it is all done but in persecution of the soul ; and he can persecute as well with prosperity as with adversity, and knows how to fit their several application. It seems as if he takes me for another Job ; he sees he can do no good upon me with fawning and clawing, and therefore falls now to quarrelling and striking ; and he strikes no light blows ; for "*he hath stricken my life down to the ground*" ; and lower would have struck it, if thou, God, hadst not broken his blow. He strikes me downward, to keep me from heaven, as much as he can : and now that he sees me down, he lets not me rest so neither ; but seizeth upon me, and being himself the prince of darkness, hath kept me in darkness ; not for a night or two, as men stay at their inn, but for a much longer time, as at their dwelling : and it is no ordinary darkness that he hath made me to dwell in, but even the darkness of dead men ; and that in the highest degree, as those that have been long dead. They that have been dead but a while are yet remembered sometimes, and sometimes talked of ; but they that have been long dead are as quite forgotten as if they had never been ; and such, alas, am I. So long have I been made to dwell in darkness, as if I had been dead many years ago, that he that would seek to find me out must be fain to look for me amongst the tombs and monuments. Indeed, to dwell in darkness is no better than the house of death : for as long as we are in life, if we want sometimes the light of the sun, yet the light of a candle will serve to supply it ; but I, alas, am kept in such darkness that neither the sunshine of thy gospel nor the lantern of thy law gives any light unto me. I cannot with confidence say, as once I did, "Thou, O Lord, shalt light my candle for me" ; and as a body being dead grows cold and stiff, and is not to be bowed, so my soul with continuance in sinning is grown hardened, and, as it were, stiff in sin ; that it is as hard a matter to make me flexible to any goodness as to bring a body long dead to life again.—*Sir Richard Baker.*

Verse 3.—"To dwell in darkness." To seek my safety in holes and obscure places in the wilderness. See 2 Sam. xvii. 16. "*As those that have been long dead.*" That is, where I seem to be buried alive, and to have no more hopes of being restored to a happy condition in this world than those that have been long dead have of living again in it.—*Thomas Fenton.*

Verse 4.—"Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed," etc. David was not only a great saint, but a great soldier, and yet even he was sometimes ready to faint in the day of adversity. "Howl, fir trees, if the cedars be shaken."—*Matthew Henry.*

Verse 4 (second clause).—"Within me"—literally, "*in the midst of me*" ; implying how deeply the feeling had penetrated. "*Is desolate,*" or rather, "*is stupefied,*" in a similar sense to that of the Hebrew (Isa. lix. 16 ; lxiii. 5 ; Dan. viii. 27). So the Chaldaic, The LXX., Vulgate, Arabic, and Syriac, "*is agitated.*"—*Andrew Robert Fausset.*

Verse 4.—"Is desolate." Or rather, "is full of amazement," literally, "astories itself" ; seeks to comprehend the mystery of its sufferings, and is ever beaten back upon itself in its perplexity : such is the full force of the reflexive conjugation here employed.—*J. Stewart Perowne.*

Verses 4, 5.—How poor a man's judgment can be formed of a man's state from

the considerations of comfort only. A holy man, we clearly see, may be void of comfort; his spirit may be overwhelmed, and his heart desolate. Nay, was it not so even with the holy Jesus himself? was he not very heavy, and his soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death? But never did the Saviour's faith and submission to his Father's will shine more brightly than in that hour of darkness. And David's faith also rises to meet the occasion. His trial is great, and his faith is great also. Hardly when he is on the mount of praise, and singing his songs of Zion in the most triumphant strain, does he appear more admirable than when struggling through this painful conflict. He is troubled on every side, yet not removed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. He has no arm of flesh to trust to, and nothing within himself to support his hope; but with what simplicity, and energy of trust, does he betake himself to God, revolving in his memory past seasons of deliverance, and staying his mind on the power and truth of Jehovah! "I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands."—*John Fawcett*.

Verse 5.—"I remember the days of old; I meditate," etc. This meditation gives an ease to the overwhelming of my spirits, a comfort to the desolateness of my heart; for I am thinking sometimes upon Jonah, how he was overwhelmed with waters and swallowed up of a whale, and yet at last delivered; sometimes I am thinking of Joseph, how he was bound and left desolate in a pit, and yet at last relieved; and then I meditate thus with myself,—Is God's power confined to persons? could he deliver them in their extremities, and can he not deliver me in mine?—*Sir Richard Baker*.

Verse 5.—"I meditate on all thy works." Let us look for God in the future more earnestly than we have done in the past,—look for him in vineyards and orchards and harvest fields,—in the bright plumage of birds, and the delicate bloom of fruit, and the sweet gracefulness of flowers,—in the dense foliage of the forest, and the sparse heather of the moor,—in the rich luxuriance of fertile valleys, and the rugged grandeur of the everlasting hills,—in the merry dance of the rivulet, and the majestic tides of the ocean,—in the gay colours of the rainbow, and the splendour of the starry heavens,—in the gentle radiance of the moon, and the gorgeous light of setting suns,—in the clear azure sky, and the weird pageantry of clouds,—in the snow-mantled wintry landscape, and the brilliant efulgence of a summer's noon,—in the virgin loveliness of spring, and in the pensive fading beauty of autumn,—let us look for him with an earnest, eager, and unwearied gaze, till we see him to be a God of wisdom as well as power, of love as well as sovereignty, of beauty as well as glory.—*A. W. Momerie*, in "*The Origin of Evil, and other Sermons*," 1881.

