

PSALM CXLVIII.

The song is one and indivisible. It seems almost impossible to expound it in detail, for a living poem is not to be dissected verse by verse. It is a song of nature and of grace. As a flash of lightning flames through space, and enwraps both heaven and earth in one vestment of glory, so doth the adoration of the Lord in this Psalm light up all the universe and cause it to glow with a radiance of praise. The song begins in the heavens, sweeps downward to dragons and all deeps, and then ascends again, till the people near unto Jehovah take up the strain. For its exposition the chief requisite is a heart on fire with reverent love to the Lord over all, who is to be blessed for ever.

EXPOSITION.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

2 Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.

6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:

8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:

9 Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:

11 Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:

12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.

14 He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

1. "*Praise ye the LORD.*" Whoever ye may be that hear this word, ye are invited, entreated, commanded, to magnify Jehovah. Assuredly he has made you, and, if for nothing else, ye are bound, upon the ground of creatureship, to adore your Maker. This exhortation can never be out of place, speak it where we may; and never out of time, speak it when we may. "*Praise ye the LORD from the heavens.*" Since ye are nearest to the High and lofty One, be ye sure to lead the song. Ye angels, ye cherubim and seraphim, and all others who dwell in the precincts of his courts, praise ye Jehovah. Do this as from a starting-point from which the praise is to pass on to other realms. Keep not your worship to yourselves, but let it fall like a golden shower from the heavens on men beneath. "*Praise him in the heights.*" This is no vain repetition; but after the manner of attractive poetry the truth is emphasized by reiteration in other words. Moreover, God is not only to be praised *from* the heights, but *in* them: the adoration is to be perfected in the heavens from which it takes its rise. No place is too high for the praises of the most High. On the summit of creation the glory of the Lord is to be revealed, even as the tops of the highest Alps are tipped with the golden light of the same sun which glads the valleys. Heavens and heights become the higher and the more heavenly as they are made to resound with the praises

of Jehovah. See how the Psalmist trumpets out the word "PRAISE." It sounds forth some nine times in the first five verses of this song. Like minute-guns, exultant exhortations are sounded forth in tremendous force—*Praise! Praise! Praise!* The drum of the great King beats round the world with this one note—*Praise! Praise! Praise!* "Again they said, Hallelujah." All this praise is distinctly and personally for Jehovah. Praise not his servants nor his works; but praise HIM. Is he not worthy of all possible praise? Pour it forth before HIM in full volume; pour it only there!

2. "*Praise ye him all his angels.*" Living intelligences, perfect in character and in bliss, lift up your loudest music to your Lord, each one of you. Not one bright spirit is exempted from this consecrated service. However many ye be, O angels, ye are all *his* angels, and therefore ye are bound, all of you, to render service to your Lord. Ye have all seen enough of him to be able to praise him, and ye have all abundant reasons for so doing. Whether ye be named Gabriel, or Michael, or by whatever other titles ye are known, praise ye the Lord. Whether ye bow before him, or fly on his errands, or desire to look into his covenant, or behold his Son, cease not, ye messengers of Jehovah, to sound forth his praise while ye move at his bidding. "*Praise ye him, all his hosts.*" This includes angelic armies, but groups with them all the heavenly bodies. Though they be inanimate, the stars, the clouds, the lightnings, have their ways of praising Jehovah. Let each one of the countless legions of the Lord of hosts show forth his glory; for the countless armies are all *his*, his by creation, and preservation, and consequent obligation. Both these sentences claim unanimity of praise from those in the upper regions who are called upon to commence the strain—"all his angels, all his hosts." That same hearty oneness must pervade the whole orchestra of praising ones; hence, further on, we read of all stars of light, all deeps, all hills, all cedars, and all people. How well the concert begins when all angels, and all the heavenly host, strike the first joyful notes! In that concert our souls would at once take their part.

3. "*Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.*" The Psalmist enters into detail as to the heavenly hosts. As all, so each, must praise the God of each and all. The sun and moon, as joint rulers of day and night, are paired in praise: the one is the complement of the other, and so they are closely associated in the summons to worship. The sun has his peculiar mode of glorifying the Great Father of lights, and the moon has her own special method of reflecting his brightness. There is a perpetual adoration of the Lord in the skies: it varies with night and day, but it ever continues while sun and moon endure. There is ever a lamp burning before the high altar of the Lord. Nor are the greater luminaries allowed to drown with their floods of light the glory of the lesser brilliants, for all the stars are bidden to the banquet of praise. Stars are many, so many that no one can count the host included under the words, "all ye stars"; yet no one of them refuses to praise its Maker. From their extreme brilliance they are fitly named "stars of light"; and this light is praise in a visible form twinkling to true music. Light is song glittering before the eye instead of resounding in the ear. Stars without light would render no praise, and Christians without light rob the Lord of his glory. However small our beam, we must not hide it: if we cannot be sun or moon we must aim to be one of the "stars of light," and our every twinkling must be to the honour of our Lord.

4. "*Praise him, ye heavens of heavens.*" By these are meant those regions which are heavens to those who dwell in our heavens; or those most heavenly of abodes where the most choice of spirits dwell. As the highest of the highest, so the best of the best are to praise the Lord. If we could climb as much above the heavens as the heavens are above the earth, we could still cry out to all around us, "Praise ye the Lord." There can be none so great and high as to be above praising Jehovah. "*And ye waters that be above the heavens.*" Let the clouds roll up volumes of adoration. Let the sea above roar, and the fulness thereof, at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel. There is something of mystery about these supposed reservoirs of water; but let them be what they may, and as they may, they shall give glory to the Lord our God. Let the most unknown and perplexing phenomena take up their parts in the universal praise.

5. "*Let them praise the name of the LORD; for he commanded, and they were created.*" Here is good argument: The Maker should have honour from his works, they should tell forth his praise; and thus they should praise his *name*—by which his character is intended. The name of JEHOVAH is written legibly upon his works,

so that his power, wisdom, goodness, and other attributes are there made manifest to thoughtful men, and thus his name is praised. The highest praise of God is to declare what he is. We can invent nothing which would magnify the Lord: we can never extol him better than by repeating his name, or describing his character. The Lord is to be extolled as creating all things that exist, and as doing so by the simple agency of his word. He created by a command; what a power is this! Well may he expect those to praise him who owe their being to him. Evolution may be atheistic; but the doctrine of creation logically demands worship; and hence, as the tree is known by its fruit, it proves itself to be true. Those who were created by command are under command to adore their Creator. The voice which said "Let them be," now saith "Let them praise."

