

Bible Commentary

PSALMS 1

General remarks. This book holds a place of unusual interest in the Bible. By one classification it is distinguished from the law (Luke 24: 44), and by another it is referred to as a part of the law (John 10: 34). It contains various forms of speech; poetical, musical, historical and prophetic. Many "authorities" divide it into 5 books, with other tabulations regarding the several verses in each book. This information is all interesting and useful, but is too detailed and technical to be given space in a commentary like this. For the benefit of the readers who might be interested, I shall cite some authors: Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia; Smith's Bible Dictionary; Oxford Cyclopedic Concordance; Two Thousand Hours in the Psalms, by Dr. Marion McH. Hull. Wherever, in my judgment, any of the Psalms require some special notice as per the information cited above, I will point it out. Otherwise I shall comment on the verses of the chapters in the order as contained in the A. V. of the Bible, as I have done in the preceding volumes of the commentary.

Verse 1. In this verse we see the entire scope of human conduct classified under three heads; walking, standing and sitting. It would be impossible literally or physically to do all of them at the same time, hence we should look for the figurative sense of the words. *Blessed* is from *ESHER* and is rendered "happy" by Strong, Young and Moffatt. *Walketh* is from *HALAK* and has a variety of applications both figurative and literal. Perhaps its most outstanding thought is to "frequent a place." *Counsel* has been translated from *ETSAL* and Strong defines it, "advice." The whole statement means one who follows the advice of the *ungodly*. The last word is from *RASHA*, which Strong defines, "morally wrong; concretely an (actively) bad person." *Standeth* is from *AMAD* and defined by Strong as follows: "A primitive root; to stand, in various relations (literally and figuratively, transitively and intransitively)." *Way* is from *PEREK* and defined, "A road (as trodden); figuratively a course of life or mode of action, often adverbially."—Strong. In the A. V. it has been rendered by conversation 2 times,

custom 1, journey 23, manner 8 and way 1692. The thought is of a man who does not "stand for" the manner of sinners. *Sitteth* is from a word that has been rendered by dwell 434 times. *Seat* is from *MOSHAB* and Strong gives "session" as a part of his definition; Moffatt renders it "company." *Scornful* is from *LCWTS* and Strong defines it, "to make mouths at, i.e. to scoff." A man who cannot deny the truthfulness of God's Word will try to weaken its force by making light of it.

Verse 2. The preceding verse describes a man who is good negatively, this one will consider a man who is good affirmatively. To *delight* in the law of the Lord means more than merely enduring it. A man might accept it with a passive approval because he has no reason to dispute it, but he should also accept it as a chief source of joy. Jesus taught the same principle in Matt. 5: 6. *Meditate* means to think seriously and respectfully over the law even when one cannot have the text before his eyes. The Bible is so full of precious material that a man can read enough of it in a few moments preceding his day's activities to keep his mind busy all day. *Day and night* comprehends the entire period of time which might seem to leave no opportunity for any necessary attention to the body. The expression is figurative, meaning that at all available moments whether in the day or night, one should be thinking of the law.

Verse 3. *Rivers of water* is a significant phrase. The first word is from *PELEG* which means, "a rill (i.e. small channel of water, as in irrigation)." —Strong. It is from another Hebrew word meaning, "to split (literally or figuratively)." It refers to places where two streams meet and the soil between them is always moist, therefore fruitful. Both fruit and foliage need nourishment and the life-giving liquid is ever present because of the condition brought about by the two streams. However, the moisture saturating the ground near the tree would be of no value did the tree not reach out and drink of it. Likewise the happy man of God is enabled to thrive because he does his part by reaching for the life-giving source in the stream of God's truth. *Whoever he doeth* is based on the condition that he de-

lights in the law of the Lord and constantly meditates therein. The *prosperity* assured him is of a spiritual nature, not that any special providence is to be expected as a reward for his study of the Word.

Verse 4. *Ungodly* is defined in the comments at v. 1. Chaff is light and passive in the presence of wind. It is used to compare the wicked men because they are of such little weight or consequence that God's blast will separate them from the righteous. See the same thought in Matt. 3: 12.

Verse 5. *Stand* is from a different original from that in v. 1. Here it means to endure or withstand a test. *The judgment* does not refer especially to that of the last day. It means any time that a test accounting is to be made. Whenever that is done the ungodly will fail to "pass" the test of truth. The last clause is practically the same in thought as the preceding one. An assembly of righteous people would expel an ungodly man from its midst. That agrees with the principles of government regulating the church in the New Testament. (1 Cor. 5: 5-8; 2 Th. 3: 6.)

Verse 6. *Knoweth* means to recognize or own. *Way* means a course of action in one's life. God will own or accept the life of a righteous man by accepting and saving the man. On the other hand, the course of life followed by an ungodly man is objectionable, and the Lord will reject it in that he will let the man perish.

PSALMS 2

Verse 1. This whole chapter is a prophecy concerning Christ. The reader should not be confused by the present or past tense of the verb, for that is the prophetic style. God knows the future as well as he does the present and indicated that fact by inspiring the prophets to write of future events as if they had already taken place. *Heathen* means "a foreign nation," and here refers to the Gentiles in the time of Christ and his disciples. *Rage* is defined by Strong "to be tumultuous," and refers to the disorderly assemblages in which the enemies of Christ conspired to injure his cause. *Imagine* means to meditate and plan to oppose the works of the disciples of the Lord. *Vain thing* is from a Hebrew word that means emptiness. It denotes that the malicious purposes of the foes of the Lord were to come

to nought. This prophecy was quoted by the disciples as recorded in Acts 4: 25, 26.

Verse 2. *Lord* and *his anointed* mean God and Christ. The *kings* refers to the rulers in the time of Christ and his followers who plotted against their work. Herod and Pilate were among them and are named in Acts 4: 27.

Verse 3. *Their bands* and *their cords* refers to the hold that God and his Son rightfully had on the rulers of the world. They (heathen) plotted to revolt against the divine legislation.

Verse 4. *Laugh* and *derision* are practically the same in meaning. The thought is that God will look upon his enemies with contempt. He will regard their attempts at overthrowing his counsel as of too little consequence to deserve serious attention.

Verse 5. God will look with contempt upon the doings of his enemies, yet that will not end the matter. They will be made to feel the sting of his wrath finally.

Verse 6. David uses the pronouns promiscuously as to the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person. In this verse he uses the 1st person and is speaking for God the Father. In spite of the plots of the heathen, God will (have) set his king (Christ) upon the holy hill of Zion of Jerusalem.

Verse 7. David is the speaker in the first clause in which he is introducing a decree about to be quoted. That decree was made by the Father concerning the Son, and the rest of the verse is the language of the Son, repeating the decree of God. It may well be worded with parenthetical explanations thus: "The Lord (God) hath said unto me (Christ), thou art," etc.

Verse 8. *Me* refers to God, making a prediction in the form of an invitation to the Son. The *heathen* refers to the nations of the world who were to embrace the Gospel and become members of the kingdom of Christ.

Verse 9. The expressions in this verse are figurative and are intended to give the idea of God's firm rule. A king holds a rod or scepter in his hand while on the throne, indicating his right and ability to rule. A rod of iron would denote a rule that is firm and enduring. A potter's vessel is fragile and would shatter into many pieces if struck. The ease and certainty with which a man would break this vessel into many pieces is used to compare God's success in demolish-

ing the heathen in their wicked attempts at overthrowing the divine authority.

Verse 10. This is an admonition to the rulers of the world to give attention to the prediction about to be made.

Verse 11. *Fear and trembling* have practically the same meaning, which is to have deep reverence for the Son of God. On that condition one would have right to rejoice in that he might expect the favor of the Son.

Verse 12. *Kiss the son* means to do homage to him. The writer is prophesying that kings and other rulers who would not incur the anger of the Son of God must do him homage. If they will do so and put their trust in him they will be happy.

PSALMS 3

Verse 1. Many of the Psalm of David were prompted by his experiences. The present one was suggested by his difficulties with Absalom. The increase of the enemies is recorded in 2 Sam. 15: 12.

Verse 2. This verse is verified in 2 Sam. 16: 8. *Selah*. This word occurs 70 times in the Psalms and 3 times in Habakkuk. I shall give the definition of it here and the reader is requested to make note of it for reference to save space in commenting on it at the various places. "A pause or musical note."—Young. "Suspension (of music), i.e. pause."—Strong. It has the same force in musical compositions as our "hold" or "bird's-eye," and the punctuation marks in language compositions. We do not pronounce the "hold" when singing nor the period and other marks when reading. They are observed but not pronounced, and that should be done when reading the Psalms. Just observe the significance of the term but do not pronounce it. Moffatt's translation does not even contain the term in the text.

Verse 3. David was always a firm believer in God. His example should be an encouragement for us.

Verse 4. *Holy hill* is a figurative reference to the throne of God.

Verse 5. This verse is a brief but beautiful statement concerning the watchful care that God had over David. In his waking or slumbering hours the vigilance of the Lord sustained him.

Verse 6. Numbers do not count when arrayed against the true man of God. Paul expressed the same thought in Rom. 8: 31.

Verse 7. David was thinking of God's past victories over the enemy. In view of that record he called upon Him to come to his rescue now. *Cheek bone* or jaw is a vital part of the human body, and to be able to attack one at that place would indicate having the mastery.

Verse 8. All salvation must come from the Lord. It is true that such a blessing will be on his people only, but it is true also that all men have the opportunity of becoming a part of the people of the Lord.

PSALMS 4

Verse 1. *God of my righteousness*. David meant that his life of righteousness was according to the will of God. No man's life can truly be said to be righteous unless it is approved of God. *Enlarged me* means that God helped him out of distress.

Verse 2. David wrote as if God spoke to the sons of men. He rebuked them for their shameful attitude toward the Lord's glory. They were charged with seeking after *leasing* which means falsehood.

Verse 3. *Set apart* is a definition of "sanctified." No arbitrary miracle ever was or ever will be done by the Lord to sanctify a person, but when one turns from his sins and accepts God's terms of pardon he is then in a sanctified state. Such an individual will be assured of having his prayers heard according to the will of God.

Verse 4. *Awe* means such respect for God that a man fears to do wrong. Instead of plotting to sin, he will meditate on the goodness of God and will be still or calm in the consciousness of the peace that comes from serving God.

Verse 5. Animal sacrifices were right under the law when properly offered. However, the most acceptable sacrifice one can make is a life that is generally righteous. Such a life entitles one to lean with *trust* or faith on the Lord.

Verse 6. The desire to find something really good is a righteous one. In behalf of such inquirers David asked the Lord to show the light of his countenance. A similar thought is to be gathered from Matt. 5: 6.

Verse 7. This means that David's gladness because of the Lord's countenance was great. It exceeded that of people who had been blessed with temporal prosperity.

Verse 8. This verse is the same in thought as Ch. 3: 5.

PSALMS 5

Verses 1, 2. David was a praying man and many of his prayers were very earnest and in the form of supplications. In this prayer he recognized God as his King also. That was significant, for there are men who would profess to lean upon God for purposes of divine aid, but look to some man for guidance in their manner of life.

Verse 3. This shows a devoted life, for David began the day's activities with prayer to God.

Verse 4. David ascribed the purest of principles to the Lord. He not only takes no pleasure in wickedness but will not permit evildoers to dwell with him.

Verse 5. *Stand* is from a word that has "withstand" as one definition. It means the foolish shall not withstand the searchlight of God's eyes. *Workers of iniquity* must be considered as a whole to understand what God hates. He loved the world to the extent that he gave his only begotten Son as a sacrifice to save sinners. But it is the works of iniquity that he hates. He hates sin but loves the sinner.

Verse 6. *Leasing* is falsehood and all liars shall be cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 21: 8.) God abhors the bloody man in the same sense he hates the *workers of iniquity* in the preceding verse.

Verse 7. The mercy of God only would admit an erring mortal to come into the house of the Lord. *In thy fear* means in reverence for God only would David presume to offer worship toward the holy temple.

Verse 8. It would not be so difficult to live righteously were it not for the opposition of enemies; for that reason David prayed for divine guidance. He also longed for a pathway that was correct. This is a parallel in thought with Matt. 6: 13.

Verse 9. In this verse David described his enemies. *No faithfulness in their mouth* means they were inconsistent in their speeches. *Inward part* refers to their thoughts about David. *Open sepulchre* would be one

into which a man might fall alive and be swallowed. It was not considered a literal death. The open sepulchre (mouth) would expose the unsuspecting person to the tongue which would kill the victim with its poisonous flattery.

Verse 10. David lived in a dispensation where force was lawful in defense of religion. He therefore prayed for the destruction of his enemies. This prayer was explained by the last clause of the verse. Those who opposed David had rebelled against God. David was an official person under God, and enmity against him was enmity against God. That principle has always been true regarding God's legal representatives. (1 Sam. 8: 7; Luke 10: 16; Rom. 13: 4.)

Verse 11. This is a fine thought and characteristic of David. He would have people rejoice, not merely because they were victorious over their enemies, but because the victory came through trusting in God.

Verse 12. This verse is much like the one preceding with regard to its thought. It promises the blessing of God upon the righteous.

PSALMS 6

Verses 1, 2. In the preceding Psalm David prayed for divine help through the day. In this one he prayed for the help of God as he approached the night. He was weary with the cares and vexations of the day and felt the need of support for his body.

Verse 3. Not only did his body feel the strain of the ordeal, but his inner being was vexed. He longingly asked how long he would be compelled to suffer thus.

Verse 4. *Return* did not mean that the Lord had forsaken David. He meant to pray for a *return* or repetition of the blessings of God.

Verse 5. *In death . . . in the grave.* These phrases must be considered together to get the thought intended by the writer. It is true that the body knows nothing while in the grave, for it is the part of man that dies and decays.

Verse 6. David was dreading the night that was upon him; the nights were often sleepless and passed in tears.

Verse 7. David's weeping over the insults of his enemies caused his eyes to become sore.

Verse 8. Later, God answered the prayer of David and gave him courage to oppose his enemies, bidding them to depart from him.

Verse 9. Many terms of respect for God are repeated in the Psalms. It indicates the fervent devotion David maintained toward God. *Supplication* and *prayer* are mentioned in the same verse. There is not much difference, but the former is more urgent than the latter.

Verse 10. This verse was encouraged by the Lord's answering of David's prayer. *Let them return* means for them to turn back to their own proper place and be ashamed for having persecuted David.

PSALMS 7

Verse 1. The Psalms of David were composed on various occasions and there might sometimes have been much time between them. If the reader will keep this in mind the seeming frequency of the repetitions will not appear so strange. Here we read again of David's plea for God to deliver him from the hand of his enemies.

Verse 2. *None to deliver* would be the case did the Lord not save him. *Tear my soul*. One definition of the last word is "vitality," and refers to the man as a whole. The thought of David was that his enemies would wish to injure him completely.

Verses 3, 4. *If* was used in these verses with the sense of a denial, or as a condition on which David would agree to submit to the following experiences.

Verse 5. The *soul* that David meant was his life. If he had been guilty of the wrongs named in the preceding verses, then he admitted he should be tormented.

Verse 6. But David did not admit being guilty, therefore he called upon the Lord to pour out his anger on the enemies.

Verse 7. The righteous judgment of God would cause the people to assemble before him. For that reason David prayed the Lord to *return* or renew his favors to them.

Verse 8. A righteous man will not object to the judgment of God. David called upon the Lord to judge him according to the merits of his works.

Verse 9. *Wickedness of the wicked* was what David prayed to be ended.

That agrees with the comments made at ch. 5: 5.

Verse 10. God will save only the upright. David's righteousness was the basis for his expecting the defense from God.

Verse 11. *With the wicked* is not in the original. The statement is simply that God is angry every day. The thoughts in the text and the comments at ch. 5: 5 will indicate what it is at which God is angry. The intensity of the Lord's *anger* is clear from the definition of the word in Strong's lexicon thus: "a primitive root; properly, to foam at the mouth, i.e. to be enraged."

Verse 12. There are pronouns for both God and the wicked. If the wicked man does not turn from his wickedness, God will whet his sword of judgment and use it.

Verse 13. If the enemies continue to persecute the righteous, God will use his instruments of death on them.

Verse 14. *He* is the wicked man who takes delight in persecuting the righteous. *Travailteth with iniquity* means he is in pain with desire to commit iniquity.

Verse 15, 16. A wicked man may become the victim of his own device. See the case of Haman in Esther 5: 14; 7: 10.

Verse 17. *According to his righteousness* means because of his righteousness. David was a very musical man and used that form of praise often.

PSALMS 8

Verse 1. *Lord* occurs twice and is from different originals. The first is from YEHOVAH and Strong defines it, "(the) self-Existent or Eternal; Jehovah, Jewish national name of God." The second is from ANOWN and defined, "sovereign, i.e. controller (human or divine)." The phrase means that the Being who always existed was acknowledged as the one to rule over David and his brethren. No wonder, then, that His name was praised above everything else in the universe.

Verse 2. This verse states a general fact, but was especially meant as a prediction that was fulfilled in Matt. 21: 16. *Babes and sucklings* was used figuratively, meaning that praise would come from those who were least expected to be able or inclined to do so. *To still* means to overcome another. By bringing praises from such humble

sources, the enemy would be put to shame.

Verse 3. David was here meditating on the same subject he wrote about in the noted 19th Psalm. He was filled with admiration at the greatness of a Creator who could make such wonderful things by the power of his hand.

Verse 4. David was overwhelmed at the thought that human beings like him would be given such great attention from the Lord of all creation.

Verse 5. *Little lower than the angels* referred to man's nature being subject to death while the angels could not die. Notwithstanding his mortal body, man had been given *glory and honor* above that of the angels. It will be described in the following paragraph.

Verses 6-8. This refers to the time when God placed mankind over the works of creation. Please read Genesis 1: 26-28.

Verse 9. This is identically like the first verse of the chapter. For that reason Dr. Marion Hull calls this an envelope psalm. That means the verses between the first and last ones describe the truth expressed by the first and last ones.

PSALMS 9

Verse 1. David would be expected to praise the Lord. The special thought is that his praise was with his whole heart. That degree of devotion was always required by the Lord. (Deut. 6: 5; Matt. 22: 37.) David had a practical reason for praising God, which was the marvelous works of his creation.

Verse 2. *Glad and rejoice*. The first word describes the state of mind, and the last one indicates that some outward expression was to be made of it. That expression took the form of singing and suggests the statement in James 5: 13.

Verse 3. David had many enemies and spoke of them frequently. *Turned back* means they were repulsed by the presence of God.

Verse 4. *Right . . . cause*. Had David's cause not been right the Lord would not have maintained it for him against his enemies.

Verse 5. The *heathen* were the people outside the congregation of Israel who were idolaters. God rebuked them by destroying their idols. This

was already true historically to some extent. But it was also a prophecy of the complete overthrow of idolatry among the Jews after the captivity.

Verse 6. The thought in this verse is much like that of the preceding one. It is largely prophetic, looking to the complete overthrow of the enemies of God's people.

Verse 7. The Lord as an independent being will endure forever. He also will continue to withstand his foes for the eternal throne has been made ready for judgment.

Verse 8. The judgments of God are always right. This is true whether we are considering his edicts of punishment for the wicked, or the favorable ruling for the righteous who have been done injustice at the hands of the wicked.

Verse 9. The assistance the Lord renders to the oppressed may be said to be negative and positive. The negative consists in overthrowing the oppressor, and the positive consists in offering a haven to the unfortunate victims.

Verse 10. *To know his name* as David was considering it meant to realize the power of that name over the workers of iniquity. However, to get the benefit of the holy name it is necessary that they have sought after the Lord; this idea is taught in the New Testament. (Matt. 7: 7.)