Verses 5, 6.—"I meditate." "I stretch forth my hands." Meditation is prayer's handmaid to wait on it, both before and after the performance of supplication. It is as the plough before the sower, to prepare the heart for the duty of prayer; and as the harrow after the sower, to cover the seed, when 'tis sown. As the hopper feeds the mill with grist, so does meditation supply the heart with matter for prayer.—*William Gurnall*.

Verse 6.—"I stretch forth my hands unto thee." As a poor beggar for an alms. Beggary here is not the easiest and poorest trade, but the hardest and richest of all other.—*John Trapp*.

Verse 6.—"I stretch forth my hands unto thee," as if I were in hope thou wouldst take me by the hand and draw me to thee.—*Sir Richard Baker*.

Verse 6.—"My soul thirsteth after thee," etc. Alas! this thirst is rare to be found. Worldly thirsts there are in many: the drunkard's thirst, Deut. xxix. 19; the worldling's thirst, Hab. ii. 5; the epicure's thirst, whose belly is his god, Phil. iii. 19; the ambitious man's thirst—Diotrephes, 3 John 9; and the malicious man's thirst, the blood thirsty, Ps. v. 6. Thirst after these things doth keep away that thirst after grace without which we shall never escape Dives' thirst in hell, Luke xvi. 24. If we have a godly thirst, it will appear by diligence in frequenting the place and means of grace, Prov. viii. 34; brute beasts for want of water will break through hedges, and grace-thirsty souls will make their ways through all encumbrances to come where they may have satisfaction.—*Thomas Pierson*, 1570—1633.

Verse 6.—"My soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land." He declareth his vehement affection to God by a very pretty similitude, taken from the ground

which is thirsty by the long drought of summer, wherein the earth, rent in pieces, as it were, and with open mouth through long thirst, seeketh drink from heaven. By which he showeth that he came to God as destitute of natural substance, and therefore seeketh from above that which he lacked. So in all his extremities he looked ever upward; from above he seeketh help and comfort. Albeit we be in extremity, and as it were rent asunder, yet here is comfort,—there are waters in heaven which will refresh us, if we gape after them. Here is a blessing—those that thirst shall be satisfied. If we thirst for mercy, for deliverance, for spiritual or temporal comfort, we shall be satisfied therewith; for if God heard the prayers of Hagar and Ishmael being athirst in the wilderness, and opened unto them a fountain (Gen. xxi. 17, 19), will he forsake Isaac, the child of promise? If he heard Samson in the bitterness of his heart, when he said, “I die from thirst,” and opened a spring out of the jawbone of an ass (Jud. xv. 19), will he forsake us in time of our distress, if we thirst aright?—*Archibald Symson*.

Verse 6.—“*My soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land.*” Sir John Chardin, in his MSS. says:—“The lands of the East, which the great dryness there causes to crack, are the ground of this figure, which is certainly extremely beautiful; for these dry lands have chinks too deep for a person to see the bottom of: this may be observed in the Indies more than anywhere, a little before the rains fall, and wherever the lands are rich and hard.”—*Harmer’s Observations*.

Verse 6.—“*I stretch forth my hands unto thee,*” etc. It is not a strange thing, then, for the soul to find its life in God. This is its native air: God as the Environment of the soul has been from the remotest age the doctrine of all the deepest thinkers in religion. How profoundly Hebrew poetry is saturated with this high thought will appear when we try to conceive of it with this left out. True poetry is only science in another form. And long before it was possible for religion to give scientific expression to its greatest truths, men of insight uttered themselves in Psalms which could not have been truer to Nature had the most modern light controlled the inspiration. “As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.” What fine sense of the natural analogy of the natural and spiritual does not underlie these words. As the hart after its environment, so man after his; as the water-brooks are fitly designed to meet the natural wants, so fitly does God implement the spiritual need of man. It will be noticed that in the Hebrew poets the longing for God never strikes one as morbid, or unnatural to the men who uttered it. It is as natural for them to long for God as for the swallow to seek her nest. Throughout all their images no suspicion rises within us that they are exaggerating. We feel how truly they are reading themselves, their deepest selves. No false note occurs in all their aspiration. There is no weariness even in their ceaseless sighing, except the lover’s weariness for the absent—if they would fly away, it is only to be at rest. Men who have no soul can only wonder at this. Men who have a soul, but with little faith, can only envy it. How joyous a thing it was to the Hebrews to seek their God! How artlessly they call upon him to entertain them in his pavilion, to cover them with his feathers, to hide them in his secret place, to hold them in the hollow of his hand, or stretch around them the everlasting arms! These men were true children of nature. As the humming-bird among its own palm-trees, as the ephemera in the sunshine of a summer evening, so they lived their joyous lives. And even the full share of the sadder experiences of life which came to all of them but drove them the further into the secret place, and led them with more consecration to make, as they expressed it, “*the Lord their portion.*” All that has been said since from Marcus Aurelius to Swedenborg, from Augustine to Schleiermacher, of a besetting God as the full complement of humanity is but a repetition of the Hebrew poets’ faith. And even the New Testament has nothing higher to offer man than this. The Psalmist’s “God is our refuge and strength” is only the earlier form, less defined, less practicable, but not less noble, of Christ’s “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.”—*Henry Drummond*, in “*Natural Law in the Spiritual World,*” 1884.

