

NOTES *on the*
FIRST BOOK
OF PSALMS

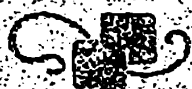
PSALM I—XV

By R. K. WILSON.

with

An Outline of the Five Books of Psalms

By L. LAURENSEN.



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PSALM I—xli.

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An Outline of the Five Books of Psalms.

THE Book of Psalms forms a very important portion of Holy Scripture.

Perhaps no other book of the Old Testament is so frequently cited by the Holy Spirit in the New; and no other book of the Old Testament is so full of Christ, both in His Messianic character, and as a Man upon the earth. He only can fully answer to the Blessed Man of Ps. 1., as He alone is the suffering Man of Ps. xxii., Who will assuredly, in a coming day, be the glorified King of Ps's. xlv. and lxxii. In the Psalms, too, we can trace His path of Sorrow, as He walks, a righteous Man, and One true to God, through a world under the power of evil, so that He can sympathise with His own, whether the believer of to-day or the remnant of Israel oppressed in a future day by the Man of Sin.

Nevertheless the Psalms do not give us the unfolding of Christian truth which we have in the Gospels. Christ come to His own; rejected by them and slain; the Spirit leading the remnant to long for His return as the avenger of their manifold wrongs, the Judge of the wicked, and the King to reign over Zion; we do get in full. These are precious truths, vindicating the ways of God in grace and righteousness with men upon the earth. But the present period during which Christ, risen from the dead, has gone back to the Father; the Father's name is being revealed; and God by the Spirit is calling out a people to form the Assembly of God, the Church which is "the body" of Christ—this is nowhere spoken of in the Psalms.

Hence, whatever men may say, the Psalms are not a proper vehicle for Christian worship. To try to make them such serves only to distort the plain words of God, and to read a meaning into them which they do not contain.

If one indulges in this "spiritualising" process, "Israel and Judah" would be made to represent "Christians"; "Zion" and "Jerusalem" must mean "the Church"; the "pleasant land" the "Father's House"; and the wars of the Jews have to be metamorphosed into spiritual conflict. When we reach the imprecatory Psalms, this system breaks down totally; and men resort to an unjustifiable method, of what they call "mitigating the vengeance" by taking unwarrantable liberties with the text. This system dates back to the second century; and the Reformers, delivered from much, never delivered themselves from this false theology of Rome.

In the Books of Psalms, taken as they stand, everything is in true and beautiful order. God is now dealing with men in grace: a day is coming in which He will deal in righteousness; and those who will not bow to grace, however much men may forget it, will be broken by power, as Ps. ii. plainly shows.

Now this leads us to consider briefly the characteristics of the various Books.

In Book I, which contains Psalms i-xli, Jerusalem is recognised as the centre of God's government on the earth.

In spite of the state of things in Judah, the Covenant relationship of Jehovah with His people is maintained: hence what marks this first book is that, no less than 270 times, the divine title LORD

(Jehovah) is employed to express that relationship. God (Elohim) is used only some 60 times.

In Book II (Psalms xlii-lxxii.) this order is exactly reversed. The glorious land is under Gentile domination. Judah is outcast, and the relationship title, Jehovah, occurs only some 26 times, while the Creatorial title, Elohim, is used about 200 times. He is the God of all the earth.

Book III (Psalms lxxiii-lxxxix.) continues the theme ; but there is now a remnant in the land, who, though only a remnant, are representative of the nation and hold in faith to the truth expressed in the opening sentence of Asaph's Psalm, which becomes the keynote of this portion, that "God is good to *Israel*." Moreover, the disciplinary dealing of God has produced true repentance of heart ; hence the writer immediately adds "to such as are of a clean heart."

In Book IV (Psalms xc-cvi) the opening Psalm was no doubt historically the first to be written, and is essentially the Psalm for the wilderness ; but in it also there is expressed, what the writer had learned experimentally, that man's littleness finds resource and satisfaction in God's Almightyness ; and, in spite of all the powers arrayed against him, the heart rests in the supreme fact that "Jehovah reigneth." His manifold mercies extended to his erring but now restored people, call forth the praises of the Psalms that follow ; and this portion closes with the prayer for the full recovery of the scattered people.

"Gather us from among the heathen to give thanks to Thy holy name."

The Doxology here in Ps. cvi., is of a fuller character than heretofore.

Book V (Psalms cvii.-cl.) contemplates the nation again in their land with Messiah's law written in their heart, and Jehovah's ways and purposes about to be manifested in the millennial kingdom. The prospect and the retrospect call forth the great 'Hallel' of praise rising to its climax in the closing Psalm,—“Everything that hath breath shall praise Jehovah.”