Verse 11. God as a spirit is everywhere. There was a special sense in which he dwelt in Zion or Jerusalem. That was the location of the temple and the ark at which the national religious exercises were done.

Verse 12. *Inquisition* means inquiry. When blood has been shed unlawfully, God will look into the matter and will punish the guilty.

Verse 13. David had been threatened with death more than once. God had saved him from it and so had lifted him up *from the gates of death*. But he still felt the need of the mercy of the Lord to help him in his many trials.

Verse 14. *Daughter of Zion* was a figurative name for Jerusalem. David wished to express his praise of God in the gates of his capital city.

Verse 15. The heathen were the nations foreign to the people of Israel. They had devised plots against God's people but had perished in their iniquity.

Verse 16. God was *known* or recognized by the righteousness of his judgments. They were different from the popular ones of the world. By the divine operations the wicked were trapped in their own schemes. *Hag-gion* is defined by Strong as "a musical notation." It is therefore a term to be observed but not pronounced. *Selah* is explained by my comments at ch. 3: 2.

Verse 17. The word *hell* in the Old Testament is always from *sheol* and that word is also translated by grave and pit. Its figurative meaning is "oblivion" or "forgetfulness." It is true that the wicked will finally be cast into the lake of fire otherwise termed "hell" in the New Testament. David was making a more general use of the word and coupling it with the idea of the nations that forget God. The persons who forget God will themselves be forgotten by Him.

Verse 18. God will forget the wicked people and thus consign them to the figurative pit of forgetfulness. But the needy will not be forgotten, which is a statement made in contrast with what will happen to the wicked in v. 17. *Not perish forever* is significant. The poor may have to suffer for a time, but they will finally be remembered and cared for by the Lord.

Verse 19. David was still concerned about the success of unworthy men. He prayed for them to be judged in the presence of the Lord.

Verse 20. Many heathen rulers acted as if they were superior and in no danger of defeat. David would have God bring them to realize their own littleness.

PSALMS 10

Verse 1. David was an inspired man when he wrote his portions of the Bible. Whenever he reported the occurrences of his day he told the truth. And, like Job, he had many personal tribulations from his enemies and was authorized by the Lord to write about them for the information of the reader. In keeping with this idea he made frequent complaints of his experiences. In some of them it might seem that he was dissatisfied with the care he received from God. We should observe that he was often giving a description of those circumstances as they appeared to him "as a man" (see Job 38: 3 with my comments). But in giving a "write-up" of his feelings and experiences he was an inspired scribe. Let the reader constantly keep

these thoughts in mind studying this book and he will be saved much confusion. So here we have an example of the conditions just described. David felt that God was too far from him for his comfort while his enemies were so near.

Verse 2. David's fine character was often manifested by his consideration for others. In this verse he was worried because of the troubles of the poor, and prayed that the persecutors might be trapped in their own wicked devices.

Verse 3. The desires of a wicked man would logically be favored by riches if improperly used. For that reason such a man would be friendly with an enterprise of covetousness, even though such would be abhorred by the Lord.

Verse 4. *Countenance* means the face in general, because that is the part of a man's body where his thoughts are usually indicated. One of the most active emotions is pride and in order for a proud man to "save his face" in his wickedness, he will shun the presence of God.

Verse 5. David was describing a man who combined pride with other forms of wickedness in his life. The ways or conduct of such a man would always be grievous to the Lord. One reason such a person ignores the righteous judgments of God is his determination to persecute those whom he regards as his enemies. *Puffeth* means to scoff which is a coward's method for opposing that which he cannot meet otherwise.

Verse 6. Wealth and other worldly advantages have the effect of making wicked men vain. They form conclusions of their own importance that make them feel secure.

Verse 7. *Cursing* means a wishing for some evil thing to come upon another. The one doing the cursing will even try to carry out his evil wishes by using deceitful dealings. *Under his tongue* means that his language is prompted by vain motives.

Verses 8, 9. Almost this entire psalm is a description of a wicked man, and the details of his wickedness are many. In this paragraph he is described as a coward who will not meet his victim face to face, but crouches in hiding places and waits for the opportune time to strike. This wicked man seems to have special designs against the poor and that was the chief reason why David abhorred him.

Verse 10. *Humbleth himself* does not refer to his state of mind, for such an evil person would not have that sentiment. It refers to the posture of his body in crouching down like a huge cat, waiting to spring at his unsuspecting prey.

Verse 11. The temporary success of an unrighteous man sometimes leads him to conclude that God had not observed his actions: that he had forgotten to notice what had been going on in the conduct of the evil character.

Verse 12. David would have the Lord bring the wicked man to his senses. *Humble* is from a word that also means to be afflicted. God was asked to relieve all such.

Verse 13. *Contemn* means to treat with disrespect. David asked why the wicked man was suffered to treat God in that manner. By his apparent success he was prompted to conclude that he was in no danger of punishment from God. *Thou wilt require it* means the unrighteous man did not expect to be required to answer to God for his sins.

Verse 14. David acknowledged that God had seen the things of which he was complaining. He also cited the good example of the poor who put their trust in God.

Verse 15. *Break thou the arm* was figurative and meant for God to crush the devices of the wicked. *Till thou find none* means till there was no more wickedness left after God had searched it out and had overthrown the evildoers.

Verse 16. *Lord* means one who rules or controls. David ascribed the authority of a king to the Lord of Heaven, and declared that he should so rule forever. He predicted the final overthrow of the *heathen* or foreign nations.

Verses 17, 18. David's confidence in the goodness of God to the poor was indicated by his positive declaration that he would do so. We should therefore not regard this paragraph in the light of a dictation.

PSALMS 11

Verse 1. David was having many troubles; in spite of them, however, he had full confidence in the Lord. With such a trust to cheer him he rejected the suggestion to flee as a bird would to the mountain for refuge.

Verse 2. That was not because he did not realize the seriousness of his difficulties. He thought of his enemies as those who were poised with their weapons in position for discharge. He knew that he would not escape if the enemy had his way.

Verse 3. *Foundations* is from SHATHAH and defined thus: "a basis, i.e. (figuratively) political or moral support."—Strong. In this verse David was giving a picture of the utter helplessness of the righteous were it not for some *foundation* or basis of support on which to rest.

Verse 4. In reference to the thought expressed in the preceding verse, David announced the existence of a sure foundation. It consisted in the fact that the Lord has a throne in the heavens and that he is occupying it. That would constitute the surest of all bases for support. From that high abode the cause of everyone will get a just hearing and the wrongs of all evil men will be punished. *Eye* and *eyelids* are used in the same sense. The meaning is that God sees all that men do and will give them the deserts of their deeds whether good or bad.

Verse 5. *Trieth* means to put to the test. This is done to the righteous in order to verify the good esteem already had of them. But a violently wicked man is so evidently wrong that God does not consider it necessary to make a test of him.

Verse 6. The wicked will actually suffer the penalty of eternal fire after the final judgment. The terms of this verse, however, are used figuratively, referring to the utter defeat of all those who oppose the works of God.

Verse 7. The first clause of this verse is more than a mere repetition of words. There is a logical connection between the words. The reason the Lord loves righteousness is the fact that he is righteous himself. By that same token, if a person does not love righteousness it is because he is not righteous himself. *Countenance* means the face as a whole, and represents the mental expression of the person. *Behold* means to look at with interested pleasure. The Lord will take such a look at an upright man. See this same thought expressed at Isa. 66: 2.

PSALMS 12

Verse 1. We must take this verse in a comparative sense, for we know that there have always been some

godly and faithful men. But the percent of them is and was so small that David felt the need of divine help.

Verse 2. *Speak vanity* means to say things that are empty and without sound thought. *Double heart* is a figure meaning a heart that is not sincere; one that will cause its owner to say one thing today and another tomorrow.

Verse 3. Flattery is a form of falsehood in that it seeks to make an impression that is not out of sincerity. The Lord will cut off all such speaking in the end. *Speakeeth proud things* denotes a boasting of accomplishment beyond the facts.

Verse 4. These boastful persons relied on the power of their speech to accomplish their purposes. They boastfully claimed full control of their lips and said that no one could be *lord* over them.

Verse 5. God is always considerate of those who are oppressed. That is especially true if the oppression comes from the proud and double-tongued. *Puffeth at him* refers to the man who would attack the poor for the purpose of ensnaring them. God will protect the one who is being thus attacked by placing him in a safe position.

Verse 6. *Pure* means unmixed, and the words of the Lord have that quality. Nothing can literally be purified more than once. *Purified seven times* is a figurative term used for emphasis on the quality of the words of the Lord.

Verse 7. God will see that his words are preserved indefinitely, from that day or *generation* to the end. Jesus said about the same thing in Mark 13: 31.

Verse 8. When vile men are suffered to be in the ascendancy the wicked ones will strut about all over the place. Their presence will be encouraged by the support of the vile rulers, which proves the objectionable character of such overseers. The opposite will be the case if righteous men are placed in authority.

PSALMS 13

Verse 1. Again we should remember that David was writing of his experiences in trials "as a man." See my comments at ch. 10: 1. It seemed at times that the Lord had forgotten him; that was because one's suffering makes the time seem long.

Verse 2. *Counsel in my soul* refers to his meditations over his sorrows. He feels as if his enemies had the advantage over him.

Verse 3. This is a fervent prayer for help from God. David's eyes had become heavy from sorrow and felt the dreariness that comes from much weeping. His condition was so grievous that gloom was overshadowing him like the shades near the river of death. That is why he prayed for light to brighten his eyes.

Verse 4. David's chief concern was the thought of being overcome by his enemies. He could have endured any amount of discomfort that would come in the natural course of events. The thing that he prayed to avoid was the triumph of his enemies over him.

Verse 5. David was not in utter despair. At times he would seem to give way to his grief, then suddenly he would recall his faith in God's mercy. When he did that, he again rejoiced because he expected salvation from the Lord.

Verse 6. Having considered anew the bountiful assistance received from God he was influenced to praise him. And he used the form of expression so usual with him, that of singing the praises.

PSALMS 14

Verse 1. *Fool* is from NABAL and Strong defines it, "stupid; wicked (especially impious)." *No God* is the doctrine of an atheist. No one but a stupid person would make such a statement. It is not merely saying he does not believe there is a God; that would be bad enough. But the atheist affirms a negative. To declare that there is no God is the same as stating that the speaker has seen every nook and cranny of the universe and found that there is no God. Otherwise, if there was a single bit of space that he had not seen, there might be a God there. But since it is impossible for any man to have seen every inch of space in the universe, the affirmation of the atheist is ridiculous; therefore the term fool is a proper one for such a character. The last part of the verse is an additional comment of David on the kind of men who would assume the position of an atheist. There is absolutely no good in such persons.

Verse 2. Much of the language in the Bible coming directly from God and about him, sounds as if he were a man. The statement of Paul in Rom.

6: 19 should be a familiar one to all Bible students. It will serve as a key to many otherwise difficult passages. God is infinite and is capable of using language as high as his thoughts (Isa. 55: 8, 9), but man could not understand it. Therefore the language of Heaven is made to conform to the habits and mental capacity of man. This verse speaks of God as making the same investigation as a man would make under the circumstances. When even one human being appeared so corrupt that he would deny the existence of God, perhaps it would be well to take a look at the race in general.

Verse 3. When the Lord made the investigation he found that the race as a whole had become corrupt. All rules have exceptions and we know this one had, for the Bible itself records the names of some good men. We think of Abel, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Job and many others. When these are considered as they are scattered out over the centuries they look like a small minority. But that very fact gives emphasis to the statement of the verse as to rules and exceptions.

Verse 4. The distinction between the *workers of iniquity* and *my people* agrees with the remarks concerning a rule and its exceptions in the preceding verse. The question about the lack of knowledge is really a charge that the knowledge is lacking. That lack of knowledge, however, was without excuse. The 19th psalm, also the statement of Paul in Rom. 1: 20, 21, indicates there were many evidences of the existence of God. Their ignorance was wilful, then, and due to their failure to consider the evidences as was charged later against the Israelites in Isa. 1: 3.

Verse 5. When God saw his righteous people in trouble at the hands of these unbelievers he defended them against their oppressors. That caused the wicked ones to be afraid of the Lord's judgments; or it put them in great fear.

Verse 6. These unbelievers could not defeat the Lord who is the refuge of the poor and oppressed. They therefore made their attack directly against the people.

Verse 7. *Captivity* is from *SHIBYTH* and Strong defines it, "exile; concretely, prisoners; figuratively, a former state of prosperity." The word actually refers to a condition that

existed previously, and *bringing back the captivity* means to bring the people back to the state of good fortune that was enjoyed before the captivity. That good fortune could have consisted in either temporal or spiritual blessings. Many prophecies in the Bible have a twofold application. The one in this verse has first a reference to the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity. Its second application is to the Jewish nation in the return from disbelief in Christ to a state of belief in him (Rom. 11: 26).

PSALMS 15

Verse 1. The *tabernacle* and *holy hill* of the Lord are the same and refers to the house of God. For the present purpose it is likened to the home of a citizen. David introduces his description of an acceptable guest by asking a double question. *Abide* is from *CUW* and Strong defines it, "a primitive root; properly to turn aside from the road (for a lodging or any other purpose), i.e. sojourn (as a guest)." *Dwell* is from *SHAKAN* and defined, "a primitive root [apparently akin (by transmutation) to *shakab* through the idea of lodging]; to reside or permanently stay (literally or figuratively)."—Strong. A person might be regarded good enough to admit as a temporary guest who would not be good enough as a permanent occupant. But according to David a man would not be worthy of even temporary lodging unless he came up to the qualifications described in the following verses.

Verse 2. A man does not literally speak with his heart, but he should speak from his heart. If he cherishes the truth in his heart his outward conduct will likely be righteous. This was taught by Jesus in Matt. 15: 19.

Verse 3. *Backbiteth* means to slander one at his back. *Taketh up a reproach* means to act as a repeater of a reproach. It is as bad to repeat a slander as it is to start one. The civil law of the land will punish a man who helps to circulate a reproach as well as the one who starts it. It is about the same in principle as to receive stolen goods because it makes such a man a party to the offense.

Verse 4. *Contemn* means to regard with disrespect. A vile person is one who is filthy either morally or physically. All such should be held beneath the notice of the man who is good enough to enter the house of God.

David puts the *vile* person in contrast with one who *fears the Lord*. That is an important thought and shows that a man who has respect for God will not be vile in his life. *Swareth . . . changeth not*. This means that after a man has made a promise to do a certain thing, he will make his word good even though he learns that he will be the loser in the transaction.

Verse 5. *Usury* in the Old Testament is from three different Hebrew words that have practically the same meaning. I shall quote the one definition from Strong that represents the word in its various passages: "Interest on a debt." Common usage in our day makes it mean excessive interest, but it had no such qualification in the law of Moses. It is true that some passages refer to usury as an oppression on the poor, but it was the fact that any usury or interest was charged at all that constituted the oppression. Of course we should understand the law to apply to the taking of interest from their brethren. They were permitted to exact usury from strangers, for they were not under any obligations of special compassion toward the foreigners. One qualification a man must have to admit him as a guest was that he did not charge usury on his money. Another was that he would never be bribed into opposing an innocent man. This would especially apply in a case where he was acting as a judge between others. David closed this psalm with about the same thought he expressed at its beginning. *Never be moved* means he will never fall.

PSALMS 16

Verses 1, 2. David makes another prayer for divine preservation. *Goodness extendeth not to thee*. The second word is not in the original. The clause means that David's life of goodness was of no personal benefit to God. He will soon tell us who were to be benefited by him if he lived a righteous life. Notwithstanding, because of his example lived for the encouragement of others, he claimed assistance from God.

Verse 3. This verse tells for whose benefit David maintained his good life; it was the excellent saints of the Lord.

Verse 4. In this verse David brings up the subject of false gods. He predicts many sorrows for those who worship such gods. The latter part of the

verse disclaims any fellowship with the above-mentioned characters.

Verse 5. *Portion* is from a word that has the sense of allotment or ration. The richest ration anyone could have would be the Lord, and David claimed to have received it. No heir could complain of the manner in which an inheritance was settled if he received such a liberal portion as that.

Verse 6. *Lines* has the same force as *portion* in the preceding verse. It is defined in Strong's lexicon thus: "a rope (as twisted), especially a measuring line; by implication a district or inheritance (as measured)." Sometimes when an inheritance of land is being divided one heir may think the line is not drawn in the proper place; that he is being deprived of some of the good land. David used the circumstance as an illustration and said he was satisfied with the places allotted to him. That was because the "boundary line" had been drawn in such a place that his portion included the Lord, the richest spot in the universe.

Verse 7. David *blessed* or praised the Lord for his helpful counsel or instruction. *Reins* refers to the mind and David meant he could meditate profitably in the night hours on the counsel the Lord had given him in the day. This is the idea expressed in ch. 1: 2 and my comments thereon.

Verses 8-10. I am grouping these verses in one paragraph because they compose one of the most important prophecies in the whole Bible; on the resurrection of Christ. We know it is on that subject, for Peter so applied it in the first discourse of the Christian Dispensation, recorded in Acts 2: 25-31. The prophecy was written by David, but in using the 1st personal pronoun he was speaking for Christ, and we should think of him as the speaker while we read this interesting passage. Furthermore, in thinking of Christ as the speaker, we should understand that when he uses the 2nd or 3rd personal pronouns he means God the Father. The word *hell* is from *sheol* here and means the unseen world or abode of the soul after death. The soul or spirit of Christ went into that place at death, and his body went to the grave.

There is another application made of this prophecy in 1 Cor. 15: 4. "According to the scriptures" had to mean this passage in the Psalms, for it is

the very one that Peter quoted almost verbatim and applied it to that subject. It is also the only prophecy in the Old Testament that spoke specifically of the resurrection of Christ. But it may be asked how the "third day" idea got into the passage. It is in the statement that the flesh of Christ was not to remain in the grave long enough to begin to decay. According to John 11: 39 a body will start decaying in 4 days. Three days, then, would be as long as a body could remain dead and not see *corruption*. And so this noted prophecy, written hundreds of years before it was fulfilled, gives us another proof that the Bible was not written by uninspired men. The detail that Christ not only was to rise from the dead, but was to do so after the 3rd day and before the 4th, forms an evidence that will forever baffle those who scoff at the Word of God.

Verse 11. David now came back to his personal line of thought to speak of his confidence in the Lord and what he expected to gain by his service to Him. In the first place, God will show him the proper way of life, and that will finally lead him up to the divine presence. In that holy place there is fulness of joy. It will be at the right hand of Jehovah where the pleasures will continue forever.

PSALMS 17

Verse 1. *Feigned lips* means lips that merely pretend to honor God by praying to him. David was always sincere and never tried to keep anything back, even when he was guilty of a great wrong. (2 Sam. 12: 13.)

Verse 2. *Sentence* means judgment and *equal* means that which is just. The verse indicates that David was relying on the judgment of God; that it would be just.

Verse 3. *Shalt find nothing* was David's way of inviting the test of the Lord. He believed he would be found acceptable in God's sight were he put to the test.

Verse 4. David had escaped the destruction his enemies had plotted against him. That was done by following the word of thy lips, or by heeding the counsel of God.

Verse 5. David prayed to be kept in the paths of God in order that he might not stumble. This same thought is expressed in Psalms 37: 23 and 119: 133.

Verse 6. David always had faith in God and believed it would avail him much to pray toward the divine throne. He made another approach, therefore, and asked to be heard.

Verse 7. A person's right hand would not be more able, physically, than his left in accomplishing a purpose. It is referred to figuratively, meaning the righteous power and method of the individual.