Verses 6, 7.—“*I stretch forth my hands. . . . Hear me,*” etc. So will the weary hands be raised yet again, through faith in him who stretched forth his hands upon the cross. So will the fainting soul wait and long for the outpouring of his grace, who upon the cross said, “I thirst.” We shall thirst for our salvation, even as the parched-up fields and dying herbs seem to gasp and pant like living things for the sweet and cheering showers in the fierce heat of summer. So will the soul cry to be heard, and that soon, lest its faith grow faint with delay; and the hiding

of God's face, the denying of his smile of pardon, will press on the spirit like sickness, and weigh it down like the heaviness of death.—*J. W. Burgon.*

Verse 7.—"Hear me speedily." David is in trouble, and he betakes himself to prayer. Prayer is the sovereign remedy the godly fly to in all their extremities. The saints in sorrows have fled for comfort and healing unto prayers and supplications. Heaven is a shop full of all good things—there are stored up blessings and mercies; this the children of God know who fly to this shop in their troubles, begging for help from this holy sanctuary. "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord": Ps. lxxvii. 2. When any vexation makes our life grievous unto us, what should we seek but help? of whom should we seek, but of the Lord? how should we seek, but by prayer? . . . "Speedily." His request is not only for hearing, but for speedy hearing: "Hear me, and hear me speedily;" answer, and answer quickly. This is the tone and tune of men in distress. Man in misery earnestly sues for speedy delivery. In our afflictions and troubles, deliverance, though it should come with wings, we never think it comes soon enough. Weak man cannot content himself to know he shall have help, unless it be present help.—*Thomas Calvert, 1647.*

Verse 7.—"My spirit faileth." This is David's first reason to move the Lord; he is at the last cast and even giving up the ghost with long waiting for help: from his low condition we may see what is often the condition of God's children,—and the best of God's servants have waited for comfort and the feelings of his Spirit, to the very failing of their own spirit. David, a man after God's own heart, is yet brought low with the faintness and failing of his heart, in waiting for help from God. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. iii. 19); this lies upon the sons of men. But here, not sweat of face only, that were but small; but sighs and fainting of the heart lie upon the sons of God, in seeking and hungering after a taste of God's bread of life, inward comfort, assurance, and joy of the Holy Ghost. Thus the Church was brought to this sick bed ere her comfort came: "For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me:" Lam. i. 16. The disciples' spirits were even failing in the tempest, when Christ slept and seemed to neglect them, as if he cared not though they perished. How should our spirits do other but fail, when our Comforter sleeps, when our only friend seems to be our enemy?

Failing of spirit is both a motive which God means to yield unto and to be won by withal; and it is also his opportunity, when he usually helps. It is a strong motive in our prayers to move him, for he is pitiful, and will not let his children utterly fail and perish; he is a pitiful Spirit to failing spirits. "I will not contend (saith the Lord) for ever, neither will I be always wroth;" why? we deserve his wrath should last and take fire for ever against us; yea, but (saith the Lord) this is the reason, "The spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made" (Isaiah lvii. 16): I love and pity the fainting souls and spirits of men; I will help my children; how can I see my creatures whom I made and do love, to perish for want of my help? David knew the Lord's nature, and that that was a speeding argument in prayer, which made him here and elsewhere so often use it. A pitiful father will not see the spirit of his children utterly fail. It is his opportunity; he usually helps when all other helps fail, that we may the more strongly cleave to him, and ground ourselves upon him, as knowing how infirm we are, if he confirm us not. When man's cruse of oil is dry, and fails, and can drop no more, then is God's time to prepare his. Thus helped he the Israelites at the Red Sea, when all man's strength and wisdom was at a stand. He loves to be seen in the mount, in extremities.—*Condensed from Thomas Calvert.*

Verse 7.—The prayer of David becomes, as he proceeds, both more spiritual and more fervent. In the sixth verse we find him thirsting after God; and now that thirst is become so intense that it admits of no delay. In the beginning of the Psalm he was content to say, "Hear my prayer;" but now he cries, "Hear me speedily." This is not the language of sinful impatience: it is, indeed, good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God; yet a man may desire, not only an answer, but also a speedy answer, without incurring the charge of impatience. Whatever a man desires to have he desires to have soon; nor can he be otherwise than grieved at anything which delays the accomplishment of his wishes. In such desire or grief there is nothing sinful, provided it do not lead to murmuring or distrust of God. Hence this petition for speedy relief, and manifestation of God's presence and favour is very frequent with the Psalmist. He often

prays, "Make haste, O Lord, to deliver; make haste to help me, O Lord." Nay, if a man does not desire the light of God's countenance soon, it is a certain proof that he does not desire it at all. If the natural language of his heart be not, "hear me speedily," delay is to him no exercise of patience. The very idea of patience implies that something is contrary to our wish; and the stronger the desire is, the more difficult will that exercise of patience become.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and therefore David adds, "my spirit faileth." He believed verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living; yet so intense was his desire, that faith could hardly keep his spirit from fainting, while the blessing, which he so eagerly pursued, seemed still distant, and fled before him. He is afraid lest if God should long delay, and withdraw himself, faith and hope could hold out no longer. He therefore pleads, "hide not thy face from me, lest I become like them that go down into the pit;" and urges the failing of his spirit before him who "will not contend for ever, lest the spirit should fail before him."—*John Fawcett.*

Verses 7, 8, 10, 11.—Observe how David mixes together prayers for joy, for guidance, and for sanctification—"Hide not thy face from me." "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk." "Teach me to do thy will." "Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning." "Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake." Now this is exactly right: our prayers, as well as our other obedience, must be without partiality; nay, we should desire comfort for the sake of holiness, rather than holiness for the sake of comfort.—*John Fawcett.*

Verse 8.—"*Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness.*" Here he craveth God's favour and kindness, as he doth in many other Psalms. Because in his favour is life, wealth, and grace, all good things, and pleasure for evermore, so that if he look kindly to us we need be afraid of nothing. But how shall he be assured of his favour? Even by *hearing* it, as he saith in the fifty-first Psalm: "Make me to hear joy and gladness." The voice which is heard is the word of God, which, being apprehended by faith, is able to comfort our souls in whatsoever temptation. It is no marvel that such atheists and papists who altogether refuse the word of God, live comfortless and die without comfort, because they refuse that instrument which should carry joy to them. Good reason they die athirst, since they reject that vessel, the word of God, by which they might be refreshed. Therefore since faith cometh by hearing of God's word, and all our comfort cometh by it, let us pray God to bore our ears and our hearts, that we may receive the glad tidings of reconciliation from God.

