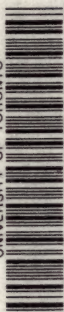


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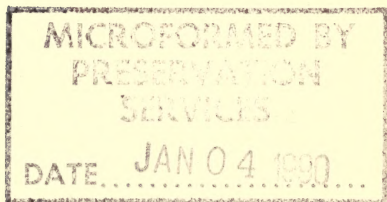
THE
WAY OF HOLINESS

AN EXPOSITION OF PSALM CXIX
ANALYTICAL AND DEVOTIONAL

BY

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P R E F A C E

THE Psalm which has been the food of so many holy souls has naturally had a large number of commentators. Its simplicity does not leave the soul to wander as in a wilderness, but lifts up the soul to contemplate the glory of God in the varied relationship of His holy covenant. It is the utterance of a heart which feels the earth round about it to be a wilderness, but yet it goes upon its way rejoicing by reason of the Divine Presence which is its own true home. So this Psalm conducts us through the wilderness of the world in the fellowship of the Incarnate Son of God. It follows upon the Hallel which celebrated the Exodus from Egypt of old. It leads to the Psalms of Ascent, and thus to the great Hallel where the people of God praise the Lord for His mercy endureth for ever.

It is only by continually using this Psalm that we can attain to the full enjoyment of its mysteries. The ear of the loving heart will be awake to its guidance. The various contributions which may be suggested by previous students of the Psalm help us to catch the sounds of a higher voice speaking in varied ways to attentive souls. It is hoped that the following notes, brief as they are, may lead some readers not merely to see new light shining out in various places like stars in the dark firmament, but also to recognise certain laws of Divine interpretation which may lead on to further applications of meditative study.

It will be seen that the references in this little treatise are generally given in a double form, first to the Section, then to the verse. It will be found that the Sectional number supplies the key note of the octave in which the verse occurs. The Sections are numbered not arithmetically but alphabetically according to the value of the letter which is the acrostic for those eight verses.

The letters of the alphabet are treated as leading us from the perfection of the Divine Way which is brought near to us by Christ to the glory of the Cross whereby Christ leads His redeemed ones that were as lost sheep wandering in the wilderness to the blessedness of the life of the heavenly home wherein they are to praise God.

It has been the custom of the Church for many ages to repeat this Psalm daily, a custom which is widely prevalent amongst ourselves in the present day.

Those who use this little book as a suggestive help will do well to use it in detail, meditating upon the several verses, and not reading them merely as an explanation. The difficulties of the Psalm are not the grammatical difficulties which have to be cleared away by literal exegesis. They are the difficulties of spiritual combination which can only be made clear by the teaching of the Spirit of God in answer to the prayer of meditative adoration. We must put ourselves in the Presence of God and pause over each verse while we say it. As the children of Israel journeying through the wilderness waited for the cloud that was above the ark to rise and then they were ready to follow, so must we in saying the Psalter, and specially in saying Ps. 119, wait for the Spirit of God to guide us. Sometimes He may leave us to remain silent. At other times He may lead us onward and open to us trains of spiritual thought which bring us much joy and strength in our journey.

He will always be found of such as diligently seek him. We must seek Him in His glory. He is always seeking us in our earthly hiding places that He may raise us to live with Him in the glory of His love.

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INTRODUCTION

THIS wonderful Psalm is the most complete of the Alphabetical Psalms. It is arranged in twenty-two sections corresponding with the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew Alphabet, and in each section there are eight verses, each of them beginning with the same letter.

With the utmost simplicity, a flow of language which is almost as unnoticeable as the calm movement of some mighty river, it combines both the strength and the depth which such a mighty river may also illustrate. It is the river of the water of life. It bears us in calm progress, the progress of man's beatification in God, which the first word of the Psalm itself proclaims. This river is the way of life. Happy is he who floats upon its tranquil surface, drinks of its pellucid stream, inhales the gentle breeze which cheers the traveller on that sacred tide, and exulting in the bright sunshine of Divine promise as the rays of heaven gild his path below, progresses joyfully to that ocean of Divine consciousness where the Love of God welcomes in the rapture of immortality all such as have learnt amidst the ordinances of covenanted grace to anticipate with holy longing the perfection of eternal life in the fellowship of the Triune glory.

Like the highest forms of organic life in the animal world, this psalm is founded upon a strictness of mechanism proportionate to the elasticity of its motion. The more we examine into its structure the more must we feel that there are contrivances and combinations which minister to our delight and edification, although they transcend our discovery. The repetitions and the slight alterations which give such freshness to each recurring phrase are not merely accidental. They recall dominating thoughts by which the mind is to feel itself enchained in the

sweet guidance of the Divine Word, not fettered so as to lose its individual liberty, but led onward in the delight of such heavenly remembrance. Sometimes it seems as if the words were ours, and Jesus put them into our lips that we might speak them as taught by Him. Sometimes the words seem to be primarily or wholly His own, so that we can only speak them as His members, partakers in Him of that life wherewith He lives as the Incarnate Word.

There are ten words which are as the vertebræ of the Psalm. One or other of them occurs in every verse of the Psalm except *ver. 122*. This verse is a remarkable verse as pointing to our Lord's mediatorial character, our Advocate with the Father, the Surety for whom Job longed. This verse, being the second verse of the sixteenth Section, might seem to mark no special point of progress. We are however to look not merely to an arithmetical division of metrical technicality. This verse divides the Psalm in a very important mystical manner, although to the superficial reader quite unnoticeable. The first portion of the Psalm which precedes this interrupting verse has one hundred and twenty-one verses. That is eleven times eleven. Now eleven is a number signifying sin, and the square of eleven indicates the healing of man's sin by the Manhood of Christ. Then the second part of the Psalm following *ver. 122* contains fifty-four verses. That is nine times six. Now nine is the number of Godhead and six is the number of worldly power. This number, therefore, tells us of Him who, having borne our sins and healed our nature, sat down upon the Throne of God in the Kingdom of the redeemed. The verse, therefore, which all commentators have noticed as being simply one by itself and violating the universal requirement of this Psalm, serves aptly to express the truth of Christ as the One Mediator between God and Man for whose appearance this verse appeals.

It is the second verse of the sixteenth Section. It comes fitly here, for this Section sets before us the Life of grace. The sixteenth Section is Section LXX., and LXX. is the number of grace.

The Alphabetical structure of many psalms seems not to be a

mere rhetorical artifice or help to the memory. There is no other psalm in which it is so complete as it is in Ps. cxix. unless it be those short Psalms, cxi., cxii.

Various mystical reasons have been invented by Jewish commentators for the failure of certain letters in other psalms. These suggestions however are arbitrary and fanciful. Nevertheless, the mere fact of such suggestion implies the probability that there was some law, some purpose, some meaning, in the alphabetical arrangement.

That idea is corroborated by the fact of there being eight Alphabetical psalms in the Psalter, eight, or if we count the eightfold Ps. cxix. as supplying eight Alphabets, we get eight or fifteen Alphabets in the Psalter.

Now these two numbers are, both of them in Holy Scripture, significant of Christ, the New Man, the regenerate Life of Humanity, as one might say, Himself the Octave of Humanity, Himself also the Ladder reaching from earth to heaven as the fifteen steps of the Temple, uniting God and man.

The idea then which the Alphabetical Acrostics seem to embody is that of order, judgment, righteousness, and the Alphabet consecrated for the human utterance of the Eternal Word represents the restoration of man to his true dignity under the Headship of the Mediatorial Word.

The first of the Alphabetical psalms follows Ps. viii., which is explicitly interpreted for us in the Ep. to the Hebrews as having reference to Christ, the New Man, triumphant over the powers of death. This is what the number "Eight" would symbolize even of itself. So then Ps. ix. which follows sets before us the judgment upon the enemies of Christ, especially the judgment upon the City of Jerusalem, which was utterly to perish. Here we have only half the Alphabet. It is continued in Ps. x. This psalm opens with an interruption of the Acrostic character, while nevertheless the necessary intervals for the omitted Acrostic letters is preserved. This seems to indicate the temporary triumph of evil over the Christian Church under the power of Antichrist, whose character these verses pourtray. Then at length the letters of the

Acrostic series begin again with a declaration of Christ arising to judgment at the end of the world.

Ps. xxxiii. is a psalm of the Resurrection. It is followed by the two psalms in which mention is made of the Angel of the Lord. In Ps. xxxiv. the Angel of the Lord is camping round the Church to protect it. In Ps. xxxv. he is pressing upon the wicked to destroy them, and Ps. xxxvi. follows with a description of Antichrist hardened in final impenitence, the enemy of God's covenanted people. Ps. xxxvii. which follows contains an appeal to the faithful not to be distressed at the insolence of the ungodly. Their end is near at hand. "The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord." Here we find the psalm rising up to the acknowledgment of the Messianic Head who shall deliver His people from this world of sin.

Now Pss. xxxiv., xxxvii. are Acrostics, enclosing Psalms of encouragement for those who rise by faith in the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They are to feel sure of the overthrow of the ungodly, and they must wait and they shall surely see the salvation of God. Messiah at His coming will restore all things to their proper order.

The two sharpest and most striking of the Alphabetical psalms are Pss. cxi., cxii. These brief but energetic utterances which tell of eucharistic feeding upon Christ and the life of the faithful in Divine conformity to Christ follow upon the great psalm of the enthronization of Christ our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, who is called in Ps. cx. to sit at God's Right Hand and exercise sovereign sway over all the nations of the earth. They are like the firing of a salute in honour of Him whom "God hath made both Lord and Christ."

Now we come to Ps. cxix. It is the psalm of God's people pressing onward in the way of perfection through the discipline of life, and it leads onward to the fifteen psalms of ascent by which we advance to the heavenly Choirs, joining with all the host of heaven in the Hallelujahs to which the Psalter looks forward as its consummation. Ps. cxviii. told of the Stone which is the Head of the Corner. We enter in through the Gate of the Lord,

and Ps. cxix. conducts us through the discipline of life while we walk in the law of the Lord, having His Temple as the Home of our hearts.

The eightfold character of this psalm is not an arbitrary prolongation of its teaching. The number "eight" sets forth the risen life of the regenerate in Christ, and we cannot carry out the teaching of this psalm except as united to the Son of Man, and called in fellowship with Him to be crowned with glory and worship. This renewal in eightfold regeneration belongs to the children of grace (7), the covenanted people of God (17). $119 = 7 \times 17$. The number (17) in Holy Scripture symbolizes God's covenanted people.

One Alphabetical psalm remains. It follows upon Ps. cxliv. as the first Alphabetical psalm followed on Ps. viii. We may notice that this is an echo and enlargement of that earlier psalm of Christ's triumph. Not only does $144 = 8 \times 18$, but the phraseology of both these psalms springs up again in Ps. cxliv. Ps. cxliv. takes up as it were the musical motive of Pss. viii. and xviii., and thus serves as an introduction to the last Septuor of Psalmody, for these last seven are really one prolonged strain of harmony like the powerful chords in the closing bars of a musical symphony, in which there are modulations of harmony, in which, indeed, the shout of earthly song dies out to this our lower sphere, passing on into the silence whither we cannot follow it now, in the heavenly glory.

Ps. cxliv. is followed by Ps. cxlv., an Alphabetical psalm. The Son of Man is exalted. All creation is in tune. The Pentateuch of Hallelujah psalms must follow. The service of the law is transformed into the sovereign joy of filial praise.

Ps. cxlv. is remarkable further, because it gives the name to the whole Psalter. The whole of the five books are called the Book of Praise-Psalms, but Ps. cxlv. is the only one to which this name is applied in its Title. It is the Alphabet in which all Praise-Psalms are perfected. It leads the perfect onward through the benediction of Divine approval to "bless God's Holy Name for ever and ever." All must join in the undying glory of the fivefold Hallelujah.

We may thus see what the place is which Ps. cxix. is intended to occupy in the Psalter, and this is of great importance, practically that we may use it aright, and moreover spiritually that we may recognize the intensity of Divine inspiration by which the psalms were not only originally composed, but also preserved and arranged in such manner as to form a complete volume of prophetic song for Christ and His Church.

We shall now also gain a hint as to the significance of each Section of the Psalm.

As each of the Hebrew letters has its numerical value, and that numerical value has its mystical significance, we shall be prepared to find that each Section of the Psalm has special reference to that spiritual meaning which belongs to its acrostic. And it will be seen that in this commentary each of the Sections is characterized not by the Hebrew letter but by the numerical equivalent as this intimates under what aspect the reference is to be regarded.

This may be illustrated before going further by a remarkable note of Delitzsch. He does not take notice of the mystical character of the letters, but he describes the Psalm as "a prayer for final deliverance, a prayer which in group \beth rises into the urgent 'How long?'" Now the number 20 which that letter indicates is the number of earnest expectation.

The Acrostic letters constitute the back-bone of this Psalm. Their spiritual import is as it were the spinal marrow.

Moreover, the verses of this Psalm are not to be taken singly. Though each be complete in itself, they all belong to one another, are essential to one another, possess a common life.

As is customary in oriental writings, they leave the reader to supply from his own mind such thoughts of likeness or contrast as may be fitting to develop the relationship between various verses. A verse may therefore suggest different meanings in different combinations, and perhaps without such combination, the mere words of some verse might seem to be a mere truism. We must seek to read it with such Divine inspiration as may put us in intelligent union of heart with the inspired Author.

It matters not to us who that author was among the sons of men. Woe be to those who in this or in any other psalm fail of that reverent awe which recognises “holy men of God uttering the words as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” and “speaking in the Spirit.”

The ten words to which attention must specially be given are as follows:—

1. תּוֹרָה. LAW. This word occurs twenty-five times. It is found in every Section except the second. There it seems as if the Word, the living, Personal, law took the place of the old law which could not make the comers thereunto perfect.

Law is the basis of all communion with God. God works not by changeful will, but by law. “He is not the Author of confusion, but of order.”—1 *Cor.* xiv. 33. The law of nature, the law of conscience, the law of the covenant, the law of grace, the law of the Spirit—all come from Him. All are truly one, for they have one source, and tend to the one end.

2. דֶּרֶךְ. THE WAY. This occurs twelve times. Once also in an evil sense, *the way of lying*.

This is the prescribed, habitual rule of life. It rises up to its full meaning, which is His glory, as being not only an habitual way of man’s desire, but a way of life, a way of power, a way of Divine acceptance, a way which separates all who walk in it from the scattered wanderers who follow earthly aims. This is the living way of Christ’s mediatorial grace, as Jesus Himself says of Himself, “I am the Way.”

3. עֵדוּת. TESTIMONY. It occurs fourteen times and in another form eight times, twenty-two times in all.

God’s way is marked by “sure and certain signs.” It was so under the old economy. It is so under the new. The word therefore for us as Christians is almost the same as “Sacraments,” taking that word in its largest signification as including all outward acts which have a spiritual power attaching to them as channels of grace, ordained by Divine authority.

4. פְּקֻדִים. PRECEPTS. This occurs twenty-one times.

A precept is something entrusted to us to keep. It seems to appeal to the intuition of love, that we may know how to keep it. The life of Christ is our example, and we are to interpret the precepts of God by observing His conduct, that we may regulate our lives on all occasions in accordance with His. The law enjoins. The testimonies assist. The precepts encourage us that we may not only keep from sin, but advance in holiness, so that "Christ may be truly formed within us." "We have the mind of Christ." We must "grow up unto Him in all things for He is the Head" of the Body.

5. דְּבַר. DECREE OR STATUTE. Twenty-one times, and once besides in another form.