L. Laurenson.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Psalm 1

IN this first Psalm we have the Spirit of Christ in the Remnant. Separation and Meditation mark the blessed man. The clean beasts part the hoof and chew the cud. Lev. xi. and Jer. xv. and xvii. teach this. The ungodly are spoken of as a class to be avoided—like the chaff they will be driven away; they cannot stand in the judgment, and in the end they shall perish. This is seen in Jude: they may be religious like Cain and teachers like Balaam (see also 2 Peter ii.); but their end as of Korah and his company is perdition (Num. xvi. 33). There is progress in each as seen in this Psalm—Walking—Standing—Sitting: but the man that keeps clear of such is found day and night meditating on God's Word: he is like a tree that does not depend on rain; but is ever kept fresh and fruitful by the river at its roots; and prosperity marks his soul (3 John i. 2). Everything prospers in the hand of such a man. It is said of Joseph, “He was a prosperous man,” but he was separate from the ungodly. The Lord knows the way of the righteous; and He knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation. Man is helpless and hopeless without God; even in his best state, he is altogether Vanity. Job likens man to a flower fair and fresh, but soon withered: his days few and full of trouble. Such is man born

of woman. Well may James say, "What is your life. It is even a vapour." Underneath all the fairness and freshness seen in man, there is man's uncleanness before God. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Job, with all the outward things that commended him as a man (and there was none like him), yet says "I am vile; I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." He is fit only for death and judgment. This was the effect of being in God's presence. A man must be born again to see anything of God; "by nature children of wrath"; "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." A slave to sin and Satan, man cannot help himself, and no man can help him. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." But what man cannot do, God does by His word and Spirit, through the death of His own Son, Jesus Christ, who was born of a woman, yet was "that Holy Thing,"—and "the Son of Man who is in Heaven"—holy and heavenly as man. "In Him was life and the life was the light of men." But this light only condemns the first man. The Lord needed not that any man testify what was in man. He knew what was in man: nothing that God could trust; nothing to take in a right thought of God. Man is darkness. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not,"—could not take it in. "Ye were sometime darkness"—not only in the dark; there was nothing in man to enlighten, nothing to take in the light. "Except a man be born again, he *cannot see*." "The light of the body is the eye": where there is no sight, there can be no light within.

But it was not only that man was in darkness—yea, *was* darkness itself (Eph. v. 8), God Himself dwelt in thick darkness up to the Cross—there was a veil between God and His people. Now at the death of Christ the veil was rent from the top to the bottom. There is the *new* and living way into the presence of God ; and with boldness we can approach by the blood of Jesus ; having *no more conscience* of sins ; where there is *no more remembrance* of sins ; and hence *no more offering* for sins (Heb. x.). Such is the perfect value of the *work of Christ* who did the *Will of God* ; and those who have faith in *Him* and *His perfect work*, have the witness of the Holy Ghost. And now the Word of God settles everything in the soul ; so that with full assurance of faith we can draw near to God.

The message now is “*God is Light* and in Him is no darkness at all.” *God is in the Light.*

That God is Light, that God is Love was ever true ; but it was not made known till Jesus came into the world. Words—written words—could not reveal what *God is*. It is by the Word of Life—the Word becoming flesh, that God is made known to this world. “No man hath seen God at any time : the only begotten Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, (He hath declared Him.” God hath spoken in these last days in His Son—and He is the brightness of God’s glory—and the express image of His person—God was in Christ. All that Jesus did, all that He said, all that He is, expressed God the Father (John i. 14). Now that God has come out at the Cross, the darkness is past ; the true light now shineth : no more clouds, no more distance, no more dread for the believer in Jesus. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin—perfectly fit for the light, and

free in the light : “ giving thanks unto the Father Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the *saints in light*.” This is where we find ourselves through grace. God has come out and made us fit to go in, like the father in Luke xv, meeting the younger son and kissing him, clothing him and killing the fatted calf. Fêted and feasted—“ they began to be merry.” The son had begun to be in want when in the far country, without God and without Christ. We thus get two *beginnings*—the *old* and the *new*. If he had remained away from the Father in the far country, his want would never have come to an end ; but now that he has come home to the Father, want is unknown in the heart. “ A merry heart is a continual feast.” There were two merry hearts that day : the Father and the son were both merry. “ They began to be merry ” : and there is no end to this joy. “ In Thy presence there is fullness of joy ; and at Thy right hand pleasures for evermore.” All that is open to Jesus now is ours—His path, His portion, His place, His prospect. “ As He is so are we in this world.” Luke xv. is what we have now. How slow we are to believe all that God has told us ! How little do we take in ! “ *Bring hither* the fatted calf and kill it.” “ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by Whom we have now received the reconciliation ” (Rom. v.).