"*Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk.*" The second petition ariseth very well from the first. For when we have obtained an assurance of God's favour, as he is reconciled to us in Jesus Christ, it followeth next that we should desire to conform our lives to the obedience of his commandments. For no man will frame himself to walk in God's ways till he be assured of God's favour. Therefore faith in God's promises is the most effectual cause to bring forth good works; and an assurance of justification the surest means to produce sanctification.

"*For I lift up my soul unto thee.*" Behold what a wonderful effect God worketh by afflictions: they depress and cast down the outward man, and our inward man by them is elevated and raised aloft; yea, the more we are afflicted, the more we are stirred up. The oftener the messenger of Satan is sent to buffet us, the more earnestly (with Paul) we cry unto the Lord to be delivered (2 Cor. xii. 8). So if we be cast down to hell in our feelings, what the worse are we if by that we be raised up to heaven?—*Archibald Symson.*

Verse 8.—"*Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning,*" etc. To hear thy lovingkindness in the morning makes my waking to be saluted, as it were, with music; makes my troubles seem as if they were but dreams; makes me find it true that though "weeping may endure for a night, yet joy cometh in the morning;" Ps. xxx. 5. . . . It may well be said we hear this lovingkindness in the morning, seeing it makes it morning to us whensoever we hear it.—*Sir Richard Baker.*

Verse 8.—"*Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning.*" If evil fall upon us in the night, we would have it removed ere the morning; if in the morning, we would not have it our bed-fellow in the evening. We would have the Lord's promise run thus,—Your sorrows shall not endure the whole night, your joy shall come long before the morning. The luxurious Emperor (? Smyndirides the Sybarite) and his drunken mates sat and drank all the night, and slept all the day, insomuch that it was said of them, they never saw sun-set nor sun-rise. Such would we

have the evils we suffer—of so short continuance that neither sun-set nor sun-rise might see us in our misery. This makes me wonder at that strange Egyptian beast called Pharaoh, who being demanded of Moses when he would have God's plague of the frogs removed, answered, "To-morrow." Surely, here he spake not as a man, to whom one hour's trouble is accounted a day, a day a month, a month a year. For in leaving of two things we change our desires, and are much different.

1. In leaving of sin, then we procrastinate and put off; and when God says, "To-day hear my voice," we answer, "To-morrow," and are like the Levite's wife's father (Judg. xix. 6), too kind hosts to such bad guests: saying to our sins "tarry till the morning." Our pace to repentance is slow, we are far from haste in that matter.

2. But for afflictions to leave us, then we wish they had feet like hinds' feet, to run away from us, or we the wings of a dove to fly away from them, and be at rest. . . . What prisoner desires not to be presently set free, and that liberty's soft hand may loose his iron knots? What mariner wishes a long storm? What servant sighs not over his hard apprenticeship? Yea, who is he, that if there were an appearance of an offering to take the cup of calamity from his mouth, saying, "Thou shalt drink no more," would answer, "This cup shall not yet pass from me, I delight to carouse and drink deeply of these bitter waters"? Yea, this desire extends so far that it comes to the Son of Man, the blessed Seed of the woman, who was so clad with human weakness that he earnestly prayed for speedy help from his heavy anguish; and that not once, but often,—“Oh, my Father, if it be possible,” etc.; and when his Father answers not, he cries like one ready to fall under the burden, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The reason for Christ's thus complaining is to be fetched from thence, whence his flesh came; even from us. It was our human flesh, not his Divine spirit, which was so weary of suffering; his spirit was willing, it was our flesh that was so weak.—*Thomas Calvert.*

Verse 8.—“Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning.” This is a short and sweet morning prayer. God hears early prayer, and lovingly responds to it. The smiles of his face, the sweetness of his voice, the gifts of his hand, bless the morning, bless all the day. Do we write and read experimentally? Then we know the blessedness of divine love. The subject is truly pleasant and precious. “Lovingkindness” is a favourite expression, is a choice theme of David's. It is used more in the Book of Psalms than in any other book in the Scriptures. Lovingkindness is love showing kindness; it is the sun of love shining with rays of kindness; the river of love sending forth streams of kindness; it is the heart of love uttering itself by words of kindness, doing deeds, and giving gifts of kindness.

Here it is the *voice* of the lovingkindness of the Lord that David desires to hear. This voice is the music of heaven, the joyful sound of the gospel, and it makes a jubilee in the Christian's heart. To him there is beauty, sweetness, fulness in the theme; it is his joy and rejoicing. This is the voice that speaks *pardon*. Pardon is through Jesus the medium of this kindness. Apart from this there is no hope of forgiveness. We plead this and realize pardon. “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions”: Ps. li. 1. It is the Lord's lovingkindness that pardons me. This voice speaks *peace*: “The Lord will speak peace unto his people.” Precious peace is the result of pardoning kindness. This voice also speaks *joy*. This is the alone and all-sufficient source of joy. It is sought elsewhere, but found only here. It sweetens every bitter, and makes sweeter every sweet. It is a balsam for every wound, a cordial for every fear. The present is but a taste, but a drop of the future fulness of joy. How sweetly refreshing is the joy of the Lord's lovingkindness. This voice speaks *hope*. With the sweet music of this voice falling upon our ears, the night of hopelessness passes away, and the morning of expectation opens upon us. It assures us of supplies for our wants, of safety in danger, of endurance to the end, and of a glorious portion in eternity.