The great Decree of the Psalter is the Eternal Decree of the Divine Sonship. This is a decree inherent by Divine utterance in the very Substance of the Godhead. It is the relationship wherein the Father eternally contemplates His Only-begotten Son. It is set before us at the beginning in Ps. ii. and the Son of God comes into the world, proclaiming Himself in accordance with this Decree as co-equal with the Father. All men are to honour the Son as they honour the Father." This fundamental Decree is the eternal Expression of the Divine consciousness by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is the foundation of the physical creation, for all things were created by the Word and for Him. So also it is the foundation of the moral creation of man, created in the image of God. So also now it is the foundation of Christ's mediatorial Sovereignty, the new creation of man in Christ Jesus for the accomplishment of all good works. By this Decree the Eternal Son is "the Beginning, the First Principle of the Creation of God." (*Rev.* iii. 14.)

This Decree has to be recognized by us by faith, for the nature of God, the object of our faith, is disclosed to us not merely as a sublime mystery up in heaven, for then we could not ascend to contemplate it with personal interest, but as the living principle of a communicated relationship. We are called to share in the Divine

Sonship as being incorporated into Christ's Humanity. The relationships under which the Godhead exists eternally are the foundation of all our knowledge of God, and of all gifts of grace which we receive *from* God, and so also of all action by which we draw near *to* God. "Eternal Life is given to us in the Son," 1 *John* v. 11. and similarly "no man can come unto the Father but by the Son." *John* xiv. 6.

All the acts of our spiritual life are therefore the outcome of this Decree. All the ministrations of the Spirit in the Body of Christ are the echoing onward of the Eternal Decree so that the Consubstantial Sonship of the Only begotten quickens all the relationships, powers, and duties in which we as Christians have to do with Christ our Mediatorial Head.

God must in all things behold His Son in us, the action of His Son in what we do. Otherwise our conduct whatever may be its natural excellence cannot have acceptance with Him. We must in all things reverence the Divine Personality of Christ our Head as lifting us up above every consideration of the natural creation. Otherwise we cannot rise above the lower creation to abide in Christ.

6. מִצְוָה. COMMANDMENT. This occurs twenty-two times.

A commandment has close reference to some particular detail which God requires men to perform. The previous words have had reference to the general principles of the Covenant. This word points to special observances by which they must keep the covenant ever in mind.

7. מִשְׁפָּט. JUDGMENT. This occurs twenty-three times.

There is not only a final judgment awaiting us all. God in His Providence is dealing with us judicially from day to day. The events of life, its failures, its developing opportunities are ordered by God with a view to the perfection of His Saints. We are bound to recognize God's justice acting towards us in love for our sanctification, to separate us from the evil world whenever any trouble befalls us. We may look for God in His mercy to

reward us for any good that we seek to do for Him by calling us onward to the accomplishment of something better. It will often happen that God calls us onward to some higher exercise of faith and love, by giving us something to suffer when we perhaps thought that He would reward us by giving us some temporal advantage. We must feel the goodness of God's wise judgment whether things turn out as we ourselves desire or no. The true judgment of Almighty God is not exhausted in the immediate issues of our continued success or failure. God requires us to be looking up to Him, with confidence that, if we are loving Him, all will be eventually overruled so that we may be partakers of His love eternally.

Moreover God is exercising judgment upon the powers of darkness while He is leading His saints to their triumph. At Calvary the Prince of this world was judged by the manifestation of the Divine righteousness of Him whose heel he bruised. The same process is going on in various minor ways even now. God who judged Satan by handing Job over to his power, is exercising judgment still upon all who oppose His Church. The manifestation of the faith of the elect is the judgment of the enemy. Thus must we often feel encouraged amidst seeming failure. The victory of faith cannot fail.

8. **דְבַר**. WORD. This occurs twenty-three times.

This is the Divine utterance which sums up everything. It finds its consummation in the Incarnation. The DECREE speaks rather of the relation of the Father to the Son. The WORD tells of the relation of the Son to the Father. He is said to come forth from the mouth of the Most High. By Him the Father created the worlds. He is the sustaining utterance by which the laws of the created world are still kept in their stability. He by the Holy Spirit spake through the prophets by external control. He has taken to Himself our human nature by the power of the Holy Ghost, and in that nature He acts personally as a Divine Person, using the faculties of our human nature. "The Word was made flesh." He is the fulfiller of the law, for everything in the law was

typical of what He would do as man in his struggle with Satan. In our human nature He suffered and perfected it. In our human nature He was exalted and glorified it. He takes us into the fellowship of His glorified humanity that we by the power of His grace and Holy Spirit may suffer so as to glorify God and to be glorified with Himself and in Himself eternally.

The Word of God in its outward appearance in the Old Testament is the verbal utterance of God's will, but partaking of the emptiness of human expression. It is the outward form possessing a hidden life by the quickening inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Thus the Word of God came to chosen men of old. The Holy Ghost spake by the prophets. Nevertheless the Personal Word did not supersede their personality. The Personal Word at the Incarnation spake no longer merely through inspired men. He spake by the power of the Holy Ghost in the truth of His Divine personality. He dwells in us, making us His members that we as Christians may live with His life. The Word of old was external and compulsory. Now the Word dwells in us with spiritual regenerating power and suasive guidance to illuminate and sanctify.

9. אִמְרָה. PROMISE. It occurs nineteen times.

In the English versions this is rendered as the last, but it is distinct from it. If rendered PROMISE the distinction is preserved. THE WORD points more immediately to the Personal Word. The PROMISE points rather to the results which flow from the Divine Covenant; the Message rather than the Speaker.

10. אֱמוּנָה. FAITHFULNESS. This word, descriptive of the Divine quality, occurs only five times.

The name JEHOVAH occurs twenty-four times.

N.B. In this commentary the references in Roman letters refer to the Section of the Psalm, in which the verse occurs which is indicated by the Arabic numeral following.

The Section is numbered according to the numerical value of its acrostic letter. Thus the eleventh Section is Section XX.

SECTION I

Vers. 1-8

PERFECTION

THE BLESSEDNESS OF A PERFECT LIFE IN CHRIST

Happy are those that are perfect in the way : *It is a life of progressive obedience :*
Who walk in the law of the Lord.
Happy they who guard His testimonies : *sustained by covenanted ordinances:*
They seek Him with their whole heart. *quicken'd by personal devotion :*
They also work no iniquity : *preserved in sinlessness :*
They walk in His ways. *in the fellowship of the grace of Christ.*

THE REQUIREMENT OF GOD

Thou hast ordained Thy precepts, *We must be always watchful.*
That we should observe them diligently.
O that my ways were made firm *Aspiration for renewing grace.*
So as to observe Thy decrees.

THE SECURITY OF LIFE WITH GOD

So shall I not be ashamed *Deliverance from shame at the last day.*
While I have respect to all Thy commandments.
I shall thank Thee with uprightness of heart, *Eucharistic joy when our discipline is complete.*
When I learn Thy righteous judgments.

RESOLUTION

I will observe Thy decrees, *Self-surrender to the covenant of grace.*
O forsake me not utterly.

I. HAPPY *Twice, i. vers. 1, 2.*

The blessedness is that of those who are perfect in the way. It is the seventeenth occurrence of this word in the Psalter. Happy (1) in renewal, and (2) by walking true to it!

PERFECT *Twice, i. 1.; x. 80.*

Section I. naturally speaks of perfection. This blessedness belongs to perfection according to the Divine *call*, whereby the Redeemer leads us to our heavenly consummation.

Section X. speaks of the *moral perfection*, whereby we correspond with that call.

Ps. xv. asked the question:—"Lord who shall rest upon Thy Holy Hill?" The answer was:—"He that walketh perfectly." Ps. cxix. is the description of the way leading to that Holy Hill, along which the perfect are to walk.

Ps. xix. said,—“The law of the Lord is perfect.” Now Ps. cxix. says, —“Blessed are the perfect who walk in the law of the Lord.”

“Noah was a righteous man, perfect in his generations: Noah walked with God.” *Gen. vi. 9.*

God commanded Abram,—“Walk before Me, and be thou perfect.” *Gen. xvii. 1.*

The Paschal lamb was to be “a male, perfect, a year old.” *Ex. xii. 5.*

Every sacrifice must be “perfect,” or as it is frequently translated, “without blemish.”

The people of Israel were all of them charged to be “perfect with the Lord their God.” *Deut. xviii. 13.*

Moses praises the Rock of Israel:—"His work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity: just and upright is He" (*Deut. xxxii. 4*). These words set before us a summary of Ps. cxix., for God requires us to be like Himself.

God requires us to meet Him with perfectness as He meets us. So David sang in his great psalm of deliverance (xviii. 24, 26,

31, 33; 2 *Sam.* xxii.) "I was perfect with Him . . . With a perfect man Thou wilt be perfect."

Job was a perfect man (*Job* i. 8) and his afflictions were intended of God to manifest his perfection. The blessedness of the perfect does not imply their exemption from Divine discipline, but rather their fitness to be led onward by Satanic trials and worldly affliction to higher perfection.

The blessedness of Divine joy is expressed by another word (*vid. ver.* 12). It is reserved for another state. The blessedness here spoken of is the Divine favour leading the faithful onward with secure progress to that consummation.

The *perfection* here spoken of is perfection *in viâ*, *i.e.* perfection of earthly life in probation.

The way is the true Way, *i.e.* the Body of Christ. "He is the Way" (*John* xiv.). *Natural* perfection avails nothing without *mystical* perfection, *i.e.* sacramental union with Christ by grace. Natural gifts do not lead us onward so as to become nearer to God. However much they may be developed by culture, they do not lift us up into a higher *order* of life. There is therefore no such thing as moral progress by nature alone. The true, *the living way* is that by which we come into closer fellowship with God, and higher experience of the Divine Nature. With such a Divine capacity of progress, our moral life is at a standstill when left to itself. There is no way of natural formation which can span the gulf between the finite and the infinite. We may by natural discipline cure some defects of conduct, but not the inherent corruption. If we are to rise to a higher order of life at the end of the way, there must be a Divine power of life operative within us to lead us onward in the way from the very outset.

WAY Occurs eight times as meaning this divine way, the way of regeneration, i. 1, 3; ii. 14; iv. 27, 30, 32; v. 33, 37; four times in a neutral sense, the ordinary way of life, i. 5.; iv. 26; viii. 59; ccc. 168; once of evil, the way of lying, iv. 29.

It does not occur in its sacramental sense after v. 37.

We may notice the absence of this word from Section III. That Section contemplates the Divine Life in itself, and not in

our progressive experience of it. The stages of progress are therefore outside of its scope.

We may notice also that the devil omits this word in quoting the Divine promise to Christ. The Angel of God will be near at hand to protect us if we are walking in the way which God has ordained for us. If we leave the way which God ordains, walking in one that we choose for ourselves, we leave the protection which God has provided.

This *way* is indeed "the way of the tree of life" (*Gen.* iii. 24), which our first parents were not permitted to tread after they had by sin fallen into a state of death. But by His promise to Abram, God called the chosen people into the *way*, giving them the fence of the law that they might walk perfectly in His covenant, and now He gives us boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by "*a new and living way* which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His Flesh" (*Heb.* x. 19, 20). The sword of the Cherubim held our first parents back, but now the veil of Cherubic exclusion has been rent in twain, and we are called to draw near, for Jesus, the second Adam, has conquered the enemy who held us captive. He has been welcomed as the only begotten Son returning to His Father's glory in our very flesh, alive from the dead. He has taken His place at the Right Hand of God, where the Cherubim of old spread their wings over the mercy seat. In virtue of His own triumph He calls us to Himself, for "God hath set Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His Blood, to declare His righteousness" to all, whether Jew or Gentile, that He may show forth His righteousness in Himself and communicate His righteousness as a living power of resurrection to everyone that believeth in Jesus (*Rom.* iii. 25, 26).

As then our Forerunner has entered into His glory, having conquered Satan, we must follow in the strength which He gives. "He goes forth conquering and to conquer," and we must take up our Cross and follow Him in the continuous exercise of victory over the enemy, who, although he is crushed, is nevertheless continually seeking to work our hurt. But God will tread

down Satan under our feet shortly, if we follow bearing the Cross of Jesus. This is *the highway* through the habitation of dragons, and it is the *way of holiness*. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads" (*Isa.* xxxv. 8, 9).

THE LAW *Twenty-five times.* It occurs in every section except Section ii.

The Blessing is given to those whose life is active in obedience. The recognition of God's authority is the basis of all true service. Therefore at the outset we have "the law of the Lord." We walk not in the Way, unless we walk *according to the law*, "striving lawfully."

After this first announcement of "the Law of the Lord" it occurs *twenty-four times, twenty-five times in all.*

Twenty-three times, "Thy law." *Once*, ix. 72, "The law of Thy mouth."

Three times, "I forget not Thy law," viii. 61, l. 109, cc. 153.

Three times, "My love is in Thy law," xl. 97, lx. 113, ccc. 163.

Three times, "Thy law my delight," x. 77, xxx. 92, cccc. 174.

Five times, of the evil "who forget Thy law," vii. 53, xx. 85, lxx. 126, lxxx. 136, c. 150.

Christ is *the Way*. He is the fulfilling of the Law, giving it vital power, so that it is not merely a Pattern to be imitated, but a living Way. As we tread in this way of obedience we gain fresh strength. He in whose steps we tread is very Man personally united with the very Godhead from whom the law comes. He acts towards us as God giving the Law and as Man giving renewal to our corrupt nature, so that we may walk in its perfection.

Ps. cxix. develops the praise of the Law which is more briefly sketched out in Ps. xix. He whose glory is symbolized in the outward heavens by the sun as the bridegroom of the universe shows his own greater glory as the Bridegroom of the moral universe, and the operations both of nature and grace are ruled by His unchanging will. "He hath given them a law which shall not be broken." Both in nature and grace He is the Author of order, not of confusion (*1 Cor.* xiv. 33), and the Law is unchangeable because of His unchanging will.

WALK *Three times, i. 1, 3. Hithp., vi. 45.*

To walk in the Law of the Lord is to walk "in God's ways." In walking thus we gain a real fellowship with God, and this sets us free from the bondage of the world. To serve the Lord is perfect freedom. It is the law of love. God loves us and therefore He calls us to walk in this law that we may be worthy of His love. We cannot keep this law save by loving God. Love rejoices to find God so near while we walk in His ways. Love sets us free from all bondage ; for if we walk in God's love we cannot desire anything but what God desires, and our desires rise up to the greatness of God's purposes. Thus are we lifted up above the entanglements of this lower sphere of worldly error and feebleness.

2. HAPPY, *vid. ver. 1.*

The *Blessedness* attributed to man in this psalm is true human blessedness, the blessedness for which man was originally created. The happiness proper to *our own order* of life must not be confounded with the *Divine* Blessedness to which we are called by grace, and yet inasmuch as man was created in God's image to hold fellowship with God, we cannot have that human happiness without the fellowship of the Divine. The loss of God's presence was the source of all our misery, and we cannot be happy unless it is restored. But then it cannot be restored unless we walk in the way which God originally marked out for us as the moral condition of our wellbeing. If we use the life of God restored to us in Christ, so as to walk according to the *moral law* of our being, then we gain the happiness which God intended us to acquire. And then we also acquire the *supernatural* beatitude which God provides for us as new creatures in Christ. The perfection of the human capacity of happiness is not superseded by the spiritual enjoyment of the beatitude of God, but it is the *necessary condition* of our attaining to share that Beatitude.

It is *only* as being *perfected* in Christ, as members of *His Humanity*, that we can have the true and proper *happiness of man*. All other happiness is only accidental, deceitful, transitory.

And thus it is only by rising up to the moral happiness of our nature as perfected in Christ that we become capable of receiving the supernatural, Divine Beatitude which Christ gives to His members.