6. "*He hath also established them for ever and ever.*" The continued existence of celestial beings is due to the supporting might of Jehovah, and to that alone. They do not fail because the Lord does not fail them. Without his will these things cannot alter; he has impressed upon them laws which only he himself can change. Eternally his ordinances are binding upon them. Therefore ought the Lord to be praised because he is Preserver as well as Creator, Ruler as well as Maker. "*He hath made a decree which shall not pass.*" The heavenly bodies are ruled by Jehovah's decree: they cannot pass his limit, or trespass against his law. His rule and ordination can never be changed except by himself, and in this sense his decree "shall not pass": moreover, the highest and most wonderful of creatures are perfectly obedient to the statutes of the Great King, and thus his decree is not passed over. This submission to law is praise. Obedience is homage; order is harmony. In this respect the praise rendered to Jehovah from the "bodies celestial" is absolutely perfect. His almighty power upholds all things in their spheres, securing the march of stars and the flight of seraphs; and thus the music of the upper regions is never marred by discord, nor interrupted by destruction. The eternal hymn is for ever chanted; even the solemn silence of the spheres is a perpetual psalm.

7. "*Praise the LORD from the earth.*" The song descends to our abode, and so comes nearer home to us. We who are "bodies terrestrial," are to pour out our portion of praise from the golden globe of this favoured planet. Jehovah is to be praised not only in the earth but from the earth, as if the adoration ran over from this planet into the general accumulation of worship. In the first verse the song was "from the heavens"; here it is going "from the earth"; songs coming down from heaven are to blend with those going up from earth. The "earth" here meant is our entire globe of land and water: it is to be made vocal everywhere with praise. "*Ye dragons, and all deeps.*" It would be idle to enquire what special sea-monsters are here meant; but we believe all of them are intended, and the places where they abide are indicated by "all deeps." Terrible beasts or fishes, whether they roam the earth or swim the seas, are bidden to the feast of praise. Whether they float amid the teeming waves of the tropics, or wend their way among the floes and bergs of polar waters, they are commanded by our sacred poet to yield their tribute to the creating Jehovah. They pay no service to man; let them the more heartily confess their allegiance to the Lord. About "dragons" and "deeps" there is somewhat of dread, but this may the more fitly become the bass of the music of the Psalm. If there be aught grim in mythology, or fantastic in heraldry, let it praise the incomprehensible Lord.

8. "*Fire and hail.*" Lightning and hailstones go together. In the plagues of Egypt they co-operated in making Jehovah known in all the terrors of his power. Fire and ice-morsels are a contrast in nature, but they are combined in magnifying the Lord. "*Snow and vapours.*" Offsprings of cold, or creations of heat, be ye equally consecrated to his praise. Congealed or expanded vapours, falling flakes or rising clouds, should, rising or falling, still reveal the praises of the Lord. "*Stormy winds fulfilling his word.*" Though rushing with incalculable fury, the storm-wind is still under law, and moves in order due, to carry out the designs of God. It is a grand orchestra which contains such wind-instruments as these! He is a great leader who can keep all these musicians in concert, and direct both time and tune.

9. "*Mountains and all hills.*" Towering steepes and swelling knolls alike declare their Creator. "All hills" are to be consecrated; we have no longer Ebal and Gerizim, the hill of the curse and the hill of the blessing, but all our Ebals are turned to Gerizims. Tabor and Hermon, Lebanon and Carmel, rejoice in the name of the Lord. The greater and the lesser mounts are one in their adoration. Not

only the Alps and the mountains of the Jura thunder out his praise; but our own Cotswolds and Grampians are vocal with songs in his honour. "*Fruitful trees and all cedars.*" Fruit trees and forest trees, trees deciduous or evergreen, are equally full of benevolent design, and alike subserve some purpose of love; therefore for all and by all let the great Designer be praised. There are many species of cedar, but they all reveal the wisdom of their Maker. When kings fell them, that they may make beams for their palaces, they do but confess their obligation to the King of trees, and to the King of kings, whose trees they are. Varieties in the landscape are produced by the rising and falling of the soil, and by the many kinds of trees which adorn the land: let all, and all alike, glorify their one Lord. When the trees clap their hands in the wind, or their leaves rustle in the gentle breath of Zephyr, they do to their best ability sing out unto the Lord.

10. "*Beasts, and all cattle.*" Animals fierce or tame; wild beasts and domestic cattle; let all these show forth the praises of Jehovah. Those are worse than beasts who do not praise our God. More than brutish are those who are wilfully dumb concerning their Maker. "*Creeping things, and flying fowl.*" The multitudes that throng the earth and the air; insects of every form and birds of every wing are called upon to join the universal worship. No one can become familiar with insect and bird life without feeling that they constitute a wonderful chapter in the history of divine wisdom. The minute insect marvellously proclaims the Lord's handiwork: when placed under the microscope it tells a wondrous tale. So, too, the bird which soars aloft displays in its adaptation for an aerial life an amount of skill which our balloonists have in vain attempted to emulate. True devotion not only hears the praises of God in the sweet song of feathered minstrels, but even discovers it in the croaking from the marsh or in the buzz of "the bluefly which singeth in the window-pane." More base than reptiles, more insignificant than insects, are songless men.

11. "*Kings of the earth, and all people: princes, and all judges of the earth.*" Now the poet has reached our own race, and very justly he would have rulers and subjects, chieftains and magistrates, unite in worshipping the sovereign Lord of all. Monarchs must not disdain to sing, nor must their people refrain from uniting with them. Those who lead in battle and those who decide in courts must neither of them allow their vocations to keep them from reverently adoring the Chief and Judge of all. All people, and all judges, must praise the Lord of all. What a happy day it will be when it is universally acknowledged that through our Lord Jesus, the incarnate Wisdom, "kings reign and princes decree justice"! Alas, it is not so as yet! kings have been patrons of vice, and princes ringleaders in folly. Let us pray that the song of the Psalmist may be realized in fact.

12. "*Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children.*" Both sexes and all ages are summoned to the blessed service of song. Those who usually make merry together are to be devoutly joyful together: those who make up the ends of families, that is to say, the elders and the juveniles, should make the Lord their one and only end. Old men should by their experience teach children to praise; and children by their cheerfulness should excite old men to song. There is room for every voice at this concert: fruitful trees and maidens, cedars and young men, angels and children, old men and judges—all may unite in this oratorio. None, indeed, can be dispensed with: for perfect Psalmody we must have the whole universe aroused to worship, and all parts of creation must take their parts in devotion.