It is good to look at the truth in the full light of the New Testament: though the Book of Psalms does not give us the Father and our relationships as children and sons of God, we find in them Christ and the things concerning Himself (Luke xxiv.) David was the man after God’s own heart to fulfil all His will—the sweet Psalmist in Israel—the beloved of God—a

Type of Christ : the shadow is there, but it is only when Christ comes that we have the substance "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. xxxii.)

Psalm 2

IN the second Psalm we have the Millenium anticipated. Christ in person is brought before us as King. The rebellion against Him is seen; but He will have His way. Kings, and all the powers of men are helpless; when He speaks and acts, all must *bow* or *break*. He is Son and Heir of all (Heb. i); and has only to ask for the nations, and all will be given Him; for the present, however, He does not ask for the world (John xvii), but for those given Him by the Father out of the world; that He may give them eternal life now, and the glory when He comes.

The prayer in Acts iv, and the promises in Rev. ii. 24-29 refer to this. The desire was that God would stretch forth His hand to *heal*, that His word might be in *power*. The day is coming when He will come forth in power and glory and clear off all His enemies. Before that day the counsel is "*Kiss the Son.*" Bow to Him, take refuge in Him. He is the King that shall reign in righteousness. At the same time He is anointed Man—the hiding place. It is well for those who have fled to Him for refuge (Heb. vi) He is to be served with fear and trembling, yet with joy (Phil. ii.).

Psalm 3

IN Psalms 3—15 we find the Remnant and the Spirit of Christ in the Remnant.

Psalm 3 was written when David fled from Absalom. What the troubler, what the enemy says proves

that he knows nothing of God (v. 1-2). But faith can speak of God as shield and glory and the lifter up of the head, so that one is heard : and can lie down in peace and sleep ; and awake knowing that the Lord is the Keeper in the face of ten thousand foes. *He* will deal with the enemies. Salvation is His : His blessing is upon His people. How well the two go together, Salvation and blessing! (Heb. vi., 1 Cor. x.).

Psalm 4

THE third psalm is for the *morning*; the fourth is for the evening. In distress one becomes enlarged. (2nd. Cor. i). The *godly* man is set *apart* for *God* Himself; his prayer is heard. And on his bed he can have communion with God, and do the right thing and trust in God. Many may say, " Who will show us any good ? " The light of God's countenance is everything to a believer: gladness put into his heart *more* than corn and wine, earthly blessings. For the present Christ is cut off and has nothing of earth's joys; but He is anointed with the oil of gladness above His companions (Heb. i.); and all His own share in His gladness.

One in this state can lie down and sleep in *peace* and *safety*, depending on God. How different with the world: sudden destruction coming upon those who say peace and safety (1 Thes. 5). Psalms iii. and iv. are very encouraging—morning and evening Psalms : salvation and blessing in the morning; peace and safety in the evening.

Psalm 5

WE have in Psalm 5 dependence expressed in *words*—meditation, and the voice of one crying to God. It is in the morning that the Voice is heard: his prayer is directed with expectation, as he *looks up* to the Lord for protection from evil men,

who tell lies and who murder. David says he will come unto God's house and worship in His fear toward His Holy Temple. *God's way* is sought, that it may be made plain. The wicked cannot be trusted. But *all* who trust in the Lord, are to ever shout for joy: the Lord defends such. Those who love the name of the Lord are to be joyful in Him. His blessing is on the righteous, and they are shielded by God's favour.

Psalm 6

HERE again David is the writer: he feels the chastening hand of God, the weakness of the body, his bones vexed and his soul too. But there is confidence, and prayer for deliverance for His mercy's sake. Man is without merit. Hebrews xii tells us the purpose of God's present dealings; while Deut. viii shows why he dealt with Israel for forty years in the wilderness. The Book of Job gives us the *end* of the Lord in all His dealings. Death, the grave, and the enemies are all faced in Ps. vi. There may be tears and groaning on the bed; but the Lord hears prayer and delivers, and deals with the enemies.

Psalm 7

THIS psalm seems to have been written when Shimei cursed David fleeing from his son Absalom. Saul had hunted David; but now the persecution is even closer: a man's foes shall be they of his own house—enemies without and within. But David's trust is in the Lord, Who would deal with all the wicked. The upright in heart is known to God. He is their defence, and tries the reins and heart of the righteous; but He is angry with the wicked every day, and will judge them. Praise is the outcome of all the exercise of God's people: they can sing in the face of the foe, to the name of the Lord.