HIS TESTIMONIES *Fourteen times* : i. 2 ; iii. 22, 24 ; vi. 46 ; viii. 59 ; x. 79 ; xxx. 95 ; lx. 119 ; lxx. 125 ; xc. 138 ; c. 146, 152 ; ccc. 167, 168. *Nine times*, in another form, ii. 14 ; iv. 31 ; v. 36 ; xx. 88 ; xl. 99 ; liii ; lxxx. 124 ; xc. 144 ; cc. 157.

Twenty-three times in all.

The *testimonies* are the sacramental signs of the covenant. If we would guard His Testimonies, we must realise the efficacy of His voice speaking to us therein. "Adest verbum et fit sacramentum." "They are sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's goodwill towards us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in Him."

Without them the Law would not be a *covenant*, and without them the Law could not give Life. The *old* Law had testimonies of God's covenanted favour, but as the old Law could not give life, the testimonies were beggarly elements. They were, however, types of the *life-giving testimonies* of the *new* Covenant which God makes with us in the Body of Christ.

They must be "guarded" by us as containing a living virtue of Divine operation which demands recognition on our part, lest it be profaned and lost, for if we forfeit its grace it must turn to our condemnation.

GUARD *Ten times* : law, 33, 34 ; commandments, 115 ; testimonies, 2, 22, 129 ; precepts, 56, 69, 100 ; decrees, 145.

SEEK HIM *Five times* ; i. 2 ; ii. 10 ; vi. 45 ; xxx. 94 ; cc. 155.

The care we take in the reception of God's *testimonies* will depend upon the diligence with which we seek *Him*. They are means of personal intercourse between ourselves and God. We cannot gain this virtue except by personal approach to God who acts *through* these, His outward channels of communication. The virtue of the sacraments is not an abstract essence derived from God by external appointment, but a personal action of God's own

substantive power. He acts towards us, and we have to apprehend His action by faith. "Lift up your hearts: we lift them up unto the Lord." God must be the personal object of our desire if we would profit by His sacraments, not any mere gift of supposed spiritual excellence coming from Him. The sacraments must not send us back from Him enriched with a spiritual life of our own, but as we "seek Him" in them, we must "abide in Him" the more indissolubly by partaking of them. "If ye abide in Me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" (*John* xv. 7). Thus seeking Him we are established in "the Divine nature" (*2 Pet.* i. 4). Only so can we truly love Him.

THEIR WHOLE HEART *Six times*: i. 2; ii. 10; v. 34; viii. 38; lx. 69; c. 145.

Fourteen times the word "heart."

The whole life of obedience is a life of love. Otherwise it would be a slavery. The old covenant was "the covenant of Hagar gendering to bondage" (*Gal.* iv. 24). Nevertheless all the while God was longing for the gift of man's heart. That gift could not be until Christ came. Christ gave Himself wholly to God, and He enables us to give ourselves to God by the power of His grace. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (*Rom.* v. 5).

3. The character of the perfect.

NO WICKEDNESS

Wickedness is the opposite to God's law. It is perverseness, turning aside. The impulse of God's ways is a loving power bearing the loving heart straight onward in conformity with itself. The conformity of the life to God is not a mere accident, which depends upon the agreement of the human will. It is a Divine controlling life to which the loving heart yields itself up. This verse is a summary of St John's First Epistle. "He that abideth in Him sinneth not."

4. THOU HAST COMMANDED *Twice, i. 4; xc. 138.*

God's first command was respecting the tree of which our first parents were not to eat. We must be diligent in obeying these commands whereby that first sin of human nature may be healed. Unless we seek in the first place the divinely commanded healing, we cannot really obey any other commands, even though we perform the letter of them.

The Psalmist recognises God's command as the root of perfection here, and again in Section XC. when he speaks of the Divine life, he speaks of God commanding His testimonies in righteousness and faithfulness. The perfection of God's action gives power to man's perfect obedience.

THY PRECEPTS *Twenty-one times.*

These precepts are the counsels of Christ's teaching. They are "entrusted to us as a charge" (*Dr. Kay*). Christ commands us to imitate Him, taking up our Cross. He is Himself the Personal Manifestation of that law which we are to obey. We obey by taking up our Cross and following Him. We must observe diligently the character of Him whom we are to follow.

The old law was given by a voice from the Mount, but the people saw no form. It was a law of prohibition. The new law is manifested in the personal example of the Lawgiver whom we are to follow. It is a law of positive action. The old law was to check the inherited corruption of human nature. The new law is to develop the communicated energies of the Divine nature whereby we are sanctified.

We must "observe" God's precepts. The word is very nearly the same in its meaning as the word "guard" in the foregoing verse. They are both of them translated by the one English word "keep." However the word "guard" seems to imply a treasure received, which we must not lose, and the word "keep" implies the carefulness with which we are to cherish an injunction. We have to guard the grace of Christ as a *gift*. We have to keep the likeness of Christ as a *duty*. We have to guard what God

has given. We have to keep His promise that we may obtain what He *means to give*.

In order to observe God's precepts we must seek to have "the same mind which was in Christ Jesus" (*Phil.* ii. 5), learning of Him for He is "meek and lowly of heart": and so shall we "find rest to our souls" (*Matt.* xi. 29).

5. O THAT MY WAYS WERE MADE FIRM *Four Times. Niph.* i. 5; *Polel.* x. 73; xc. 90; *Hiph.* lxxx. 133.

If we would walk in His ways, our ways must be made firm like rock-hewn steps. i. God has *made firm* the earth with a law which cannot be broken (*ver.* 90). ii. He has *made firm* our physical nature (*ver.* 73). iii. If we had not separated ourselves from Him in Adam He would have *made firm* our moral being. The unsteadfastness of our will arises from our having broken away from Personal submission to the will of God. If we had continued in Him, we should have been stablished with the firmness of the Divine Will. As we lost His indwelling presence, our will is carried away by the changeful impulses of our earthly nature.

iv. This unsteadfastness of the will can only be healed by the communication of the Life of Christ, God and man. His will always was to do His Father's good pleasure. The fixity of His will sustained by the hypostatic union so as to be always true to the Divine Will, was manifested by His endurance of all the temptations wherewith Satan assailed Him. He makes firm our steps, restoring to us the Holy Spirit in the regenerate life, so that the vanity of the world may not overthrow us (*ver.* 133). Section LXXX. is the Section of regeneration.

Now that His Glorified Humanity is extended by sacramental agency so as to take us into vital union with Himself, He would have us bring every thought into subjection to His service, and so shall our will be increasingly stablished in union with His own will as our Head. The help which He gives to our will is not a mere external encouragement, but an interior invigoration, unifying us with Himself. So we are "rooted and built up in Him and stablished in the faith" (*Col.* ii. 7).

The temptations of earthly life showed the perfection of unity wherein Christ dwelt with God. The like temptations are necessary for us in order to bring the strength of the Christ-life into operation throughout our own weak natures. No temptation can be too strong for the will of Christ to conquer. Therefore also we must feel that in every temptation "He is able to succour us when we are tempted." So shall our uncertain volition attain to the solidarity of His Divine perfections. The law of our moral habits will be made firm by grace when Christ will be perfectly "formed within us" (*Gal. iv. 19*). If we really desire that stedfastness for which the Psalmist aspires, we must be careful not to trifle with Christ's renewing presence. A trivial surrender to sin in forgetfulness of Him will involve as a moral consequence such a loss of supernatural support as cannot be regained without lengthened and severe discipline, but every effort to be true to Christ will equally involve an increase of supernatural vigour in union with Him which will surpass our highest expectations.

In the Heavenly Jerusalem built upon Christ as its living principle there will be a stability far exceeding any stability of this present world. In this world there is the fixity of God's law from age to age, but it will come to an end. In the Holy City every will will be perfectly unified in the will of God through Christ to make the glory of God triumphant throughout eternity.

TO KEEP THY DECREES *Twenty-one times.* Once in another form, "decretal,"
ii. 16.

These statutes or decrees are the laws which God has ordained for the kingdom of heaven. The foundation Decree is the Royalty of Christ. "I will preach the decree whereof the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son: this day have I begotten Thee. Desire of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (*Psa. ii. 7-9*).

6. SO SHALL I NOT BE ASHAMED *Three times*, i. 6; vi. 46; x. 80. Also the verb occurs, x. 78; *Hiph.* iv. 31; lx. 116. *Six times in all.*

To be ashamed of Christ now, involves shame in His Presence when He shall be revealed. But if we suffer shame for His Name now, having respect to His commandments we shall be glorified with Him eternally.

HAVE RESPECT *Three times.* *Hiph.* i. 6; ii. 15; iii. 18.

If the heart is set to look upward to Christ and the things which are at God's Right Hand, there will be no sense of shame arising from worldly disgrace or disfavour. The heart follows the eye: and the soul, while we walk firmly with Christ, rejoices in His approval, whatever may be the outward result of our stedfastness in keeping His commandments.

The real shame of the soul is when the world draws us away from that allegiance.

Even a slight shame if it is borne for Christ's sake is a great glory. The shame is measured by our littleness, but the glory is measured by the greatness of Him whose love is shown forth in our acceptance. We often fall under trifling temptations, because we see this smallness and it seems to us as if the offering were not worthy of Christ's acceptance; but He acts towards us in the fulness of His own love, and He who is Infinite accounts nothing small which we can either do or suffer for the love of Him.

THY COMMANDMENTS *Twenty-one times.* *Once:* "The c. of my God," lx. 115
Twenty-two times in all.

Christ recognises the fulness of love in every act of our obedience, and we must recognise the fulness of Divine Authority in every act of His command. These are "directions issued with paternal authority" (*Kay.*) Let us seek in every thing to act in childlike love. How different is the obedience rendered to an abstract authority from the watchful delight of a child seeking to do whatever it knows to be a father's will! When we think what our Father has done, we shall be strengthened to do whatever He requires of us.

The world repudiates the keeping of commandments for God's sake, even when it may see the fitness of the action in itself. To us the reason for every action must be that God has commanded it, whether we see the inherent fitness of the act or no. Enough it will even be for us, that God will be pleased with our doing it. In obeying we come into fellowship with His Word. It is "the commandment of my God." That is the answer of the faithful to all the powers of the world. So must we bid them depart from us, as in Section LX.

In truth we must indeed remember that whatever is fitting to be done, gains its fitness, not from the nature of things, but from God's *command*. The Word of God created all things and created all relationships in the world. Things are right to be done because God has *commanded* them to be done, whether by outward legislation or by our own intuition of fitness. God created the world upon certain moral principles, so that the most obvious duties result from His origination power. Moral duties had no existence antecedent to God's creation of the relationships which necessitate them. The animal races do not share the duties of mankind, for they have not been created so as to know them. Man was created in God's image so that his moral conduct might exhibit the operations of that righteousness and love which belongs to God our Father. Nevertheless the distance between the brute's intelligence and ours is but small as compared with the distance between our finite conceptions and the infinite purposes of the Creator. What we see to be fitting is evident to us only because God enlightens our understanding to see the given duty. God has created us with certain natural powers of perception fitted for our guidance in our own immediate state. We cannot see beyond what His illumination exhibits. Moral truths have their eternity from God's eternity, but except in so far as we are created in God's Image, all the relationships of the created world are accidental. We must therefore look to the commandments of God as being altogether beyond the reach of our judgment. By the moral truth which God has enjoined upon us in our probationary state, He is preparing us for closer

fellowship with His own eternal Being. The decrees of God's eternity altogether surpass our scrutiny. That small knowledge of His works which we possess must not make us self-sufficient as if we were capable of judging as to higher spheres of existence. By fulfilling God's commandments our moral sense will be trained and developed. Thus it will open out in future worlds to contemplate with joy the infinite decrees of the Eternal Love.

If our intellect supposes we could order a universe better than God's commandments, we must remember that that would be a different universe and God's commandments are leading us on through the discipline of ignorance to an infinity of joy which is beyond all imagination. The relationships of earth with all the difficulties attaching to our ignorance, shall expand at length into a brightness of Divine knowledge of which we should not be capable had we not passed through that moral trial. Humility must subdue impatience, and love must sustain obedience, so shall we become fitted for our part in another world.

We shall indeed be ashamed if we have trusted to our own imaginations rather than to God's commandments. Better it is to feel our ignorance and to obey with childlike hearts than to give heed to the proud reasonings of our finite apprehension and perish in the neglect of duties purely and simply as they come to us from God!

7. I WILL THANK THEE *Twice, i. 7; viii. 62.*

In these Sections of Perfection and Regeneration the Psalmist looks forward to the glorious issue. The confidence of earthly probationary obedience shall be perfected in the Eucharist of heavenly joy. Then shall every one of God's commandments be followed by the due recompense of reward. We shall receive in the body the things done in the body whether they be good or bad. The reward of eternity is not a gift bestowed from without, but an experience and manifestation of the life of glory. The power of grace will develop our human nature according as that grace has been exercised during the hidden period of our probation.

UPRIGHTNESS OF HEART *Three times. Substant. i. 7. Verb Piel. lxx. 128. Adject. xc. 137.*

God's *judgments* (*ver. 137*) and *precepts* (*ver. 128*) are *upright*. So must our *heart* be, if we would keep them and experience their goodness. Our heart must see God's goodness shining forth in all His government of the world. "What I know not, teach Thou me." God has revealed to us enough of His own Self to demand such *uprightness of heart* in loving Him. If any matter in God's government occasion us any perplexity, we must remember that we could have no conceptions of good save what God has infused into us and therefore we must feel sure that He is capable of accomplishing good in ways that are beyond our understanding.

We must thank God for the great purposes of love which He sets before us and rejoice with simplicity of self-surrender while we trust to His guidance.

JUDGMENTS *Twenty-three times.*

The Divine approval is a *judgment* whereby God searches into the character of His servants. God does not receive the *work* of His servants merely as a finished result. He cannot accept it until He has tested the *character* of the worker and the spirit wherein the work has been done. He only accepts the work as implying His acceptance of the worker. The thing done is in itself valueless to Him. He may test us by success or by failure. He wants to see that we are looking simply to His Love. We upon our part must learn His *judgments* by accepting whatever issue of events He may be pleased to ordain. Our perfection does not consist in universal success, but in the absence of any thought, in what we do, save the thought of pleasing Him. Then our ways will be made firm, for we shall in all things find our only satisfaction in knowing that we have done what God commanded.

By all that God gives us to do, God is drawing us nearer to Himself. The perfection of man consists in his being thus taken into God, acting more and more in the exercise of God's love, until he attains to love as he is loved. Then does he become one with God for ever.

Jesus could say that He was always doing God's will. The first utterance recorded of his boyhood is this, "I must be doing my Father's business" (*Luke* ii. 49). His last utterance told of His work being "finished," so that nothing lacked. *John* xix. 30. Then He could commend His Spirit into the Father's Hands.

So must we come to God, through the various stages of earthly discipline. Each stage must find us thanking God for the judgment of His righteousness whereby He has *rewarded* us for the *past* in the very fact of *calling us onward* to the *future*. The result of all true work for God must be to make us thankful that we shall be able to serve God for the future *better* than before, more simply, more closely, more intelligently, more absorbingly, until the perfect union is attained for which our souls are longing, and then "we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is."

RIGHTEOUS JUDGEMENTS *Six times*, i. 7; viii. 62; x. 75; l. 106; cc. 160; ccc. 164.

It is Divine *righteousness* which must be developed within us by the discipline of God's judgments. They come forth from the Divine Righteousness and they perfect us therein.