13. "*Let them praise the name of the LORD.*" All that is contained in the name or character of Jehovah is worthy of praise, and all the objects of his creating care will be too few to set it forth in its completeness. "*For his name alone is excellent.*" It alone deserves to be exalted in praise, for alone it is exalted in worth. There is none like unto the Lord, none that for a moment can be compared unto him. His unique name should have a monopoly of praise. "*His glory is above the earth and heaven:*" it is therefore alone because it surpasses all others. His royal splendour exceeds all that earth and heaven can express. He is himself the crown of all things, the excellency of the creation. There is more glory in him personally than in all his works united. It is not possible for us to exceed and become extravagant in the Lord's praise: his own natural glory is infinitely greater than any glory which we can render to him.

14. "*He also exalteth the horn of his people.*" He hath made them strong, famous, and victorious. His goodness to all his creatures does not prevent his having a

special favour to his chosen nation : he is good to all, but he is God to his people. He lifts up the down-trodden, but he in a peculiar manner lifts up his people. When they are brought low he raises up a horn for them by sending them a deliverer ; when they are in conflict he gives them courage and strength, so that they lift up their horn amid the fray ; and when all is peaceful around them, he fills their horn with plenty, and they lift it up with delight. "*The praise of all his saints.*" He is their glory : to him they render praise ; and he by his mercy to them evermore gives them further reasons for praise, and higher motives for adoration. He lifts up their horn, and they lift up his praise. He exalts them, and they exalt him. The Holy One is praised by holy ones. He is their God, and they are his saints ; he makes them blessed, and they bless him in return. "*Even of the children of Israel.*" The Lord knoweth them that are his. He knows the name of him with whom he made a covenant, and how he came by that name, and who his children are, and where they are. All nations are bidden in verse 11 to praise the Lord ; but here the call is specially addressed to his elect people, who know him beyond all others. Those who are children of privilege should be children of praise. "*A people near unto him,*" near by kin, and near by care ; near as to manifestation and near as to affection. This is a highly honourable description of the beloved race ; and it is true even more emphatically of the spiritual Israel, the believing seed. This nearness should prompt us to perpetual adoration. The Lord's elect are the children of his love, the courtiers of his palace, the priests of his temple, and therefore they are bound beyond all others to be filled with reverence for him, and delight in him. "*Praise ye the LORD,*" or, *Hallelujah*. This should be the Alpha and Omega of a good man's life. Let us praise God to the end, world without end. The field of praise which lies before us in this Psalm is bounded at beginning and end by landmarks in the form of Hallelujahs, and all that lieth between them is every word of it to the Lord's honour. Amen.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS.

Psalms cxlviii.—cl.—The last three Psalms are a *triad of wondrous praise*, ascending from praise to higher praise, until it becomes "joy unspeakable and full of glory"—exultation which knows no bounds. The joy overflows the soul, and spreads throughout the universe ; every creature is magnetized by it, and drawn into the chorus. Heaven is full of praise, the earth is full of praise, praises rise from under the earth, "every thing that hath breath" joins in the rapture. God is encompassed by a loving, praising creation. Man, the last in creation, but the first in song, knows not how to contain himself. He dances, he sings, he commands all the heavens, with all their angels, to help him, "beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl" must do likewise, even "dragons" must not be silent, and "all deeps" must yield contributions. He presses even dead things into his service, timbrels, trumpets, harps, organs, cymbals, high-sounding cymbals, if by any means, and by all means, he may give utterance to his love and joy.—*John Pulsford*.

Whole Psalm.—In this splendid anthem the Psalmist calls upon the whole creation, in its two great divisions (according to the Hebrew conception) of heaven and earth, to praise Jehovah : things with and things without life, beings rational and irrational, are summoned to join the mighty chorus. This Psalm is the expression of the loftiest devotion, and it embraces at the same time the most comprehensive view of the relation of the creature to the Creator. Whether it is exclusively the utterance of a heart filled to the full with the thought of the infinite majesty of God, or whether it is also an anticipation, a prophetic forecast, of the final glory of creation, when at the manifestation of the sons of God, the creation itself also shall be redeemed from the bondage of corruption (Rom. viii. 18—23), and the homage of praise shall indeed be rendered by all things that are in heaven and earth and under the earth, is a question into which we need not enter.—*J. J. Stewart Perowne*.

Whole Psalm.—Milton, in his *Paradise Lost* (Book V., line 153, etc.), has elegantly imitated this Psalm, and put it into the mouth of Adam and Eve as their morning hymn in a state of innocence.—*James Anderson*.

Whole Psalm.—Is this universal praise never to be realized? is it only the longing, intense desire of the Psalmist's heart, which will never be heard on earth, and can only be perfected in heaven? Is there to be no jubilee in which the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands? If there is to be no such day, then is the word of God of none effect; if no such universal anthem is to swell the chorus of heaven, and to be re-echoed by all that is on earth, then is God's promise void. It is true, in this Psalm our translation presents it to us as a call or summons for everything that hath or hath not breath to praise the Lord—or as a petition that they may praise; but it is in reality a prediction that they *shall* praise. . . . This Psalm is neither more nor less than a glorious prophecy of that coming day, when not only shall the knowledge of the Lord be spread over the whole earth, as the waters cover the sea, but from every created object in heaven and in earth, animate and inanimate, from the highest archangel through every grade and phase of being, down to the tiniest atom—young men and maidens, old men and children, and all kings and princes, and judges of the earth, shall unite in this millennial anthem to the Redeemer's praise.—*Barton Bouchier.*

Verse 1.—"Praise ye the LORD," etc. All things praise, and yet he says, "Praise ye." Wherefore doth he say, "Praise ye," when they are praising? Because he delighteth in their praising, and therefore it pleaseth him to add, as it were, his own encouragement. Just as, when you come to men who are doing any good work with pleasure in their vineyard or in their harvest-field, or in some other matter of husbandry, you are pleased at what they are doing, and say, "Work on," "Go on"; not that they may begin to work, when you say this, but, because you are pleased at finding them working, you add your approbation and encouragement. For by saying, "Work on," and encouraging those who are working, you, so to speak, work with them in wish. In this sort of encouragement, then, the Psalmist, filled with the Holy Ghost, saith this.—*Augustine.*

Verse 1.—The thrice-repeated exhortation, "Praise . . . Praise . . . Praise," in this first verse is not merely imperative, nor only hortative, but it is an exultant hallelujah.—*Martin Geier.*

Verse 1.—"From the heavens: praise him in the heights." Or, high places. As God in framing the world begun above, and wrought downward, so doth the Psalmist proceed in this his exhortation to all creatures to praise the Lord.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 1.—"Praise him in the heights." The principle applied in this verse is this, that those who have been exalted to the highest honours of the created universe, should proportionately excel in their tribute of honour to him who has exalted them.—*Hermann Venema.*

Verse 1.—Bernard, in his sermon on the death of his brother Gerard, relates that in the middle of his last night on earth his brother, to the astonishment of all present, with a voice and countenance of exultation, broke forth in the words of the Psalmist—"Praise the Lord of heaven, praise him in the heights!"