Verse 8. This verse is all figurative, *apple* meaning something that is very near of kin. If God would so regard David, he would certainly keep him from the harm intended by his enemies.

Verse 9. *Deadly enemies* were those who would destroy David had they the opportunity. He prayed for God to keep him from the grasp of such foes. They were round and about him constantly and hence the protection of the Lord was always needed.

Verse 10. *Fat* is from CHELEB and Strong defines it, "from an unused root meaning to be fat; fat, whether literal or figurative; hence the richest or choice part." These enemies of David were rich and were allowing their wealth to blind them to the regard they should have for others.

Verse 11. The enemies had surrounded David's pathway, seeking to interfere with his progress. *Eyes bowing down* means the enemies had their eyes on the lower plain of life thinking to drag David down to it.

Verse 12. A lion is like all of the cat family in that he crouches in hidden places, waiting to spring upon his helpless prey.

Verse 13. David wished his enemy to be disappointed in his plans. The defeat was to consist in the very thing he had planned against David by being himself cast down. *Which is thy sword* was said in the sense of a comparison. If God would reverse the plan of the enemy by giving him the very thing he had intended against David, that would be the most effective sword God could use against the evil plot.

Verse 14. *Which are* is like the same words in the preceding verse and means "by." The thought is that David was praying God to rescue him from worldly men and to do it by his (God's) hand. *Portion in this life* means such men will find their only joy in this life, none can be expected for the next. Jesus taught the same

idea in Matt. 6: 2, 5, 16. *Belly thou fillest* refers to the temporal prosperity that God had provided for their people. They having many children to help enjoy their temporal blessings, that gave the occasion to have an abundance so that the youngest of the family would find a remainder of the wealth left after their father was gone.

Verse 15. *Behold thy face in righteousness* means David would not expect to behold the face of God unless he lived a righteous life in this world. Such a life would finally end in death, but it would not be "an eternal sleep." He believed there would be a resurrection at which he and all other righteous persons would awake in the likeness of the Lord. This is taught also in the New Testament. (1 John 3: 2.)

PSALMS 18

Verses 1-50. I have made one paragraph of this whole chapter because it is practically identical with 2 Samuel 22. Detailed comments are made on the chapter which is at the regular place in volume 2 of this commentary and will not be repeated here. The reason for giving the comments at the other place is the fact that it came in more direct connection with the history belonging to it. I will call attention to one special circumstance in the differences between the two chapters. The statements that are placed as a heading here are included in the text in 2 Samuel 22. When the collection of the Psalms of David was made into one book, the one he wrote at the time of his conflicts with Saul and other enemies was brought and included in the document. Since the two occurrences of the psalm are alike, the reader of the commentary would have no advantage offered him were I to repeat the comments in this place. I therefore urge him to see my remarks in the other place.

PSALMS 19

Verse 1. The original for *heavens* is defined by Strong as follows: "from an unused root meaning to be lofty; the sky (as aloft; the dual perhaps alluding to the visible arch in which the clouds move, as well as to the higher ether where the celestial bodies revolve." From the definition it can be seen that the word is a descriptive one and the regions to which it is applied are so named because they

partake of the description. Thus the sky (1st heaven), the region of the planets (2nd heaven), and the abode of God (3rd heaven) are so named because they all are especially characterized by the leading definition of the word, "to be lofty," either materially or otherwise. With only 3 exceptions the word "heaven" in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew words SHAMAYIM or SHEMAYIM whether singular or plural. The first is used 393 times and the second 38 times. Hence the context alone can determine whether the 1st, 2nd or 3rd heaven is meant in given cases. See Gen. 1: 20; 22: 17 and 1 Ki. 8: 30 for instances, respectively, of these heavens. The connection in the present verse shows that the 1st and 2nd heavens are meant. *Declare* is from CAPHAR which Strong defines as follows: "to score with a mark as a tally or record, i.e. (by implication) to inscribe, and also to enumerate; intensively to recount, i.e. celebrate." The clause means that the splendor of God is inscribed or written in the region of the planets. *Firmament* is from RAQIA and Strong defines it, "an expanse, i.e. the firmament or (apparently) visible arch of the sky." This region is also a part of the 1st heaven but is noticed here by itself because of an additional characteristic, that of being expansive as well as lofty. One meaning of *sheweth* is to manifest or expose. *Handywork* is from two Hebrew words that combine to mean "the work of God's hand." The clause means that the work of God's hand is made manifest by the appearances in the sky. Without doubt the 19th Psalm is a citation to one of the strongest, most unanswerable lines of evidence proving the existence of the Supreme Being. Let us study the entire chapter with profound respect.

Verse 2. The word for *day* is so rendered 1167 times and the definition in Strong's lexicon includes all the phases of the period; whether that portion from sunset to sunset, or only from sunrise to sunset. So the connection in each case must determine the application of the word. In this verse it is used in contrast with *night*, therefore it means the time between sunrise and sunset. That is very significant because the sun is visible in the day while the stars are visible in the night. *Unto* has the sense of to or after; *day after day*, etc., not that one day shows something to another.

The thought is that from day to day the declaration of God's glory is known by the evidences in the heavens as mentioned in verse one.

Verse 3. *There is* and *where* are not in the original. The verse means that the declaration of the glory of God is made without audible speech or specific language. In other words, when a man looks up at the sun and stars he should be filled with awe by the silent tribute to the power and wisdom of the Creator. David had expressed this very thought in Ch. 8: 3, 4. A group of atheists were overheard discussing the existence of God. A bystander interrupted to ask: "Gentlemen, do you say there is no God?" Upon receiving an affirmative reply he pointed up toward the myriad of stars twinkling overhead and asked: "Who made all of those?" Profound silence was their only response.

Verse 4. The antecedent of *their* is the declaration of evidences of the preceding verses. *Line* means the collection of evidences of the glory of God. That line or collection extends throughout the *earth* or the globe, and to the end of the *world* or inhabitants of the globe. *In them*, meaning in the collection of the evidences, hath *he* (God) set a *tabernacle* for the sun. A tabernacle is usually thought of as a portable structure. It does not necessarily mean that, and one part of Strong's definition is, "dwelling place." The idea is that the sun has a fixed position in the collection of the heavens; that agrees also with what men have learned about astronomy. The sun is stationary and other bodies move around it.

Verse 5. A *bridegroom* all prepared for the great event, and a man prepared for the test of a race are used to compare the dignity of the sun in its powerful shining.

Verse 6. This verse might seem to contradict the comments made at v. 4, but it does not. The sun itself is in a fixed position, but the light rays of it *go forth* from one end of heaven to the other. This disproves the speculation that there are other worlds outside the realm affected by the sun. That is also proved by the last clause of the verse; that is, nothing exists beyond the reach of the sun's rays. The *heat* of the sun extends so far that *there is nothing hid* from it which shows that the solar system contains everything that belongs to the creation of material things.

Verse 7. Having devoted 6 verses to the creation of the material world, David takes up the subject of God's Word in its various phases. *Law* is a general reference to the rule of God for the conduct of man. It is perfect in its ability to convert a soul, which would mean that no human law is needed to be added to it. *Testimonies* has special reference to the words of the Lord that have been tested and proved to be true. They will add wisdom to those who are simple or uninstructed.

Verse 8. *Statutes* means the set ordinances of God. They are just and right so that they cause the heart to rejoice instead of dreading the Lord. *Commandment* specifically refers to personal action and gives instructions and warnings to the (mental) eyes. It is *pure* which means it is not mixed with any human weakness.

Verse 9. *Fear* has two phases of meaning; one to dread, the other to respect the Lord, the latter is its meaning here. It is *clean* in the sense of being free from elements of decay; that is why it endures forever. *Judgments* refers to the verdicts or decisions of God. The full definition of this word is quoted at Ex. 21: 1 in the first volume of the commentary. The decisions of the Lord are always according to truth and hence are altogether righteous.

Verse 10. The value of spiritual things cannot be fully estimated by temporal things. The best that can be done, therefore, is to compare them with such values; things that we prize and enjoy. Gold was one of the most precious metals known in olden times. The first occurrence in this verse is from a word that is defined in the lexicon, "something gold-colored." In the second instance the word *fine* is not in the original as a separate word. *Gold* is from a different Hebrew word from the one above and is defined, "pure (gold); hence gold itself (as refined)."—Strong. The statement in comparison is interesting. David first compared the Word of God to things that looked attractive, then intensified it by naming the article that not only looked desirable but was of genuine worth. In other words, the things of God not only look good to the man who will give them his attention, but upon closer inspection they will be found to be of real value. *Honeycomb* by itself is not sweet, hence the comparison must be

seen by a closer study of the words. The first use of the word *honey* is from an original that means the entire product that we call by that name, including the comb. The word *honey-comb* is from two Hebrew words and means extracted honey. Of course we would understand that the per cent of sweetness in the extracted product would be greater than it would be in the whole article including the comb.

Verse 11. The antecedent of *them* is the Word of God with its various classifications. *Warned* means, "to enlighten (by caution)."—Strong. To be warned of danger should not be the only purpose of the law of God and it is not. The next part of the verse states the affirmative benefits; they consist in *great reward*.

Verse 12. This verse has reference to the life of a human being passed in a world where innumerable temptations abound. No man fully realizes the multitude of weaknesses that exist in his flesh; no one but the Lord knows. Such is the meaning of the question, *who can understand his errors?* Recognizing this fact, David asked the Lord to cleanse him from the errors that he could not see but which can be seen by the Lord. Of course it must be understood that such a favor from God will not be extended to a man unless his life otherwise is in keeping with the law. The same teaching regarding the continuous favor of the cleansing for a righteous person is given in 1 John 1: 7.

Verse 13. *Presumptuous* sins are the opposite of the ones described in the preceding verse. Those were committed ignorantly while these are committed in the spirit of arrogance. It would be bad enough were a man to give way to that kind of sin even occasionally. But David was concerned lest such sins should get the *dominion*, which means the rule over him. If he were free from such a life he would then be upright. *The great transgression*. No special significance can be attached to the definite article. The original expression means anything great in the way of transgression. The statement as a whole means that if David would be kept from presumptuous sins he would be clear of much unrighteousness.

Verse 14. It will be noticed that David specified his thoughts and words, but said nothing directly about his deeds. That was not an oversight,

for the thoughts of the heart are the source from which actions spring. Jesus taught that in Mark 7: 20-23. It is also taught in Philipians 4: 8 which the reader should see. If a man will keep his thoughts pure he will likely not have much trouble with his actions.

PSALMS 20

Verse 1. David is the author of this psalm but he wrote it as a song or prayer to be offered by the people. They were to appeal to God in behalf of their king who was about to contact his enemies in battle. This view of the situation will explain why the 2nd or 3rd person was used, although David was composing the passage.

Verse 2. The *sanctuary* was the holy place and it was in Zion, a place in the city of Jerusalem. God was officially located there, which made it a source of help.

Verse 3. David had made many sacrifices to God, and the people were to ask that the sacrifices be remembered.

Verse 4. The prayer at this point should be considered as being conditional. The desires and advice of the king should be granted as far as they were acceptable to the Lord.

Verse 5. *Thy salvation* means the salvation of David their king in his struggles for success over his enemies. Such results would bring rejoicing to the people and they would be encouraged to *set up banners* which means raising the flag of triumph.

Verse 6. *Anointed* means the king who had been anointed over the people of Israel. Having given special instructions that David be anointed king over his people (1 Sam. 13: 14; 16: 1, 12), he would certainly protect him in his struggles.

Verse 7. *Trust* is not in the original but is justified by *remember* later on in the verse. *Some* is from a word that is defined by Strong, "these or those." The antecedent is the heathen with whom the king was about to engage in battle. They depended for success on their (war) *chariots*; the Israelites depended on *the Lord our God*.

Verse 8. *They* refers to the same heathen mentioned in the preceding verse. They were destined to fall before the might of the king of Israel.

Verse 9. This is a prayer of the people. They were interested in two

beings; those beings were God and David. They asked for the victory for their king, then he would be able, as a victorious king, to help his people when they called upon him.

PSALMS 21

Verse 1. Please read my comments on Ch. 20: 1. The people are still represented as praying for their king and they have confidence that the Lord will grant him much cause for rejoicing.

Verse 2. The people acknowledged that their king had been given his heart's desire. That was because his desire was pleasing to God. We would expect that of a man who was after God's own heart. (1 Sam. 13: 14.)

Verse 3. *Preventest* means to assist, for it is used in connection with God's blessings and goodness. *Pure gold* means refined gold, and it is called pure because that term means unmixed.

Verse 4. *He* means the king and *thee* means the Lord. *Ever and ever* was used figuratively, meaning that David was to die in peace, not by the sword of war.

Verse 5. *His glory* means the glory of their king. It was great because it was accomplished through the salvation from the Lord. *Honor* means splendor and *majesty* means dignity and power.

Verse 6. *Blessed for ever* was and is still true of David. Although he is dead his name is still honored throughout the earth. The *countenance* or face of God was favorable toward David, therefore he was made exceedingly glad.

Verse 7. David trusted in the Lord, not in the might of war chariots as did the heathen. (Ch. 20: 7.)

Verse 8. *Thine* refers to king David. The people believed their king would be able to *find out* or manage his enemies. *Right hand* had a figurative as well as literal meaning. David was destined to win out against his enemies because the things he was doing with his hand were right.

Verse 9. *As a fiery oven* means as if they were cast into such an oven. The comparison is made to the wrath of God against the enemies of David.

Verse 10. *Their fruit* means the fruit of this body. *Their seed* means the same as the fruit and the statement was added for emphasis.

Verse 11. *They* still means the enemies of *thee* who is David. The verse means to declare that the plans of the enemies were too great for them to carry out.

Verse 12. *Turn their backs* refers to the retreat of the enemies. The cause of their flight will be the sight of the weapon of war (the bow and arrow) in the hand of David's army. *Upon thy strings* denotes that the end of the arrow will be attached to the string ready to be discharged against the foe.

Verse 13. The psalm or prayer closes with a tribute of praise for the Lord. *Thine own strength* means that God is strong in his own might and not in that of another.

PSALMS 22

Verse 1. This psalm as a whole is a prophecy of Christ. The proof for that statement is in the chapter itself. Christ quoted the first clause verbatim when he was on the cross, and other verses in the chapter plainly identify it to have been written with Christ and his times in view. (Matt. 27: 46; Mark 15: 34.) Christ realized that the sustaining strength of God had been taken from him for the time.

Verse 2. The form of speech indicates that David was writing about his own personal troubles. It is true that he was having just the experiences of which he complained. He might not have realized that in describing those experiences he was giving a prophetic picture of those to be shared by his most illustrious son in the centuries to come. His ignorance of that would not affect the truth of the prophecies since he wrote by inspiration. In fact, it was taught by Jesus and the apostles that many of the writers of the Old Testament did not know "what it was all about" when they penned their documents. (Matt. 13: 17; 1 Pe. 1: 10, 11; 2 Pe. 1: 20, 21.)

Verse 3. *Inhabitest* is used in the sense of dwelling in a certain place or in some special surroundings. The verse means that God continually dwells in the midst of the praises of his people Israel.

Verse 4. *Fathers* refers to the ancient ancestors of the race. The history shows that in proportion as they put their trust in the Lord they were delivered from the grasp of their enemies.

Verse 5. Trusting in God was manifested when the people made their prayer unto him. *Not confounded* means they were not disappointed or confused.

Verse 6. The use of *worm* and *man* is for comparison only since David was not only a man, but an important one. But he was like the worm in that his body was subject to decay. Please see my comments on Job 25: 6 in the 2nd volume of the commentary.

Verses 7, 8. This paragraph is specifically a prophecy of Christ. It was fulfilled in Matt. 27: 42, 43.

Verse 9. A nursing babe could not literally have the sentiments of hope. It means that God was the source of all hope for the newborn infant. The argument is that since God was the one who brought the infant into being, it was reasonable to expect Him to see that he would succeed in life.

Verse 10. *Cast upon thee* denotes that from the first moment of his life, David was dependent on God for his continued existence.

Verse 11. Since God was the one who brought David into the world, he was the one to whom the prayer for protection should be made.

Verse 12. We know that *bulls* is used figuratively since it was men who were opposing David. Moffatt renders the word by "a brutal horde." The verse has the force of a prophecy pointing to Christ when on the cross, which the following verses show beyond any doubt.

Verse 13. *Gape* means literally to open the mouth as if in yawning. The verse refers to the time when the "brutal horde" stood round the cross and opened their mouths in mockery at Jesus. They were compared to a lion because of their desire to destroy the victim of their hatred.

Verse 14. *I* represents Christ describing his condition while on the cross. The expressions are figurative, of course, and give a picture of a human being that is fast approaching death. The whole body would be entering a state of dissolution as if the organs were melting and running together like wax.

Verse 15. This verse is practically the same in thought as the preceding one. It describes the physical condition of one who is dying. That would be especially true where the condition was not caused by any active disease,

but by the slow ebbing of the forces of life through nervous exhaustion.

Verse 16. *Dogs* is used figuratively, referring to the wickedest of men. It applied specifically to the soldiers who executed the Roman sentence and drove the nails through the hands and feet of Jesus.

Verse 17. *Tell* means to count or number. It was the rule to break the bones of the legs of one crucified, near the end of the day. It was unlawful to let a body remain on a tree overnight (Deut. 21: 22, 23), yet the mere fact of crucifixion would not ordinarily produce death before the end of the day. In order to hasten death the legs were broken, and the shock would put an end to the life that had already been weakened. For some reason not directly told us, Jesus died before the executioners got to the cross, making it unnecessary to break his legs. Instead of doing that, they pierced his side. That act opened the cavity near the heart where the blood had gathered after death, but it did not break any bone. The apparently whimsical act of the soldiers fulfilled, the prediction made here. It also carried out the antitype of the restriction about the Jewish passover that the bones of the lamb must not be broken (Ex. 12: 46). *Stare upon me* was fulfilled in John 19: 37.

Verse 18. The physical reason for not dividing the garment of Jesus among the soldiers was the character of its making. It was woven "without seam" and hence could not be divided without destroying its use. They settled the matter by casting lots, thus fulfilling another prophecy. (John 19: 23-25.)

Verse 19. This and the rest of the verses is a combining of descriptions of David's experiences with thoughts pertaining to Christ. David still felt the need of the Lord in overcoming his personal enemies.

Verse 20. *My darling* is in the 3rd person. Inspired writers often used that person in referring to themselves (Num. 12: 3; Josh. 1: 1, etc.). The word is from an original that means someone who is precious and valued very highly. David wished to be delivered from the power of wicked men. He also predicted a like desire on the part of Jesus.

Verse 21. *Heard me from the horns*, etc. This means when David prayed to be delivered from the horns of the

unicorn (a species of wild ox that was strong and vicious) the Lord heard his prayer.

Verse 22. Again we have the direct proof that Christ is being prophesied for the verse is quoted in Heb. 2: 12. In that connection the name of Jesus is given which identifies the subject of the verse beyond any doubt.

Verse 23. *Fear the Lord* means to respect him, for the ones fearing him are the same ones expected to indicate their respect by their praise.

Verse 24. To *despise* means to overlook or think lightly of. God does not thus treat his servants when they cry to him in their afflictions.

Verse 25. This verse is plainly applicable to both David and Christ. As a prophecy of Christ it would read, *my (Christ's) praise shall be of thee (God) in the great congregation (the church)*. *Pay my vows* as it pertains to David refers to his obedience to the law of Moses. As it pertains to Christ it means he is willing to do his part of God's plan of salvation. (Heb. 10: 5-9.)