Psalm 8

IN this Psalm we have the Millennium established : “ the name of the Lord excellent in all the earth ” are the first and last words. His glory is set above the heavens, with the works of His fingers—the moon and the stars. The question is asked, “ What is man ? ” Christ is seen taking a lower place than angels : they never die, but He tasted death for everything (Heb. ii) ; but now as man He is *above* the angels—a name above every name ; —all have to bow to Him ; all is to be *under His* feet (1 Cor. xv. ; Eph. i.). It is the simple ones that see this—babes and sucklings ; and out of their mouths, strength to still the enemy is found.

Psalm 9

IN Psalm 9 we have the Millennium anticipated. It begins with praise with the *whole heart*. God’s works and doings are before the writer. Enemies are dealt with ; their works come to an end : but the Lord endures for ever. He will judge the world in righteousness, and in uprightness He will minister judgment to the people. The oppressed will find in Him a refuge in the time of trouble ; and they who know His name will *trust* Him. How the people of God are encouraged to sing praise to the Lord who dwells in Zion, and to tell what He is *doing*. He hears the cry of the humble. In verses 13 and 14 we have the *gates* of death and the *gates* of the daughter of Zion. We are taken from the one, and brought in at the other. He does it ; the Lord is known by what He does (v. 16) ; and the wicked are caught in a snare by their works. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God. The needy and the poor will be *cared* for ; man is not to prevail. God can put the nations in *fear*, that they may know *they are only men*.

Psalm 10

IN this Psalm the character of the wicked is given—pride, boasting, admiration of the covetous. God is not in his thoughts. His ways and acts are bad, and *in his heart* he says “I shall never be moved.” He has no fear of adversity; he thinks that God forgets, and never sees. He lies in wait for the poor; but the latter turn to God and in prayer commit themselves to His keeping. God will deal with the evil man, the man of the earth, and deliver the fatherless and the oppressed. The devil in 1 John v. is called the *wicked one*.

Psalm 11

TRUST in the Lord marks the upright in heart: when the wicked would shoot arrows, the shield of faith (Eph. vi.) keeps all off. Christ, his work and word, is the foundation. Who can touch Him? He is in the Holy Temple and on the Throne (Isa. vi.; 1 Cor. iii.). The righteous are tried, but the wicked will get their portion—snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest (2 Thess. ii.). Righteousness and uprightness the Lord loves; and *He sees all*.

Psalm 12

IN this Psalm we hear the Voice of the Remnant crying to the Lord for help. The godly and the faithful are gone. The wicked, flattering with their lips, double in heart and proud, think they can say anything: their words are most trying. But the Lord sees and hears the poor and needy in their oppression, and will lift up such. *His words* are pure: they have been tried like silver in a furnace seven times. The Lord keeps His words from

this generation (2 Tim. iii.). One can turn to God and to the word of His grace, when men and men's words fail (Acts xx.).

Psalm 13

IN this psalm the question is asked : How long will God allow the wicked seemingly to triumph ; as if God had forgotten His people, and was hiding His face from them. There is sorrow of heart daily at the state of things. Paul knew something of this (2 Cor. vi., xi., xii.; Phil. iii.). How eager is the Psalmist for God's attention (v. 3). Consider, hear, lighten mine eyes, lest the sleep of death come, and the enemy see him moved. There is Victory through the Mercy and Salvation of God, and singing to the Lord for His bountiful dealing (Rom. viii.).

Psalm 14

HERE the Millennium is anticipated. Man as he is, is seen ; what he says in his heart is : " No God " ; what he does is only evil ; there is none good. The Lord looks down from heaven to see : and finds none understanding, none seeking, no knowledge of God. Such shall not be found in the generation of the righteous : they shame the counsel of the poor. It is out of Zion (grace) that salvation will come. Then Israel will turn to the Lord and be glad (Psalm cxxvi.; Zech. ix. 9; Heb. xii.).

Psalm 15

WHO can be in God's *tent* to sojourn, or in His holy hill to dwell ? Some eleven things would mark the man : but where is such to be found ? Ps. xiv. and Rom. iii. would make plain that none of Adam's race have any chance. Only Christ could claim to be spotless, and pure from sin and selfishness. He knew no sin ; in Him was no sin ;

He did no sin. He could have gone where He was before (John vi. 62). But He would have been alone (John xii. 24).