Verse 2.—"Praise ye him, all his angels." Angels are first invoked, because they can praise God with humility, reverence, and purity. The highest are the humblest, the leaders of all created hosts are the most ready themselves to obey.—*Thomas Le Blanc.*

Verse 2.—"Praise ye him, all his angels." The angels of God were his first creatures; it has even been thought that they existed prior to the inanimate universe. They were already praising their Maker before the light of day, and they have never ceased their holy song. Angels praise God best in their holy service. They praised Christ as God when they sang their *Gloria in Excelsis* at the Incarnation, and they praised him as man when they ministered to him after his temptation and before his crucifixion. So also now angels praise the Lord by their alacrity in ministering to his saints.—*John Lorinus.*

Verse 2.—"Praise ye him, all his hosts." That is, his creatures (those above especially which are as his *cavalry*) called his "hosts," for, 1, Their number; 2, their order; 3, their obedience.—*John Trapp.*

Verse 3.—"Praise ye him, sun and moon," etc. How does the *sun* specially praise Jehovah? 1. By its beauty. Jesus son of Sirach calls it the "globe of beauty." 2. By its fulness. Dion calls it "the image of the Divine capacity."

3. By its exaltation. Pliny calls it *cæli rector*, "the ruler of heaven." 4. By its perfect brightness. Pliny adds that it is "the mind and soul of the whole universe." 5. By its velocity and constancy of motion. Martian calls it "the Guide of Nature."

God the Supreme was depicted by the ancients holding in his hand a wreath of stars, to show the double conception, that they both obey and adorn him.—*Thomas Le Blanc*.

Verses 3, 4.—Let the sun, the fount of light, and warmth, and gladness, the greater light which rules the day, the visible emblem of the Uncreated Wisdom, the Light which lighteth every man, the centre round whom all our hopes and fears, our wants and prayers, our faith and love, are ever moving,—let the moon, the lesser light which rules the night, the type of the Church, which giveth to the world the light she gains from the Sun of Righteousness,—let the stars, so vast in their number, so lovely in their arrangement and their brightness, which God hath appointed in the heavens, even as he hath appointed his elect to shine for ever and ever,—let all the heavens with all their wonders and their worlds, the depths of space above, and the waters which are above the firmament, the images of God's Holy Scripture and of the glories and the mysteries contained therein,—let these ever praise him who made and blessed them in the beginning of the creation.—*J. W. Burgon*.

Verses 3, 4.—

Praise him, thou golden-tressèd sun ;
Praise him, thou fair and silver moon,
And ye bright orbs of streaming light ;
Ye floods that float above the skies,
Ye heav'ns, that vault o'er vault arise,
Praise him, who sits above all height.

Richard Mant.

Verse 4.—"Praise him, ye heavens of heavens," etc. From the heavenly inhabitants the poetic strain passes in transition to the heavens themselves. There are orders of heavens, ranks and heights supreme, and stages and degrees of lower altitude. This verse sublimely traverses the immensities which are the home of the most exalted dignities who wait on Deity, and then it descends to the firmament where the meteors flash forth, and where the heavens stoop to lift the clouds that aspire from earth. And the idea sustained is that all these vast realms, higher and lower, are one temple of unceasing praise.—*Hermann Venema*.

Verse 4.—The ancients thought there was an ethereal and lofty ocean in which the worlds floated like ships in a sea.—*Thomas Le Blanc*.

Verses 5, 6.—This is the account of creation in a word—He spake ; it was done. When Jesus came, he went everywhere showing his Divinity by this evidence, that his word was omnipotent. These verses declare two miracles of God's Will and Word, viz., the creation and consolidation of the earth. Jehovah first produced matter, then he ordered and established it.—*John Lorinus*.

Verse 6.—"He hath also stablished them for ever and ever," etc. Here two things are set before us, the permanence and the cosmic order of creation. Each created thing is not only formed to endure, in the type or the development, if not in the individual, but has its place in the universe fixed by Gods decree, that it may fulfil its appointed share of working out his will. They raise a question as to the words "for ever and ever," how they can be reconciled with the prophecy, Isaiah lxxv. 17 : "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth : and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" ; a prophecy confirmed by the Lord himself, saying, "Heaven and earth shall pass away," and seen fulfilled in vision by the beloved disciple. Matt. v. 18 ; Rev. xxi. 1. And they answer that just as man dies and rises again to incorruption, having the same personality in a glorified body, so will it be with heaven and earth. Their qualities will be changed, not their identity, in that new birth of all things.—*Neale and Littledale*.

Verse 6.—"For ever and ever."

My heart is awed within me, when I think
Of the great miracle which still goes on,
In silence, round me—the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed,
For ever.

William Cullen Bryant, 1794—1878.

Verse 6.—“*He hath made a decree,*” etc. Rather, *He hath made an ordinance, and will not transgress it.* This is more obvious and natural than to supply a new subject to the second verb, “and none of them transgress it.” This anticipates, but only in form, the modern scientific doctrine of the inviolability of natural order. It is the imperishable faithfulness of God that renders the law invariable.—A. S. Aglen.