“*The morning*” is the season in which David desires to hear the voice of the lovingkindness of the Lord. The morning is a season often mentioned by him, and as a time of devotion is much prized by him. “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up”: Ps. v. 3. “Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning”: let it engage my thoughts and affections. It is well to have a subject like this to occupy our waking thoughts, and to take hold of our first desires. If other thoughts get

into our hearts in the morning, we may not be able to turn them out all the day. Prayer and praise, reading and meditation, will be sweet with such a subject occupying and influencing our minds. They will be exercises of cheerfulness, freedom, and blessedness.

"Cause me to hear" this voice. It speaks every morning, but many ears are deaf to it. But while others are indifferent to it, cause me to hear it; let me not lose the opportunity: waken my ear morning by morning, so that I may hail the season and enjoy the privilege. And when the morning of eternity shall come, "cause me to hear the voice of thy lovingkindness" welcoming me to its joys.—*W. Abbot, in "The Baptist Messenger," 1870.*

Verse 8.—"Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk." The whole valley is surrounded by ranges of regal crags; but the mountain of the Gemmi, apparently absolutely inaccessible, is the last point to which you would turn for an outlet. A side gorge that sweeps up to the glaciers and snowy pyramids flashing upon you in the opposite direction is the route which you suppose your guide is going to take; and visions of pedestrians perilously scaling icy precipices, or struggling up to the middle through ridges of snow, begin to surround you, as the prospect of your own experience in this day's expedition. So convinced was I that the path *must* go in that direction, that I took a short cut, which I conceived would bring me again into the mule path at a point under the glaciers; but after scaling precipices and getting lost in a wood of firs in the valley, I was glad to rejoin my friend with the guide, and to clamber on in pure ignorance and wonder. . . . Now what a striking symbol is this of things that sometimes take place in our spiritual pilgrimage. We are often brought to a stand, hedged up and hemmed in by the providence of God so that there seems no way out. A man is sometimes thrown into difficulties in which he sits down beginning to despair, and says to himself, "Well, this time it is all over with me"; like Sterne's starling, or, worse, like Bunyan's man in the cage, he says, "I cannot get out." Then when God has drawn him from all self-confidence and self-resource, a door opens in the wall and he rises up, and walks at liberty, praising God.—*George Barrell Cheever, 1807—.*

Verses 8—10.—After thou hast prayed, observe what God doth towards thee; especially how he doth guide thy feet and heart after prayer; there is much in that. That which was the spirit of supplication in a man when he prayed, rests upon him as the spirit of obedience in his course. That dependence which he hath upon God for the mercy he seeks for is a special motive and means to keep him fearful of offending, and diligent in duty. He looks to his paths, and endeavours to behave himself as becomes a suitor, as well as to pray as a suitor. David walked by this principle when he said (Ps. lxxvi. 18), "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"; that consideration still came in as a curb unto sin. Therefore David, in these verses, when he was to pray, even as for his life, for deliverance from his enemies, he specially prays God to direct him and keep him, that he might not sin against him; for he knew that by sinning he should enervate and spoil all his prayers. He cries not only "*Hear me speedily,*" but also, "*Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; teach me to do thy will.*" This he especially prays for, more than for deliverance, for else he knew God would not hear him. Therefore when thou art in treaty with God for any mercy, observe, doth God still after praying keep thee in a more obedient frame of spirit? If so, it is a sign he intends to answer thee. The same is true when he keeps thee from using ill means, etc. When he meant to give David the kingdom, he kept him innocent, and made his heart tender, so that it smote him but for cutting off the lap of Saul's garment.—*Thomas Goodwin.*

Verse 9.—"*Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies.*" In the former verse he desireth God's mercy and lovingkindness, and that he might be showed the way wherein he should walk: now he desireth to be free of temporal danger. This is a good method in prayer, first to seek the kingdom of God and spiritual graces, for then all other things shall be added to us. We seek in vain temporal deliverances of God if we neglect to seek spiritual graces, which are most necessary for us.

As for *enemies*, the church and her members neither have wanted nor shall want innumerable foes, against whom we can only oppose God's protection. In number, in power, in policy and subtilty they are ever above us. There is no help for us against them all but our gracious God. Esau came with four hundred against Jacob, a naked man, with his wife, children, and droves of cattle. But

Mahanaim was with him; he was guarded by God's angels. And, therefore, since the church of God in France, Germany, and elsewhere is in danger of the Leviathan and the sons of Anak, let us run to the Lord, and cry unto him,—O God Jehovah, who art one against all, deliver thy church from her enemies, who likewise are thy enemies.—*Archibald Symson.*

Verse 9.—"I flee unto thee to hide me." Is David's valour come to this, that he is come now to be glad to fly? Had he not done better to have died valiantly than to fly basely? O my soul, to fly is not always a sign of baseness; it is not always a point of valour to stand to it; but then to fly when we feel our own weakness, and to him to fly, in whom is our strength—this is, if not valour, at least wisdom, but it is, to say true, both wisdom and true valour. And now, O God, seeing I find my own weakness, and know thy strength, what should I do but fly, and whither fly but only to thee?—to thee, a strong fortress to all that build upon thee; to thee, a safe sanctuary to all that fly unto thee.—*Sir Richard Baker.*