Psalm 16

IN Psalm 16, Christ in person is speaking as the dependent man—subject to the Will of God—in His path finding all His delight in the saints—called the excellent of the earth. Those that go after other gods will find sorrow. Christ would not touch anything in His pathway here that shut out God the Father. And we are to follow Him (1 John ii.; v. 21). His portion was outside this world. “I have meat to eat” (John iv). He speaks of “My peace” (John xiv.) and “My joy” (John xv.). He received counsel and instruction in the night from God, the One always before Him, so that He is not moved. (Luke xiii., John xi.). He walked in the path of God’s will; neither driven out by the fox Herod, nor moved by the sisters at Bethany before the time of the Father’s will. And when the time came, though they had taken up stones, He proceeds for the glory of God, and says, “I am glad”—when everybody else was sad: death is nothing to Him, Who is the Resurrection and the Life. His tongue could rejoice, and, as to the body, rest in Hope. Lazarus saw corruption; the grave could not keep Christ (Acts ii., xiii.),[§] It was for others. *He died*, was buried, and was raised (1 Cor. xv.). And now for all who believe, the *path* of life is open (Rom. vi.)—Fullness of joy (1 John i.)—Pleasures for evermore (Col. iii.).

Psalm 17

HERE Christ in Person is speaking. The *ear* and the *eye* are appealed to in verses 1-2. God hears and God sees (v. 3): He proves the heart, visits even in the night, tries, and finds nothing:

the thought and the word are the same. Christ said in John viii. that He *was* what He *said*. It is by the Word of God's lips that one is kept in the path from wicked men : one's goings are sustained. God saves them that call upon Him, keeps them as the apple of the eye, covers them with His wing. He shows tenderness and power in His way of protecting from evil and wicked men. Men of the world have their portion in this life : but the portion and prospect of Christ and of all who belong to Him is to *see His face* in righteousness, and wake up in *His likeness*.

Psalm 18

IN this Psalm David speaks of great deliverances. God had wrought for him, and had delivered him from all his enemies, from death and all its sorrows, from hell and all its pains. David is only a reflection : one can see Christ in victory ; brought into a large place—all bowing to Him when they hear of Him. But in faith a believer can speak of victory now (1 Cor. xv.) through our Lord Jesus Christ ; and of God who has delivered and does and will yet deliver ; and Who always leads in triumph (2 Cor. i., 11). The day will come when the Psalm will be fulfilled (Phil. ii.; Rev. xii., xix.).

Psalm 19

IN the first seven verses of this psalm we have the voice of creation. The heavens tell God's glory : the handiwork of God is seen in the firmament. Day and night have a language of their own everywhere : the *sun* is the centre, and gives not only light but *heat* ; and everything feels it. But the *Word* of God affects the *soul*, restoring, as-

suring, making wise the heart, opening the eyes, cleansing. Gold for value and honey for sweetness are not to be compared with God's word. It gives warnings and rewards those who keep it. Through it secret faults are found out, and presumptuous sins are avoided. The desire is that in word and thought one may be acceptable to God.

In this Psalm one can see if there is attention to God's voice, whether in Creation or in what comes home to heart and conscience : through the *written word*, one is made very happy and kept in a safe path ; and then there is a response to God : the words of the mouth are agreeable to Him ; and the meditation of the heart ; the One Who is the Strength and Redeemer gets glory. It was so in Mal. iii. 16, when they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another and thought upon His name—a *book was kept*.

Psalm 20

IN this Psalm we find Christ in Person speaking. In His trouble He cries to God (Heb. v. 7). He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and there is succour and sympathy in Him (Heb. ii. 10). While this psalm applies to Christ and to all that He passed through, one can take it up and know that the *ear* of God is open : He hears and protects in the day of trouble, as He did Jacob ;—"The God of Jacob." Help and strength come from the Sanctuary and Zion. In the offerings and burnt sacrifices we have the death of Christ Godward (Heb. ix., x.). Prayer is heard ; and an answer is given to all the petitions ; Salvation—the banner is set up : the name of the Lord is all that is needed. His Anointed is saved from heaven with the strength of His right hand. Enemies are *brought low*.

Psalm 21

THIS psalm shows us the Millennium anticipated. The king's joy is in God's strength and salvation : He has received an answer to His requests ; He is presented with the blessing of goodness, and bears on His head a crown of pure gold. There is no limit to His blessedness, to His days, glory, honour and majesty ;—most blessed and exceeding glad. There are enemies ; but through the Mercy of the Most High, nothing can move Him : all enemies will be destroyed, and the Lord shall be exalted, with singing and praise for His power. Psalm 21 gives the heavenly side of the Kingdom: Psalm 45 its earthly side. The King is Christ.

Psalm 22

HERE again we have Christ in Person—the Psalm means "*hind of the morning*." Never had there been a darker night, never was there a brighter morning than when Christ rose from among the dead. The Psalm begins with the forsaken of God; the deepest sufferings were from the hand of a Holy God, when Christ Who knew no sin was made sin : *all alone*. Others had gone through trials, but God was with them : they trusted and were delivered. Christ takes the place of *a worm*, reproached and despised by the people: mocked. Still He can speak of His dependence on God from His birth. Trouble is near. Never was trouble like the Cross : no one else could have endured what He suffered. By the grace of God He tasted death for everything : death in all its bitterness :—Satan's power, too, the power of darkness ; the lion's mouth, the bulls—Israel's leaders ; and dogs—the Gentiles. In the Gospels we see how this psalm was fulfilled even to the dividing of His clothes. But He was *heard* and

delivered out of death (Heb. v.). And now in Resurrection He declares the *Name of God the Father* (John xvii., xx.; Heb. ii.). He takes His place in the midst of the assembly singing praise to God. This is begun; but it will go on till Israel and the ends of the earth are full of praise.