Verse 7.—“*Dragons.*” The word *tanninim*, rendered “*dragons,*” is a word which may denote whales, sharks, serpents, or sea-monsters of any kind (Job vii. 1; Ezek. xxix. 3).—*John Morison.*

Verse 7.—“*Sea-monsters,*” in Revised Version. Fishes constrain our admiration, as a created wonder, by the perfection of their form, their magnitude, their adaptation to the element they inhabit, and their multitude. Thus their very nature praises the Creator.—*Thomas Le Blanc.*

Verses 7, 8.—He calls to the *deeps, fire, hail, snow, mountains, and hills*, to bear a part in this work of praise. Not that they are able to do it actively, but to show that man is to call in the whole creation to assist him passively, and should have so much charity to all creatures as to receive what they offer, and so much affection to God as to present to him what he receives from him. *Snow* and *hail* cannot bless and praise God, but man ought to bless God for those things, wherein there is a mixture of trouble and inconvenience, something to molest our sense, as well as something that improves the earth for fruit.—*Stephen Charnock.*

Verses 7—10.—Here be many things easy to be understood, they are clear to every eye; as when David doth exhort “*kings*” and “*princes,*” “*old men*” and “*babes*” to praise God; that is easy to be done, and we know the meaning as soon as we look on it; but here are some things again that are hard to be understood, dark and obscure, and they are two:—

First, in that David doth exhort *dumb, unreasonable, and senseless creatures* to praise God, such as cannot hear, at least cannot understand. Doth the Holy Ghost in the gospel bid us avoid impertinent speeches, and vain repetitions, and shall we think he will use them himself? No, no. But,

Secondly, not only doth he call upon these creatures, but also he calls upon the “*deeps*” and the “*seas*” to praise God; these two things are hard to be conceived. But to give you some reasons.

The first reason may be this, why David calls upon the unreasonable creatures to perform this duty,—*He doth his duty like a faithful preacher*, whether they will hear or no that he preaches to, yet he will discharge his soul: a true preacher, he speaks forth the truth, and calls upon them to hear, though his auditors sleep, are careless, and regard it not. So likewise doth David, in this sense, with these creatures; he doth his duty, and calls upon them to do it, though they understand not, though they comprehend it not. And likewise he doth it to show his vehement desire for all creatures to praise God.

The second reason may be this: *he doth it craftily*, by way of policy, to incite others to perform this duty, that if such creatures as they ought to do this, then those that are above them in degree have more cause, and may be ashamed to neglect it; as an ill-governed master, though he stay himself at home, yet he will send his servants to church: so David, being conscious of his own neglect, yet he calls upon others not to be slack and negligent: though he came infinitely short of that he should do, yet he shows his own desire for all creatures to perform this duty.

But if these reasons will not satisfy you, though they have done many others, a third reason may be this: *to set forth the sweet harmony that is among all God's creatures*; to show how that all the creatures being God's family, do with one consent speak and preach aloud God's praise; and therefore he calls upon some above him, some below him, on both sides, everywhere, to speak God's praise; for every one in their place, degree, and calling, show forth, though it be in a dumb sense and way, their Creator's praise.

Or, fourthly, and lastly, which I think to be a good reason: *zeal makes men speak and utter things impossible*; the fire of zeal will so transport him that it will make him speak things unreasonable, impossible, as Moses in his zeal desired God, for the safety of Israel, “to blot his name out of his book”; and Paul wished himself “*anathema,*” accursed or separate from Christ, for his brethren's salvation, which was a thing impossible, it could not be.—*John Everard, in “Some Gospel Treasures,” 1653.*

Verses 7—10.—The ox and the ass acknowledge their master. The winds and the sea obey him. It should seem that as there is a religion above man, the religion of angels, so there may be a religion beneath man, the religion of dumb creatures. For wheresoever there is a service of God, in effect it is a religion. Thus according to the several degrees and difference of states—the state of nature, grace, and glory—religion may likewise admit of degrees.—*G. G., in a sermon entitled "The Creatures Praising God," 1662.*

Verse 8.—This verse arrays in striking order three elements that are ever full of movement and power—*igneæ, aquea, aërea*; fire (or caloric), water (or vapour), and air (or wind). The first includes meteors, lightnings and thunders; the second, snow, hoar-frost, dew, mist and rain; the third breezes, tempests and hurricanes.—*Hermann Venema.*

Verse 8.—“*Fire and hail.*” These are contrasted with one another. “*Snow and mist.*” The mist is the vapour raised by the heat of the sun, and therefore suitably contrasted with the snow, which is the effect of cold. “*Stormy wind*” (Ps. cvii. 25), which accompanies the changes of temperature in the air.—*James G. Murphy.*

Verse 8.—“*Snow.*” As sure as every falling flake of winter’s snow has a part in the great economy of nature, so surely has every Word of God which falls within the sanctuary its end to accomplish in the moral sphere. I have stood on a winter’s day, and seen the tiny flakes in little clouds lose themselves one by one in the rushing river. They seemed to die to no purpose—to be swallowed up by an enemy which ignored both their power and their existence. And so have I seen the Word of God fall upon human hearts. Sent of God, from day to day and from year to year, I have seen it dropping apparently all resultless into the fierce current of unbelief—into the fiercer gulf-stream of worldliness which was sweeping through the minds and the lives of the hearers. But as I stood upon the river’s bank and looked upon what seemed to be the death of the little fluttering crystal, a second thought assured me that it was but death into life, and that every tiny flake which wept its life away in the rushing waters, became incorporate with the river’s being. So when I have seen the Word of God fall apparently fruitless upon the restless, seething, rushing current of human life, a recovered faith in the immutable declaration of God has assured me that what I looked upon was not a chance or idle death, but rather the falling of the soldier, after that he had wrought his life-force into the destiny of a nation and into the history of a world. And so it must ever be. The Word of God ever reaches unto its end.—*S. S. Mitchell, in a Sermon entitled "The Coming of the Snow and the Coming of the Word," 1884.*

Verse 8.—The “*stormy wind*” is the swift messenger of God, Ps. cxlvii. 15. The hurricane fulfils the divine command. See Matt. viii. 27. “Even the winds and the sea obey him.” The “*wind*” is the minister of judgment. See Ezek. xiii. 13. The words of this verse have special use; for men are exceedingly apt to ascribe the violence of tempests to blind chance.—*Martin Geier.*

Verse 8.—The half-learned man is apt to laugh at the simple faith of the clown or savage, who tells us that rain comes from God. The former, it seems, has discovered that it is the product of certain laws of air, water, and electricity. But truly the peasant is the more enlightened of the two, for he has discovered the main cause, and the real Actor, while the other has found only the second cause, and the mere instrument. It is as if a friend were to send us a gift of ingenious and beautiful workmanship, and just as our gratitude was beginning to rise to the donor, some bystanders were to endeavour to damp it all, by telling us that the gift is the product of certain machinery he had seen.—*James MacCosh, 1811.*

Verse 9.—“*Mountains and all hills,*” etc.—The diversifying of the face of the earth with higher and lower parts, with mountains, hills, and valleys, and the adorning of the face thereof with trees of varied sorts, contributeth much to the praise of God.—*David Dickson.*

Verse 9.—“*Mountains and all hills.*” What voices have the hills! How solemn the sounds of the mountains from their sublime solitudes! The mountains thunder, and the hills re-echo; but they speak peace and send down plenty to the vales in running rivulets.—*Thomas Le Blanc.*

Verse 9.—“*Fruitful trees and all cedars.*” The praise of God is in the rustling voices of the trees. They fulfil his purpose in giving fruit to refresh, and shelter and

shadow for a covert, and their murmur is the soft cadence that chants mercy and grace. In India, the ancients reported that the trees were worshipped as divine, and death was a penalty awarded to those who cut them down. In classic mythology the groves were the homes of gods. Jehovah decreed that an ark of safety for man, and also a temple for himself, should be constructed of wood. Thus more than any other created things, the trees of the wood have redounded to his glory.—*Le Blanc*.