God is Love, eternal Love. Love expresses the eternal union of the Father and the Son. By that word we express the perfection of the relationships wherein the Three Divine Persons dwell together eternally. Without relationships there can be no love. There must be a mutual action as the expression of love, and that action must be worthy both of the Giver and the Receiver. As God is infinite and eternal, so must His Act of Love be Infinite and Eternal. That Act is the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father to the Son and reflectively from the Son to the Father. So is the Holy Ghost the Bond of the Eternal Trinity and these Three Persons being Coeternal and Coequal are One God. Without *Personality* the Godhead would be an unintelligent abstraction. Without *Love* the Godhead would be a blank selfish Monad. Without *equality* of Persons the Subordinate Persons would not be worthy of the Father's Love nor capable of reciprocating it. Love demands an object whereon to rest without belittling itself

by any unworthy self-surrender to the object who is loved. The Infinite Love of an Infinite Being is not an exhausting communication of sentiment but the exhaustless communication of the whole substance of living energy, which gives itself wholly forth and yet remains unimpaired. In such an act of Infinite Love the Father gives Himself to the Son, and in like manner receives from the Son the Love which is the due acknowledgment of Fatherhood. The coming forth of that Love eternally from the Father is the eternal cause of the Son's life. The Son is begotten in the unity of the Eternal Spirit. He is the Personal Partner of Divine Life in whom the Father finds His satisfaction. This is what we mean when we speak of the the Eternal Generation of the Son. "As the Father has Life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." That gift does not belong to any past moment of time, perpetuated until now because never withdrawn. It is a gift *outside of Time*. It has no measure but the Eternity and Infinity of God. It is the Act of the Divine consciousness whereby God contemplates His own Infinite perfections not with the stupidity of miserly self-satisfaction or the pride of conscious superiority, but as the living treasury of holy joy which He delights to impart, and His own perfections would be felt to be wanting if there were not a *Person capable of receiving them* in their fulness. God cannot part with his perfections so as to cease to live in the fulness of His Glory. His perfections would lose their greatest glory if He did not call forth a Being from His very Self equal to Himself, rejoicing along with Himself in all that He is.

In the mutual consciousness of the Father and the Son, the Divine Nature assumes throughout eternity a Relationship of Personal *activity* without any change or partition of Substance. The Divine Substance is infinite, eternal, indissoluble. This is what we speak of when we say that the Holy Ghost *proceeds* eternally from the Father and the Son. The Eternal Action of the Blessed Trinity does not exhaust itself by the Generation of the Son, but in this threefold activity it acquires its completeness, so that there can be *no fourth personality*, no additional relationship, conceivable

within the Being of God without disturbing the *Triune* Perfection in which that mystery is *consummated*.

God who is thus complete in Himself is the Creator of all things, and so in His working He is Triune. His works, all of them, bear the impress of His Triune Being, and if God were to call forth any relationships among His creatures which did not bear the stamp of His Triune energy, these relationships would be a sphere of disorder which He must regard with abomination. The higher the forms of relationship, the more must every created relationship image forth the relationships of the Creator.

As then God is Love, love must be the ruling principle of all created intelligences.

What do we mean by love?

It is love whereby we exist not for ourselves but for others. It is love whereby we rejoice in contemplating others' perfections as truly as if they were our own. It is love whereby we acknowledge our obligations to others and seek to make return to them for all the good we have received.

This love within the limits of personal experience is a sentiment which fills the heart, but the intelligence makes that sentiment of love spread far and wide. We cannot dissociate ourselves from the human race, and hence we cannot but recognise the claims of all the human race upon our love. We cannot—that is to say, we are conscious of being wrong whenever we do. Although man in the shrivelled state of fallen humanity may make himself the centre of everything and treat all with indifference or hatred which is beyond the reach of his own self-interest, yet the heart must confess that there is a sense of unity involving the *moral obligation* of love which binds us to the whole human race. In the human race we see not empty masks imaging forth ourselves, but void of claim upon our regard. They are the *totality* out of which we have emerged, and we perish in the void, if we seek to live as individuals for ourselves alone.

The *social law* which binds creation is the impress of the *love of God*. As God is love, He requires His creatures to live in love. Otherwise they die. Love is the fulfilling of the law. When we

speak of the glory in which the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity abide, we call it love. That love is the Life of God. When we speak of the *image of that love* as binding together the *moral beings* whom God has created, we call it *righteousness*. Love is the Life of the Creator, the pattern to which all created relationships must be conformed. Righteousness is the duty of the Creature accomplishing according to the law of created beings those social purposes of beneficence which image forth the Creator's goodness.

When therefore we speak of God's righteous judgments, we speak of that discipline whereby God is carrying out the purposes of His eternal goodness for the well-being of His people. We must not only submit to them. We must learn to conform ourselves to God by accepting His Providential guidance. We must learn to become the instruments of His all-wise love. By His righteous judgments we learn to take our place, acting supremely true in all our duties to Him, and Divinely beneficent in all our relations to the created world.

The Righteousness of God is manifested in the Person of Jesus Christ.

The righteous judgments of God shine forth in the consummating discipline of the Cross.

As by the Holy Ghost the Son of God became incarnate and offered Himself a Sacrifice to the Father, so by the Holy Ghost, "we are made the Righteousness of God in Christ" that we also may take up our Cross and follow Him.

By this Divine righteousness we become *perfect in the way* so as to attain to that happiness for which man was created in God's Image.

8. The section closes with a promise and a prayer.

I WILL KEEP THY DECREES *Keep. Twenty-one times.*

By faithfulness to God, the soul learns God's faithfulness. The desire of *ver. 5* is the foundation of this promise. The Psalmist knows that God's decrees will triumph in the end, so that the trial of his faith by judgments befalling him upon the way will be

abundantly fruitful. He will learn God's discipline so as to reverence His commandments, and by keeping His commandments he would rise to acknowledge His eternal decrees. In earthly life he seeks to find a moral staircase of perfection whereby he may ascend to the Divine Presence Chamber.

FORSAKE ME NOT *Three times*: i. 8; vii. 53; xx. 87.

If we cling to God, God will not forsake us eternally.

We must bear the forsaking which is ordained as the discipline of time. We must fight as if we were alone. So in Ps. xxii. 2 the Sufferer speaks of being forsaken. Such forsaking does not imply the withdrawal of the Divine Presence. God upholds His people all the while for "He continueth holy."

The ungodly forsake God and perish in their *separation*. God does not *separate* Himself even when He *forsakes*. It is only for a time that He hides His Face, meaning to draw us the more closely to Himself by making us feel the dependence of our nature upon Him.

UTTERLY *Nine times*: i. 4, 8; vi. 43; vii. 51; xxx. 96; l. 107; xc. 138, 140; ccc. 167.

The utter obedience that is required! The utter forsaking that is deprecated!

God may leave us *for a while* alone to strive with Satan to test our obedience. He will not leave us *utterly* unless we leave Him (*vers.* 4, 8).

We must not lose our hope amidst God's discipline. Then we shall not utterly lose the word of truth wherewith we are to witness against the deceitful power of the world (*ver.* 43).

The utter mockery of the proud must not make us wander from the law of grace (*ver.* 51).

God's commandment spreads abroad in the eternity of the resurrection-life, but all earthly perfection ends in death (*ver.* 96).

The humiliation of the Passion is to the uttermost, but the jubilee of the Divine word is eternal life (*ver.* 107).

The utter faithfulness of the Divine testimonies! The Divine

promise must be utterly tried. God's faithfulness demands proportionate faith on our part and therefore proportionate trial (*vers.* 138, 140).

The faithful soul triumphs in the unswerving confidence where-with it cherishes God's testimonies in unfailing love (*ver.* 167).

The second Section naturally belongs to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The Number Two expresses both His Eternal relation to the Father and the Two Natures in which He acts towards us, being both God and Man.

9. YOUNG MAN

The young man is the new race of man called to a life of purity and rescued from Adam's sin. So the Apostle speaks: "Ye have put on the new man." We have "put off the old man which was corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" so that we must no longer walk "according to the former conversation" but being "created in righteousness and true holiness" we must walk "according to God" (*Eph. iv. 22, 24*).

Man is *unclean* from his birth. The nature of Adam cannot purify itself in its transmission from one generation to another. "Who shall bring a clean thing out of an unclean?"

The nature of man is a *solidarity*. Our acts are not accidental to us. They are the outcome of our inherent self. The body is not a mere appendage of our natural self. It is essential to the completeness of our nature and therefore we believe in the Resurrection of the Flesh that we may "receive in the body the things done in the body whether they be good or bad." The personal Self is an originative unit acting through body and soul inseparably. Neither body nor soul can act save in union with the other. Hence there can be no deliverance from the inheritance of Adam's sin. "How shall he be clean that is born of a woman?" (*Job xxv. 4*).

Since then we are called to Divine perfection in Christ, how shall this be?

While the old personality flows on, *that which makes us man*, each soul that God creates must act in subjection to the transmitted defilement of sin. The *path* upon which he enters is a way of *uncleanness*. Had the child of Adam been born before Adam sinned, the motions of his body would have been glorious with the life of the co-operative Spirit, the Holy Ghost, whom God breathed into the nostrils of Adam. So was it with Eve,

formed from Adam's unfallen body. She was bright and living with Divine glory as Adam himself was. After Adam lost that Holy Spirit, his nature was no longer capable of rising up to Divine Fellowship. He was "of the earth, earthy" (1 Cor. xv. 47). But the clay of his body was not like the clay out of which Adam's body was originally formed. That clay had no capacity of animate existence or vital energy. Now, as it is transmitted from Adam, it has impulses which constitute its vitality and fit it to be the organ through which the newly implanted soul shall work. So it is that "the corruptible body necessarily presseth down the incorruptible soul" (Wis. ix. 15). Whatever may be the desires of the spirit, the soul is incapable of reaching out to perform that which it wills, because the body holds it down by tendencies which keep it to the earth. The body has within itself a law of earthly movement, a *path* which belongs to the solid earth. It cannot soar into regions of pure spirit, however sublime may be the visions which rise up before the soul.

How then shall each fresh generation *cleanse* this path along which the inherent consciousness of earthliness drives the body, making it tyrannize over the soul?

No law of God can change this earthliness. Whatever law God may give is "weak through the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). The law is not death, but sin is death and the law shows the deadness of our natural sinful estate by the very fact of appealing to higher desires and showing that we cannot perform them. "The law"—every law of God—"is spiritual but I am fleshly, sold under sin" to this fleshly nature by having forsaken God's word in order to obtain a fleshly gratification (Rom. vii. 14.)

There can be no regaining the pure path of moral perfection with the sublimity which God's spiritual law supplies.

Something more is required than an external law such as was given by Moses. There must be a *vital renewal* of nature by the intervention of the Word of God in the creative power by which that Word originally gave to man his moral being. That operation cannot be effectual by any *external* action. Whatever organism God might create so as to assist man in doing works beyond his

natural ability would leave man in his natural deadness. The added organism might conceal but could not change the corruption of man's degraded estate. If the Word of God is to intervene for the elevation, purification, vitalization of man, degraded, vile, and dead, it must be by entering into the transmitted essence of man's organism. The higher life which shall accomplish the Divine will must clothe itself with the lower life which has by death become incapable of accomplishing the Divine will. The law sufficed not, spoken as it was to man. The Word must speak not merely *to* man but *in* man. The Word must become incarnate. The transmitted impulses of an empty, powerless personality must be quickened by the fulness and capacity of a living personality abiding in fellowship of wisdom, will and power with God Himself. It was impossible to invest man's feebleness with God's omnipotence. God's omnipotence must come and clothe itself with man's feebleness.

In no other way can any child of man regain purity in the pathway of life.

Thus it is that the Son of Man shall accomplish the destiny of His being. "Grace and Truth come" into man "by Jesus Christ" (*John* i. 17). He is the Second Adam. His Divine Person assumes our nature in all that belongs to its organic reality, but in the emptiness of impersonal incapacity. The personality which shall act through human nature so as to cleanse it must be Divine and not human. "God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit . . . for the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace" (*Rom.* viii. 3, 6).

So then in this Second Section the Word, as the incarnate principle of Divine activity, takes the place of the Law which was set forth in Section I. as the Divine requirement of perfection. This is the only section in which the word "law" does not occur.

HIS PATH *Five times.*

As this word expresses the active life which man has naturally before him, the course along which his natural impulses drive

him, it actually implies evil: but as our activity is cleansed by grace, we have the word applied once to the paths along which the grace of God impels us (II. 15), the example and the impulse of the Incarnate Word. The word "Way" expresses rather the law of action than the activity itself. But in Christ the law and the activity are identical. Christ is both Life and Way.

CLEANSING THE PATH

The path to be cleansed is not a road from which the filth is to be removed ere we tread upon it, but the course of nature which we mar by the impulse of evil inherent in ourselves. It is the impulse of evil habit which accompanies our action in the doing.

The moral path is cleansed by cleansing the *motive power*. The removal of all that causes unsteadiness leaves the object free to move more sharply and purely. Our complex nature since the Fall has all its motions marred by many evil passions and desires which are attached to various worldly objects. The path must be cleansed by eliminating those disturbing features and keeping the soul firmly fixed upon God as the end to which it is making progress.

The path must therefore be cleansed by some communicated impulse which will overpower those minor, distracting impulses, leaving the soul absolutely under the control of the love of God.

An impulse of Divine love must be communicated which will make the soul dead to all those unworthy considerations and alive simply to the call of God.

The various elements of man's nature by the loss of the Divine life which man suffered when he fell, have each of them their own earthly affinity, and nothing can give a clean path of moral progress to man, save the restoration of a Divine impulse by which the self-surrendering love of man may act in living correspondence of love with the call of God.

How then is this impulse to be obtained?

THE WORD OF GOD

God calls us by His Word. That Word is a Personal Word, and that Word speaks in human nature by becoming incarnate.

His Personal fellowship with the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost is a power which no attractive solicitation of earthly delight can possibly disturb. Therefore the life of man as assumed by the Son of God is free from all defilement. Sin is to Him an impossibility because the Divine impulse is superior to every other.

Each one of us, if we would cleanse our path, must *observe God's Word*.

This is what men were called to do under the old dispensation, but they had not the power. Now we are called to act according to the power of the Word dwelling within us, and the promise is sure, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. xii. 9). "Of His fulness have all we received and grace for grace."

"The Word of God was made Flesh." The unity of the Divine life underlay all the motions of His Human Will.

"The Life is in the Blood." The Life of God was the principle of holiness and immortality in the Blood of Jesus. Therefore "by His own Blood He entered into the Holy Place" (Heb. ix. 12). Though His Blood was separated from His Body by physical death, it never could lose the inherent immortality of the indwelling Soul. The Blood of others was shed as the penalty of sin. The Soul of Jesus which He commended into the Hands of the Father showed its inherent Divine life when the Blood of Jesus was shed, vindicating that Blood-shedding from the penalty of sin, and speaking triumphantly as the Son of God to repudiate the penalty of sin and claim the immortality of Divine Righteousness.

In the Person of Jesus Christ the Nature of the Divine Word was the cleansing principle which made Him to be free from all inheritance of Adam's sin. The emptiness of the Humanity which He assumed was no longer in Him the sport of manifold temptations arising from its kinship to a sinful world. "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9). There was in Him a power of Divine Life and Love, for He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. The dead personality of the old Adam was replaced by the everliving Personality of the Eternal Word. Whatever He did, or spake, or thought, it was the Person of God

the Son who acted, spake, and thought in all the organism, mental and bodily, of the human nature which He assumed.

We pass on from considering the Human Nature of Christ as exercised by Him during the three and thirty years of His earthly career, to consider the same now that He is glorified in Heaven.

He is still the Head of the Body, the Church. Our nature is cleansed by our incorporation into His mystical Body, extended so as to be our life by the initiatory sacrament of Baptism and the sustaining food of His Body and Blood given to us in the Holy Eucharist.