Verse 26. This verse coincides with one of the sayings of Jesus. Matt. 5: 5 pronounces a blessing on the meek. The Holy Spirit evidently had this in mind when it directed David to write the statement.

Verses 27, 28. This prediction was fulfilled when the kingdom of Christ was established throughout the world. (Rom. 10: 18; Col. 1: 23.)

Verse 29. This verse predicts that all classes of people, the *fat* (prosperous) as well as those in the *dust* (the poor) would bow before the Lord. The last clause means that no man can save his own soul, and that is the reason all classes would come to the Lord for salvation.

Verse 30. This is a prediction that Christ was to have a seed that would be spiritual and that it would be greater than the fleshly seed of David. The fulfillment of this prediction is indicated in John 3: 1-5 and 1 Pe. 2: 9.

Verse 31. *That shall be born* is a prophecy of those who would be born again and become a part of the spiritual seed of Christ.

PSALMS 23

Verse 1. David had been a shepherd when a boy (1 Sam. 16: 11; 17: 34, 40), and had many experiences that he used as illustrations in his writings.

This psalm is almost wholly drawn from that subject. The expressions are largely figurative, and the phases of his experiences will be used either in comparison or contrast or both, as the nature of the cases may suggest. He had been a shepherd over literal sheep, now he is a sheep himself and the Lord is his shepherd. It was his duty as a shepherd to see that proper nourishment was provided for his flock. Accordingly he felt assured that his shepherd would not let him want. That word is from *CHACER* and Strong defines it, "a primitive root; to lack; by implication to fail, lessen." Young and Moffatt also render it by lack. So it does not mean that God's people will always obtain their desires or wishes, but they will be supplied with their actual needs as sheep of the Lord's pasture.

Verse 2. *Lie* is from *RABATS* and is defined thus: "a primitive root; to crouch (on all four legs folded, like a recumbent animal)."—Strong. It does not mean to be prone, with the body extended as if from exhaustion. But it describes an animal in a posture of comfort and contentment. *Green pastures*. The first word is from an original that means "young and tender," hence very desirable food. When an animal lies down in the pasture (not where the pasture was), it proves that there was enough provision for him and some to spare. When *waters* are used figuratively they represent the state of mind or the surroundings of the individual concerned. If the condition is one of unpleasantness, then we will see such terms as "troubled waters" or "waters of affliction." If the condition is the other kind, we will see such terms as David used here; *still waters*. The direct thought is that the divine shepherd will always give the sheep of his pasture such complete care they will be happy and contented.

Verse 3. A shepherd was supposed to provide food to *restore* or nourish the bodies of his sheep. He did so by placing them in the pastures described in the preceding verse. The spiritual Shepherd provides spiritual food for the *souls* of his sheep. This consists of the instruction found in the Word of God. A careful shepherd will seek a safe path in which to conduct his sheep to the places of good pasture. It is natural for a sheep to follow wherever his master leads, whether the path goes into a wild and dangerous

thicket, or into the good fields of tender grass. David's shepherd always led him in the *paths of righteousness*, which means the right paths. An earthly shepherd would be concerned about his reputation as a reliable man to have charge of a flock. If he had no other motive, yet he would not knowingly mislead the flock, for that would injure his good name as a dependable shepherd. Likewise David's shepherd would lead him in the right paths for *his name's sake*. Dr. Marion Hull renders this by, "on account of his reputation," and Strong's lexicon justifies the translation. God is said to be free from all evil. He certainly would not stain such a good name by leading his flock unrighteously.

Verse 4. A sheep is a timid animal. In passing from one pasture to another it might be necessary to walk down the slope near a stream, dividing the present location from some pasture land beyond. There are usually some trees and other growing things that would cast a shadowy appearance around. The trusting sheep keeps close to his master with confidence. It was likewise with David and his confidence in the Shepherd of his soul. The valley of death did not hold any dread for him. Though the pathway leading downward was shaded by the dimness of approaching death, he was confident it would finally bring him over safely to the brighter fields of eternal verdure on the other side of the valley. A shepherd carries a rod or stick for the purpose of defense against any unfriendly creature, and a staff or walking cane for the support of his body. (1 Sam. 17: 40.) The Word of God was both rod and staff for David.

Verse 5. In the verse David drops the illustration of the shepherd to some extent. Instead of likening himself to a sheep he thinks of being a man. As a man he thinks of his troublesome enemies who have been opposing him in every way possible. It would be something of a triumph to have provisions of life made for him even under favorable circumstances. It would be a greater one to have it done in the presence of his enemies. Such a fact not only would tend to arouse the envy of the enemies, but would actually prove God's power by making the provision in spite of the enemies. All of this would have special significance with a man whose chief secular business of life

was to be a "man of war," and to "shed blood abundantly." Victory over his enemies would be one of his most cherished desires. In ancient times when a man was to be given an important position of power and satisfaction, he was anointed by having oil poured over his head (1 Sam. 10: 1; 16: 13; 1 Ki. 1: 39; 2 Ki. 9: 3, 6). The practice was afterward used as a figure in cases where some person was given any great favor. *Cup* is from an original that means "lot." *Runneth over*. The 2nd word is not in the original. The 1st is from a Hebrew word that means "satisfaction." The clause means that his lot was wholly satisfactory.

Verse 6. *Goodness* is from an original that means "good things," and *mercy* is from one that is defined "kindness." *Follow me* is properly rendered and indicates that the favors will come after David has gone forward in serving the Lord. To be a permanent occupant of the house of the Lord would be a greater favor than merely entering it for a short time. Such a blessing would be the lot of the man complying with the conditions set forth in this psalm.

Before leaving this interesting psalm I will make a few more general remarks. The second but more important application of the prophecy is to Christ. It will be well for the student to go through the entire chapter again with Christ specifically in mind. It will then be possible to see and hear him on the cross as he quotes the 1st verse of the preceding chapter. Then coming directly to the present one again, hear Christ as he speaks of his Father in the relationship of his shepherd who was at the very instance of his crucifixion preparing (through it) a table or spiritual feast (salvation) for *me*, meaning his church. Then he can be heard saying, *death, I will fear no evil*, in the language of the psalm. Or, if we listen for his own words in the fulfillment we will hear him saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And, true to the prophecy, he afterward entered his Father's heavenly mansion above, there to abide forever.

PSALMS 24

Verse 1. This is quoted in 1 Cor. 10: 26. *Fulness* is from a word that means "everything in it." Since all belongs to the Lord, we are expected to make such use of it as will be pleasing to

Him. That is the reason for connecting the thought of the inhabitants of the world directly with the first statement.

Verse 2. *Seas* refers to the stationary bodies of water, and *floods* is from a word that means the rivers. (see Josh. 24: 2, 3.) The Lord created all of these things and has the right of control over them.

Verse 3. The psalmist again writes in language that could apply to man in general, but he will come to special consideration of Christ before the chapter is ended. *Hill* and *holy place* refers to the sanctuary of the Lord. The question means to inquire who is worthy to enter that place.

Verse 4. This verse answers the question of the preceding one. *Clean hands* are hands that do clean or righteous acts, because they are prompted by a pure or unmixed heart. *Vanity* means thoughts that are useless. *Sworn deceitfully* denotes that the one guilty had made an oath that was not from the heart and was thus deceitful.

Verse 5. A person who is free from such wrongs not only will be permitted to come into the house of the Lord, but will be blessed with *righteousness* from the Lord. That means he will be given the reward coming to a life of righteousness.

Verse 6. *Generation* as used here means a race or species of persons who seek the Lord. It was especially true of Christ, and that entitled him to the favor indicated in v. 3. *O Jacob* is a brief form of "O God of Jacob." As Christ was preeminently entitled to "dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (ch. 23: 6), or to receive the favor named in v. 3 in this chapter, the writer plunges next into one of his most important prophecies of Christ which will be seen in the following paragraph.

Verses 7-10. This is a prophecy of the ascension of Jesus and the reception that was accorded him. It is figurative, of course, and represents a call upon his celestial city to open its gates to the conquering king. A short time ago he left the city for a sojourn in the world of mankind. He met the enemy of souls in battle and came off the victor. He was suffered to become the victim of murderous hands and was put to death. But even death did not hold him in its grasp, because his own Shepherd was with him and brought him forth again to die no

more. His great mission into yonder's world was accomplished and he was returning to the Eternal City as the greatest conqueror the universe ever knew or was destined ever to know. Now the gates of the city were bidden to admit this *King of glory*. He entered and was seated at his Father's right hand, where he is now reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords.

PSALMS 25

Verse 1. To lift up the soul means to pray with the soul to God.

Verse 2. *Not be ashamed* means not to be debased by the defeat from his enemies. We should keep constantly in mind the fact that David was actively at war most of the time. That made him many enemies among the heathen. Besides this, he had been given the kingdom in preference to Saul which brought him the enmity of Saul's family.

Verse 3. The thought is significant that David considered the service to God as a just condition for escaping confusion. On the other hand, if a man transgressed the law of God he was worthy to be made ashamed.

Verse 4, 5. As a man in distress David prayed the Lord to show him the right way of life. As an inspired man he pointed out that way himself (ch. 37: 23; 119: 133).

Verse 6. God never forgets, as David knew. The statement is a form of request for God to renew his favors of the past.

Verse 7. David was always open and fair with the Lord. He never tried to shield himself in wrong, but humbly and frankly came to the Lord for pardon. Such is the meaning of this verse, and not that God would remember a man's sins against him after having forgiven them.

Verse 8. If sinners do not know better than they are doing it is not through any neglect of God. He is upright and therefore will teach them if they will learn.

Verse 9. This gives the key to the reason some are uninformed. If a man is meek or humble he will even seek for information from God.

Verse 10. The paths or steps the Lord requires his people to follow are really merciful in their effects. The way of the transgressor is hard when the end thereof is considered. Also the path the Lord advises is *truth*

which means it is according to truth. But in order to profit by this arrangement a person must keep the *covenant* (agreement) and the testimonies (proven truths) of the Lord.

Verse 11. *Name's sake*. For explanation of this see my comments at ch. 23: 3.

Verse 12. To fear the Lord in the favorable sense is to respect him. The man who does so will be taught in the right way, that being the kind of way a God-fearing man would choose.

Verse 13. The inner man can be at ease regardless of outward conditions. Such will be the case with a man who fears God. His seed or descendants will not literally possess this globe on which we live, but they will enjoy the blessings of it.

Verse 14. *Secret* is from a word that Strong defines in part as "intimacy." In other words, those who fear the Lord will be "taken into a sacred nearness with Him." He will impart his covenant to them.

Verse 15. *The net* refers to the snares that David's enemies placed in his pathway. They were hidden from human eyes, but the Lord sees them and will snatch his faithful followers from the danger.

Verse 16. In the desolation brought on David by his enemies, he made his appeal to God, and was always confident of receiving a hearing.

Verse 17. The troubles were *enlarged* which means they were growing. God alone was able to overcome the forces of his enemies.

Verse 18. The *affliction* and *pain* were not necessarily of a physical nature. David was not concerned about mere temporal discomfort. He desired above all other things to be contented in mind. At the same time he realized his weaknesses of the flesh and made his usual plea for the pardon of his sins.

Verse 19. The chief sources of David's worries were his enemies. The mention of them identifies the character of troubles that he has been praying about to God.

Verse 20. *Be ashamed* means to be confused by the treatment from his enemies. David prayed for the safety of his soul. He trusted the Lord with all his highest interests and desires.

Verse 21. David realized that his conduct would need to be right before he could expect the favor of God.

Hence he asked consideration for his *integrity* or *loyalty*. *Wait on thee* means he was ever ready to serve the Lord.

Verse 22. David was not selfish. While praying for personal favors he did not forget his people. He had shown that kind of charity right while he was distressed over the sufferings they were experiencing. (2 Sam. 24: 17.)

PSALMS 26

Verse 1. *Judge me* indicated he was ready to be examined as to his conduct and then humbly submit to whatever decision the Lord would make against David. He was confident of the result should the Lord make such a test of him. That was because he had walked in his *integrity* or *innocence*. To *slide* means to slip or waver. David's trust in God gave him confidence against the pitfalls along the way.

Verse 2. The confidence felt by David was so great that he would willingly submit to an examination for the purpose of *proving* or testing him. That is the attitude of all persons who are sincere in their professions. If a man evades the attempts to investigate him he shows evidence of being wrong knowingly. This idea is taught in John 3: 19, 20. There is not much difference between *reins* and *heart*, and they may ordinarily be used interchangeably. But when the two are employed in the same sentence the first refers especially to the mind as the director of a man's actions, and the second has more application to the feelings or emotions of the mind. David invited an examination of his entire inner being.

Verse 3. It was not the sentiment of dread or terror that prompted David to walk according to truth. He was drawn along his pathway of life by the *lovingkindness*, which means the same as just "kindness," of God.

Verse 4. In ch. 1: 1 David has expressed his disapproval of those who *sat* with the wrong kind of persons. In this psalm he affirms he has not done so himself. The *dissemblers* were men who practiced hypocrisy in their plans.

Verse 5. *Congregation* also means company, and David hated all such associations. He had the same idea that is expressed in 1 Cor. 15: 33.

Verse 6. *Wash mine hands* is a figurative reference to Deut. 21: 6-8. An innocent man had the right to practice that, and David claimed to be innocent. It also is related to Ex. 30: 18-21, which is why he added *so will I compass thine altar*.

Verse 7. Having prepared himself according to the law, David was ready to make an offering. Not of an animal, however, but of a devotional service to God in appreciation for his *wondrous works*.

Verse 8. *Habitation* means abode or a place to stay. *House* is from BAYITH and has been rendered in the Authorized Version by house over 1900 times, also by such words as court, door, family, home, household, palace, place and temple. The clause means David loved to spend time in the Lord's temple. The reason given for it was the fact that God's honor dwelt there. We will find many instances where David expressed his pleasure in the Lord's house.

Verse 9. *Gather* means "remove," and "soul" means his life. David prayed that sinners might not be permitted to take his life. The last clause was more specific as he prayed to be delivered from bloody men; those who delighted in shedding blood.

Verse 10. These bloody men were using their hands to perform mischief. When *right hand* is used figuratively and for a good purpose, it means that the person uses his hand to do right things. When used in the sense of this verse, *right hand* means his stronger and more experienced hand. The person uses his greatest ability to perform something to earn a bribe.

Verse 11. *Walk in mine integrity* means to walk innocently, and in such a manner as to retain a good reputation. *Redeem* as used here has the sense of "preserve," and was said in view of the dangers threatened against David by his many enemies.

Verse 12. *Even* means level or plain. It has the same idea as was set forth in the work of John the Baptist. (Luke 3: 4, 5; Isa. 40: 3, 4.) *Congregations* refers to any of the groups or assemblies where David might be present. In all such places he would bless or praise the Lord.

PSALMS 27

Verse 1. *Light* refers to instruction and it leads a man into the paths of

salvation. With such provisions David had no one to fear. He drew the strength of his life also from the Lord and hence need not be afraid of any man. (Rom. 8: 31.)

Verse 2. *Enemies* and *foes* mean also the same, but there is a slight difference in degree. The first has the sense of a competitor without any necessary personal feeling of enmity. The second means those who hate another. *Eat up my flesh* means they wanted to do him bodily harm. God intervened and caused them to fail in their designs against David.

Verse 3. Numbers do not count when arrayed against the Lord or those in his service. Even in war the Lord can give the victory by the use of small numbers. The experience of Gideon could be cited as a proof (Judges 7: 7).

Verse 4. Of course David would not expect to be in the temple constantly, any more than Christians can be in an assembly at all hours. But he wanted to be always in position to enter the house of God to receive its spiritual benefits.

Verse 5. A pavilion is a covering and shelter. In times of trouble God will cover his faithful servants with strong protection. In the secret or intimacy of the sacred house of the Lord there is shelter from the storms of life. A *rock* is a sure foundation, and God will be a rock of support for his loved ones.

Verse 6. To lift up the head means to have a feeling of triumph when it is said with reference to personal enemies. A man might have various reasons for coming to the house of God with an offering. David's success over his enemies gave him one of his chief motives for such devotion, and it was accompanied with songs of praise.

Verse 7. A prayer formed in the mind would be known by the Lord and would be given proper attention. In times of great distress, however, a man would be inclined to make his prayer audible. That was what David did in this verse and it expressed an earnest desire for the help of God.

Verse 8. The first 3 words of this verse are not in the original. The true thought is a view of the dictates of the heart of David. In the time of his troubles his heart (sentiments or feelings) urged him to seek the face of the Lord (in prayer). In response

to the urge of his heart he sought the Lord by prayer and song.

Verse 9. No man can literally see God's face and live (Ex. 33: 20). The expression used so frequently by David partakes of some of the figurative meanings of the word. It is from *PANIM* and has been rendered in the Authorized Version by *anger* 3 times, *countenance* 30, *edge* 1, *face* 356, *favor* 4, *forefront* 4, *forepart* 4, *form* 1, *former time* 1, *front* 2, *heaviness* 1, *looks* 2, *mouth* 1, *old time* 1, *person* 20, *presence* 75, *prospect* 6, *sight* 40, *state* 1, *time past* 1, *times past* 1, *upside* 2. With such a field of meanings we know that we should not be too technical in applying the word. It would be reasonable to conclude that David wished to receive the spiritual smile of the Lord. He felt the need of such an influence while combatting the enemies.

Verse 10. There is no evidence that David ever had any trouble with his parents. The idea was that he regarded the Lord as being more dependable than even his own flesh-and-blood relations. Such comparison to one's blood relatives is found else where in the Bible (Proverbs 18: 24).

Verse 11. *Plain path* is one that can be easily seen and followed. *Mine enemies* is rendered in the margin by, "those which observe me." A footnote in the American Standard Version renders it, "them that lie in wait for me." Young translates it, "my beholders." From these various translations we can arrive at the thought intended by the psalmist. He knew he was being watched and did not want to make a mistake in his life. For that reason he asked for instructions that could be easily understood.

Verse 12. David never expected or asked to be spared having enemies in this life. He evidently understood that a godly man is bound to have opposition. That doctrine is also found in the New Testament (2 Tim. 3: 12). What he often prayed for was to be supported so that his enemies could not overcome him. One of the bitterest kinds of enemies is a false witness. A man could better be attacked by a physical assailant than by a man who would make a false report about him. The physical opponent would be visible and a man could know whom he was meeting; but a liar would be using his cowardly weapon in the absence of his victim.

Verse 13. The first 3 words have none in the original. The connection, as well as David's trust in the Lord which has been expressed in so many places, indicates that he was making a positive statement. He meant to say that he actually did believe in seeing the goodness of the Lord.

Verse 14. This verse is an exhortation addressed to himself to wait on the Lord. That means to trust the Lord and be ready to do his bidding. If he will do that the Lord will strengthen him.

PSALMS 28

Verse 1. *Cry* is a strong word for pray, and David was earnest in his prayer to God. *Be not silent* does not mean that he expected an audible voice from God. It means for God not to overlook his cry. *Down into* the pit means down to a state of great depression and forgetfulness.

Verse 2. Lifting the hands at a time of prayer was a practice to indicate respectful appeal to God. (1 Tim. 2: 8.) *Supplications* is an urgent form of prayer. *Holy oracle* is a term applying to the temple as the spiritual headquarters of God.

Verse 3. *Draw me not*, etc., means for God not to class David with these wicked men. They were hypocrites; saying one thing and thinking another.

Verse 4. This whole verse is a prayer for God to punish the wicked persons in a way worthy of their unrighteous deeds.

Verse 5. *Works of the Lord* refers to the things that the Lord has created. *Operation of his hands* means the management of those created things. These wicked men disregarded the whole subject, which was the chief basis for David's criticism of his enemies. *Not build them up* means the Lord will not uphold such characters.