Verse 9.—“*Fruitful trees.*” Rather *fruit trees*; the fruit-bearing tree being representative of one division of the vegetable world, planted and reared by man; the “cedars” of the other, which are (Ps. civ. 16) of God’s own plantation. So in verse 10 we have *wild animals and domesticated animals.*—*A. S. Aglen*.

Verse 9.—“*Trees.*”

All creatures of the eternal God but man,
In several sorts do glorify his name;
Each tree doth seem ten thousand tongues to have,
With them to laud the Lord omnipotent;
Each leaf that with wind’s gentle breath doth wave,
Seems as a tongue to speak to that intent,
In language admirably excellent.
The sundry sorts of fragrant flowers do seem
Sundry discourses God to glorify,
And sweetest volumes may we them esteem;
For all these creatures in their several sort
Praise God, and man unto the same exhort.

Peter Pett, 1599.

Verse 9.—“*All cedars.*” Beautiful indeed is the pine forest in all seasons: in the freshness of spring, when the gnarled boughs are penetrated and mollified by the soft wind and the warm sun, and, thrilled with new life, burst out into fringes and tassels of the richest green, and cones of the tenderest purple; beautiful in the sultry summer, when among its cool, dim shadows the heated hours all day sing vespers, while the open landscape is palpitating in the scorching heat; beautiful in the sadness of autumn, when its unfading verdure stands out in striking relief amid changing scenes, that have no sympathy with anything earthly save sorrow and decay, and directs the thoughts to the imperishableness of the heavenly Paradise; beautiful exceedingly in the depth of winter, when the tiers of branches are covered with pure, unsullied wreaths of snow, sculptured by the wind into curves of exquisite grace. It is beautiful in calm, when the tree-tops scarce whisper to each other, and the twitter of the golden wren sounds loud in the expectant hush; it is more than beautiful in storm, when the wild fingers of the wind play the most mournful music on its great harp-strings, and its full diapason is sublime as the roar of the ocean on a rock-bound shore. I do not wonder that the northern imagination in heathen times should have invested it with awe and fear as the favourite haunt of Odin and Thor; or that, in after times, its long rows of trunks, vanishing in the dim perspective, should have furnished designs for the aisles of Christian temples, and the sunset, burning among its fretted branches, should have suggested the gorgeous painted window of the cathedral. It looks like a place made for worship, all its sentiments and associations seem of a sacred and solemn character. Nature, with folded hands, as Longfellow says, seems kneeling there in prayer. It certainly reminds us in various ways of the power, wisdom, and goodness of him who thus spake by the mouth of his prophet: “I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.”—*Hugh Macmillan, in “Bible Teachings in Nature,” 1867.*

Verse 10.—“*Creeping things.*” In public worship all should join. The little strings go to make up a concert, as well as the great.—*Thomas Goodwin*.

Verse 10.—“*Flying fowl.*” Thus the air is vocal. It has a hallelujah of its own. The “*flying fowl*” praise him; whether it be “the stork that knoweth her appointed time” (Jer. viii. 7), or “the sparrow alone upon the housetop” (Ps. cii. 7), or “the raven of the valley” (Prov. xxx. 17), or the eagle “stirring up her nest, and fluttering over her young” (Deut. xxxii. 11), or the turtle making its voice to be heard in the land (Song. ii. 12), or the dove winging its way to the wilderness (Ps. lv. 6). This is creation’s harp (truer and sweeter than Memnon’s), which each sunrise

awakens, "turning all the air to music."—*Horatius Bonar*, in "*Earth's Morning; or, Thoughts on Genesis*," 1875.

Verse 11.—"*Kings of the earth, and all people; princes.*" As kings and princes are blinded by the dazzling influence of their station, so as to think the world was made for them, and to despise God in the pride of their hearts, he particularly calls them to this duty; and, by mentioning them first, he reproves their ingratitude in withholding their tribute of praise when they are under greater obligations than others. As all men originally stand upon a level as to condition, the higher persons have risen, and the nearer they have been brought to God, the more sacredly are they bound to proclaim his goodness. The more intolerable is the wickedness of kings and princes who claim exemption from the common rule, when they ought rather to inculcate it upon others, and lead the way. He could have addressed his exhortation at once summarily to all men, as indeed he mentions *people* in general terms; but by thrice specifying *princes* he suggests that they are slow to discharge the duty, and need to be urged to it.—*John Calvin*.

Verse 11.—"*Kings of the earth*"; "*judges of the earth*"; these are not proud but humiliating titles; for *earthly* kings and *earthly* judges will not be kings and judges long.

Verse 12.—"*Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children.*" The parties are mentioned by couples, being tied two and two together. "*Young men and maidens; old men and children.*" And here is a double *caveat*; first, against presumption; and secondly, against despair. First, that the younger sort might desire to praise God, they are exhorted to address themselves to the service of God, to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. Secondly, for aged men, that they might not doubt of the acceptance of their service, our Prophet exhorts them also. For the first, you know, David calls upon the sun and the moon to praise God. Should the sun reply, I will not do it in the morning, or at noon time, but when I am about to set? or the moon reply, I will not in the full, but in the wane? or the tree, not in the spring time, or in the summer, but at the fall of the leaf? So likewise, thou young man, defer not the time of praising God: take the swing of thy youth, and do not defer to apply thyself to the service of God till thy old age; but remember that for all these things thou shalt come to judgment. He that styles himself by the title *I AM*, cares not for I will be, or I have been, but he that is at this present: take heed, therefore, thou strong and lusty young man: the Devil that holds thee now will every day tie a new cord about thee. Consider this, you that are yet young, whom the morning sun of light adorns with his glorious rays: everyone doth not live to be old. Let us not procrastinate in God's service; for the longer we defer to serve God, the farther God's grace is distant from us, and the dominion of Satan is more strengthened in our hearts; the more we delay, the more is our debt, the greater our sin, and the less our grace. I will commend this lesson unto all. He that doth not repent to-day hath a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in. I shall conclude with a hearty exhortation for us all, of what sex, age, and degree soever; I could wish that all our lives might end like this book of Psalms, in blessing and praising Almighty God.—*Thomas Cheshire*, in "*A Sermon preached in Saint Paule's Church*," 1641.