Verse 9.—"I flee unto thee to hide me." This implies, 1. *Danger*: the Christian may be in danger from sin, self, foes. 2. *Fear*: his fears may be groundless, but they are often very painful. 3. *Inability*—to defend himself or overcome his opposers. 4. *Foresight*: he sees the storm in the distance, and looks out for the covert. 5. *Prudence*: he hides before the storm, ere the enemy comes upon him. 6. A laudable *concern* for safety and comfort. The believer, if wise, will at all times flee to Jehovah. Jacob flies to Laban; the manslayer to the refuge; the bird to his mountain; and the Christian to his God. Asa may seek to physicians; Ephraim to king Jareb; and Saul to the witch; but the believer looks to his God. The Lord receives, befriends, and secures him. Let us flee to him by prayer, in faith, with hope, for salvation; and he will receive us, shelter us, and be our refuge and strength. Flee from sin, from self, from the world; but flee to Jesus. His heart is ever toward us, his ear is open to us, and his hand is ready to help, protect, and deliver us. His throne is our asylum. His promise is our comfort, and his omnipotence is our guard.

Happy soul, that, free from harms
Rests within his Shepherd's arms!
Who his quiet shall molest?
Who shall violate his rest?
He who found the wandering sheep,
Loves, and still delights to keep.

James Smith, in "The Believer's Daily Remembrancer."

Verse 9.—"I flee unto thee to hide me." The Lord hid the prophets so that Ahab could not find them out: 1 Kings xviii. 13. If we will creep under his wings he will surely keep us.—*Archibald Symson.*

Verse 9.—"I flee unto thee to hide me." It may be rendered, "With thee have I hid"; that is, myself: so Arama gives the sense. "I have hid myself with thee." Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi interpret it to this purpose, "I have hid my affairs, my straits and troubles, my difficulties and necessities, from men, and have revealed them unto thee, who alone can save." The Targum is, "I have appointed thy Word to be (my) Redeemer.—*John Gill.*

Verses 9, 10.—Be persuaded actually to hide yourselves with Jesus Christ. To have a hiding-place and not to use it is as bad as to want one: fly to Christ; run into the holes of this rock. Three things must be done by all those that would hide themselves with Christ.

1. You must put away sin by repentance. Jesus Christ will not be a sanctuary for rebels, he will not protect evil-doers. Christ will never hide the devil, nor any of his servants. Isa. lv. 6, 7: "Let the ungodly forsake his ways," etc. David knew this, therefore he prays that God would teach him to do his will: "Deliver me, etc. I flee unto thee to hide me. Teach me to do thy will." He that will not do the will of Christ shall receive no protection from Christ. *Protectio sequitur allegiantiam.* You must be his liege people if you will have him to defend you. Job xxii. 23, 25.

2. You must pray that he would hide you. The promise is made to prayer: Isa. lxxv. 10, "Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me." He that prays most fervently is like to be hid most securely. And then,

3. You must believe in him. Faith is the key that opens the door of this

hiding-place, and locks it again. One word in the Hebrew signifies to trust and to make a refuge. Ps. lvii. 1. He that doth not make Christ his trust shall not have Christ for his hiding-place; he will hide none but those that commit themselves to him: "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name": Ps. xci. 9, 14.—*Ralph Robinson.*

Verse 10.—"Teach me to do thy will." He saith not, Teach me to know thy will, but to do thy will. God teaches us in three ways. First, by his word. Secondly, he illuminateth our minds by the Spirit. Thirdly, he imprinteth it in our hearts, and maketh us obedient to the same; for the servant who knoweth the will of his master, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes: Luke xii. 47.—*Archibald Symson.*

Verse 10.—"Teach me to do thy will." We are to pray that God would teach us to know, and then teach us to do, his will. Knowledge without obedience is lame, obedience without knowledge is blind; and we must never hope for acceptance if we offer the blind and the lame to God.—*Vincent Alsop* (—1703), in "*The Morning Exercises.*"

Verse 10.—"Teach me to do thy will." The Lord doth no sooner call his people to himself, but as soon as ever he hath thus crowned them with these glorious privileges, and given them any sense and feeling of them, then they immediately cry out, O Lord, what shall I now do for thee? How shall I now live to thee? They know now that they are no more their own, but his; and therefore should now live to him.

It is true indeed, obedience to the law is not required of us now as it was of Adam; it was required of him as a condition antecedent to life, but of those that be in Christ it is required only as a duty consequent to life, or as a rule of life, that seeing he hath purchased our lives in redemption, and actually given us life in vocation and sanctification, we should now live unto him, in all thankful and fruitful obedience, according to his will revealed in the moral law. It is a vain thing to imagine that our obedience is to have no other rule but the Spirit, without an attendance to the law: the Spirit is indeed the efficient cause of our obedience, and hence we are said to be "led by the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 14); but it is not properly the rule of our obedience, but the will of God revealed in his word, especially in the law, is the rule; the Spirit is the wind that drives us in our obedience; the law is our compass, according to which it steers our course for us: the Spirit and the law, the wind and the compass, can stand well together. "*Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God*" (there is David's rule, viz., God's will revealed); "*Thy Spirit is good*" (there is David's wind, that enabled him to steer his course according to it). The Spirit of life doth free us from the law of sin and death; but not from the holy, and pure, and good, and righteous law of God. Rom. viii. 1—3.—*Thomas Shepard*, in "*The Sound Believer*," 1671.