Verse 6. *Blessed* usually means "happy," and when applied to God it means he is to be praised because he gives happiness to others. He had given it to David in answer to his supplications.

Verse 7. *Strength* would enable David to perform the service desired by the Lord, and *shield* would protect him in the performance of it. This help came to David because he trusted in the Lord. As an expression of his appreciation for the favors, David praised God with songs.

Verse 8. The antecedent of *their* is indicated by the last word of the verse. His *anointed* refers to the people whom God had chosen.

Verse 9. *Save thy people* should not be interpreted as an indication of partiality. It is true that David prayed only for the Lord's people to be saved for no others have the promise of salvation. But the subject will appear clear and just when we remember that all people have the opportunity of being among God's people as far as personal salvation is concerned. David prayed that all of them should be fed and lifted up, which meant they were to be taught and upheld.

PSALMS 29

Verse 1. This chapter as a whole is a psalm of praise. It is a call for all people to give the Lord the credit for all *glory and strength*.

Verse 2. *Due unto his name* requires that men not merely admit some glory for the Lord; they should give all that is justly his; it must be a whole-hearted service. There is nothing really more beautiful than a holy service to God. It will be such a service if conducted according to the Lord's directions. That is what David meant by *the beauty of holiness*.

Verse 3. We should not think of the *voice* of the Lord in an audible sense as used in this and several verses following. It is true that every sound, whether the "still small voice" of the meekest living creature, or the mightiest peal of thunder and the roar of the ocean's stormy billows, all come from the God of all creation. But David is describing God's voice in the sense of his intelligent supervision over all the various domain itemized in the passage. Let us read this and the several verses following and think of the majesty of the Word of God. The mighty ocean, covering over half of the earth's surface and thousands of feet in depth, indicates the force of God's word when he said, "Let the waters under heaven be gathered together unto one place (Gen. 1: 9).

Verse 4. *Full of majesty* means it is full of magnificence and glory. Because of this the psalmist declares the voice of God is powerful.

Verse 5. The cedar was noted for its size, strength and beauty. Referred to figuratively it stood for power of influence and demanded the attention and respect of other things in nature.

But the voice of God was mightier than all of these things credited to the cedar.

Verse 6. *Them* refers to the cedars of the preceding verse. They would not literally skip or dance around. The figure means that even as important things as these noted plants of the mountains will respond jubilantly to the voice of their Creator.

Verse 7. *Divideth flames*. Human artists can carve and form the various materials of the earth because they are adapted to their capacity. The great Artist of the universe can "hew, split, square, quarry, engrave," materials as flames of fire. The quotation is from Strong's definition of the original word for *divideth*.

Verse 8. *Kadesh* was the place where the Israelites murmured at the report of the spies (Num. 13 and 14). At that place God took charge of the situation and sentenced the congregation to wander in the wilderness 38 years longer, thus giving another demonstration of the power of his voice.

Verse 9. The *hind* was a timid animal and at the sound of thunder would give birth to its young. Since this was done away from and independent of man, it formed one of the evidences of the existence of God mentioned in Job 39: 1. *Discovereth the forests* means he has power over them and strips them of their foliage. All appearances in the temple reflect the glory of God.

Verse 10. In Gen. 1: 2 the spirit of God moved or hovered over the face of the waters. His voice then handled those waters according to his will and he still has complete control of them. To sum up, the Lord is King or ruler over everything, and will continue to rule throughout the existence of all things.

Verse 11. A Being so powerful as the one described above can do great things for his people. He will do so by giving them the peace that no other could provide.

PSALMS 30

Verse 1. To *extol* means to elevate by praise. It was appropriate for David to be so disposed toward God for he had received that favor himself. A detail was added regarding the sense in which David had been elevated; his foes had not been allowed to rejoice over him.

Verse 2. *Lord* and *God* are from different originals. The first is from *Yehovah* and means the self-Existent One. It was the Jewish national name of God. The second is from *Elohim* and its outstanding meaning is one who rules. Taken together, the two words mean to state that the supreme, uncreated, and eternal Being is the rightful ruler over all. No wonder, then, that David so often cried unto him for help. To *heal* does not always refer to disease, but frequently means to relieve from any form of distress.

Verse 3. David had been in danger of death by the hand of his enemies. In rescuing him from evil designs he had really been saved from the grave. *Pit* is from an original that has been properly translated, but David used it figuratively. Had he been suffered to be overcome by his enemies it would have been his ruin.

Verse 4. In gratitude for the many favors from the Lord, David called on all his saints to praise him in song, and as a memorial service to His great holiness.

Verse 5. This verse has some contrasting terms to give force to the thought. The anger of the Lord is but for a moment compared with his favor which lasts a life-time. This translation is supported by the Revised Version, Moffatt's Translation and by Dr. Hull. Other contrasts are between weeping and joy, night and morning. The lesson is that we can afford to submit to the discipline that comes from God for the sake of the happy results that will follow.

Verse 6. *Prosperity* refers to the state of security that David felt through the protection from God. He was so assured that he believed he would never be moved.

Verse 7. This verse uses words figuratively. *Mountain* means the highest hopes. As long as David had the favor of God his hopes were "high as a mountain." In times of great trouble he felt that the face of God had been hid from him.

Verse 8. When David was discouraged over the pressure of troubles from the enemy, he prayed to God with the strongest form of petition which was *supplication*.

Verse 9. David believed that death would end all of his activities for the Lord. After he had gone down to the *pit* (grave) he could be of no further service. Therefore, if his enemies were

suffered to take his blood it would be in vain as far as the cause of the Lord was concerned.

Verse 10. David was a normal man and wished to live for the sake of life itself. Yet we are pleased to learn that he also wished to live for the sake of what good he could do. In that way he was like Paul in Philipians 1: 21-25. Since David needed to live in order to render this service, he prayed for God to be his merciful helper.

Verse 11. When *dancing* is used figuratively it means leaping for joy. *Sackcloth* was worn in times of distress or danger. God had helped David out of his difficulties and he expressed it by using the contrasting terms of this verse.

Verse 12. *Glory may sing praise* refers to the motive that a good man would have in praising God. It means he would sing praises unto the Lord in order to express the glory he believed to be due to Him.

PSALMS 31

Verse 1. *Deliver me in thy righteousness* is about the same as saying, "thy will be done." Such deliverance as would be righteous would be all that David would expect from the Lord. *Never be ashamed* means never to be confused.

Verse 2. *Bow down thine ear* is equivalent to saying, "give a listening ear." A *rock* indicates strength and would provide a good basis for support. A *house* would indicate a defense because it would be a shelter.

Verse 3. A *fortress* is a place that has been fortified against attack. *Name's sake lead me*. For explanation of this see my comments at Ch. 23: 3.

Verse 4. All public or official men dread a secret enemy more than all other kinds. One man lurking in ambush, waiting to spring unexpectedly at his victim, is more difficult to cope with than a score of men in the open. David was aware that he had many such enemies conspiring and plotting against him. But while he had evidence of their existence and activities he could not always discern them; hence he sent the plea to God for defense against his private foes.

Verse 5. This verse might be taken as a prophetic statement, referring to the one made by Christ in Luke 23: 46. But a similar one was made by

Stephen in Acts 7: 59. The clearest explanation is that it was a coincidence. But we should not overlook a very informative idea that is suggested in all three of the statements. The men asked the Lord to receive their spirit which shows that something was taken out of the body or was to leave it. That disproves the theory of materialists of every grade who maintain that every part of man is mortal and all there is of him goes to the grave at death.

Verse 6. All *vanities* are wrong and all *lying* is to be condemned. When the two evils are combined in one person it forms a character that would certainly be hateful to as humble and candid a man as David.

Verse 7. Among human beings it is required that one have a like experience before he can sympathize with another in trouble. It is not so with the Lord for his knowledge is infinite. That was why David could rejoice in the hope of divine mercy.

Verse 8. *Large room* means the Lord had made plenty of room for him to escape from his enemies and to counteract their schemes against David.

Verse 9. *Soul* means the inner part of a man and *belly* means the body. It is a strong statement of David's trials, meaning that his enemies had given him afflictions that affected him "soul and body."

Verse 10. Iniquity is sometimes translated by, "punishment of iniquity." Moffatt renders the word here by "punishment." The verse means that David was being punished by his enemies. The punishment was so great that his strength of body was being spent and he was required to call upon the Lord for help.

Verse 11. David was a fighter by disposition and not afraid of the strongest of foes who would offer him physical combat. But he was made to feel depressed when his enemies treated him with contempt. The very ones who were nearest to him and who should have given him the most cordial respect, were the ones who evaded him like cowards. However, that should be considered in favor of him. When those who know a good man the best will avoid a personal contact, it is an indication that they realize their inferiority and are too low in principle to admit it.

Verse 12. This verse is a continuation of the treatment David was re-

ceiving from his cowardly foes, which was described in the preceding verse.

Verse 13. In describing the activities of his enemies, David unconsciously predicted the actions that were plotted against Christ. *Took counsel against me* was done in Matt. 26: 14-16; Luke 22: 3-6. But David frequently had such plotting against his life by Saul and also by his own family relatives.

Verse 14. David never lost his faith in God, although he was very much concerned many times about what was going to be the next move of his enemies.

Verse 15. *Times are in thy hand* means he was in the hand of the Lord at all times. On that basis David felt he had the privilege of calling on Him for deliverance.

Verse 16. *Face to shine* denotes that David wanted the face of God to be favorable toward him. The attribute of the Lord that would prompt him to help was his mercy.

Verse 17. *Ashamed* occurs very frequently in the Bible. It has a varied meaning, but we would not go wrong were we always to think of it as meaning to be confused, disappointed or humbled. This will explain why David used the word twice in this verse; once about himself and once about his enemies. *Silent in the grave* was David's way of wishing the destruction of his enemies.

Verse 18. All lying should be condemned, but the kind that David had in mind here was *grievous*. That is from a word that means hard or cruel. The foes of David not only wished him harm, but were eager to make his life as miserable as possible.

Verse 19. *Laid up* means reserved. *Goodness* does not refer primarily to character, but to the good things that the Lord has to give. He reserves them for the ones who respect and serve him. God has *wrought* or brought about these good things for those who trust in him, and he has done so in the sight of other human beings.

Verse 20. The first clause of this verse means that God will take his faithful servants into his confidence and shield them from harm. *Pride* is often the result of envy. David had many foes who envied him his standing with God and in revenge wished to injure him. *Pavilion* means a covering or protection from danger.

Verse 21. *Strong city* has reference to a fortified one. David likened the favor of God's care over him to the security of that kind of a city. When he *blessed* the Lord he meant to ascribe all blessings to Him.

Verse 22. *In my haste* referred to those times when David's persecutions almost caused him to despair. One definition of the word is "distraction." But even in such times he looked to the Lord in earnest prayer and was heard. In the most trying hours of distress David never forgot to appeal to the divine throne for help.

Verse 23. This is an exhortation for all of God's people to love him in order to secure the preservation that can come from that source only. *Plentifully rewardeth* means that the *proud* or haughty person will get the full deserts of his deeds.

Verse 24. An old saying is, "God helps those who help themselves." That idea is set forth in the exhortation to the saints. If they will gird up their courage the Lord will add to their heart's desire.

PSALMS 32

Verse 1. This verse is cited in Rom. 4: 7, 8. Sinless perfection is not expected of man in this life and blessedness is nowhere based on it. But God has always had some system whereby a man could obtain the forgiveness of his sins and thus be permitted to have the divine blessing. *Sin be covered* means it is put out of sight by the plan of atonement that is in force at the time.

Verse 2. This verse is about the same in thought as the first one. To impute means to hold it against one. If a man complies with the law of pardon that he is under, the Lord will not hold his iniquity against him. *Guile* is a special kind of sin, meaning something in the nature of deceit. However, if a man comes up to the terms of forgiveness that God lays down to him, it will indicate his sincerity and show him to be free of guile.

Verse 3. Until David came to the throne of grace with his prayer for divine mercy, he was not at ease in mind over his condition. The last half of the verse is figurative and intended to indicate his dissatisfied feeling.

Verse 4. *Moisture* and *drought* are opposite terms and are used by David to indicate his feelings when the trou-

bles of life beset him. *Selah* is punctuation mark in language and a pause in music, and is explained at Ch. 3: 2.

Verse 5. In this verse we have *sin*, *iniquity* and *transgressions*. The first two mean practically the same and are not quite as strong as the third. It is from an original that means to commit a sin with the attitude of rebellion against some constituted authority. David made full confession of all his faults and was forgiven.

Verse 6. The quality of godliness is due to the attitude toward God, hence that kind of a man would be disposed to pray to Him. *Mayest be found* does not indicate that God sometimes is unwilling to be sought. But he will be found only when men have sought him after the proper manner and in the right frame of mind. *Floods of great waters* means the waves of troubles that come over men in this life. The floods will not come nigh *him*, referring to the man who has sought and found God.

Verse 7. *Hiding place* does not mean a place of secrecy for a wicked person, but means a shelter for David because he had trusted in the Lord. *Compass with songs* denotes that God would surround David with the conditions that would cause him to give a song of deliverance.

Verse 8. *I* stands for the Lord who is answering the prayer of David. *Guide thee with mine eye* refers to the oversight that God always has for his people. There is an eye watching over the righteous and looking out for the welfare of those who desire counsel in the uncertain ways of the world.

Verse 9. This verse is also the language of God giving admonition to man. The beast requires some mechanical means to guide him, but man should use his reasoning faculties and apply the instructions that come from the Lord.

Verse 10. Righteous men often have sorrows, but they are not the sorrows of penitence like the experiences of the wicked. Mercy shall *compass* or surround the man who puts his trust in the Lord.

Verse 11. *Glad* and *rejoice* are about the same practically. The first refers especially to the state of mind and the second to the expression of it. *Shout* is a stronger word than *rejoice*. It is defined in Strong's lexicon, "to creak (or emit a stridulous [shrill] sound)."

PSALMS 33

Verse 1. The first definition of the original for *comely* is "suitable." The expression is significant and agrees with a principle that is taught throughout the Bible. Praise is a term connected with the services offered to God. It is suitable or consistent for the *upright* to offer the service of praise to God. It is out of place for the wicked to pretend that they wish to praise the Lord.

Verse 2. It is a well-known truth that David's specialty in the field of religious exercises was the musical instruments of various kinds; so this verse is in true form. The *harp* was the national instrument of the Hebrews. It was a stringed instrument and was played on with a plectrum, an attachment worn on the finger. The *psaltery* also was a stringed instrument and specially used to accompany the voice. *Ten strings* is only a detail of the kind of instrument David meant when he said to praise the Lord with the psaltery, the word *and* not being in the original.

Verse 3. *Skilfully* with a *loud noise* means to play correctly as to the proper strings plucked, and also to make it emphatic. It was to accompany a new song.

Verse 4. The *works* of the Lord pertain to his dealings with men, hence they could properly be said to be according to truth. This, then, has reference to the intellectual activities of the Lord instead of his mechanical ones, which agrees with the first clause of the verse on the subject of the *word of the Lord*.

Verse 5. God loves a man who is righteous; and that means he will be just in his dealings with his fellow-men. And there is an example to follow, for the earth is full of the *goodness* or good things of the Lord.

Verse 6. This refers to the week of creation. "And God said" were the words that were used and the only means by which the Creator brought the things into existence. This is affirmed in Heb. 11: 3 in connection with the subject of faith.

Verse 7. This refers to God's control of the sea.

Verse 8. *Fear* and *awe* are used in the same sense. They mean to have deep respect for God for his wonderful works of the universe.

Verse 9. See my comments at verse 6.

Verse 10. A heathen nation may plan to oppose the interests of God but they will be overthrown. The Egyptian nation intended to destroy the Israelites but met defeat itself in the death of all its men in the march, including their king.

Verse 11. God can see the end from the beginning. Because of that he can give counsel or advice that will prove to be correct in the coming ages.

Verse 12. The Jewish nation is specifically the one meant in this verse. In an extended sense it is true that any nation that acknowledges God (the self-Existent One) as its Lord (ruler) will be in more favor. This principle was taught to the Babylonian king (Dan. 4: 17).

Verse 13. The Lord as a personal Being is in heaven and from there he can see all of the actions of men.

Verse 14. This is practically the same as the preceding verse. *Habitation* is a place where a person habitually dwells. God's spirit is everywhere, but his person is on his throne in the Eternal City.

Verse 15. God is the maker of all the hearts of men. The one who makes a piece of mechanism would certainly understand all about its working. If it did not perform in the way he expected he should understand what was wrong. On that basis the Lord understands the failures of the hearts of men since he *fashioned* all of them.

Verse 16. Numbers alone will not count when arrayed on the wrong side. Gideon won in the conflict with the Midianites although he had but 300 men. But they were supported by the Lord and that outweighed all other considerations. Paul had this idea in mind in Rom. 8: 31.

Verse 17. We know that David did not discount the actual usefulness of the horse, for he had seen him in action in many a battle. We must look for some comparison that he had in mind. He meant that the mere strength of the animal would not take care of a dangerous situation, any more than would numbers of men as per the comments on the preceding verse.

Verse 18. This verse should be considered in the light of the two preceding ones. If a man so conducts himself that the eye of the Lord is upon him for good, he need not be afraid of a million men on as many strong horses.

Verse 19. Even when death by famine threatens a servant of God, he is able to provide food for him by miracle if necessary. (See the cases in 1 Ki. 17: 6, 16.)

Verse 20. In the Old Testament *soul* comes from NEPHESH and its first definition in Strong's lexicon is, "a breathing creature." It could be used for the entire creature or for only the inner part of him, and the connection will determine how it is used in given cases. Since the present verse speaks of an action requiring an intelligent attitude toward the Lord, the inner man is evidently meant. To *wait for the Lord* means to rely on the Lord for help.

Verse 21. The word for *heart* has some of the same meaning as that for *soul*, but has more special reference to the emotional part of man. That explains why the heart would *rejoice in Him*.

Verse 22. *Mercy* often has the idea of leniency toward those deserving stern treatment because of evil conduct. It also means kindness and pity in times of distress or other need and is so used here.

PSALMS 34

Verse 1. To *bless* generally means to make happy when used with regard to man-to-man treatment. When used toward God it means to praise him as the source of happiness.

Verse 2. For *soul* see my comments at Ch. 33: 20. To *boast* in a good sense means to make a strong claim of having some favor.

Verse 3. Since *magnify* means to enlarge, and since man cannot actually enlarge the Lord, the clause means to enlarge our praises of the Lord. The second clause is practically the same in thought, meaning to hold the name of the Lord above all others. The verse also expresses the idea of a united action on the part of the people.

Verse 4. God *heard* David when he *sought* for him, which shows that prayer is one method of seeking the Lord. Professed children of God who never pray do not indicate much eagerness to find him. David profited by his searching for the Lord who delivered him from the fears that were thrown round him by his enemies.

Verse 5. *They* refers to persons in general; that is, all they who looked

unto the Lord *were lightened*, meaning they were made to be cheerful and not *ashamed* or confused. If people would turn to the Lord for help in times of fear or other trouble they would find the consolation not to be had elsewhere.

Verse 6. *This* poor man does not refer to any certain person. It is a general reference to some supposed instance among the ones called *they* in the preceding verse.

Verse 7. God dwells in heaven in the everlasting city, but accomplishes his purposes by the use of means. One of those means is the ministration of angels according to this verse. The same is taught in Heb. 1: 14.