Verse 12.—"*Old men.*" Think not, ye who are now near the end of life, that your tongues may without blame be silent in the praises of the Lord, because you are come to those years in which men say, they "have no pleasure in them." Were you not frequently praising God when you were children and young men? Have you less, or have you not greater, reason now to praise God than in those early days of life?

Old men ought to be better qualified than young persons to show forth the glory both of the perfections and works of God, because they have enjoyed more time, and more abundant opportunities than their juniors, for attaining the knowledge of God, and of those glorious perfections and works which furnish us with endless materials for praise. "Days should speak, and the multitude of years should teach wisdom."

The heavens are constantly declaring "the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Have you, then, lived twenty thousand days and twenty thousand nights? What deep impressions ought to be made upon your spirits,

of those wonders which have been preached in your ears or eyes, ever since you could use your bodily senses as ministers to your intellectual powers! All the works of God praise him, by showing forth how wonderful in power, and goodness, and wisdom, the Creator is. Your tongues are indeed inexcusable, if they are silent in the praises of him whose glory is proclaimed by every object above or around them, and even by every member of their own bodies, and every faculty of their souls. But old men are doubly inexcusable, if they are inattentive to those precious instructions which are given them by all the works of God which they have seen, or of which they have been informed, every day since the powers of their rational natures began to operate.

But old men in this highly favoured land have been blessed with more excellent instructions than those which are given them by the mountains and fruitful valleys, by the dragons of the desert or the deep, or by the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth, or by the sun and stars of heaven. For many more years than young men or maidens you have been learners, or you are very blamable if you have not been at the school of Christ. You were early taught to read the Word of God. In the course of fifty or sixty years, you have probably heard six thousand religious discourses from the ministers of Christ, not to mention other excellent means you have enjoyed for increasing in the knowledge of God. "For the time," says Paul to the Hebrew Christians, "ye might have been teachers." May I not say the same to all aged Christians, who have had the Bible in their possession, and have enjoyed opportunities of frequenting the holy assemblies from their earliest days? May it not be expected that your hearts and your mouths will be filled with the praises of God, not only as your Maker, but as your Redeemer?

But there are many things more especially relating to themselves, which should induce the aged to abound in this duty of praise to God.

Consider how long you have lived. Is not every day of life, and even every hour, and every moment, an undeserved mercy? You might have been cut off from the breast and the womb, for you were conceived in iniquity and born in sin. How many of your race have been cut off before they could distinguish between their right hand and their left, before they could do good or evil! Since you were moral agents, not a day has passed in which you were not chargeable with many sins. What riches of long-suffering is manifested in a life of sixty or seventy years! If you have lived in a state of sin all that time, have you not reason to be astonished, that you are not already in a condition which would for ever render it impossible for you to utter the voice of praise? Give glory, therefore, to that God who has still preserved you alive.

Consider with what mercies your days have been filled up. God's mercies have been new to you every morning, although every day you have sinned against him.

Reflections on your own conduct through life will suggest to you many reasons for praise and thanksgiving. But on this part of the subject it is proper to put you in mind of the two great classes into which men are divided: saints and sinners. If you belong to the former class, who is it that has made you to differ from others? Give thanks to him who delivered you from the power of darkness, and translated you into the kingdom of his dear Son. Have you been enabled to do some good works in the course of your lives? For every one of them bless God, who wrought "in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Have any of your endeavours been successful to bring about the reformation of any of your fellow-men, or to promote their spiritual welfare? What sufficient thanks can you render to God for making you the humble ministers of his grace?

But there are too many of the old who have no reason to think that they have yet passed from death to life. These, certainly, are very unfit to praise God, and will not be able to praise him with their hearts, unless that change pass upon them, without which no man shall ever enter into the kingdom of heaven. Yet, surely, they have great reason to praise the Lord; and they may see good reason for it, although they cannot carry their knowledge into practice. You have, indeed, greater reason to praise God that you are in the land of the living than those who are in a better state; because, if you were deprived of your present life, nothing is left for you but the terrors of eternal death. Bless God, ye who have lived fifty or sixty years in sin, and have been all along spared in a world so full of mercy. You are still called by the gospel to receive that salvation which you have long treated with contempt.—*Condensed from a Sermon by George Lawson (1749—1820), entitled, "The Duty of the Old to praise God."*

Verse 12.—"Old men and children." It is interesting always to see a friendship between the old and the young. It is striking to see the aged one retaining so much of freshness and simplicity as not to repel the sympathies of boyhood. It is surprising to see the younger one so advanced and thoughtful, as not to find dull the society of one who has outlived excitability and passion.—*Frederick William Robertson.*

Verses 12, 13.—The Psalms are church songs, and all who belong to the church are to sing them. "*Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children; let them praise the name of the LORD.*" The ripe believer who can triumph in the steadfast hope of God's glory, is to lend his voice to swell the song of the church when she cries to God out of the depths; and the penitent, who is still sitting in darkness, is not to refrain his voice when the church pours out in song her sense of God's love. The whole church has fellowship in the Psalms.—*William Binnie, in "The Psalms, their History, Teachings, and Use," 1870.*

Verses 12, 13.—"Old men . . . Let them praise the name of the LORD." It is a favourite speculation of mine that if spared to sixty we then enter on the seventh decade of human life, and that this, if possible, should be turned into the Sabbath of our earthly pilgrimage and spent sabbatically, as if on the shores of an eternal world, or in the outer courts, as it were, of the temple that is above, the tabernacle in heaven.—*Thomas Chalmers.*

Verse 13.—"Let them praise." Exactly as at the close of the first great division of the anthem (verse 5), and, in the same way as there, the reason for the exhortation follows in the next clause. But it is a different reason. It is no longer because he has given them a decree, bound them as passive, unconscious creatures by a law which they cannot transgress. (It is the fearful mystery of the reasonable will that it can transgress the law.) It is because his name is exalted, so that the eyes of men can see, and the hearts and tongues of men confess it; it is because he has graciously revealed himself to, and mightily succoured, the people whom he loves, the nation who are near to him. If it be said that what was designed to be a Universal Anthem is thus narrowed at its close, it must be remembered that, however largely the glory of God was written on the visible creation, it was only to the Jew that any direct revelation of his character had been made.—*J. J. Stewart Perowne.*