Verse 10.—"Teach me to do thy will," etc. We are inclined and enabled [to good] by the sanctifying Spirit. In the Christian religion, not only the precepts are good, but there goeth along with them the power of God to make us good. "*Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good.*" The Spirit's direction hath strength joined with it. And he is a good Spirit, as he doth incline us to good. The Spirit is the only fountain of all goodness and holiness: Neh. ix. 20, "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them." Why is he so often called the good Spirit, but that all his operations tend to make men good and holy? Eph. v. 9, "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."—*Thomas Manton.*

Verse 10.—"Thy Spirit is good; lead me," says the Psalmist. And therefore it is a usual phrase in Rom. viii. and Gal. iv., our being led by the Spirit.—*Thomas Goodwin.*

Verse 10.—"Lead me into the land of uprightness," into the communion of saints, the pleasant land of the upright; or into a settled course of holy living, which will lead to heaven, that land of uprightness, where holiness will be in perfection, and he that is holy will be holy still. We should desire to be led and kept safe to heaven, not only because it is a land of blessedness, but because it is a land of uprightness; it is the perfection of grace.—*Matthew Henry.*

Verse 10.—"Lead me." Man by nature is as a cripple and blind, he cannot go upright unless he be led by a superior spirit; yea, he must be carried as an eagle carrieth her little ones, or as a mother her tender child. Think not that we can

step one right step to heaven but by the conduct and convoy of God's Holy Spirit. Miserable are those who go without his conduction.—*Archibald Symson.*

Verse 10.—"The land of uprightness." *Mishor* is the name for the smooth upland downs of Moab (Deut. iii. 10; Josh. xiii. 17; xx. 8; Jer. xlviii. 8, 21). Derived from the root *yashar*, "even, level plain," it naturally came to be used figuratively for equity, right, righteous, and uprightness. Mal. ii. 6; Isa. xi. 4; Ps. xlv. 7; lxxvii. 5; cxliii. 10.—*Cunningham Geikie*, in "*Hours with the Bible*," 1884.

Verse 10.—"The land of uprightness." The land of plainness, a land where no wickedness of men, and malice of Satan, vex the soul from day to day; a land where no rough paths and crooked turns lengthen out the traveller's weary journey (see verse 5); but where all is like the smooth pasture-lands of Reuben (Deut. iii. 10; Josh. xiii. 9), a fit place for flocks to lie down.—*Andrew A. Bonar.*

Verse 11.—"Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake." For the sake of thine own glory, that thou mayest show thyself to be the God of lovingkindness and power which thou art esteemed to be.—*Andrew Robert Fausset.*

Verse 11.—"For thy righteousness' sake." It is worthy of observation that the Psalmist pleads God's righteousness as the foundation on which he bases his supplication for the deliverance of his soul from trouble, and God's lovingkindness or mercy as that on which he grounds his prayer, or his conviction, that God will destroy his enemies. This is not the language of a revengeful and bloodthirsty spirit.—*Speaker's Commentary.*

Verse 11.—"Bring my soul out of trouble." I can bring it in, but thou only canst bring it out.—*John Trapp.*

Verses 11, 12.—"Thy name's sake . . . thy righteousness' sake . . . And of thy mercy." Mark here, my soul, with what three cords David seeks to draw God to grant him his suits: for his name's sake, for his righteousness' sake, and for his mercy's sake,—three such motives, that it must be a very hard suit that God will deny, if either of them be used. But though all the three strong motives, yet as David riseth in his suits, so he may seem also to rise in his motives; and by this account; for his righteousness' sake will prove a motive of a higher degree than for his name's sake, and for his mercy's sake the highest of them all—as indeed his mercy-seat is the highest part of all his ark, if it be not rather that as the attributes of God, so these motives, that are drawn from the attributes, are of equal pre-eminence. But if the three motives be all of them so strong, being each of them single, how strong would they be if they were all united, and twisted, I may say, into one cord? And united they are all, indeed, into a motive, which God hath more clearly revealed to us than he did to David (although it be strange, seeing it was his Lord; and yet not strange, seeing it was his son); and this is the motive: for thy Son Christ Jesus' sake; for he is the *verbum abbreviatum* [the Word in brief], in whom are included all the motives—all the powerful motives—that can be used to God for obtaining our suits.—*Sir Richard Baker.*

Verses 11, 12.—The verbs in these two last verses, as Dr. Hammond hath noted, should be rendered in the future; "*Thou shalt quicken*," etc., and then the Psalm will end, as usual, with an act of faith and assurance, that all those mercies, which have been asked, shall be obtained; that God, for the sake of his "*name*," and his "*righteousness*," of his glory, and his faithfulness in the performance of his promises, will not fail to be favourable and gracious to his servants, "*quicken*" them, even when dead in trespasses and sins, and bringing them, by degrees, "*out of all their troubles*": going forth with them to the battle against their spiritual "*enemies*," and enabling them to vanquish the authors of their "*affliction*" and misery, to mortify the flesh, and to overcome the world; that so they may triumph with their Redeemer, in the day when he shall likewise quicken their mortal bodies, and put all enemies under their feet.—*George Horne.*

Verse 12.—"Of thy mercy cut off mine enemies." He desireth God to slay his enemies in his mercy, when rather their destruction was a work of his justice? I answer that the destruction of the wicked is a mercy to the church. As God showed great mercy and kindness to his church by the death of Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Herod, and other troublers thereof.—*Archibald Symson.*

Verse 12.—"Cut off mine enemies," etc. When you find these imprecations to be prophecies of events which the Psalmist himself could not understand; but

were to be fulfilled in persons whom the Psalmist could not know, as they were to live in distant future ages,—for instance, Judas, and the Romans, and leaders of the Jewish nation,—who would make these imprecations proofs of a revengeful spirit?—*James Bennett* (1774—1862), in "*Lectures on the Acts of the Apostles*," 1847.