Verse 8. *Taste and see*, etc., is the same idea expressed by the apostle in 1 Peter 2: 3. Sometimes children will refuse certain articles of food offered to them, and will give as a reason that they "do not like them." Then the parent will probably tell them that if they would only taste the foods they would find out that they would like them. It is likewise so with the children of God in many instances. They imagine they would not relish the things offered to them when they have not even had the interest, perhaps, to taste and see.

Verse 9. To *fear the Lord* means to reverence him. *Want* means to lack or actually have need. People often desire or long for things they do not need. The real needs of mankind will be supplied by the Lord for all who prove to be worthy.

Verse 10. *Young lions* comes from one Hebrew word. In their lack of judgment they sometimes are hungry for the very nourishment that nature has provided for them. Such a circumstance was used by David to illustrate the professed children of God who do not seek the Lord in the appointed way. Those who do seek properly will not *want* (lack) any *good* thing.

Verse 11. As a father would talk to his children, so David exhorted the nations under him to fear or reverence the Lord.

Verse 12. This verse was not worded as an inquiry, for every man desires the things named. It was another way of calling for the attention of all such to a suggestion about to be made as to how a man may obtain his desire.

Verse 13. The first item in the method of obtaining the genuine good

things of life is to guard one's language. This idea is also to be seen in James 1: 26.

Verse 14. The first clause is identical in thought with Isa. 1: 16, 17. Repentance not only requires that one cease his life of sin, but he must also take up an active life of good works. *Seek* and *pursue* are different only in degree of meaning. The second means not only to be eager for peace but to run after it.

Verses 15, 16. These verses are made to form one paragraph because they form one verse almost verbatim in 1 Pe. 3: 12. Words should be understood by the connection in which they are found. We know that in the general sense the eyes of the Lord are everywhere (Prov. 15: 30), regardless of whether men are evil or good. But the context here shows the expression is used in a special sense and means that the eyes of the Lord are favorable toward the righteous. Because of this attitude the Lord will give a favorable ear to the *cry* or prayer of those who are good. *Face* includes the whole countenance and everything that would be used in giving attention. It means that if a man's life is continually one of *doing evil* the Lord will not honor his prayers. That does not mean that a sinner cannot turn to the Lord for mercy. If he will *depart from evil* (v. 14) and show signs of repentance the Lord will hear him.

Verse 17. *The righteous* has no words in the original, but the connection in this and the preceding verses justifies their use. God will be merciful to the righteous.

Verse 18. *Lord is nigh* should be understood in the light of the comments on v. 15. If a man is *contrite*, which means he is penitent and humble, the Lord will be near him with assistance.

Verse 19. *Afflictions* do not refer especially to physical diseases. The word means adversities in general, including persecutions by enemies. The New Testament teaches that righteous persons will have such afflictions (2 Tim. 3: 12). The Lord in his own way will care for all such.

Verse 20. David was an inspired writer and wrote many prophetic statements. This verse refers to the circumstance that the legs of Jesus were not broken on the cross as were those of the thieves. (John 19: 36.)

Verse 21. The judgment to come on

the wicked does not always come literally in this life. The unrighteous men who do not repent will be slain with eternal death after the judgment of the last day.

Verse 22. *Redeemeth the soul* is significant. The bodies of God's servants may suffer persecution and finally be put to death by the tormentors, but the soul is beyond the power of man to destroy. (Luke 12: 4, 5.) *Desolate* means to be under punishment for guilt of sin, and the righteous will escape that lot.

PSALMS 35

Verse 1. *Plead* is from an original that means not only to advocate, but to grapple with the cause of another for his benefit. David called upon the Lord actually to take charge of his controversy with the enemy.

Verse 2. *Shield* and *buckler* were articles worn in warfare. David used them figuratively in asking God to fight for him against his enemies.

Verse 3. The articles mentioned in the preceding verses were for defense. The *spear* is a weapon of attack and David used the word in a figurative sense also. I do not mean that he did not want literal protection against the enemy, but he expected God to use his miraculous power to give him the help these instruments would do in the hands of a man in literal warfare, only in a more perfect manner and degree of success.

Verse 4. *Confounded* and *shame* are practically the same in effect. Strictly speaking, the first means to be defeated and the second means to be humiliated because of the defeat. *Soul* is used of the man in general, for these enemies were not especially concerned with the spiritual lot of David; they were after him bodily. *Hurt* is used in the same sense as the words about the soul.

Verse 5. There were two reasons why David compared his enemies to chaff. One was to express their worthlessness and the other was to indicate their destruction. Matt. 3: 12 gives a good description of the lot awaiting the chaff. Since *angels* are instruments in God's hands to carry out his purposes (Heb. 1: 14), we may understand why David mentioned them.

Verse 6. The use of *dark* and *slippery* is to indicate that the enemies would be hindered in their purposes against David. *Persecute* means to

pursue and defeat the enemies in their persecutions of David.

Verse 7. It means they had no just cause for opposing David. The *net* meant a trap and the *pit* meant it was hidden so as to take David unawares. *Digged for soul* is explained by my comments at v. 4.

Verse 8. The enemy had formed a plot for David and he prayed God that the enemy might be caught in his own trap. Such a fate was endorsed by Solomon (Prov. 26: 27), and Haman actually had that experience. (Est. 7: 10.)

Verse 9. David was more concerned in his soul than his body. In spite of persecutions, if God assisted him he believed it would be well with his soul.

Verse 10. *Bones* is from ETSEM and Strong defines it, "a bone (as strong), by extension the body." David meant that his whole being was engaged in praise for the Lord for his many good deeds unto the unfortunate.

Verse 11. If a man lives righteously the only kind of testimony that can be against him is falsehood. Naturally, then, such charges would concern some form of misconduct of which he *knew not*.

Verse 12. *Spoiling* is from SHEKWL which Strong defines by "bereavement," and that makes the thought clearer. It shows the nature of those who are so wicked as to return to a man some evil for his good.

Verse 13. Sackcloth was worn in times of grief or anxiety. Instead of returning evil for good, when David's enemies were in trouble he grieved for them and showed his concern by clothing himself with sackcloth. Paul told Christians to "weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12: 15). This sentiment was further expressed by David in the form of *prayer* and *fasting*. *Prayer returned* means his prayer was not appreciated by those for whom it was offered. In other words, the selfish spirit of ingratitude was all that David received for his unselfish interest in the welfare of his enemies.

Verse 14. David had treated his enemies in distress as he would a friend or nearest relative, but his kindness was not appreciated.

Verse 15. In return for the kindness of David in their adversity, when a like misfortune came to him they rejoiced. *The objects* were the low characters who secretly plotted against

David. To *tear* him meant they reviled him at his back.

Verse 16. They were *hypocritical mockers* in that they pretended to be David's friends, but secretly wished to devour him as a vicious beast would have done.

Verse 17. For explanation of *my darling* see the comments at ch. 22: 20

Verse 18. Wherever a large gathering of the people might be, David would utter forth his gratitude for the goodness of God.

Verse 19. David never did ask to be upheld in anything that was wrong. He only prayed that his enemies not be allowed to rejoice over him in their wrong-doing. To *wink with the eye* is a gesture of contempt as if they would humiliate him with scorn.

Verse 20. David's enemies not only did nothing in behalf of peace, but were active in devising plots against peaceful citizens of the land.

Verse 21. *Aha, aha*, was another expression of ridicule and fun-making. *Hath seen it* refers to the misfortunes of David, and his enemies were outwardly glad because of his troubles.

Verse 22. *Keep not silence* means for the Lord not to fail to help David.

Verse 23. This is similar to the preceding verse. It is a supplication for divine help. *God* and *Lord* are used in one sentence, which indicates a difference in meaning. The first is from an original that means a Being to be worshiped. The second is from a word that means a ruler. The combined thought is that God should be worshiped and obeyed as supreme Ruler.

Verse 24. *Judge* means to pronounce a verdict, and to do so according to the facts in the case. David believed he had been righteous in his conduct and therefore was not uneasy as to the judgment that God would form. In that case his enemies would have no ground for rejoicing over him.

Verse 25. David could not bear the thought of giving his enemies something to gloat over. The mere fact of having some kind of unpleasant experience would not have troubled him so much, but he did not want his enemies to claim credit for it.

Verse 26. *Ashamed* and *confusion* are practically the same and are used together for the purpose of emphasis. They mean for the enemies to be de-

feated in their plots against David. *Shame* means a feeling of humiliation, and *dishonor* has the sense of disgrace. All of these conditions were what David wished to come on his enemies because they *magnified* or boasted themselves against him.

Verse 27. We should like the spirit of this verse. David was not interested merely in his own welfare, but wished the Lord to receive due credit for it. The people he expected to take such an attitude were those who were in sympathy with him in his righteous service to God.

Verse 28. *Thy righteousness* had special reference to God's righteous dealings with man. *Thy praise* meant the praise that David believed to be justly due the Lord.

PSALMS 36

Verse 1. The pronouns are a little indefinite as to person, but they both refer to the *wicked*. In their *transgressions* (which means rebellion), they deny having any fear of God in their hearts.

Verse 2. The wicked man coaxed himself into thinking that he was all right. That kind of conduct led him on until his iniquity became hateful.

Verse 3. It is significant that the wicked man *left off* both wisdom and doing good at the same time. The wisest man in this world is one who knows to do good.

Verse 4. The antecedent of *he* is the *wicked* man of v. 1. In the hour when he is reclining he plans on the mischief he wishes to do on the morrow. *Setteth himself in a way* denotes that he becomes "set in his ways" of unrighteousness. Paul taught that we should "abhor that which is evil (Rom. 12: 9)," but the man whom David was considering did not do that. Of course such a man would not hesitate to devise evil plans.

Verse 5. *Heavens and clouds* are used to indicate the extent of God's mercy and faithfulness. There is no limit to the mercy of God on his part. Man limits it by his refusal to meet the terms on which divine mercy is offered.

Verse 6. In a number of verses the psalmist expressed his adoration for the qualities of the Lord by some comparisons. He used some of the things of the material creation for his figures. A *mountain* is lofty and great, and the sea has great depth; so is the good-

ness of God. Both *man* and *beast* owe their existence to the preserving might of their Creator.

Verse 7. Strong defines the original word for *excellent* by "valuable." The term, then, means something more than a mere sentiment. When God extends his kindness to the children of men, they receive something that is of actual assistance in life.

Verse 8. *Fatness* literally means richness, and when used figuratively means that rich blessings are to be had in the house of the Lord. A *river* is abundant in volume, continuous in supply, pure in quality. For these reasons it is used to compare the pleasures flowing from the throne of God. (Rev. 22: 1.)

Verse 9. A *fountain* has about the same meaning as a river when used as an illustration. It is continuous and bountiful. The light that comes from God is infinite, yet it is adapted to the needs of man, shedding light across his pathway.

Verse 10. *Know thee* means the people who recognize and honor the Lord. They are the kind that have the right to the favors of God. This thought is indicated by the term near the end of the verse; the *upright in heart*.

Verse 11. *Let not the foot* means not to let the proud enemies walk or move against David. *Remove me* would indicate an attempt to interfere with David's relation of favor with the Lord.

Verse 12. *There* implies the place where the evil men had been cast down by the Lord. That is, after the wishes of David that he had just expressed had been granted, these workers of iniquity would be in that condition.

PSALMS 37

Verse 1. It seems a little strange for David to give us this advice, after he has said so much about those evil-doers and manifested so much concern over them. It will be well to read the comments at ch. 10: 1 in connection with the above remarks. But this verse is good advice, for after all these wicked men are not to be envied.

Verse 2. This verse does not teach that the wicked will be put out of existence as materialists claim. It means they will soon come to the end of their wicked plans.

Verse 3. *Doing good* is put before *being fed*, which is the same principle taught by Christ in Matt. 6: 33. It is taken for granted that if a man really does *trust in the Lord* he will do his part in acquiring the necessities of life.

Verse 4. The promises of God are generally made conditional. Here we are taught that a man will get his *heart's desire* if he will *delight in the Lord*. That is true, for a man who has that regard for the Lord will not have unrighteous desires.

Verse 5. This verse has much the same thought as the preceding one. *Commit thy way* literally means to roll one's burdens on the Lord. The New Testament teaches this idea in 1 Pe. 5: 7. Then after committing one's way on the Lord he should not regret his action but should *trust in Him*. *Shall bring it to pass* means that all desires that are according to the will of the Lord will be brought to pass.

Verse 6. A beautiful object will look the more attractive if in the light. Likewise the righteous life of a man of God will shine all the more when *brought forth* in the divine light.

Verse 7. This verse is about the same in thought as the first one. To *rest in the Lord* means to be contented in him and not be worrying at the success of the wicked.

Verse 8. *Anger* is the violent action of the temper and *wrath* is the anger settled down into a steady heat; both degrees should be brought under control. A man should not "lose his temper" over the success of wicked persons.

Verse 9. The success of *evildoers* will be brought to an end in God's own way. *To wait upon the Lord* means to trust and obey him. Those who do so shall inherit the earth as the New Testament also teaches in Matt. 5: 5; 2 Pe. 3: 13.

Verse 10. *Wicked shall not be* as far as his activities in wrong are concerned.

Verse 11. This verse repeats the statement in v. 9. It should be understood that no actual possession of this earthly globe is meant. But the righteous people on the earth shall appreciate the good things produced thereon, and later will be given a place on the new earth referred to in v. 9.

Verse 12. *Plotteth* and *gnasheth* are used to indicate the intensity of evil

men in their designs against good men.

Verse 13. The Lord is never frivolous, but to *laugh* means to look with belittling on the plots of wicked men. God is able to see the end of such a wicked career.

Verse 14. The *sword* and *bow* were used as weapons of war, but the wicked men used them as instruments of cruelty against the helpless. *Upright conversation* means righteous conduct. An evil man would want to "get even" with a righteous one and could do so only by slaying him.

Verse 15. The thought in this verse is that evil workers will fail in their plans in the end. Their weapons will be destroyed or be turned against themselves. This will again remind us of the lesson about the pit and gallows. (Prov. 26: 27; Est. 7: 10.) The same idea is expressed by saying, "Evil works its own rebuke."

Verse 16. His *little* is better for two reasons. He obtained it by the proper means, and a righteous man will appreciate what he has and make proper use of it.

Verse 17. *Arms* is from an original that has a figurative as well as literal definition. It is here used in the first sense and means "force." The forces of the wicked will finally be brought to naught.

Verse 18. *Lord knoweth* is used in the sense of approval. *Inheritance* means the reward that the upright man will receive from the Lord, never to fade away.

Verse 19. *Not be ashamed* means they will not be confused or disappointed in times of distress. The Lord will remember them and supply their needs.

Verse 20. *The fat of lambs* is used as a sacrifice to God. The wicked will not be literally burned up as the fat is done, but they will be consigned to the wrath of God and their evil works shall utterly perish.

Verse 21. Two opposite kinds of conduct are described in this verse, and the characteristic of the one emphasizes that of the other. If the wicked man should repay what he had borrowed it would be only what strict justice would require. The righteous man goes farther than the demands of justice. He shows mercy by giving to the needy who would not be able to repay. (See Luke 14: 12-14.)

Verse 22. *Blessed of him* means blessed by the Lord. Those who are righteous come under this benefit and shall *inherit the earth*. For explanation of this phrase see comments at v. 9.

Verse 23. *Good* is not in the original and should not be in the translation. The predestinarians teach that if a man is good it is because God decreed it that way before he was born, and that his own choice had nothing to do with it. They claim this verse teaches that theory. But God has ordered or pointed out the steps he wishes all men to take and has left it to them to make the choice or decision as to whether they will walk in that way. If they do, then they become good men. David understood this subject, for in ch. 119:133 he states that the steps are ordered through the word of God. When a man walks in the steps advised in the Word the Lord *delighteth in his way* according to the statement of the verse.

Verse 24. If a good man falls it will be through the human weakness and not any fault of the way ordered by the Lord. In that case he will be lifted up by the divine help. This is like the doctrine in 1 John 1:7. It is not the man who never makes a mistake who will be saved, for there is no such a man. But the man who gets right up and "tries again" is the one whom the Lord will help.

Verse 25. Critics have tried to array this verse against the facts of life and against other parts of the Bible, but it is a strained application of the passage. Almost any rule has some exceptions, and the exception really emphasizes the rule. It should be noticed that the righteous were not *forsaken*, which is a stronger word than saying they had never been reduced or inconvenienced. A good man may have to endure some hardships, but the Lord will take care of him in the end. There is another thought that is overlooked. David did not profess to have seen everything that ever took place, he was only telling what he had not seen. We should be careful not to make a statement of scripture mean more than the writer intended.

Verse 26. This verse will shed some light on the preceding one. That same righteous man is said to be lending to the less fortunate. To do that he would need to have more than his *own* life required, which indicates financial success. That would justify a reflection

on the other verse, that the righteous man considered was the industrious one. Such a person would logically not need to go begging for bread when he had enough and to spare, so that he could supply the needs of others. In this connection the student should read Matt. 6:33.

Verse 27. *Forever* means to the end of the age, and it is applied here to the span of life usually allotted to man. If he will follow the laws of God, to depart from evil and do good, he will have the assurance of the best things of life.

Verse 28. *Judgment* means justice or the rights belonging to upright persons. The saints of the Lord deserve his attention, and since He loves justice he will see that his people receive it. *Preserved forever*. They may suffer death at the hands of enemies, but their soul can no man touch to destroy; God will preserve it forever. *Seed* is used in the sense of fruit or product, and that which was brought about by the wicked shall be destroyed when the final lot of all actions is manifested.

Verse 29. This verse is to be understood in the same sense as v. 27.

Verse 30. Righteousness will not give intelligence to a man whom nature has denied. But such a man will speak the wisdom that God gives him in his Word.

Verse 31. This verse confirms the comment made in the preceding one. Such a man will not *slide* or slip out of the way.

Verse 32. In times when physical persecutions were tolerated by the government this verse would have a literal application. Otherwise it would refer to the moral and spiritual destruction that could be brought upon the righteous. That is why Christians are warned to be on their guard. (1 Pe. 5:8.)

Verse 33. *Him* refers to the righteous man of the preceding verse and *his* means the wicked. A righteous man may have to suffer some hardships, but when he is judged or put to the test God will deliver him.

Verse 34. *Wait on the Lord* means to trust him and look to him for all needed help. In order to have the right to such favors, however, one must *keep his way* which means to do the way the Lord wishes him to. *Inherit the land* is explained at v. 9. When that blessing comes to the right-

eous they will realize that the wicked are cut off or denied such favors.

Verse 35. *Bay* is from an original that means "native," and *green* means a new plant that had sprung up and made a big showing at first because it did not have the "shock" of transplanting. The wicked man was compared to this tree on account of his threatening boasts of power, thinking to make others come and cower under him. The word *power* is from *ARIYTS* and Strong defines it, "fearful, i.e. powerful or tyrannical." In the Authorized Version it is rendered mighty 1 time, oppressor 3, terrible 13.

Verse 36. This verse is a comment on the preceding one. A tree that is making a big showing because of special advantages will likely soon die. It is the same with the boastful man in his wickedness and terrorizing over others. Such a character is doomed to final defeat.

Verse 37. *Mark* and *behold* were David's words for calling attention to the good man. It is significant that peace was to come to that man in the end. He might have many trials in course of his journey but when the "last mile of the way" has been traveled he will have peace. The "end of a perfect day" is not as important as the perfect end of a day. Paul taught this idea in Acts 20: 24.

Verse 38. *End of the wicked* means the wicked shall be cut off in the end. It is the opposite of the lot of the righteous that was described in the preceding verse.

Verse 39. The final success of the righteous is accounted for by the fact that his salvation is of the Lord. The weakest man who is righteous will win out over the wicked, for the strength of the Lord will hold him up.