Verse 13.—"The name of Jehovah." Jehovah is a name of great power and efficacy, a name that hath in it five vowels, without which no language can be expressed; a name that hath in it also three syllables, to signify the Trinity of Persons, the eternity of God, One in Three, and Three in One; a name of such dread and reverence amongst the Jews, that they tremble to name it, and therefore they use the name *Adonai* (Lord) in all their devotions. And thus ought every one to stand in awe, and sin not by taking the name of God in vain; but to sing praises, to honour, to remember, to declare, to exalt, and bless it; for holy and reverend, only worthy and excellent is his name.—*Raymont, 1630.*

Verse 14.—"His people, the praise of all his saints." But among all, one class in particular is called on to praise him, for they have an additional motive for so doing, namely, "*his people,*" and "*his saints.*" As man above all the creatures, so among men his elect or chosen, who are the objects of his special grace, and, above all, of his redeeming love. "*He also exalteth the horn of his people*"—exalts them, one and all, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, and consequent on this, from the dust of earth to the glory of heaven. "*The praise of all his saints*"; and, yet again, among them, of one people in particular—"even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him." "*Near to him*" of old, and yet again to be—yea, nearest of all the peoples of the earth—when he recalls them from their dispersion, and again places his name and his throne among them. HALLELUJAH—PRAISE YE THE LORD.—*William De Burgh.*

Verse 14.—"A people near unto him." Jesus took our nature, and became one with us; thus he is "*near*" unto us; he gives us his Holy Spirit, brings us into union with himself, and thus we are near to him. This is our highest honour, an unfailing source of happiness and peace. We are near to him in point of *relation*, being his children; near to him in point of *affection*, being loved with an everlasting love; we are near to him in point of *union*, being members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; we are near to him in point of *fellowship*, walking with him as a man walketh with his friend; we are near to him in point of *attention*, being the objects of his daily, hourly, tender care; we shall soon be near to him in point of *locality*,

when our mansion is prepared, for we shall depart to be with Christ, which is far better. We are near to him when poor, and when deeply tried; and if ever nearer at one time than another, we shall be nearest to him in death. If we are near unto him, he will sympathize with us in all our sorrows, assist us in all our trials, protect us in all our dangers, hold intercourse with us in all our lonely hours, provide for us in all seasons of necessity, and honourably introduce us to glory. Let us realize this fact daily—we are near and dear to our God.—*James Smith.*

HINTS TO PREACHERS.

Whole Psalm.—I. What is implied in the invitation to the natural creation to praise God. 1. That praise is due to God on its account. 2. That it is due from those for whose benefit it was created. 3. That it is a reproof to those who do not praise God who are actually capable of it. "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." II. What is implied in the invitation to innocent beings to praise God. "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens. Praise ye him all his angels, praise ye him all his hosts:" verses 1, 2.—1. That they owe their creation in innocence to God. 2. That they owe their preservation in innocence to him. 3. That they owe the reward of their innocence to him. III. What is implied in the invitation to fallen beings to praise God: "Kings of the earth and all people," etc.: verses 11—13.—1. That God is merciful and ready to forgive. "Not willing that any should perish," etc. They would not be called upon to praise God if they were irrecoverably lost. Our Lord would not when on earth accept praise from an evil spirit. 2. That means of restoration from the fall are provided by God for men. Without this they would have no hope, and could offer no praise. IV. What is implied in the invitation to the redeemed to praise God: verse 14.—1. That God is their God. 2. That all his perfections are engaged for their present and eternal welfare.—*G. R.*

Verse 1.—"Praise ye the Lord." I. The Voice—of Scripture, of nature, of grace, of duty. II. The Ear on which it rightly falls—of saints and sinners, old and young, healthy and sick. It falls on our ear. III. The Time when it is heard. Now, ever, yet also at special times. IV. The Response which we will give. Let us now praise with heart, life, lip.

Verse 1 (second and third clauses).—I. The character of the praises of heaven. II. How far they influence us who are here below. III. The hope which we have of uniting in them.

Verse 2.—I. The angels as praiseful servants. II. The other hosts of God, and how they praise him. III. The rule without exception: "*all—all.*" Imagine one heavenly being living without praising the Lord!

Verse 3.—I. God's praise continual both day and night. II. Light the leading fountain of this praise. III. Life behind all, calling for the praise.

Verses 5, 6.—Creation and conversation, two chief reasons for praise.

Verse 7.—God's praise from dark, deep, and mysterious things.

Verse 8.—Canon Liddon preached in St. Paul's on Sunday afternoon, December 23, 1883, and took for his text Ps. cxlviii. 8, "*Wind and storm fulfilling his word.*" He spoke of the divine use of destructive forces. I. In the physical world we see wind and storm fulfilling God's word. 1. The Bible occasionally lifts the veil, and shows us how destructive forces of Nature have been the servants of God. 2. Modern history illustrates this vividly. II. In the human, spiritual, and moral world, we find new and rich application of the words of the text. 1. In the State we see the storm of invasion and the storm of revolution fulfilling God's word. 2. In the Church we see the storm of persecution and the storm of controversy fulfilling God's word. 3. In the experience of individual life we see outward troubles, and inward storms of religious doubts fulfilling God's word.—*The Contemporary Pulpit, 1884.*

Verse 9.—"Trees." The glory of God as seen in trees.

Verse 10.—The wildest, the quietest, the most depressed, and the most aspiring should each have its song.

Verses 11—13.—I. The universal King. Alone in excelling. Supreme in glory.

II. The universal summons. Of all nations, ranks, classes and ages. Foreshadowing the Judgment. III. The universal duty: praise,—constant, emphatic, growing.—*W. B. H.*

Verse 12.—God to be served by strength and beauty, experience and expectation.

Verse 12.—“*And children.*” A Children’s Address. I. Where the children are found (verses 11 and 12). In royal and distinguished society; yet not lost or overlooked. II. What they are called to. “Praise the Lord.” Even they have abundant reason. III. What are the lessons of the subject? 1. Children should come up with their parents on the Sabbath. 2. Children should unite in heart and voice in God’s praises. 3. Children should seek fitness for this praise by believing in Christ.—*W. B. H.*

Verse 14.—The Favoured People and their God. I. What he does for them. II. What he makes them: “Saints.” III. Who they are: “Children of Israel.” IV. Where they are: “Near unto him.” V. What they do for him: “Praise ye the Lord.”