We then as having "put on the new man" must *cleanse our path* by ruling ourselves after God's Word, or as the Apostle puts it, "doing all in the Name of the Lord Jesus" (*Col. iii. 17*). The Headship of Christ as the vital principle of the Body is that which alone can give us purity. Having thus put on the new man we are as St Peter says, "made partakers of the Divine Nature having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust" (*2. Pet. i. 4*). Thus does the Blood of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, cleanse us from all sin, as the members of His Body.

10. SEEKING GOD

A whole hearted seeking! The heart is the principle of life by the circulation of the Blood. God has taken away "the stony heart" and given us "an heart of flesh" according to the promise made by the prophet (*Ezekiel xxxvi. 26*). We must "draw near with a true heart in the full assurance of faith, having our hearts purged from an evil conscience and our body washed with pure water" (*Heb. x. 23*).

The Blood of Jesus is the quickening power wherein alone we can seek God. It quickens man's dead and stony heart with tenderness and life and love. The Psalmist here with a heart renewed by the Blood of Jesus claims the promise made in *v. 2*. to all who seek God in His sacramental covenant with their whole heart.

As he seeks God in Christ "holding the Head" of the Body (*Col. ii. 19*), he looks to be kept by the Word, so as not to

wander. Thus our Lord says, "Those whom Thou hast given me, I have kept" (*John xvii. 12*).

WANDERING *Three times. Vers. 10 (Poel) 21, 118. Once in another form, ver. 67.*

"Who can discern his wanderings?" (Ps. 19, 13). This word is one of the many links between Ps. 19 and 119.

"The life is the Light of men." Christ is the Light wherein we are to walk. He will not lead us astray if we abide in Him: but if we walk in the blindness of our pride we know not whither we go.

THY PROMISE *Eighteen times. Thy promise. Once "the promise of Thy righteousness," ver. 123.*

This word is obscured in the English version, being translated as if it were "the Word."

The "Word" is the creative utterance of God. The "Promise" is the utterance of predestinating love. While we follow the example and live in the power of the Incarnate Word, we must cherish the Promise, "looking unto Jesus who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross despising the shame" (*Heb. xii. 2*). The Word is the object of faithful reliance. The Promise is the object of hope that cannot fail. As Christ acted in the consciousness of the joy, so must we treasure up His promise, even that He will give us all that the Father hath given Him (*John xvii. 22*). The promise is as sure to us as it was to Him. It is therefore not a mere hope of the future. It is a power of present life to be revealed hereafter, but given to us already so as to stablish us amidst the trials of the present time. We must not complain, if we are tried as He was. Our will must be proved as His will was. The promise is made sure to us by Divine covenant. We must not cast it away by unworthy negligence.

HID

We must keep the promise as a treasure hidden within our heart, which the world at large cannot know. If we would keep

it hidden, we must ourselves "live hidden with Christ," rejoicing in the Divine Love. *Col. iii. 3.*

The promise which we have to hide is not an earthly promise which by its failure may make us ashamed. It is a Divine promise, *hidden* because the world understandeth it not. It is the "wisdom which we speak among them that are perfect, the wisdom of God in a mystery which God foreordained before the ages to our glory" (*1 Cor. ii. 6, 7*). It is hidden in our hearts, for it is the hidden principle of life which must show its fruit in all our conduct, although in itself it is beyond all human knowledge. It is the seed which must spring up unto eternal life, and unless it be hidden beneath our earthly nature, that earthly nature cannot germinate with its power. It is hidden for it is the foundation of all devotional union with God, the correspondence of the regenerate soul with God in the blessedness of our new birth as God's children. It is hidden so that the soul communes thereby in secret with God, shutting out the glare of outward brilliancy and rejoicing in the calm contemplation of Divine acceptance. It is hidden where the power of Satan cannot reach it, for the heart wherein it lies hid is sustained by the imperishable Substance of the Divine love, and grows increasingly in the fellowship of the Eternal Spirit. Where this living promise is hidden, the active Spirit of God will be ever revealing to the soul the glory of God's transforming power, and thus is the faithful heart prepared for that manifestation of Divine likeness wherein at length the completeness of predestinating love shall welcome those who have been truly exercised thereby.

SINNING AGAINST GOD

Sin is not an abstract evil, but the violation of a *personal relationship* to God, the Author of all our life. "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned" (*Ps. li. 5*). The devout acknowledgment of God's Personal Presence dwelling within us must be our great preservative against sin. It is this which gives dignity to life. Man was created in God's Image to hold living fellowship with God. This raises man above the level of the brute creation.

Man is not exalted by the multiplicity of powers in every one of which the brute creation surpass him, but by the power of concentrating them all upon God and consecrating them to Him in sanctifying love. So man rises to a yet higher dignity by the infused life of the Incarnate Word. The nature of man is dignified in the Person of the Incarnate God, and the individual man is raised to a Divine life of holy fellowship by incorporation into the Body of Christ. By incorporation into the living Christ he is raised out of a state of sinfulness into a state of holiness. This holy estate whereby God dwells in him lifts up his acts. His condition of sinfulness had become unavoidable by the Fall. Now he acquires the possibility of individual sanctity and his sin intensified by wilfulness. The vague consciousness of right and wrong passes away. Every act is holy or sinful as being done towards the indwelling God. Thus does man regain his true position in Christ, and it is the watchful heed which he pays to God's treasured presence which alone can keep him from the sinful negligence by which God's presence within him is outraged.

12. THE BLESSEDNESS OF GOD

This *Divine Blessedness* must be distinguished from the *human beatitude* or happiness of *vv. 1, 2*. That was to be attained by walking in the way of life. This Blessedness is the Divine *Life itself*, the inherent love wherein the Blessed Trinity abides eternally.

All creation is the outcome of that eternal love. God creates all things with capacities of happiness proportionate to the law of obedience to Himself by which He calls them to correspond with His own infinite Bliss so that they are happy while walking in the law of the Lord, according to their position as His creatures.

But all created happiness is only the radiation of that interior Bliss which is the uncreated Life of the Ever Blessed Trinity. God is blessed in His own self-knowledge. The Only Begotten, the Word of the Father, is one God with the Father, "God blessed for ever" (*Rom. ix. 5*).

As man He not only shares the happiness which belongs to

man, because He is perfectly true to all that man should be, but He, by the predestination of His Incarnate Life, is the source of all human happiness, for the law of man's beatitude culminates in God the Son Himself, as the Supreme Manifestation of human nature. Man was created in the Image of God with capacities of happiness befitting that Image as it should be substantially glorified by Christ's assuming man's nature.

He also as the consubstantial Word of the Father dwells eternally in the Bliss of Everlasting Love. "This is the glory which He had with the Father before the world was" (*John* xvii. 5).

In this Blessedness He calls us to share by being incorporated into His mystical Body. This is His Decree for His elect.

This Blessedness glorifying the Humanity in all the extension of His Incarnation is the Promise which is hidden in the hearts of the faithful. "We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is" (1 *John* iii. 2).

DIVINE TEACHING, *vid. ver.* 66. *Eight times*, ii. 12; iv. 26; viii. 64; ix. 66, 68; i. 108; lxx. 124; lxxx. 135.

It is our regeneration in Christ whereby God teaches us. St John says, "Ye have an anointing from the Holy One and know all things. . . . The same anointing teacheth you concerning all things and is truth and is no lie" (1 *John* ii. 20, 27).

Our blessedness consists in knowing the Blessedness of God and our happiness consists in serving Him. Our happiness *in viâ* shall be consummated by our blessedness *in patriâ*. God teaches us increasingly that we may "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

THE DECREES OF THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

The Psalmist would be taught the decrees in which the great decree of Christ's Royalty is developed. All the glory of the new kingdom is that which the Father gives to the Son. He requires "all men to honour the Son as they honour the Father" (*John*, v. 23). The Son in the utterness of His Humiliation, *ver.* 8, 107, was to show forth to the Father the utterness of His Love, *vv.*

4, 167. The Father would reward Him with the glory which belonged to His eternal Sonship. He would be exalted above the Angels for His Birthright entitles Him to the Throne of original Godhead. The manhood was to be worthy of the exaltation by the infinity of the responsive love. *Heb. i. 4.*

Christ was to ascend so that His Manhood would be glorified at God's Right Hand when He had endured in His Manhood all that the enmity of Satan could do against Him. The eternal promise gave Him joyous consciousness in His struggle against Satan.

We must rise up to the same consciousness according to the measure of our struggle. We must lay hold upon the glory of Christ as the basis and life of the eternal kingdom. The created universe is not to be merely the chamber in which Jesus shall be glorified. The triumphant glory of the Incarnate Son of God, the Redeemer, is the fundamental principle which sustains the universe which He created, permeates it, quickens it, develops it in purposes of expanding power, elevates it as an object of the Father's love. God's decree shall make all to share the glory.

13. I HAVE RECOUNTED

Our Lord "recounted the decree" of His Divine Sonship (Ps. ii. 7). He proclaimed Himself as the Son of God when He came into the world. The object of all His teaching was to proclaim Himself as the only Saviour by whom men could have access unto the Father.

As He has "taught us" by His illuminating Spirit, we must make Him known, *recounting with our lips the judgments of God's mouth.* Our lips utter the voice which comes from the mouth of the Incarnate God. He shall judge all nations, "consuming the ungodly with the breath of His mouth." By us, His members, He speaks the words of warning, calling men to *cleanse their path* according to the discipline of His judgments. The law of His mouth is a creative law, giving to the faithful a power greater than gold or silver (IX. 72). His mouth speaks in sacraments of heavenly grace which the quickened soul delights to cherish (XX. 88).

THE JUDGMENTS OF THY MOUTH *Seven times* Thy mouth, ii. 13; ix. 72; xx. 88. My mouth, vi. 43; xl. 103; l. 108; lxxx, 131. *Twice.* My lips, ii. 13; cccc. 171.

My lips must recount God's judgments calling men to Christ.

My lips shall pour forth God's praise when the teaching of the Cross is complete. It is the praise of redemption.

14. I HAVE REJOICED *Three times; 14, 162 (Subst.) 111.*

The threefold joy of treasure : of victory : and of inheritance.

The way of God's testimonies, the regenerate life in Christ, is full of joy. The word is commonly used of God rejoicing over His redeemed people. That joy of communicated Blessedness we share by the power of the Spirit of Christ. The communications of sacramental grace are the earnest of the joy that shall be when the victory is won (CCC. 162) and we see God face to face in the jubilee of the redeemed (L. 111) as our eternal inheritance.

RICHES

The word implies that substantial reality which makes us feel no want. Earthly substance cannot compare with the substantive joy of the soul that has the Divine Substance for its portion, and this is what we receive in the sacraments of grace, the "testimonies" of God's vital fellowship with us.

15. I WILL MEDITATE *Eight times; vers. 15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 148 (Subst.) 97, 99.*

The soul which would speak *of* God must be holding constant colloquy *with* God. Then the mouth will speak out of the abundance of the heart, but we must not let empty words to men exhaust our utterance. What we say to men is apt to leave us empty, but when we speak interiorly with God we feed upon His fulness.

HAVING RESPECT UNTO GOD'S PATHS

The cleansed path of the regenerate race is ever conformable to the paths in which our Divine Head leads us by His example

Our life must be the following of Christ. Our meditations must have His personal truth for their foundation so that we may follow Him in love.

The Gospels tell us "that which Jesus began both to do and teach" (*Acts* i. 1). As He is the Incarnate Word we cannot cleanse our path save by acting in conformity with His example in all the paths of earthly relationship. That cannot be a true precept of God which does not find itself illustrated in the living action of Christ.

Meditation avoids superficial imitation which may often be at variance with real vital unity of purpose through neglect of the proper conditions of our action. We must not merely think what Christ did, but each one of us must consider what Christ would have done had He been placed in our circumstances.

Various precepts of God belong to various circumstances of earthly positions, but they all are in harmony with the indissoluble purpose of the Divine Will, and they all shine out with vital unity as exhibited in the Personal conduct of Christ. He speaks to all, and He is the pattern of all, and no path can be a path that leads to Divine Glory unless it be a path marked by His Footsteps.

16. MY DELIGHT IN GOD'S DECREES *Three times (High.)* 16, 47; (*Pilp.*) 70; *five times (Subst.)* 24, 77, 92, 143, 174.

To contemplate the glory of Christ according to the Divine decree is eightfold joy to the regenerate soul. In the Divinity of Christ the love of God shines forth upon us and the vision of that love is the joy of God's children.

The manifestation of the Godhead of the Eternal Son is the great, the all containing Decree, as set forth in Ps. 2. This joy of Christ was a blessed consciousness underlying all His sufferings while He was upon earth. The manifestation of this Decree in its final triumph is the joy of all the hosts of heaven who fell down at His feet with their song of Hallelujah. This must be our delight if we would walk in the fellowship of the Incarnate Word. While we take up our Cross and follow Him in earthly suffering, we must meditate upon His precepts in

adoration of His Divine glory that so we may have our part in the fulness of His Promise. The glory to which He has been exalted by the Divine Decree must be our joy now, if we would rejoice therein hereafter. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say Rejoice." *Phil.* iv. 4.

NOT FORGETTING THE WORD *Nine times, ii. 16; viii. 61; xx. 33; xxx. 93; i. 109; xc. 139, 141; cc. 153; cccc. 176.*

Meditating: respecting: delighting.

Section II. is the Section of "the Word." The first and last verses point us to the Word. The Word cleanses.

The Word must never be forgotten. Purity on earth is by the Word coming to us. Heavenly adoration is by our delight in His glory, as we ascend in heart to Him.

As for the first, our Lord says: "Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you" (*John* xv. 3). With reference to not forgetting, He says: "Do this in remembrance of me." We are not to think of Him as far away because we see Him not. We are to rejoice in His being exalted to the Father's Right Hand, for thus He exercises towards us the power of "the Word" in the new creation, surpassing the power by which of old He gave existence to the outer worlds.

SECTION III

VV. 17-24

THE DIVINE LIFE OF RESURRECTION

Deal bounteously with Thy servant that I may live :	<i>The life of Divine Sonship contrasted with the servitude of the law.</i>
So shall I observe Thy Word.	
Open mine eyes, that I may have respect	<i>Illumination so as to behold heavenly mysteries.</i>
To the wondrous things out of Thy law.	
I am a sojourner upon earth :	<i>Moral guidance so as to fulfil earthly duties.</i>
Hide not Thy commandments from me.	
My soul is crushed with longing For Thy judgments at all times.	<i>Holy discipline recognised in loving Providence.</i>
Thou hast rebuked the proud, the accursed,	<i>Contemplation of the terrible judgment awaiting the proud.</i>
That stray from Thy command- ments.	
Roll away from me reproach and contempt	<i>Expectation of a glorious resurrection, in the confidence of the sacrament covenant.</i>
For I have guarded Thy testi- monies.	
Princes who did sit, and speak against me :	<i>Protection against the powers of the world which Satan organises for our destruction.</i>
Thy servant meditates on Thy de- crees.	
Thy testimonies also are my de- light	<i>Spiritual perception causing delight in the comfort and guidance of the Holy Ghost.</i>
And my counsellors.	

Section III. should speak of Divine life. Three is the number of the Holy Everliving Trinity. It is also the number of Resurrection in the fellowship of the Divine Life. The section opens with an aspiration for life such as befits God's law, the perfect

life which transcends earthly infirmity. It closes with reference to the principalities of evil which tyrannise over us in this present world (*ver.* 23). The praise which is due to God in His adorable mystery wakens an expression of thankful delight in the sacraments of grace. They are instruments of personal power by which we are guided onward through the difficulties of time (*ver.* 24).