Verse 40. God will not save the righteous on the basis of their merit or because they have "earned" it. It will be in reward for their trust in Him.

PSALMS 38

Verse 1. God suffers his faithful servants to be tested by the persecutions of the enemies. David did not mean to ask the Lord to relieve him of all unpleasantness. His idea was to ask for a modification of it.

Verse 2. David likened the troubles suffered to come on him to the arrows of the Lord. He did not mean that God directly afflicted him, but he

suffered the enemy to wound him with the arrows of persecution.

Verse 3. David had always considered himself human and subject to the same weaknesses as other men. He believed that one's faithfulness to God needed to be tested in order to fortify him against his natural tendency to sin. That test at times was so severe that he described it figuratively by its effect on his body.

Verse 4. *Gone over mine head* means his iniquities had overwhelmed him. This means his afflictions, for iniquities often has that application.

Verse 5. It is well for us to make frequent reference to 1 Sam. 13: 14. The reason David was a man after God's own heart was his frankness and willingness to admit his sins and other weaknesses. He manifested almost what we might term was an "inferiority complex" in regard to his moral and spiritual worth. That is why we have so many verses along here in which are the severe criticisms of himself.

Verse 6. All of the things complained of in this verse pertain to the mind or inner man. David was greatly worried over the trials he was having.

Verse 7. *Disease* is not in the original and is not necessary. *Loins* has a general meaning and refers to the sources of strength in various parts of the body. The verse means that David was practically reduced in strength by reason of his many trials.

Verse 8. This verse is similar in thought to the last one above. There is no evidence that David had any special physical affliction, but his many trials and persecutions had the effect of prostrating him.

Verse 9. The second half of this verse explains the first. David believed his complaints were known to the Lord, and that was why he made his desire known to Him.

Verse 10. These are strong statements, intended to express the depressed state of David's mind over his troubles.

Verse 11. *Sore* is a figurative term to designate the hard lot that had come upon David. *Stand aloof* refers to the shock it was to his friends and relatives.

Verse 12. The private foes of David have been his most dreaded problem. It would be so with any of us. There is some chance of wrestling with an antagonist who will come out openly

with his challenge, but it is hard to deal with a sneaking coward.

Verse 13. See the comments on the previous verse. This offers the same thoughts in different words. If an enemy keeps his operations out of hearing of his victim he might as well be deaf. Or, he might as well be dumb since he could not have known when to speak against his foe.

Verse 14. This verse should take the comments of v. 13.

Verse 15. David was practically deaf to the activities of his enemies because of his finite knowledge. But God can see and hear everything and thus would know all about the plots of the enemies against David. For that reason he turned to the Lord for help and believed that his services to the God of heaven and earth would avail.

Verse 16. David's greatest dread regarding his personal misfortunes was about the attitude of his enemies toward him in his condition. He knew they would rejoice at any calamity that would come to him, and that was what he desired the Lord to prevent.

Verse 17. *Ready to halt* is rendered "on the verge of a collapse" by Moffatt. The thought is that his trials were at that very moment about to overwhelm him. They would do so, he feared, unless God helped him.

Verse 18. Here is another reference to his sin. See the comments at vs. 3, 5.

Verse 19. Usually those who are unrighteous are in the majority; it was so in the case of David's enemies. As they were *multiplied* that gave them the strength that comes from numbers. Such strength, however, will not avail when God enters the situation, hence David made his appeal to Him.

Verse 20. It would be taken for granted that those who would return evil for good to a man would be his adversaries. That was not the information David intended to impart in this verse. The significant idea is the motive he assigned to them; that it was because he followed that which was good. It has been the general history of mankind that a wicked person will dislike one who is good.

Verses 21, 22. David expected his enemies to continue their persecutions against him, therefore he was earnestly praying to God for relief. *Make haste* is a phrase that refers to David's feeling of eagerness rather than to the action of God.

PSALMS 39

Verse 1. David expressed the sentiments of this verse in ch. 19: 14. He knew the relation between a man's words and his action. That is why he resolved to *bridle* his mouth. This thought is expressed in James 3: 3.

Verse 2. *Even from good* means that even when the facts would have been in his favor he refrained from "talking back." This restraint caused his troubles to burn in him, yet for the better effect he practiced control of his mouth.

Verse 3. There is a limit to human endurance. The proper control of the tongue does not require that a person should never speak out against a wrong. *The fire burned* refers to the heat in his heart while he was thinking over the injustices heaped upon him by his enemies. The fire at last broke out in the form of speech by his tongue. But it was not in rashness nor undue haste, for he mused over the situation a while first. This is like the teaching in the New Testament (Jas. 1: 19), "let every man be . . . slow to speak, slow to wrath."

Verse 4. David did not expect the Lord to name the day on which he would die. *Make to know* meant to help him realize the shortness and uncertainty of this life.

Verse 5. This verse is about the same in thought as the preceding one. It expresses the same idea concerning which David prayed to God, which is to the effect that man's life, at best, is brief. This will remind us of James 4: 15.

Verse 6. This verse is a general reference to the actions of men. They are more interested in this life than in the one to come. They act as if they would live here forever to enjoy the riches they have accumulated. It is foolish for a man thus to spend his days in that way, for he will not stay here always, nor does he know just who will get to use the riches he has spent his life to produce. This thought also is offered in the New Testament (Luke 12: 20).

Verse 7. *What wait I for* means there is no reason to look further than to the Lord for help. There is no hope worth cherishing not based on the promises of God.

Verse 8. *All my transgressions* does not necessarily mean a confession of any specific sins. It is an acknowl-

edgement that any humble servant of God should make.

Verse 9. *I was dumb* means David did not have a word of criticism to offer against the dealings of God with man.

Verse 10. This verse is merely a plea for the mercy of God in his treatment of the children of men. While David used the personal pronoun *I*, he was speaking for the human race as a whole as the following verse will show.

Verse 11. Here we see the writer speaks of *man* in general which shows he did not have anything special in mind about his own experiences under the discipline of God. But the chastisement coming from the Lord will expose the vanity of man's earthly pretensions and desires. It will make them appear as flimsy as the moth that shines brilliantly in the light at the moment and in the next is gone out of sight.

Verse 12. This is another application to God for his mercy and guidance. *Stranger with thee* means David was here for a time only and would soon pass away. He wished to pass the few years of his life on this earth under the care of the Lord.

Verse 13. *Go hence* means to go from here. *Be no more* means he will not be living on the earth any more after death.

PSALMS 40

Verse 1. *Waited* is from an original that Strong defines (figuratively), "to expect." The verse means that David had hope in the Lord. If a person hopes for a thing he will be patient in waiting for it. This thought is given in Rom. 8: 25.

Verse 2. *Pit* and *miry clay* are figurative, meaning the lowly condition David's foes were forcing upon him. The *rock* was the foundation of truth on which God placed his feet along the pathway of life.

Verse 3. *A new song* denoted that David was enabled to sing with renewed spirits; that he could offer a song of rejoicing. God was so gracious to him that he was able to sing praises because of his triumph over his enemies. This was so much in evidence that others could realize it and were induced to respect the Lord.

Verse 4. Trust in the Lord is set over against being proud. We thus see that pride can be manifested in more than one way. Another contrast that is indicated is between trust in

God on the one hand, and turning to lies on the other. Any statement that questions the faithfulness of God is a falsehood.

Verse 5. This verse simply teaches that the wonderful works of God are "too numerous to mention."

Verses 6-8. This paragraph is a prophecy of Christ and is quoted in Heb. 10: 5-7. David was writing by inspiration and with his prophetic eye he could see Christ as he came into the world to become the supreme sacrifice for sin. An extended explanation of this prophecy will be found in its proper place in the New Testament.

Verse 9. This verse is less definite than the preceding paragraph. It is prophetic of the work of Christ, and also describes the activities of David in the congregation of Israel over which he was king.

Verse 10. This also has the twofold application noted in the preceding verse. Both David and Christ imparted their knowledge of God to the people.

Verse 11. David came back to his personal needs, and, as he had so often done, prayed for the mercies of God.

Verse 12. *Evils* and *iniquities* are used in the same sense, referring to the afflictions that David was suffering. They had been caused by his enemies and were severe enough to "break his heart."

Verse 13. David feared he would be overwhelmed by his trouble unless the Lord gave him speedy assistance.

Verse 14. *Ashamed* and *confounded* means to be humiliated and defeated.

Verse 15. *Desolate* for a *reward* denoted that David's enemies were to find no way out of their humiliation. *Aha, aha* is a term of ridicule.

Verse 16. David prayed for the favor of God to come on certain persons. It was on condition, however, that they reverence and serve Him.

Verse 17. *Poor* and *needy* did not refer to temporal possessions, for David had a sufficiency of those things and to spare. It was said with reference to his human weaknesses as if he would have said, "I need thee every hour." *Make no tarrying* is an expression of earnestness in pleading for divine help.

PSALMS 41

Verse 1. So much of the activity of mankind is for the gaining of the things of this world that selfishness

has become one of the most outstanding traits. Because of that fact we observe that David has very frequently referred to the fine but rare practice of helping the poor. So this is another verse to show how the Lord considers the subject and how he will treat the persons concerned.

Verse 2. This verse expresses the same thoughts as the first verse. God has such tender regard for the poor that he will bless the man who has a like regard.

Verse 3. *Make* is from HAPHAQ which Strong defines, "a primitive root; to turn about or over; by implication to change, overturn, return, pervert." It means that when the merciful man is on a bed of sickness, the Lord will take care of him.

Verse 4. David had been good to the poor and therefore had reason to expect the favor of God. His confession of sin did not refer to any specific act that we know of here. The humble servants of God are always willing to acknowledge their weakness.

Verse 5. David prayed for the death of his enemies. That was a military age when physical force was often used against an antagonist. However, he never believed in using any unlawful means to defeat even his personal enemies. He wished to have the result come through the Lord, hence his frequent prayer on that subject.

Verse 6. This means that when David's enemy asked for a visit with him it proved to be in hypocrisy. *Speaketh vanity* means that the conversations the enemy had were empty and not sincere. The real motive he had was to catch something from David about which he could spread some gossip.

Verse 7. This verse describes the kind of opposition that was waged against David. The enemies would *whisper* or hold secret counsel against him, plotting some way to injure him.

Verse 8. When David would appear to be hurt by the action of his enemies, they would pretend to believe they had conquered him.

Verse 9. This is another passage with twofold application. The personal experiences of David were so much like those that came to Jesus that occasionally the circumstances were described in language that could be used as a prophecy. David's close personal associates often proved to be his personal enemies, and took ad-

vantage of their confidential relationship with him to injure him. (As an example of such a fact see the case of Absalom in 2 Samuel 15.) This passage is quoted by Jesus in John 13: 18 where he applies it to himself and Judas.

Verse 10. *Raise me up* meant to help David against his enemies, and as it applied to Jesus it meant to bring him up from the grave. *Requite them* means to punish the enemies according to their just deserts.

Verse 11. Both with David and Christ, when God came into the situation, what seemed to be a triumph for the enemies was turned into their defeat.

Verse 12. *Integrity* is another word for steadiness in an innocent life. As a reward for such a life God upheld David and gave him assurance of his continued favor.

Verse 13. *Everlasting* means "age-lasting" or endless. God always was in existence and hence there could be found no end to his existence in either direction, past or future. That is the meaning of the expression *FROM everlasting TO everlasting*. *Amen and amen* is a phrase intended as a very emphatic sanction of truths just expressed.

PSALMS 42

Verse 1. A *hart* is a male of the deer family. It is a timid creature and will flee from any indication of danger. In its fright and excitement it will become exhausted and long for water. David used the circumstance to compare his thirst for the Lord. Jesus pronounced a blessing on those who have such an appetite (Matt. 5: 6).

Verse 2. This verse is an emphasis on the preceding one. David longed for the spiritual presence of God.

Verse 3. Of course this is figurative, meaning his life had consisted very much of lamentations over the mistreatment from his enemies.

Verse 4. Many of the men who were his enemies had previously gone into the house of God. Now that something had turned them against David he felt the sting of their enmity all the more because of indications of their insincerity.

Verse 5. This verse is an effort to David to rouse himself from his despondency and think of the goodness of God. He had been helped many

times before, so now why allow himself to be so discouraged?

Verse 6. This verse is more along the line of the preceding one. *Land of Jordan* means the land made famous by the noted river. David recalled the multitude of wonders that God had wrought in that land and took renewed courage by trusting in Him.

Verse 7. Waters and floods and other like terms are used to compare the trials to which man is often subjected. David was not criticizing God, yet he believed that the afflictions his enemies were suffered to pour upon him was due to the will of God and for some good reason.

Verse 8. This is another effort at self-cheer over the final goodness of God. *Daytime* and *night* are opposite terms and used to indicate completeness of divine favor.

Verse 9. This talking-to-himself sort of discussion was a form of exhortation intended by David to get himself out of the mire of despondency. It was also for the purpose of advice for those who would read his writing.

Verse 10. David compared the thrusts of his enemies to the wounds caused by a sword. He was always greatly grieved when the reality of God was questioned.

Verse 11. See my comments at v. 5 for application to this verse.

PSALMS 43

Verse 1. The word for *nation* also means race or people and is so used in this place. The reference is to them as individuals and not as an organized group, for David was a member of the Jewish nation himself and would not wish to be separated from it. But many of his fellow citizens were his personal enemies and worked against him secretly. He prayed for God to deal with them as they deserved.

Verse 2. *God of my strength* denotes that David could feel strong only in God. Paul taught the same truth in 2 Cor. 12: 10; Eph. 6: 10. The verse contains another effort to bestir himself and shake off his feeling of despair.

Verse 3. David expressed confidence in the Word of God and prayed for more of it to be sent forth. He wished to be led by it according to the idea he expressed elsewhere. (ch. 119: 133). *Holy hill* and *tabernacle* refers to the temple which was the place where God's name was recorded. It was the

place where the national worship was conducted and where the spiritual interests of the people of God were centered.

Verse 4. Both of the altars were at the temple and the sacrifices and incense were offered thereon. David looked to that service for help in times of spiritual need. While in that vicinity he engaged in praise service in connection with the musical instruments that he had originated.

Verse 5. This verse is in the same mood as many others of David's utterances, and upon which I have already made frequent comments. I will add, however, that while he wrote from the standpoint of his personal experiences, he was an inspired writer and issued his instructions for the benefit of his readers. Hence his many exhortations to rely on the goodness of God and trust him for his grace.

PSALMS 44

Verse 1. The *hearing* that David mentioned had a figurative meaning. He was referring to the events that occurred many years before he was born. When people accepted and observed the sayings of God's Word they were said to be hearing it. This principle is what is meant in Heb. 2: 1, for the things that "we have heard" had been said long before that day, and had been transmitted to the future generations in the writings of the apostles of Christ.

Verse 2. *Heathen* and *people* denoted the nations living in Canaan when the Israelites reached the land. *Plantedst them* means God settled his own people in the land.

Verse 3. This does not mean that the children of Israel did not have to use the sword, for they did. But that would not have conquered the heathen without the help of God. *Light of thy countenance* means that God's face was toward the Israelites for their good and prompted him to fight for them.

Verse 4. God's right to be ruler over all was the idea David meant to express in this verse. Clothed with such power and might he could decree that *Jacob* (the Israelites) be delivered, and their enemies be put to shame.

Verse 5. David's confidence of victory over his enemies was based on his trust in the Lord. Lack of such faith caused the people to murmur

when the spies formed their evil conclusions about the land. (Num. 13 and 14.)

Verse 6. This verse repeats the sentiments of the preceding one, with a specification on the negative side. It does not mean that no weapons were to be used, but that such weapons would succeed only when used in the service of God.

Verse 7. This verse starts with *but*, which verifies the comments I have made on the preceding one. Instead of relying on his material weapons for victory, David ascribes it to the help from the Lord.

Verse 8. *Boast* is not used in a bad sense. It is true the word usually has the idea of vanity and display. But it also may be used as an expression of gratitude, and of recognition of the true value of the things one possesses. It is used in that sense by David in this verse. For *selah* see my comments at ch. 3: 2.

Verse 9. From here on through several verses the psalmist seems to have reversed his feeling of triumph through the Lord. He complained of the misfortunes that he and his people had suffered at the hands of the enemies. Again it should be remembered that he wrote "as a man," yet was directed in his expressions by the Lord so that they became prophetic of the experiences that God's people will be suffered to receive in the future. (See comments at ch. 10: 1.)

Verse 10. *Turn back* means to retreat from enemy. *Spoil for themselves* refers to the act of taking their possessions from them.

Verse 11. This means that the people of God had been given over to the enemy for slaughter. In attacking a flock of sheep, some would escape the immediate destruction by the wolves of the heathen, but would be scattered out over that territory and would be exposed to the dangers of future attacks.

Verse 12. This verse is a figurative reference to a bad bargain for the purpose of comparison. If an article should be sold for a price far below its true value it would be said that it was "just given away." Of course such a transaction would not leave the "seller" any profit.

Verse 13. If the people were neglected by their master, the witnesses would take it as a victory for themselves and would give forth expressions of ridicule.

Verse 14. A *byword* as used here means that the enemies considered themselves superior to the Israelites and formed their witty sayings in the manner that would hold the victims in contempt. A *shaking of the head* was a gesture of fun-making of the unfortunate people of God.

Verse 15. An experience like that just described would affect a man of God with a feeling of humiliation. David was given that feeling by the treatment imposed on him.

Verse 16. Actual physical contact did not always take place between David and his enemies. A reproaching voice from them tortured him about as severely as if he had been attacked bodily.

Verse 17. Let the reader please keep in mind the remarks at ch. 10: 1 and v. 9 in this chapter. Constancy to God in spite of afflictions is the leading idea of the verse considered in this paragraph.

Verse 18. A true servant of God will not waver nor step aside from the pathway of duty because of persecutions. He will press on in the good and the right way regardless of the mistreatment from the enemy.

Verse 19. A *dragon* was some kind of monster and meant death to those who were so unfortunate as to be thrown into its vicinity. It was used here to illustrate the rough treatment from the enemy that manifested his characteristics.

Verse 20. the proviso *if* in this verse refers to what might have been the misdeeds of God's people. They were sometimes guilty, and when they were the dealings they got from the Lord was a just punishment. But at other times their afflictions were suffered to come on them as a test of their faith. Such afflictions were administered through the agency of the enemy.

Verse 21. Outward actions can be seen and known by any person of ordinary intelligence. Only God can know the hidden motives of the heart. That is why he not only can see and punish the stretching out of the hands (a visible gesture) to a strange god, but he knows if his people forget the name of the true God which would be the *secret of the heart* mentioned in this verse.

Verse 22. Unknown to the psalmist, his prophetic eye was lifted to see some events of the far-off future. The events, however, were to be simi-

lar to the ones he had just been writing about, in that they pertained to some persecutions heaped upon God's servants in the days of the apostles. Paul quotes this in Rom. 8:36 and applies it to the experiences that he and other Christians were having. No one man could literally be *killed all the day long*. The meaning is that he was in danger constantly.

Verse 23. This verse is a plea for the mercy of God. It is similar to many other passages which we have been considering.

Verse 24. This is more along the same line. When the enemy gets forward with his program of persecutions, it would seem that God was hiding his face from the scene.

Verse 25. The terms in this verse are used figuratively and refer to the state of humiliation to which the enemy had brought God's people.

Verse 26. David did not make any special claim for help on the basis of merit, but asked for it on the ground of mercy.