Verse 12.—"I am thy servant." David the king professeth himself one of God's pensioners. Paul, when he would blaze his coat of arms, and set forth his best heraldry, he doth not call himself Paul, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, or Paul of the tribe of Benjamin, but Paul "a servant of Christ": Rom. i. 1. Theodosius thought it a greater dignity to be God's servant than to be an emperor. Christ himself, who is equal with his Father, yet is not ashamed of the title *servant*: Isa. liii. 11. Every servant of God is a son, every subject a prince: it is more honour to serve God than to have kings to serve us: the angels in heaven are servitors to the saints.—*Thomas Watson*.

HINTS TO PREACHERS.

Verse 1.—Three threes. I. As to his devotions,—prayers, supplications, requests. II. As to his success,—hear, give ear, answer me. III. As to his argument,—because thou art Jehovah, faithful, righteous.

Verses 1, 2.—A suitable prayer for a believer who has reason to suppose that he is suffering chastening for sin. I. Here is earnest importunity, as of one depending entirely upon divine favour for a hearing. II. Here is believing fervency laying hold of divine faithfulness and justice; see 1 John i. 9. III. Here is a deep consciousness of the vanity of self-justification pleading for pure mercy, ver. 2.—*J. F.*

Verse 2.—I. Who he is. "Thy servant." II. What he knows. "In thy sight shall no man living be justified." III. What he asks. "Enter not into judgment."

Verses 3—6.—Consider, I. The great lengths God may sometimes permit the enemy to go, ver 3. The case of Job a good illustration. II. The deep depression of spirit he may even permit his saints to experience, ver. 4. III. The good things he has provided for their meditation when even at their worst, ver. 5. IV. The two things his grace will never suffer to die, whose existence is a pledge of near approaching joy,—1. The thirsting after himself. 2. The practice of prayer. The whole is a good text for a lecture on the life and experience of Job.—*J. F.*

Verses 4, 5, 6.—I. Down in Despondency. II. Deep in Meditation. III. Determined in Supplication.

Verses 5, 6.—"I muse on the work of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee." Hand in hand: or the child of God admiring the work of God's hands, and praying with uplifted hands to be wrought upon by the like power.

Verse 5.—David's method. I. He gathered materials; facts and evidence concerning God: "I remember." II. He thought out his subject and arranged his matter: "I meditate." III. He discoursed thereon, and was brought nearer to God: "I muse"—discourse. IV. Let us close by viewing all this as an example for preachers and others.—*W. B. H.*

Verse 6.—God alone the desire of his people.

Verse 6.—Deep calling to deep. I. The insatiable craving of the heart. II. The vast riches in glory. III. The rushing together of these as: "My soul is to thee."—*W. B. H.*

Verse 7.—Reasons for speedy answers.

Verse 7.—Never despair. I. Because you have the Lord to plead with. Because you may freely tell him the desperateness of your case. III. Because you may be urgent with him for deliverance.—*J. F.*

Verse 7.—Cordial for the swooning heart. I. God's beloved fainting. II. The best restorative; her Lord's face. III. She has the presence of mind to call him as she falls.—*W. B. H.*

Verse 8.—The two prayers—"Cause me to hear," and "Cause me to know." The two pleas—"In thee do I trust," and "I lift up my soul unto thee."

Verse 8, Ps. cxlii. 3.—"Thou knewest my path." Ps. cxliii. 8.—"Cause me to

know the way." I. Trusting Omniscience in everything. II. Following conscience in everything.

Verse 8.—On fixing a time for the answering of our prayer. I. By whom it may be done. Not by all believers, but by those who through dwelling with God have attained to a holy boldness. II. When it may be done. 1. When the case is specially urgent. 2. When God's honour is concerned. III. What renders it pleasing to God when done. Great faith. "For in thee do I trust."—*J. F.*

Verse 8.—Listening for Lovingkindness. I. Where to listen. At the gates of Scripture; in the halls of meditation; nigh the footsteps of Jesus. II. When to listen. "In the morning;" as early and as often as possible. III. How to listen. In trustful dependence: "Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust." IV. Why to listen. To "know the way wherein I should walk."—*W. B. H.*

Verse 9.—Admirable points in this prayer to be imitated by us. There is, I. A sense of danger. II. A confession of weakness. III. A prudent foresight. IV. A solid confidence:—he expects to be hidden from his foes.

Verse 9.—I. Looking up. II. Lying close.—*W. B. H.*

Verse 10.—Two childlike requests—"Teach me. . . . lead me."

Verse 10.—See "Spurgeon's Sermons," No. 1519, "At School,"

Verse 10 (*first half*).—I. The best instructions: "Teach me to do thy will." Not merely to know, but "to do." II. The only efficient Instructor. III. The best reason for asking and expecting instruction: "For thou art my God."—*J. F.*

Verse 10.—"Teach me to do thy will." We may call this sentence a description of David's school; and it is a very complete one; at least, it hath in it the three best things that belong to a school. I. The best teacher. II. The best scholar. III. The best lesson; for who so good a teacher as God? who so good a scholar as David? what so good a lesson as to do God's will?—*Sir Richard Baker.*

Verse 10 (*latter half*).—I. Utopia—"the land of uprightness." Describe it, and declare its glories. II. The difficult paths to that upland country. III. The divine Guide,—"thy Spirit is good."

Verse 11 (*first clause*).—I. What is this blessing? "Quicken me." II. In what way will it glorify God, so that we may plead for the sake of his name?

Verse 11 (*second clause*).—How is the righteousness of God concerned in our deliverance from trouble?

Verse 12.—I. To the Master: "I am thy servant." II. For the servant: he seeks protection because he belongs to his master.