17. DIVINE BOUNTY

The Psalmist has already "sung unto the Lord because He hath *dealt bountifully* with him" (Ps. xiii. 6). The idea of this word is "recompense," whether good or evil. It is the accomplishment of covenanted promises on God's part to those who seek his covenant. It is the "penny a day" of Divine Grace, enabling us as God's servants to do the work of the supernatural or risen life. But it is more than that, for it is the share in the glorious inheritance of sonship when the toils of time shall be no more.

Prophets and kings desired to hear the words of this Divine life. They served God according to the best of their natural ability. They knew, however vaguely, that God had some better gift in store, the outcome of what they had themselves received. They waited for the Redeemer to come with the gifts of deliverance from death. "They could not be made perfect" until the initiation of the Christian Covenant with the gifts of the Holy Ghost belonging to the resurrection life in Christ. They received their glory as partakers beyond the grave of Christ's Resurrection when the Apostles on earth received the Holy Ghost from the Ascended Saviour. When Christ's Humanity was glorified in His own Person, then the faithful who had been expecting Him under the old Covenant were incorporated into Him and glorified with Him by the power of the Holy Ghost, and coincident with this was the communication of the Holy Ghost to the Church of the Firstborn in the persons of the Apostles, so that both covenants were made one in the glorification of Christ. He was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection of the dead to Divine Life along with Himself.

GOD'S SERVANT *Fourteen times*, ii. 17, 23; v. 38; vii. 49; ix. 65; x. 76; xx. 84; xxx. 91; lxx. 122, 126; lxxx. 135; xc. 140; cccc. 176.

The servant is the faithful child of the law. "Moses was faithful as a servant." So Joshua and David are called by this official name. Messiah is the Elect Servant of Jehovah, for though He was the Son of God, He "took upon Him the form of a servant," being "born of a woman, born under the law."

The "servant" is not man's true designation, for Adam was "the Son of God" (*Luke* iii.). But this title expresses the relation of human nature to God after Adam lost His Sonship, when the Holy Spirit which glorified Him by the Divine inbreathing had been withdrawn from him. "The law was a schoolmaster to bring the people of Israel to God" (*Gal.* iii. 24) preparing the way for the Son whom God would send. When man had sold himself in bondage to Satan, he could no longer call God "Father." The law was a temporary institution. "The servant remaineth not in the house for ever," but the Son remaineth ever (*John* viii.). The *servile* relationship belongs to man's *natural* birth as a creature. The *filial* relationship belongs to the *supernatural* birth by the power of the Holy Ghost. Now the *servant lives*. He becomes a Son.

We cannot have the supernatural gift unless we are true to the obligations of the natural condition.

God nevertheless sent His Son to take the position of a servant that He might assert the glory of the Divine Sonship in the midst of that enslaved condition from which human nature needed to be redeemed. Divine *Sonship* cannot be without Divine *life*.

The gift of a Divine, redeeming, Life was necessary, because man in His enslaved condition could not keep God's Word. The *living* Word must become subject to the law, for none but He could be true to the requirements of the *mandatory* word as proclaimed by the law. None but the *Son* can fulfil the *Word* of God.

The appeal of the legal servant is therefore addressed to God that He in His bounty may send His Son. Only by the life-giving power of the Son of God can "the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in us."

The Word of whom Sect. II. has spoken is "the Resurrection and the Life" to which Section III. looks forward.

DIVINE LIFE, *vid. ver.* 175 Sixteen times, 17, 77, 116, 144, 175; (*Piel*), 50, 93; (*Imp*) nine times, 25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159.

The law could not *give life*. It only made manifest the hopelessness of man, since man was dead in the slavery of sin. But it pointed onward to life. *I shall live*. It is a supernatural gift. Life was the only gift for which the faithful servant could long. Without life there could be no communion with God as a Father: and that life must be Divine Life.

The Psalter gives the assurance of this living Sonship:—"He calls them gods to whom the Word of God came" (*John* x. 35). And this implies the mediation of the Son of God "whom the Father" would sanctify and send into the world, "with the gift of Sonship."

The gift of life would not set the law aside. It would fulfil the law with heavenly power in all its spiritual truth. "The law had the shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the things." The empty outline of legal types would shine out with ineffable reality of power when God should infuse into it the Divine Life. This life would make the law a true covenant of righteousness (*Gal.* iii. 21). The tyranny of sin would be done away, because the living power of righteousness would be given.

OBSERVING GOD'S WORD, *v.* 8

I shall live. That is the supernatural gift. *I shall observe Thy Word*. That is the natural selfsurrender.

If God sends the life-giving Word, it is necessary for man to *observe that Word*, live in its power, be true to it.

The Jews rejected the life of grace which called to righteousness, because they regarded the law as a means whereby they might approach God instead of accepting it as a dispensation by which God would come to them. Therefore they missed the life-giving efficacy of its institution. "The law was spiritual," coming from God, but they were carnal, sold under sin" (*Rom.* vii.). They did not feel the necessity of God's life-giving Word to enable them to keep the word of God's command. Not so is it with the faithful servant. He longs for God's gift of life not as

the reward of his obedience, but as the only power by which he can obey. So will he *observe God's Word*. By this Word of truth God begets us into a true sonship, "that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures" (*James* i. 18). It is "the engrafted word which is able to save our souls."

18. THE OPENING OF THE EYES

"The natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God" (*1 Cor.* ii. 14). The gift of living power *opens the eyes* to see the *mysteries* of God. Hence the sacrament of Holy Baptism is called the sacrament of illumination. The vision of God is the prerogative of the regenerate life. It is given to us in this world as a principle of supernatural faith whereby we abide in Christ. It will be perfected in the next world in beatific fulness. We must cherish the gift of faith as a living power whereby to lay hold upon the things of God, that we may attain to the fulness of the glory to which that vision leads.

Intellectual apprehension is of no avail without the living power of sight. Too often it misreads the vision. We live by love, and it is only love which can attain to the vision of God, for God is love. Sight is the test of likeness (*1 John* iii. 2). Likeness begets love.

If God opens our eyes, we must take heed that we really meditate upon the Divine realities of our life as God's children. Love is not satisfied by a superficial recognition. We sink back into blindness unless we gaze upon God with all the intensity of love. Love looks and lives, and learns to love the more.

THE WONDERS OF GOD'S LAW

If we have respect to God's actions in the wide compass of their influences, we learn to have respect to God's law, not merely as requiring a formal and accidental obedience, but as involving a wide extent of spiritual demand. The *moral* and *spiritual* worlds are set over against one another in *mysterious counterpart*. "The law is spiritual." He therefore whose eyes are opened sees beyond the letter, and reads the hidden relationships of life in God which the law implies. The *moral* implies the *spiritual*.

In the blindness of our earthly state we are too apt to think of earthly conduct as if it had its importance of itself, instead of recognising the personal unity which makes the actions of our outward frame react upon the spiritual nature; and that spiritual nature which acts through the outward frame towards this material world associates us also with the world of spirits. We must remember that outward acts always have spiritual issues. That which is material lives on in the spiritual, when all appearance of outward consequences has past away. It lives on in us, so as to affect our being throughout all ages. We shall rise with the results of all that we have done in the body, marking our risen nature whether for good or for evil.

God has thus created us under a mysterious law of twofold existence, and as our moral law comes from Him we must ask Him to enable us to see through outward actions to the consequences of life hereafter that so the natural blindness of appetite may not hold us enthralled. Nay! we must see the law of God working through our personal unity to make the outward results of life glorious in their future consequences by the quickening power of His grace. He has given us the *law* to obey. He has created us with a double nature that we may fulfil the law with love. He *opens* our eyes by spiritual regeneration to see the *issues* of obedience which the carnal sense cannot appreciate. By the gift of His Holy Spirit He delivers us both from the blindness and from the bondage of sin. In the Resurrection-life He will perfect in Himself that work which His Word commanded and His Spirit hath quickened. So will the law which came forth from God calling us to the obedience of faith be perfected in God as the eternal portion of the faithful in the consummation of love.

The law had "the shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the things." This shadow is not the external shadow cast upon a separate surface, but it is the empty *outline* of a spiritual Substance ready to be revealed within. It will shine out with brilliance and power. In studying the *law of Moses* we must be careful to use the supernatural *eyesight* of

faith. All things were ordered by Moses "after the pattern of heavenly things," and we are guilty of sacrilege if we treat them as the mere results of human wisdom or as a transitory condescension to contemporary habits of religion.

WONDERFUL THINGS *Three times*, iii. 18 ; iv. 17 ; lxxx. (in another form) 129.

The *mystery* 1. of eternal life, 2. of redeeming love, 3. of sacramental covenant. Threefold love ! Mystery above nature !

The word expresses the secret name of God, the Wonderful Jud. xiii. 18 ; Is. ix. 6, the mystery of the Incarnation. In Ps. xcvi. 1, it sums up the marvellous work of Christ's redemptive triumph. The Greek word is "mystery," a sacrament having two parts.

19. A STRANGER UPON EARTH, *vid. v. 64.*

Heaven is the *home* of those who are risen to the life of God. Therefore on earth we can find no resting place, we are *sojourners* like the children of Israel in *Egypt*. Man created in the image of God could never find a home under Satan's tyranny. By nature we feel our homelessness, even though we try to hide the thought of it. Death may turn us out at any moment. By the gift of eternal life, we learn to claim our home in God. We look to Him as our Father. Our home is eternal in the reward of His love. Jesus on earth had not where to lay His head.

HIDDENNESS *Twice*, iii. 19 ; lx. (substantive) 114.

(i) If we look for God, God will show Himself to us in this land where we are strangers. Yet even in revelation, God hides His Truth, because it is not safe for us to have it unless we search for it. Hence it was that Jesus spoke in parables. He could not speak to the natural understanding unless there were a concurrent effort of the heart to receive in Divine Love the words of the Divine Speaker. All nature has mysteries hidden beneath its forms and we must learn to look for God. We must look for God's purposes of good beneath the veil of evil which shrouds them. God *hides his law from us*, when He suffers earthly things, wealth, wisdom, power and the like to

come between us and the sense of our homelessness. Woe be to us when we cease to feel ourselves dependent upon Him!

Our Lord says, "Thou hast *hid* these things from the wise and prudent." And so S. Paul: "Not many mighty are called." The power of earth *hides* God's commandments from us. How apt we are to pick and choose what we will do, instead of giving childlike obedience.

(ii) On the other hand, in lx. 114, we see how when the world is against us, God will *hide us from the world*.

We think we can do God's will in the strength of our moral judgment, and therefore we do not shrink from worldly power: but it needs a very special grace to keep us alive to God's service, so as to see in every act a commandment of His and to fulfil it for Him. By nature we feel that we are our own masters and can act as we please. We must pray, while asking for the supply of earthly needs, "lead us not into temptation."

Satan *hides* God's commandments from us by the deceitfulness of earthly power, and God *permits* such concealment for the trial of our faith. While we walk true to Him, as *strangers* upon earth, He will be with us to keep us from all harm. Not so, if we allow ourselves in *any* earthly satisfaction. Then we lose His guidance, and it is one of His sorest judgments when He suffers men so to prosper in ways which He has not blessed, that they no longer recognise His commandments. It is a terrible thing for any age, country, or individual to be so prospered as to lose the sight of responsibility to God in everything. God in His fearful judgment suffers Satan to *hide* the law of spiritual duty from man by the apparent virtues of social expediency, and He does so because man has ceased to live by the law of faith. Men may keep God's law in outward form according to the dictates of natural morality, while yet *His commandment* is entirely *hidden* from them because they are forgetful of the true oblation of love.

A high standard of natural propriety is quite consistent with an entire loss of the Divine life. A high estimate of human nature may coexist with an entire unconsciousness of a true Divine Sonship.

THE CRUSHING OF THE SOUL

The word occurs again in *Sam.* 3-16. It is used of the "teeth broken with gravel stones."

So the things of the earth break the teeth of the soul that would feed upon God.

Human intellect is broken in all endeavours to solve Divine mysteries. We cannot by wisdom find out God. Reason is crushed if it try to deal with heavenly mysteries. They are the food of the spiritual nature, but they are too hard for the natural desire of man to grapple with. The eye opened by Divine life drinks in the nourishment of heavenly wonders, but the teeth of the earthly intellect are broken in the very endeavour to get at the hidden realities of another world.

MY SOUL *Eight times*, iii. 20; iv. 25, 28; xx. 81; l. 109; lxxx. 129; ccc. 167; cccc. 175.

These occurrences seem to give a history of the regenerate soul. 1. The craving of self will. 2. The confession of natural deadness. 3. The humiliation of penitence. 4. The new born soul longing for salvation, *i.e.* for Jesus. 5. The boldness of the soul set free by faith. 6. The joy of sacramental fellowship in Divine life. 7. The love whereby the soul triumphs in the covenant of faith. 8. The eternal life of the soul praising God for the redemption accomplished on the Cross.

THE FERVENT DESIRE *Three, times* iii. 20; *In verbal form*, v. 40; cccc. 174.

The desires are as the teeth of the soul. The unusual form of the word expresses the intensity of the desire. We cannot attain to know the wonderful things of God's law and the resurrection-life by natural desire. Jesus Crucified is the satisfaction of the soul's longing. With this satisfaction the psalm draws to its close. There the *natural longing* finds its *supernatural accomplishment*. It lives exulting in God's praise. (ver. 175)

AT ALL TIMES

The soul of man is so utterly a stranger upon earth that it cannot set aside this longing. It gnashes in the hopelessness of natural

desire until by the redemption of the Cross it rises to the Divine life of eternal praise.

JUDGMENTS, *vide ver.* 7

The soul desires to understand the mystery of God's *discipline*. That mystery is only the practical side of another mystery, namely, the origin of evil. This we must accept: we cannot know. The understanding of such a mystery involves all the mysteries of the struggle with evil which belong to our experience. These *judgments* include the sufferings of the Cross, all the mystery of the bruised Heel of the Redeemer, that final *judgment* of man in the Person of Christ whereby we are helped (*ver.* 175) and which returns upon the evil one so that the Prince of this world is *judged* thereby (*John* xvi. 11). The soul is apt to rebel against God because it cannot solve the mysteries of faith, and to fret against God's individual *discipline* whereby it should be trained for the life of the resurrection. We must not fret because of our present ignorance. We must learn to *accept God's judgments*. Job felt the *mystery* of his sufferings. His friends only saw the *misery*.

21. THE PROUD *Six times*, iii. 21; vii. 51; ix. 69; x. 78; xx. 85; lxx. 122.

(i) *The proud were rebuked* by the resurrection of Christ when His soul had descended into Hell and conquered them. (ii) *The proud derided* the weakness of Christ in His humiliation. (iii) *The proud accused* Christ of blasphemy and treason, denying His Divine mission. (iv) *The proud are ashamed* by reason of the sinlessness of Christ amidst all their assaults. (v) *The proud digged* the very pit of hell, thinking to overwhelm Him in their own doom. (vi) *The proud cannot oppress* Christ in the end for His Divine Person is the surety for man's deliverance. He was sent into the world to conquer the proud. Six is the number signifying natural pride. It symbolizes the power of the world.

These six occurrences mark out the principal features of the struggle between Christ and Satan.

The proud are specially the spirits of pride as ruled by Satan. The word applies to men of pride, as being under Satan's control.

THE REBUKING

This word connects the deliverance of the psalmist with the vindication of Joshua in the prophet Zechariah. "The Lord *rebuke* thee, O Satan: even the Lord which hath chosen Jerusalem *rebuke* thee" (*Zec.* iii. 2). So also we have the rebuking of Egypt and of the Red Sea, the great symbol of Satan's tyranny and of the grave through which we must pass to win the freedom of the Resurrection.