PSALMS 45

Verse 1. *Inditing* is from RACHASH and Strong defines it, "a primitive root; to gush." Dr. Hull renders it, "bubbling over." The thought is that David was so full of the great subject that his heart was overflowing. He was eager to recite the *things* or sentences he had *made* (formed) concerning the king. He was so enthused over the subject that he felt as if he could speak with as much ease as an able scribe could write it, which is why he compared his tongue to the pen of such a writer.

Verse 2. The pronouns are in the 2nd person but refer to David. This is a clear and specific example of a fact described previously, that an inspired man could write by the dictation of the Spirit, yet write about himself as if he were another. See the comments at ch. 10:1. In the present verse David was considering the many favors he had received from God.

Verse 3. Much of the fighting was done with the sword. To gird it on the thigh meant to make ready for action, and the verse was worded in view of the assurance David had of success in his conflicts.

Verse 4. It is well to observe that *truth* and *righteousness* formed the basis of his expected success. Happy is the man whose triumphs are always a result of that kind of motive.

When the *right hand* is said to do things it means the things being done by the hand of the person are right. Thus the activities of such a person would result in practical teaching for others. This teaching would consist of the terrible things that were to be feared or respected.

Verse 5. The success of the conflicts with the enemy is the subject of this verse.

Verses 6, 7. Again the Spirit saw such a likeness between David's personal experiences or circumstances and those to happen to Christ, that a noted prophecy of the latter was dictated to the psalmist. This paragraph is quoted in Heb. 1:8, 9 and applied to Christ. He is here referred to by the name of God because that is the family name and he is a member of the divine family. It is a prophecy of the eternal character of his kingdom, and the same that is predicted in Dan. 2:44. A scepter is a sort of baton or rod that a king on the throne holds, somewhat after the manner of a judge's gavel. It indicates authority to call a session to order and then preside. In the present case the scepter was held rightfully because the ruler not only loved righteousness but had hated wickedness. *Oil of gladness* is a figurative expression. In ancient times it was a custom to pour olive oil on the head of a person who was to become a ruler or other important public servant. Olive oil was the sole material for artificial light, and the pouring of it over the head of a prospective ruler signified that he was endowed with the light of truth so that he could administer his office efficiently. When oil is referred to figuratively it means the person is showered upon with special favors resulting in his feeling of gladness.

Verse 8. Having worded his statements in such a manner that they had more specific application to Christ, David continued to apply them in that direction. Unknown to him (as a man), he wrote several verses that are highly figurative and describing the honor and splendor that would be given to King Jesus. The figures are drawn from the attention that was anciently given to persons of high rank. The spices named indicated a station in the life generally enjoyed by those being regarded with high esteem among the people. Ivory is a valuable substance and was used extensively in works of art where beauty and strength were desired. No build-

ing was literally made all of it but much of some of them was overlaid and paneled with the material. That was especially true of the residences of kings and other persons of high rank. (See 1 Ki. 10: 18; 22: 39.) The furniture of such buildings was sometimes also covered with ivory according to Amos 6: 4. To leave a building so appointed, in whose wardrobes was an abundance of garments filled with the odor of these precious spices—to leave all that and go out among the lower ranks of the people would indeed be a condescension. That is why a certain religious hymn, composed in view of the humbleness of Jesus, starts with the words *out of the ivory palaces*. That hymn is correct for those words are a part of this marvelous group of verses on the prophecy of Christ.

Verse 9. This is another figurative verse, comparing the honor to be due the King of Kings to the splendor heaped upon royal persons in ancient times.

Verse 10. This verse pictures the attractions of the king's palace as being so great that any daughter would prefer it to the accommodations provided by her own people.

Verse 11. The daughter who will show a preference described in the preceding verse, will be honored by the king and will be considered beautiful by him. Transferring the thought to the time of Christ, persons who will prefer to be part of the bride of Christ over their earthly relations will be honored by Him. (See Matt. 10: 37.)

Verse 12. Tyre was an important city in a foreign country. Bringing a *gift* was a custom in ancient times by which one person recognized another person or kingdom. (See comments at Gen. 32: 13; 1 Sam. 10: 27.) The practice is referred to here to indicate the respect that was to come to the individual of whom David is writing.

Verse 13. It is indicative of the high estate of a king that his family can be equipped with the gorgeous raiment. Such a state was predicted for the king in the mind of the Spirit as he directed David in this wonderful chapter.

Verse 14. This verse continues along the same line as that in the preceding one. *Needlework* was a leading finery of old times and indicated a state of delicate dignity.

Verse 15. *Gladness* and *rejoicing* are practically the same in meaning.

The first refers especially to the state of one's mind and the second is the outward expression of it. The companions of the king's daughter will come into the palace possessed with such sentiments because of the favorable surroundings.

Verse 16. This verse could not apply literally to Christ for he had no descendants. (Isa. 53: 8 and Acts 8: 33.) But he was to have spiritual seed who were to be made *princes*. This was fulfilled when his disciples became kings according to 1 Cor. 4: 8; 1 Pe. 2: 9; Rev. 5: 10.

Verse 17. The perpetuity of Christ's reign is clearly predicted here. *For ever and ever* has the same application as Dan. 2: 44.

PSALMS 46

Verse 1. *Present help* means the assistance that does not wait for some convenient time in the future. It comes to the aid of one at the very time of his trouble.

Verse 2. Genuine confidence in the Lord will not shrink at sight of any apparent calamity. Regardless of all charges threatened by the enemy, God will protect his own.

Verse 3. Most of this verse is on the thought of the preceding one. *Selah* is explained at Ch. 3: 2.

Verse 4. Rivers have always been regarded as important creations, both for diversion and as a necessity. A river was used to water the first garden (Gen. 2: 10), the Nile River supported the land of Egypt (called "Sihor" in Isa. 23: 3), and the city of Babylon was adorned by the great Euphrates. Now we have David prophesying the most important of all rivers, the one to gladden the city of God in the Life Beyond. (See Rev. 22: 1, 2.)

Verse 5. The presence of God would assure any city of protection against harm.

Verse 6. The *heathen* refers to all people who are not citizens of the Lord's city. It does not necessarily mean they are idolaters. When such people realize the might of God's voice they are put to shame and caused to rage in their defeat.

Verse 7. A *host* may signify any large group of men. It is generally used, however, to mean the organized army of warriors of a nation. David was a man of war and very logically thought of God from that standpoint.

It would mean sure protection to have the Commander in Chief of heaven on one's side. *God of Jacob* means the God whom Jacob served.

Verse 8. Strong defines the original for *desolations* as "*consternation*." The idea is that God's great works all over the earth had filled the *heathen* with astonishment. The heathen are the people referred to in v. 6.

Verse 9. Wars have been conducted from David's time until now and the Lord knew it would be so. We do not believe that an inspired man would contradict facts. The latter half of the verse shows he means that God ended or defeated the wars aimed against the righteous people who were worshipping the true Lord of the earth.

Verse 10. David was speaking for God in this verse. *Be still* means not to be troubled, just as Jesus calmed his disciples in John 14:1. God assured his servants that he would overcome the heathen and would be exalted in all the earth.

Verse 11. This verse does not present any new thoughts. The psalmist concludes the chapter as he began it, calling for praises unto the Lord.

PSALMS 47

Verse 1. Clapping the hands was a physical expression of what was in the mind. God had shown his power over the enemy and the people had reason to rejoice.

Verse 2. *Terrible* means to be dreaded by the enemy and revered by the people of God.

Verse 3. God will use his own people as instruments to bring the nations of the world under defeat because of their wickedness.

Verse 4. *Jacob* was the father of the 12 tribes of Israel and hence the name is often used to signify the nation as a whole. God willed that his people should have the good things of the world, to make a proper use thereof. That is why it was said that he chose the inheritance for them.

Verse 5. A *shout* was an indication of triumph in battle (Ex. 32:18), therefore the term was used in that sense in this verse.

Verse 6. A shout for victory should be followed by a song of praise to the leader in the battle, for it is he who made the victory possible.

Verse 7. *King* is used in its strongest sense. The word frequently is used

with reference to secondary rulers. That is why Jesus is called King of kings. The same thought is meant by the word here as used of God. There is no ruler or power in the earth who is as great as our God. *With understanding* means to use intelligent expressions in praising God; not merely making a noise. The same idea was meant when Paul instructed Christians to sing "with the understanding" or, in such a manner that the hearers could understand what was being sung. (1 Cor. 14:15.)

Verse 8. *Throne of his holiness* means that God's throne is one from which a holy reign is administered, such as that always issuing from God.

Verse 9. *Shields of the earth* means the protection provided the people of the earth is from the *God of Abraham*, the God whom Abraham worshiped. *Together* is from *YACHAD* and Strong defines it, "properly a unit, i.e. (adverbially) unitedly." Since the *shields* or protection had been assured to the people of God, they were unitedly trusting in the divine help and were assembling together without fear. The same thought is expressed in Micah 4:4, which is a prophecy of conditions to be enjoyed in the kingdom of Christ. It is what is meant by the oft-repeated expression that "we may assemble to worship God without fear of molestation."

PSALMS 48

Verse 1. The *city* referred to is Jerusalem and the *mountain* is the government of God which is holy.

Verse 2. This verse pertains to the same subject as the preceding one. *Situation* is from an original that means "elevation." It does not refer to it from a physical standpoint, but from the high honor that God had brought unto it. *Mount Zion* was that part of the city where David had his headquarters and often called "city of David."

Verse 3. The people came to recognize the institution of the Lord as one to offer protection to the righteous.

Verse 4. *The kings* meant the prominent persons of the earth; especially those who would have harmed God's people had they not been afraid.

Verse 5. When these would-be enemies saw the safety provided for the people of God they were *troubled*. That was because they realized they would be the loser should they attempt any harm to the righteous.

Verse 6. *Pain . . . travail* means the pains accompanying childbirth. According to Gen. 3: 16 it was the decree of God that women should experience some pain in bearing children. After the sin of Eve these pains were to be increased. Any unnatural means, therefore, used to try to avoid these pains is an attempt to set aside the will of God. These pains are characterized with such terrible keenness of body and such dreadful disturbances of mind, that the situation is used to compare other conditions of unusual distress.

Verse 7. In 1 Ki. 22: 48 is an account of this very fact. The great merchandising projects of man are nothing when subjected to the power of God.

Verse 8. David meant he had seen demonstrations of the power of God, as well as having heard about it. See comments at ch. 3: 2 on meaning of *Selah*.

Verse 9. Kindness that is prompted by love is more to be desired than that performed merely from a sense of duty. All of God's acts of kindness are thus prompted.

Verse 10. This means that wherever the name of God had reached, it had been given the praise of men. *Right hand* means the things that are done by the hand of God are right.

Verse 11. *Judah* refers to the nation and *Zion* means the capitol in Jerusalem.

Verses 12, 13. This paragraph is a challenge to the world to inspect the institutions of the Lord. The people are invited to take notice of all the strong points and then report it to their generations after them. The implication is that when the world realizes the perfection of God's great works it will make them have deep respect.

Verse 14. The name *God* is from an original form that especially means supreme ruler. A Being who could provide such a bulwark as that described in the preceding paragraph is worthy to rule. Such ruling would be a safe guidance throughout life.

PSALMS 49

Verse 1. This is a call of admonishing for the world to respect the God of Israel.

Verse 2. No man is so low that the mercy of God will not come down to him. No one is so high as to be above

needing the Lord. The rich in worldly goods are as nothing without God. The poor in material wealth may find true riches in the things that God provides for all his faithful servants.

Verse 3. The *wisdom* and *understanding* that David meant he would use would come from God. On such matters he proposed to meditate. (See ch. 1: 2.)

Verse 4. This verse is quoted in Matt. 13: 35 and applied to the teaching of Jesus. It would be appropriate for David to connect his poetic and prophetic sayings with praises on musical instruments for they were his specialty. But the central idea was a prediction of the revealing through the teaching of Jesus of hitherto unknown truths.

Verse 5. *Wherefore* means "why," and David was expressing confidence that he need fear no evil effects from his enemy. That was true even when such evils were of *my heels*, which means they were so near as to be "at his heels."

Verses 6, 7. The worthlessness of worldly riches for the soul is the subject of this paragraph. Could money be used to save the soul of men it would have been unnecessary for Christ to die.

Verse 8. This verse will seem plain by noting that the antecedent of *it* is *wealth* in the preceding paragraph. And *ceaseth* is from CHADAI which Strong defines, "A primitive root; properly to be flabby, i.e. (by implication) desist; be lacking or idle." The meaning of the verse is that wealth would be for ever unable to ransom a man's soul; either before or after death of the body.

Verse 9. Man's body dies in spite of his wealth while the soul continues to exist. That proves that material wealth is not good enough to save the soul from the judgment of God.

Verse 10. All classes of humanity are subject to death. *Brutish* is from an original that means, "subject to consumption or decay," and is a characteristic of mortal man. When the human being succumbs to the universal rule of death, all his wealth must be left behind and hence cannot benefit him after death. Paul gives us this same truth in 1 Tim. 6: 7.

Verse 11. It would be no particular wrong for a man to call his land by his own name. The point David was making was on the motive that caused

him to do so. He seemed to think that future generations would make no change in their property, and that the personal name of a former owner would always be appropriate.

Verse 12. In many respects man is honored above the beasts. But in the matter of physical death he is no better than the beasts of the field.

Verse 13. The generations that follow the above foolish men do not profit by their experience. Instead, they *approve their sayings*; that is, they act and speak just as their forefathers did.

Verse 14. Mortal man is as frail as the sheep of the pasture in the presence of death. The *upright* means those whose faith in God causes them to fashion their lives in view of a better existence to come. Such shall have dominion or have the advantage over the ones who live for this world only.

Verse 15. This is one of the Old Testament passages that teach belief in another life after this fleshly one. The soul of man does not go to the *grave* as we use that word. In the Old Testament the word *sheol* is used to signify both the place for the body after death, and the unseen state of the soul. It corresponds to *hades* in the Greek New Testament. The present verse, therefore, means that God will bring the soul out of the unseen state at the general resurrection. *Selah* is explained at ch. 3: 2.

Verse 16. The lesson in this verse is that we should not envy others when they become rich. Their wealth and other apparent advantages will do them no good at last.

Verse 17. This verse verifies the comments on the preceding one. It also agrees with the statement of Paul in 1 Tim. 6: 7.

Verse 18. The worldly-rich man enjoyed his goods *while he lived*. Other men also congratulated him on his success.

Verse 19. The rich man will go the same way his fathers went. *Never see light* means he will never come back to earth to live. (Job 7: 9, 10.)

Verse 20. A man may be flooded with all these worldly honors while in this life. But if he does not use them according to *understanding* he will be no better than the beasts when the time comes from him to die.

PSALMS 50

Verse 1. The original for *God* means a supreme ruler, and that for *Lord* means the self-existent One. Both are applied to the same Being and it is affirmed that he hath spoken. *Called* means that all people of the earth are commanded to hear the divine voice from morning until night.

Verse 2. *Zion* was that part of Jerusalem where the temple was located. The government of God on earth was administered from that place. *Perfection of beauty* indicates that real beauty in its perfect form shines from that source. It is about the same thought as expressed by "beauty of holiness" in ch. 29: 2.

Verse 3. *Shall come* means that God will be in evidence. The *fire* refers to the fiery judgments that he will send on the earth.

Verse 4. *Heavens* and *earth* are used figuratively; that is, God's call was universal.

Verse 5. There was a general call to all inhabitants of the earth (v. 4), but this is a special call to the professed people of God. *Covenant by sacrifice* refers to the great institution of national service, the central item of which was the sacrifices of animals and the shedding of their blood. (See Heb. 9: 22.)

Verse 6. This verse is similar in thought to ch. 19: 1.

Verse 7. It was true that God had a covenant with his people which required material sacrifices. However, such services were not enough unless the general conduct was right. Israel had often lapsed into a mere formality with their altar service and that was displeasing to God. In other words, the ritualistic features of the covenant could not be depended upon to make up for their shortcomings in personal life. This thought will be prominent in the next several verses.

Verse 8. God was not going to charge his people with failure to offer the sacrifices or burnt offerings. They had not been short in such performances.

Verse 9. *I will not take*, etc. God was not calling for more gifts of this kind for they had brought their quota along that line.

Verses 10, 11. The covenant of sacrifices in the first place was not for the purpose of supplying a need for the Lord. The very creatures that were being offered in sacrifice had al-

ready been the possessions of the Lord.

Verse 12. Even if God were in personal need of anything, he would not look to man to supply it. The very things that man could present were the creation of God.

Verse 13. God is a spirit and has no bodily use for the food of animals. It was not for such use that animal sacrifices were ordained.

Verse 14. With this verse the psalmist begins to show what it is that God desires in addition to the material sacrifices. Generally speaking it consists in the spiritual devotions out of a pure heart.

Verse 15. If God's people are consistent in their professed service, they may call upon Him with the assurance that he will hear and bless them.

Verse 16. God does not ask unrighteous persons to proclaim his Word. If a wicked person preaches the statutes of the Lord they will still be the truth. And those who hear and accept it will be blessed. But the wicked speaker will get no reward from God.

Verse 17. When a wicked man presumes to preach the word of the Lord it is from the wrong motive. Were he moved by the right purpose he would not himself remain a wicked man. But in his inconsistency the Lord regards him as having cast the truth away.

Verse 18. The preceding verses made general charges of the one-sided lives of the people. Some specific accusations will next be made, such as theft and adultery.

Verses 19, 20. Deception and evil speaking are charged against them.

Verse 21. The longsuffering of God had been mistaken for approval of their evil lives. The time for their chastisement finally came and God was rebuking them.

Verse 22. The full severity of God's judgments had not as yet been heaped upon the people but they were warned to repent or such treatment would come.

Verse 23. Sincere praise will redound to the glory of God. Hence it is that the Lord promised salvation to those who ordered their *conversation* or manner of life according to the divine will.

PSALMS 51

General remarks. This remarkable psalm was composed in connection with the sad affair of David and

Bathsheba. The student should now read carefully the 11th and 12th chapters of 2 Samuel which will give him the historical setting. There was every indication of genuine repentance on the part of David. Furthermore, not only did he fully repent and make unreserved acknowledgment of his sin to the prophet, but God fully pardoned him. That is, he was spared all personal or bodily punishment for it, though he was required to undergo some bitter experiences and losses as a result of his sin. And while he was forgiven his sin upon repentance and confession, as good a man as David would naturally feel humiliated by the circumstance. We know that when God "forgives" he also "forgets," and that the frequent pleas in this psalm do not indicate that David needed more than once to be forgiven for the same transgression. Instead, we should regard the repeated expressions as parts of one great supplication before the throne of God for mercy, in answer to which he was fully pardoned and reinstated in the favor of Jehovah.

Verse 1. David believed that mercy from God toward a guilty man would have to be on the ground of loving-kindness and not on the merit of man. Hence we often read such expressions as the ones in this verse.

Verse 2. *Wash* was used figuratively because there was no physical ceremony to be performed in the case. The Mosaic system did have much to do in the way of literal cleansing. All figurative expressions are based on literal facts or actions, or at least on the possibility of such facts. David had such as that in his mind when he composed this verse and several to follow in the chapter.

Verse 3. *Ever before me* is rendered by Moffatt, "never out of my mind." David knew that God forgets when he forgives, but that did not prevent him from remembering the awful affair himself.

Verse 4. *Against thee only* should not be interpreted to mean that the persons involved had not been sinned against. Bathsheba had been violated and her husband had been killed at the instigation of David. The original for *only* has a meaning that is equivalent to "chiefly." God is the creator of all things and persons in the universe. For that reason, any injury done to things or persons is the same as being done to Him. David used the expression in view of that fundamental truth.