Psalm 23

IN this Psalm we again find Christ in person, with the Remnant, and the Spirit of Christ in them. But one can take up the words of Psalm xxiii. in the light of John x., Heb. xiii., 1 Peter v. Each believer may say of the Lord—He is *my Shepherd*. He feeds and leads: no fear: company and comfort for us as we pass through the *valley of the shadow of death*. It is in Psalm xxii. that we get *death* in all its bitterness, darkness and judgment. Now in Psalm xxiii. we have the meat and sweetness; the head anointed; the cup running over; nothing but Goodness and Mercy follow. There is the house to dwell in for ever—John xiv. Enemies may be on every side; but a table is spread in their presence.

Psalm 24

IN this Psalm we have the Millennium established: there is great fullness here. Everything belongs to the Lord, not only as Creator (1 Cor. x.); but He has bought the field with the price of His own blood; and as King He will come in power and glory as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (Matt. xxv.; Rev. xix.; 1 Tim. vi.).

In Ps. xxii. we get the Cross—in Ps. xxiii. the Path along which He leads as Shepherd in the Wilderness. In Ps. xxiv. we have the King of Glory: the *gates* will open to Him. As Shepherd the door was open to Him (John x.). *He is coming*.

Psalm 25

IN this Psalm there is a sense of dependence, with sins confessed and the need of mercy felt. Enemies are all around. The psalmist is waiting on the Lord for leading and teaching. It is the meek that He guides, when He teaches His way: the one that *fears* the Lord He teaches, and the secret of the Lord is with such. There is a desire in v. 16 that the Lord should come in and *consider* the affliction and the enemies (v. 19). Integrity and uprightness and waiting on the Lord are needed for preservation (v. 21). V. 22 expresses the desire that all God's people should be redeemed out of all their trouble (2 Cor. i.; 2 Tim. ii. 10; iv. 18).

Psalm 26

HERE again the Remnant speaks: integrity marks them. The one that is in this state can invite the Lord to judge and examine him: his feet are found in the *path*, and in an even *place*; lovingkindness and truth are before the eyes, and issue in the walk (3 John; Eph. iv.).

There is the keeping clear of bad company:—vain persons, dissemblers, evil doers and the wicked all get a wide berth. The *altar* of the Lord is compassed with the voice of thanksgiving: the works of the Lord are declared: the habitation of God's House and the *place* where His honour dwelleth is loved (Eph. ii. Heb. iii.).

Psalm 27

THERE is a ring of triumph in this psalm. We find faith in God as Light, Salvation, and Strength in the face of enemies: there is nothing to fear. The *one* desire is to dwell in God's House *all the days of one's life*, to see His beauty and enquire in His Holy Temple. God can

hide and keep in the evil day in secret : and bring forth songs of praise, as we see in Acts xvi., when Paul and Silas sang as well as prayed to God in the midst of their trouble. There is a great sense of dependence on God in this Psalm. If *father* and *mother* were to forsake, the Lord would take me up. Esther had no father or mother to look after her ; yet she was taken up. The man in John ix was forsaken by father and mother as a result of his confession of Christ ; but the Lord took him up. The teaching of God is needed (John vi. 45). We must have faith in His *goodness*, and must wait on Him for strength ; and we must add to our faith courage (2 Peter i.; Joshua i.). It was a dark day when David was forsaken by all (1 Sam. xxx.); but he encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

Psalm 28

IN this psalm there is a desire to be heard—a cry to the Lord as a *Rock*. In v. 2 we have supplication, and a desire to be clear of the *wicked* : the latter speaks peace, but in their heart is mischief : they will be dealt with in judgment by the Lord (1 Thess. v.; 2 Thess. i.; 2 Peter iii.). From v. 6 we find that the Lord has heard the cry ; while in v. 7 the heart is at rest, and full of praise to the Lord Who is the strength and shield. The Messiah finds a stronghold of salvation in God. The people of God need to be *saved* (Heb. vii. 25). They need *blessing* (Heb. vi., Psalm lxxviii). They need *feeding* (1 Peter v., Acts xx.). They need *lifting up forever* (1 Thess. iv. 17. Luke xxi. 28-36).