When Satan tempts us, we must rebuke him in God's name: "Get thee hence, Satan." We must not only rely upon God's rebuke. We must use it and trust in it while we ourselves boldly rebuke the evil one.

THE CURSED ONES

The *proud* know not that they are *cursed*: but it was said to the serpent, "Cursed art thou above all cattle" (*Gen.* iii. 17). All that feed upon earthly things, the dust of the earth, are cursed. The serpent may rise up proudly to spring upon its foe, but how easily is the backbone of pride broken by a stick. The cross makes the hissing pride of the evil one to cease! There is no curse so great as the unconscious pride which does not know its own weakness.

THEY WHO ERR FROM GOD'S COMMANDMENTS *Three times* (Poel), iii. 21; ix. 118 (Hiph); ii. 10.

The light of Divine revelation will keep us from wandering if we steadfastly abide in it. If we follow our own inspirations we come under the curse of the proud. *Pride* includes every form of independence whereby we reject the restraints of God's Providence. Humility must ever be obedient.

22. ROLL AWAY FROM ME REPROACH AND CONTEMPT

This points to the resurrection of Christ, the rolling away of the stone from the sepulchre. The stone told of imprisonment in death, but He that was in the sepulchre was a stranger upon earth. He had willingly humbled Himself to the outward form

of death, but no stone could keep Him in His risen life from His heavenly Home. He has burst the bonds of death. Reproach and contempt can be His no more.

We must be willing to bear them for the love of Christ. We do not seek to have them removed that we may leave the sepulchre and return to the honour of the world. We must bear the shame of Christ that we may follow Him by a way before untrodden, "a new living way" that reaches to the throne of God.

REPROACH *Three times, iii. 22; v. 39 (Particip.); vi. 42.*

The world cannot understand us if we are living true to Christ. Moses counted the reproach of Christ better than all the riches of Egypt. How much more must we. But indeed our reproach cannot be taken away until we die to this world altogether. We must feel the burden of the flesh to be a continual reproach. The weakness of our nature so continually yielding to the temptations of him whom Christ has conquered, must fill our lives with continual self-reproach. The risen life removes the shame of the Fall.

SHAME

This Hebrew word is specially connected with Christ in the great prophecy, Is. liii. 3, and in the typical character of Elihu, the son of Barachel (the Blessing of God), the Buzite (the Shame-bearer), of the family of Ram (the lofty One).

I HAVE GUARDED THY TESTIMONIES

This expresses the reality of that spiritual life which is given to us in the ordinances of grace, and it shows the care with which we must *guard* them. It is this gift of grace which alone can *take from us the shame* of our fallen condition, clothing us with glory.

The *reproach* of nakedness came upon man when by sin he lost the Divine indwelling. That glorious Presence clothed our first parents with a Divine lustre since God breathed into Adam the Holy Ghost, the Breath of life. The skins of animals could not *take away that shame*. They could only *hide* it. The Resurrection-

life, communicated to us in the sacraments whereby we are made partakers in the glory of Christ, takes it away. The clothing of glory is a surrounding lustre of Divine Life radiating from within. "The body is sown in dishonour and shame. It is raised in glory" (1 Cor. 15). The coats of skins (*Gen. iii. 21*) typified this.

PRINCES, *ver. 161* *Twice, iii. 23; ccc. 161.*

The resurrection is the condemnation of those princes, high priests, and Roman rulers, who sat and spoke against Christ. The same power is the vindication of all Christ's people from age to age.

The Spiritual powers however who rule the darkness of this world are the real calumniators and persecutors. Verse 23 seems specially to point to the earthly, and *ver. 161* to the spiritual principalities.

THEY SAT

This is the position of authority. The powers of darkness sit in judgment upon the earth. When they are summoned into the Divine Presence it is God who sits in the midst of the heavenly council.

MEDITATE, *vers. 15, 23, 27, 48, 78*

A five-fold resolution. First he will meditate upon God's *precepts*, the *moral* relationships of duty to God. This is the meditation of the renewing Word in Section II. In Section X. the *moral* perfection thus considered is contrasted with the *proud*, who are *ashamed* for their lies, and the psalmist exults in the joy of perseverance. Here in Section III. he would meditate on God's *decrees*, the law of *Divine* life in the acknowledgment of the adorable Son. His Divine Life, which "the princes of this world knew not" (1 Cor. ii. 8), is our principle of resurrection. It is continued in the fourth meditation in Section VI. which deals with the feebleness of the world as opposed to God, There the lifting up of the hands sets forth the Divine Life in the midst of death upon the Cross. Moral duty and Divinedness

explain God's wondrous love. The central meditation in Section IV. is of the Crucified life. *The wonders* of God's love make the way of His precepts manifest to the spiritual understanding. The number Four tells of the Cross. The Cross how strong! The world how feeble!

THY TESTIMONIES MY DELIGHT, *ver.* 16

The last section ended as this one ends with delighting in God's decrees. Here it is His testimonies which witness to the power of that Decree. In the sacraments of grace we have an earnest of the beatific vision.

MY COUNSELLORS

The Holy Ghost acts personally through the sacraments for He is the Spirit of Wisdom wherewith the Body of Christ is anointed. The grace of Christ's Humanity is thus operative within us by the Personal Agency of the indwelling Spirit. There we have the Mind of Christ. The Spirit teacheth us all things.

In this material world of death personality is imprisoned in earthliness. In the Body of Christ, in the heavenly Jerusalem, all is full of personal activity. Nothing is merely mechanical. God's gifts are not abstractions incapable of stirring our affections. They are personal both as influencing us and as responding to us. Man's personality is a dead personality incapable of self-communication. In the brute creation personality is still more confined so as to act only by the instinct which remains. On the contrary the glorious Personality of God is a living, active, self-communicative power, so that He generates His Only Begotten Son in eternal and indissoluble fellowship with Himself. The Personality of God in the Triune Love is the source of all things. The Personality of the Incarnate Son takes us up into His Body so as to be one with Him. The Personality of the Holy Ghost holds us up in fellowship with the action of Christ's glorified Humanity. The Personality of the Holy Angels surrounds us with blessed ministrations. This is the glorious truth which

in some celebrated pictures finds its symbolism where the whole air upon closer inspection is seen to be an ethereal multitude of spiritual forms. That which is thus symbolized is true in the kingdom of grace. There is nothing there which is impersonally material. The innumerable multitude of Angels are as it were the atmosphere surrounding the Body of Christ, and we ourselves are the members of that Body, not impersonal organs, but personal powers acting as our Head demands and all in personal consciousness of mutual action and love. Such is the Communion of Saints in the Life everlasting. The mind, the will, the power of Christ is operative in every function of His Body. Hence the personality which is here attributed to Christ's ordinances. *They are my Counsellors.*

The Sacraments of grace are the instruments by which the Spirit who is the Life of Christ's risen Body comes to teach us who are His members. He opens our faculties which by nature are incapable of receiving Divine Truth. Thus is fulfilled the word of the prophet, "They shall be all taught of the Lord" *Is. liv. 13.* Speculations as to Divine Truth only minister to our curiosity, "breaking" our teeth. If we walk humbly in God's judgments setting aside the preconceptions of our proud intellect and resting in the revelation of His Decrees and the grace of His Testmonies, we shall find Him ever ready to teach us. So shall we grow in the experience of the risen life which this Section exhibits. A joyous experience! A wisdom whose guidance will not fail!

SECTION IV

vv. 25-32

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CROSS

- My soul cleaveth to the dust,
Quicken me according to Thy
Word.**
- I recounted my ways, and Thou
answeredst me :**
- Teach me Thy decrees.**
- Make me to understand the way
of Thy precepts**
- So shall I meditate upon Thy
wondrous works.**
- My soul melteth away for very
heaviness**
- Raise Thou me up as befits Thy
Word.**
- Make the way of lying depart from
me :**
- And give me Thy law in the ful-
ness of its grace.**
- I have chosen the way of faithful-
ness :**
- I have set Thy judgments before
me :**
- I have cleaved to Thy testimonies.
O Lord, put me not to shame.**
- I will run the way of Thy com-
mandments**
- For Thou enlargest my heart.**
- The soul*
- (a) *weighed down by earthly nature,
entreats for life :*
- (b) *accepted in penitence,
desires to be taught in heavenly
truths :*
- (c) *prays for moral perception in
daily life,
so as to meditate upon the
marvels of Divine operation.*
- The soul melting in penitential sorrow
seeks for*
- (a) *resurrection according to the
dignity of God's Word.*
- (b) *deliverance from Satan.*
- (c) *advance in holiness by the power
of grace.*
- Protestation of fidelity*
- (a) *choosing the way of God.*
- (b) *recognising His judicial provi-
dence.*
- (c) *diligent using His Sacraments.
Though he is put to death in the flesh,
he looks to be delivered from the shame
of one sinful estate.
By death he will enter into the glory
of the Resurrection.
His heart expands with the glory of
God to whose love he confides him-
self.*

The number *Four* speaks of the Cross. It is the number of universality and order as expressed by the four points of the compass. Hence also it is the number of earthliness which in combination with the Divine Three gives us Twelve for the Incarnation and the City of God which is the Body of Christ, and Seven as the symbol of grace, the Spirit of life being added to our earthly nature. The Cross is the instrument of universal redemption, and the number Four according to its Hebrew name is the Door. The Cross is the Door of life since Christ has therewith triumphed over Satan and opened Heaven. The Cross is the last letter of the Hebrew Alphabet. The value of that letter is Four Hundred. The number may therefore express either the universality of Satan's dominion over the world or the universality of Christ's Redemption.

25. MY SOUL CLEAVETH TO THE DUST *Twice, iv. 25, 32.*

"The man shall *cleave* unto his wife" (*Gen. 2, 24*). This is the first use of the word and it expresses here the close union of the soul wedded to the earthly body. (i) The soul *gnasheth* with craving for what is unattainable (so in *v. 20*). (ii) Here it *cleaves* to the dull earth which holds it down. Yet it does not find satisfaction in what is earthly. (iii) We find it next *melting* for heaviness (*v. 28*). It cannot rise. (iv) In Section XX. we find it *fainting* and longing for the Salvation which Jesus will bring. (v) The freed soul has a hard fight. In Section L. my soul is always *in my hand* (*v. 109*). (vi) It *guards* the wonderful grace of the Divine Sacraments in the Section of regenerate life (LXXX. 129). (vii) It can praise God for having *observed* them continually as befits the Divine relationship (CCC. 167). (viii) So the psalmist can put forth his claim, "*Let my soul live* and it shall praise Thee" (CCC. 175). The triumph of the Cross is complete and the soul in this *eighth* stage of its history can appeal to be established in the kingdom of the first born, crucified with Christ and living with Him for ever.

THE DUST

The dust is mentioned only here. It is the starting point of

the way of life for those who take up their Cross and follow Christ, but death breaks us away from it.

The penalty of sin was, Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return. If we are dead to sin we must not any longer continue therein (*Rom. vi. 2*). However much the soul *cleaves* to it it desires to be quickened.

QUICKEN ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD (*vid. ver. 17*) *Nine Times, iv. 25; v. 37, 40; xx. 88; l. 107; c. 149; cc. 154, 156, 159.*

There is a ninefold cry, ninefold life of God! (i) The soul begins to cry from the very dust (*ver. 25*), relying upon the Incarnate Word in whom is Life, (ii) to enable the suppliant to go forward in God's way of righteousness (*ver. 37*), (iii) partaker of the Divine Righteousness (*ver. 40*). (iv) The soul longs for God's mercy as the only claim for this gift (*XX. 88*). (v) It is a jubilee gift to him who was under the bondage of sin by the Personal Mediation of the Word the Redeemer (*L. 107*). (vi) God in His mercy is wont to hear those who call upon Him with spiritual perfection (*C. 149*). (vii) After this there is a threefold cry preparatory to the Section of victory which follows. This cry is based upon God's promise (*ver. 154*). (viii) God's compassionate judgment whereby his perseverance is accepted (*ver. 156*). (ix) God's mercy welcoming his love (*ver. 159*).

Thus the psalmist goes forward in the way of life to the victory of the Cross. So will his soul *live* in the eternal praise of God (*ver. 175*).

Life in Christ is a gift far exceeding any prayers or even wishes of our own. We pray for God to quicken us according to His own Word, not according to our halting words. That one Divine Word includes all that we could say, and infinitely surpasses all that we could desire.

26. I ACKNOWLEDGED MY WAYS *Twice, ii. 13; iv. 26.*

Our ways as children of Adam are naturally evil by reason of the Fall. We need to be raised out of this sinful state, as well as to have our actual sins forgiven.

(i) In the Section of the Incarnate Word, he recounted all the judgments of God's mouth for "all judgment is committed unto

the Son" (*John v.*). (ii) Now in the Section of the Cross he recounts his own sinfulness so that he may be partaker of redeeming grace promised to the faithful who confess their sins. If we recount our sins, God hears and owns the cry of penitence. The only thing which we can plead with God is our unworthiness.

MY WAYS *Four times*, i. 5 ; iv. 26 ; viii. 59 ; ccc. 168.

(i) He longs to have the instability of his ways corrected by the rocky firmness of perfection in Christ's way. (ii) He confesses his own sinfulness in his earthly condition while he appeals for life (*ver. 26*). (iii) As regenerated in Christ he gives himself up to change his ways in accordance with the demands of grace (VIII. 59). (iv) Having walked before God, he wins the victory of faith and claims acceptance according to God's covenanted promises (CCC. 168).

ANSWEREDST *Four times*, iv. 26 ; vi. 42 ; c. 145 ; ccc. 172.

This word is used twice of God's answering the cry of His servant, and twice of the servant himself making answer to his blasphemers and bursting forth in praise of God's unfailing promise.

Our earthliness must not hold us back from *acknowledging our ways* to God. He knoweth whereof we are made, and He is ever ready to *answer* us in the welcome of love and to teach us by His Holy Spirit. God sent His Son into the world to save sinners, and unless we draw near to God with the confession of sin we can expect no answer. It is God's *decree* that "all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father" (*John v. 23*). God will welcome us by teaching us the sufficiency of the Mediation of Christ, both God and man. So must we "learn Christ."

TEACH ME *Eight times*. Thy statutes, ii. 12 ; iv. 26 ; viii. 64 ; ix. 68 ; lxx. 124 ; lxxx. 135. Thy judgments, l. 108 ; also ix. 66.

God accepts us by *teaching* us the Divine mysteries whereby we are to rise out of sin. He manifests Christ in that glory which is the opposite of our weakness, the healing power which corresponds with our wounds. Thus we gain through penitence a

loving experimental knowledge of Christ. A vague admiration of Christ's glory would be external and purposeless.

Teachableness is the characteristic of all who would make progress in the way of life. We have to *learn* with the simplicity of little children. The Psalmist looked forward to praise God perfectly when he had perfectly *learned* the discipline of earth (I. 7). It was in the school of affliction that he must *learn* this Divine lesson, the Divine glory of the Passion (IX. 71) so as to fulfil God's commands with the perfection of the moral nature which God has given him (X. 73). By the Cross we must *learn* God's decrees. Then shall we praise Him when all is finished. Then will the glory of the reward ensue (CCCC. 171).

27. MAKE ME TO UNDERSTAND THE WAY OF THY PRECEPTS

Six times.