Psalm 29

IN this psalm we find the Remnant anticipating the Millennium. It begins with *giving* to the Lord ; and ends with the Lord giving strength and the blessing of peace to His people. It is

Jehovah's voice that is spoken of some *seven* times. Seventeen times we have the name *Jehovah*—the name He made Himself known by to Israel (Exod. vi. 3). We have the glory of God in v. 3. God means that man should be a *giver* as well as a receiver. And the day will come when *all* kings, and all the families will worship (Psalm cxxii.; Zech. xiv.). Everything *in His Temple* uttereth glory (v. 9). There is a present application (1 Cor. iii.; 2 Cor. vi.). In Eph. ii. all that God is doing groweth to an holy temple in the Lord (Rev. xxi.; Ezek. xlii.): the glory returns.

Psalm 30

HERE again we have the Millennium anticipated. This psalm was written at the dedication of David's house. There is a ring of victory in it, over enemies; prayer has been answered and healing granted: God's preserving care is seen. There is a desire that saints should join in singing to the Lord and in thanksgiving for His Holiness. A moment may be passed in His anger; and weeping may endure for a night; but a lifetime in His favour and joy in the morning are the portion of His people. One cannot do without the *face of God*. Prosperity is not enough to keep from trouble: the cry is heard, the mourning turned into dancing: gladness takes the place of sackcloth—singing and praise for ever.

Psalm 31

THE anticipation of the Millennium; Christ speaking in Person; the Spirit of Christ in the Remnant; all these come out in this Psalm. There is a desire not to be ashamed; a desire to be led, to be taken out of the net spread to catch the saint. Verse 5 gives us the last words of Jesus, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my

spirit." Compare Stephen in Acts vii. Every saint can say, "Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." He is set in a large room. That sins and enemies trouble the soul is confessed; the psalmist feels like a dead man and a broken vessel—forgotten. He has fears without (2 Cor. iv.). But he can say "My times are in Thy hands." So all is well. Opposers will be made ashamed. The Goodness laid up for those who fear and trust the Lord is great: they are hid from the strife of tongues. How encouraging!

Psalm 32

"**G**IVING Instruction" is the meaning of this Psalm. David describes the blessedness of the man God counts righteous without works (Rom. iv.). Here we have forgiveness: sin covered: never to come up again—where there is no guile, but a true confession to God. There is no question of judgment. God is the hiding place, and the saints are preserved from trouble, with songs of Victory. Now one can learn: God is the teacher (John vi. 45. Eph. iv.). One may be guided like a horse or mule with bit or bridle—circumstances. But the happy way is to be near enough to God to do His will, like Enoch, having the testimony of being pleasing (Rom. xii.). There are many sorrows for the wicked; but mercy is around the righteous: and the upright can rejoice and be glad, yea, even shout for joy.

Psalm 33

A GAIN we have the anticipation of the Millennium. The right and the upright are to be full of praise, thanksgiving, and singing: this is comely. It is a *new song* that is to be sung. The *word* and the *work*, and the *goodness* of the Lord give good

reason for praise. It was by the *word* of God that everything was made. Fear and awe are becoming in all. He spake and it was done, and He commanded and it stood fast. He can frustrate nations in their counsel, and bring to nothing the thoughts of the people : but His counsel and thoughts stand. The people that are His are happy. He sees from heaven all on earth. He can fashion hearts. It is no question of numbers or strength (v. 16). No king is saved by the multitude ; and a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety. It is they that *fear* the Lord, and those that hope in His mercy that come in for deliverance and are kept through famine. There is a waiting on the Lord at the close of this psalm. He is the *help* and *shield* of such as wait upon Him : there is rejoicing in Him and trusting in His Holy Name. Mercy is needed all the way. In v. 5 we find Goodness, in v. 22 Mercy ; at the same time (v. 4) all His works are done in *truth*.

Psalm 34

THIS Psalm was written when David received the shewbread and the sword from the Priest (1 Sam. xxi.). He went to the *cave* of Adullam : and his father's house went to him, all in distress, in debt, and discontented. Ps. xxxiv. tells how happy they were ; how one affects another. " I sought " ; " they looked." The tongue of Doeg the Edomite brought death on the Priests. If one would be kept from evil, the tongue must be kept from evil (1 Peter iii.). We get the word now. The Lord is good ; taste and see. How He takes care of those that trust in Him !

Psalm 35

IN this psalm the enemies are great and many ; but there is one greater. The soul can be joyful in the Lord and rejoice in His salvation (Phil. iii.) ;—Victory over death (1 Cor. xv.) ; and over the world and the wicked one (1 John v.). More than conquerors through Him Who loves us ! (Rom. viii.).

In v. 27 there is desire that others should share in the Victory and magnify the Lord ; also that the tongue should speak of God's righteousness and praise all the day.

Psalm 36

IN this Psalm David is spoken of as the servant of the Lord. Vs. 1-4 show us the wicked, what they say *in their hearts* : what they are *in their own eyes* : what comes *out of their mouth*. Good is left : evil is not abhorred. Pride may be in one's own heart ; the hand of the *wicked* may drive one from God. The safety is to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter iii.). In vs. 5-10 we see God in His mercy, faithfulness, righteousness, judgments,—the preserver of man and beast. The children of men are under His protection (wings). They can enjoy the best of food, and drink, where there is satisfaction and pleasure, at the fountain of life and light. The desire is that it may continue.

Psalm 37

HERE we find that evil doers are soon cut down. In v. 37 the *end* of the perfect and upright is *peace*. In v. 38 the end of the wicked is destruction. There is great encouragement to *trust*, and

delight in the Lord, and *commit* one's way to the Lord, and *rest* and *wait* on the Lord. The righteous have their troubles *here*, but salvation and strength is found in the Lord. He could say to Paul, when troubles without and within pressed upon him, (2 Cor. xii.), "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." It is only a very little while (Heb. x.).

Psalm 38

IN Ps. xxxviii. the Remnant and the Spirit of Christ in them speaks; feeling the judgment of God because of iniquities as a burden too heavy, bad all over like Job; like the man in Rom. vii., wretched, with no good in the flesh: but in the midst of it all, the heart turns to the Lord (v. 9). Strength friends, kinsmen all are gone: forsaken. Enemies seek to destroy; but as a deaf man and dumb, hearing and saying nothing, the righteous turns to the Lord for help. He committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. Like Jonah, the soul is brought to say that salvation is of the Lord, when the wicked like a troubled sea is all around. They are lively and strong (v. 17).

Psalm 39

HERE we find that the ways and words have to be watched. Silence from good brings sorrow: musing makes the heart to burn, and the one to speak to the Lord: that one may know one's end, and how short one's time is and how frail: a lifetime is as nothing; men in high places are vanity; only a vain show, the outward appearance; riches are of no good (v. 7). The hope is in the Lord alone; and what else does one wait for? Deliverance is needed from the foolish. One feels a stranger and sojourner

here : but strength is needed to be for God's glory and men's blessing.

Psalm 40

IN Ps. xl. we have Christ in Person speaking. In Heb. x we read, that to do God's will Jesus came, and that a body was prepared for Him. In John xvii. and xix., He looks up to heaven and says, "Father, the work is done." The believer comes in for the benefit of the perfect work of Christ, and is as clear of sins now as Christ : with no more conscience of sins : no more remembrance of sins. One offering once for all settled God—His claims were met ; God was glorified : sins were put away by the death of Jesus on the Cross. He is now seated, and the Spirit given as a witness that the work is done : and we have the word of God for faith. *Christ came into man's place* ; like Joseph in the pit and prison ; or, as Jonah, He has been at the bottom of all for us. Now He is out of death and the grave. It was not possible that He could be holden of death, no more than the fish could keep Jonah. He is now on dry ground—Resurrection : the feet on the rock, *firm* ; and the goings established, *free* ; so that there is a *new* song ; *Praise to our God*. The old song was praising man, the creature ; now the Creator and Redeemer has all the glory (Rev. iv., v.). Many see it and fear and trust. Each believer can take his stand in Christ on the rock. The man that trusts the Lord is blessed, and need not fear man : or respect the proud or the liars. God's wonderful works and thoughts, made known to us in Christ, are to engage our hearts. None but Jesus could tell out God's righteousness and faithfulness and salvation. Those who seek God are to be glad and rejoice, and speak out, that God may be magnified.

Psalm 41

THIS is the last psalm of Book I. In the case of Psalms i., ii., x., xxxiii., we do not read that they are Psalms of David. This Psalm begins with the blessedness of considering the poor. In Matt. v. and Luke vi., we hear the Lord saying the poor are blessed. And James says, "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith." Christ became poor, that through His poverty we might become rich. In the day to come He will *care* for the *poor* and needy (Ps. lxxii.). The one that really cares for the poor, the Lord will *deliver*, preserve, keep, make happy, sustain on a bed of suffering and sickness. Enemies wish evil, "When shall He die, and His name perish," say they. God's answer to this we find in Ps. xlv. His name shall endure forever. A familiar friend may become an enemy, like Judas. He that did eat bread lifted up his heel against me. But we see how the Lord delights in and upholds one that is right. Christ is seen in this Ps. xli. before God's face forever. The closing word, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel ; from eternity to eternity : Amen and Amen." Glory goes to Him.



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