The way of God's precepts is the way of the Holy Cross wherein we follow the example of Christ. God must teach to *understand* this way. The more we continue to walk in it, the more shall we see its goodness. There must be an understanding heart, and this the Holy Ghost alone can give. We must search into the mysteries of Christ's *Passion*, His filial love to the Father, His redeeming love to man, His interior joy in holiness, His hatred of sin, His triumphant endurance whereby He showed Himself the Conqueror of Satan. It is only the humble penitent who can attain this wisdom. The more we understand God's *precepts*, the more shall we behold His *wonders*. Each revelation discloses fresh wonders to the humble penitent.

The first cry for understanding is in Sect IV. in the humiliation of the dust. The last is in Sect. CCCC. when the victory of the Cross is complete. The pathway of the Passion is an intelligent progress in suffering. We, if we would follow Christ in His Passion, must seek to be taught in the School of the Passion, the School of heavenly Aspiration, the school of Divine Love. We must not think it enough merely to suffer as by necessity and with a resolution that is dogged, stubborn, natural. The lifelong Passion from Nazareth to Calvary needs the illumination, the strength, the love, the joy of the Holy Ghost.

At the very end the Soul of the Redeemer asks—Why? The Human nature shall find the response in the blessed experience of welcome from among the horns of the unicorns, when God gives the answer accepting the Beloved in His mysterious embrace. So must we look to learn *the way of God's precepts* with the joy ever before us wherein we are to rejoice with Jesus hereafter—“Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

I WILL MEDITATE ON THY WONDROUS WORKS, *vid. ver. 23*

It is the experience of suffering which enables the faithful soul to enter into the mystery of the Passion, not argumentatively with a cold theory of justice, but lovingly in the sympathy of the Divine Self-sacrifice. The *precepts* of conduct (*ver. 15*), the *decrees* of faith (*ver. 23*), the *wonders* of love call us to exercise our understanding as the Holy Ghost enables us.

28. MY SOUL MELTETH AWAY

The soul of Job melted in humiliation before God (*Job xvi. 20*). So was it with the “strong crying and tears” of the greater Job. Alas, that we in this day know so little of these tears. We are not conscious how much we cleave to the dust because we are so content to lie down and slumber thereon. O that we could weep holy tears such as might be evaporated from the dust which they moisten, and rise to the bright sunlit heaven of Divine glory! If our tears fall to the earth in the fulness of a love which mourns our present condition, God will gather those tears into His bottle and treasure them with imperishable delight.

HEAVINESS

It is the soul's burden of sin. The soul unconscious of sin breaks itself in lighthearted resolve. Our very resolutions of amendment are often sinful by reason of their self-sufficiency. Therefore God in mercy lets us fail. The soul burdened with sin, melts and is strengthened by God's Word.

COMFORT THOU ME

Make me arise. Lift me out of the dust of sinfulness, dryness, exhaustion.

The agonizing Word pleads for the resurrection. Even the Incarnate Son who triumphed in our nature and through our natural weakness, triumphed by the power of the Anointing Spirit, which sustained His Humanity by reason of the hypostatic union. That union did not destroy the consciousness of the created weakness, subject to the law of death while He remained in our state of bondage and humiliation. He bore, and He felt the burden of the sins of all mankind whereby the enemy held human nature under his dominion.

Nothing but the resurrection could set Him free. It is in the fellowship of His resurrection, communicated by grace to those who are crucified with Him, that we are supernaturally established.

ACCORDING TO THY WORD

We are as truly made partakers of His fulness and spiritual strength as He, the Word Incarnate, was partaker of our flesh and blood and felt our weakness.

29. MAKE THE WAY OF LYING DEPART FROM ME

As Christ is the Way of truth, so the evil power is personally the way of lying. He is the father of lies. The children of falsehood are his offspring, that is to say, all mankind, for since the fall of Adam, all Adam's offspring are begotten with the poisonous taint of the serpent. "Adder's poison is under their lips." So our Lord says to the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil" (*John* v.). We cannot cease to be the children of the devil unless this inherited virus is removed from us by supernatural covenant with God. Then we become in Christ the seed of the woman. So in the Apocalypse (xii. 17). That verse describes Christ as taken up to heaven. The remnant of her seed are those who are begotten by His grace. Against them the serpent will continue to wage war until the end of time. "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (*Gal.* iv. 26).

THE LIE *Eight times*, iv. 29; ix. 69; x. 78; xx. 86; xl. 104; lx. 118; lxx. 128; ccc. 163.

The eightfold mention of the *lie* indicates the eightfold *regeneration*, whereby we are taken into the *truth*. God will bruise Satan

under our feet if we persevere unto the end. Every element of our nature has been tainted by the corruption of death which had dominion over us. It is not only by victory in some few points that we can conquer him. Every element of our nature must feel his assault and triumph over him by the power of the regenerating Spirit.

We are not to doubt the sufficiency of the sanctifying power because Satan is so persistent in his assaults. He assailed Christ with every form of evil that he can bring against us, but when the prince of this world came to Him, our Lord could say, "He hath nothing in Me." Satan has his part in all the rest of us, but the power of the Spirit of Grace is sufficient to drive him out, if we are faithful. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1. *John* v. 4).

Our human nature is powerless for self-help between the two claimants, the law of sin and death from which we need to be delivered, and the law of the Spirit which is able to set us free (*Rom.* vii.). We may surrender ourselves to accept which law we please, but if we would profit by the law of the Spirit we must act along with it. Then by the grace of Christ's Humanity communicated to us, the Holy Ghost will personally co-operate with us and *make the way of lying depart*.

The powers of darkness fled discomfited from the Cross. They will in like manner flee from us if they see that we are "crucified with Christ," as His members. "If the Son shall make you free then are ye free indeed" (*John* viii. 36).

GRANT ME THY LAW GRACIOUSLY *Three times, iv. 29; viii. 58; lxxx. 132.*

Blessed law of the Spirit given to us by the grace of Christ! The law of the letter wrought death by giving the knowledge of sin. The law of the Spirit gives life that we may know Righteousness.

(i) The grace of Christ comes to us in the dust when we are under Satan's power (IV.). (ii) lifts us up by the Spirit of new birth so as to have the Lord for our portion (VIII.). (iii) gladdens us in the mystical covenant with the light of God's revealed countenance (LXXX.).

By this law of the Cross "we pass from death unto life." "The law of commandments contained in ordinances" (*Ephes.* ii. 15) was done away with by the Cross, for Christ has "spoiled the principalities and powers" (*Col.* ii. 15), who used it as their claim to show that man could not serve God. The man Christ Jesus has fulfilled the law, and has shown the glory of Divine righteousness, *making the way of lying depart* in confusion. They were driven away back into Hell that there He might crush them.

Now the law of grace and righteousness and life in the Body of Christ takes the place of the old law. The accursed tree is changed into the Tree of life. Of old it was written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree (*Gal.* iii. 13), but now it is changed, and we must say, Cursed is he that hangeth not upon this tree of redemption. He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, and live in the power of the Spirit whereby He rose again.

30. THE WAY OF FAITHFULNESS *Five times, iv. 30; x. 75; xx. 86; xxx. 90; xc. 138.*

"The Cross is the test of faithfulness. Christ was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross" (*Phil.* ii. 8). He is "the faithful and true witness." To us it is said "Be thou faithful unto death" (*Rev.* ii. 10).

The weariness of the flesh cleaving to the dust does but enhance the faithfulness of the spirit if we are true to God. The way of lying is the continual solicitation of Satan, making false suggestions in our heart. The way of faithfulness is the strength of the Spirit of God.

I HAVE CHOSEN *Twice, iv. 30; cccc. 173.*

God has given us a *will* wherewith to serve Him, and there can be no acceptable service without free *choice*. Sections IV. and CCCC. speak of the Cross. We must choose the way of the Cross. Without such test the choice would have no value.

THY JUDGMENTS HAVE I LAID BEFORE ME

The Cross is the instrument of judgment or trial. How we ought to find delight when God does try us. True; it is con-

trary to nature, but on that account it is the instrument of grace. We like to be put to this test in earthly relationships. How much more ought we to delight when God in His love proves us by any discipline however hard it may be to bear. We do not choose God's judgments as tokens of anger, but opportunities for the exercise of love. Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth (*Prov.* iii. 12) and every one who loves Him, chooses the chastisement with perfect confidence that it is the best way in which we can show our love to Him. Then if we are faithful in its endurance He will show us the sweetness of His grace, while He strengthens us with every gift that is needful for our sanctification therein.

A steadfast purpose to accept God's judgment strengthens us by the elevation of motive which it involves. We look up to God and are taken out of *ourselves* when we look to give *Him* pleasure by accepting some test of our faithfulness. We are cheered by anticipating His bright smile of welcome. How small the suffering! But oh! the joy is infinite!

31. I CLEAVE TO THY TESTIMONIES, *ver.* 25

While the lower nature *cleaves* to earth, the higher nature learns to *cleave* to the gifts of God as a substantive reality in the *sacraments of grace*. As the magnet gains power by the amount of weight which it has to bear, so the soul which loves God becomes fitted for greater and greater trials by every suffering that God lays upon it.

The sacraments will be of no avail unless there is this loving exercise of confidence and self-surrender to God. We must not think of the sacraments as if they were given for our satisfaction. They are given to us to enable us to satisfy the high purposes of God. They are not given to save us from punishment but to strengthen us for righteousness. We fail of obtaining their grace if we seek it with a wrong purpose.

CONFOUND ME NOT *Twice*, iv. 31; lx. 116.

"Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost."

Love is like the power of attraction in the material world. However far off an object may be, it exerts a power to draw other objects towards itself. So the love of God, though He be unseen, attracts the faithful soul towards Him. It is a steady power. Nothing can hinder it unless we give ourselves up to the nearer attraction of earthly objects.

God will not put us to shame. Our only shame can be when we rely upon some other power instead of Him.

32. I WILL RUN

“A strong man rejoiceth to run a race” (Ps. xix. 6). The spiritual athlete girds up his loins gladly to run the race that is set before him (*Heb.* xii.). The word implies the vigorous joy of healthy action. We must rise up to this joy. Love has many causes of sorrow, but it has within itself an inexhaustible fund of joyous energy. We must not sink in the dust, but run for our lives. Yet we run not in fear as seeking to avoid danger. If that were all, whither could we run? We run towards God for in Him is our life, and we find that life by the energy wherewith we run towards Him. “Draw me: we will run after Thee” (*Cant.* i. 4). As the projectile gains rapidity as it comes nearer to the ground which attracts it, so the soul which is attracted to God must be gaining fresh impetus, as we draw nearer to God.

THE WAY OF THY COMMANDMENTS

The way of God's commandments has the assurance of God's approval. It is not a way of experiment.

It is not even a way of suggestion. What we suggest for ourselves is apt to be dangerous. We would fain do what is beyond our strength. So self-confident martyrs failed. When God commands us, then we run joyously, for we know we are safe. We need not look either to right or to left. We must look straight before us and do what is bidden. We must look upward to Christ for we are following Him. So let us run with patience the race that is set before us, “looking away from all earthly distractions” to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith” (*Heb.* xii. 2.).

FOR THOU DOST ENLARGE MY HEART

The Divine love enlarges the heart in proportion to the correspondence of the saint with the Sanctifier. The more we exercise God's love, the more does He strengthen us with the capacity of doing every thing in love to Himself. We grow to that which God Himself is until we lose ourselves in God. The Heart of Jesus is the Mediatorial principle in fellowship wherewith this love must be exercised. Our heart must grow to the largeness of His Love by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit. So we must attain to "the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ."

Our feet tread the dust, but our heart must expand with all the love of heaven, to love all that God loves, to love God in all, to love with the love which God Himself gives, and whereby He makes us one with Himself, to love Jesus the Personal Head of the Church. Jesus Himself is the Heart whereby the Body of His Redeemed ones live in love for evermore.

The eternal Act of God in His Triune Essence is the source of that love: the triumphant endurance of the all-redeeming Passion is the measure of its created manifestation, that we may live therein as the sons of God and the members of Christ crucified on earth and enthroned at God's Right Hand for ever.

SECTION V

Vers. 33-40

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH

Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy decrees, And I will keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I will guard Thy laws ; And I will observe it with my whole heart. Lead me in the track of Thy com- mandments For therein do I delight. Incline mine heart unto Thy testi- monies And not to worldly gain. Turn away mine eyes from seeing vanity, Quicken me in Thy way. Raise up to Thy servant Thy promise Which is pledged to Thy fear. Make the reproach which I dread to go from me For Thy judgments are good. Behold I long for Thy precepts : Quicken me in Thy righteousness.	<i>Prayer for heavenly teaching.</i> <i>spiritual understanding.</i> <i>guidance in action.</i> <i>devout affection.</i> <i>progressive sanctification of life.</i> <i>joyful resurrection.</i> <i>deliverance from Satan.</i> <i>life in eternal righteousness.</i>
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Five is a number frequently occurring in Holy Scripture. It seems to symbolise "law." Thus we have the Five Books of Moses which stand out as the Pentateuch. It is the number of sacrifice, specially hallowed for us in the Christian Sacrifice by our Lord's Five Wounds. It is the military exponent of order

amongst the Hebrews. They went up harnessed, literally "marching five abreast." The hosts of Israel were arranged in four camps, east and west, north and south, with the Tabernacle in the centre, gathering them up in a five-fold unity.

The letter (ה) is of special importance, for this letter was added to the names of Abram and Sarai, giving them the sacred significance which attaches to them. It seems to have been taken from the mysterious Tetragrammaton, being the second and fourth letter of the Name which we call Jehovah. Apparently in that Name it indicates the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Godhead. Its numerical value is "five."

So it points to the Lord our Righteousness.

The Title upon the Cross collected from all the four evangelists, if the numerical value of the letters is added up, amounts to 7215, which is 13 into 555, the number of sin, and a powerful expression in fives to set forth the Righteousness of Him who conquered sin. Thirteen is the number of sin and of atonement.

33. THE WAY OF THY DECREES *Six times, ii. 14; iv. 27, 29, 30, 32; v. 33.*

Besides the general expressions "the way of lying and the way of faithfulness" contrasted in *vers.* 29, 30, we have "the way of Thy testimonies," the sacramental sustenance of the pilgrim (II. 14), "the way of Thy precepts," the following of Christ Crucified (IV. 27), "the way of Thy commandments," active religious obedience (IV. 32), and now the final phrase, "the way of Thy decrees."

The word "decrees" seems always to have reference to the Decree of Divine Sonship, that all men shall "honour the Son as they honour the Father" (*John* v. 23). This includes the Decree which makes Christ the one Mediator dying upon the Cross to bring man into unity with God.

"The way of God's Decrees" therefore leads from the practical idea of obedience to the mystical recognition of the Divine Righteousness, the Righteousness of faith (*Rom.* ix. 30). We are made the Righteousness of God in Him (*2 Cor.* v. 21). God's Decree is that we are to accept His Incarnate Son as the Lord

our Righteousness (*Jer.* xxiii. 6). To this all the statutes connected with the Mosaic Tabernacle and its numerous details (arranged in fives) bear witness. His Incarnation was the glory which required expression when God changed the names of Abram and Sarai, adding the letter H to each as a prophetic and mysterious designation of them to be His parents after the flesh.

TEACH ME *Twice*, v. 33; xl. 102.

This word is the verbal form of that which appears so constantly throughout this Psalm, "the Law." *Teach me, give me the law which regulates the way of Thy decrees.* It is the law of the New Covenant, the law of the righteousness of faith based upon the Incarnation of the adorable Son.

Here he asks for the law to be given him. In XL. 102 the Section of probation he speaks as having been faithful in his trial because God had given him this law to keep.

I WILL GUARD IT

We must guard the supernatural character of Divine Righteousness whereby we are accepted in Christ. The Jews kept strictly the letter of their law but they did not *guard* that spiritual import which alone gave it any substance. They merely kept the shadow or outline.

UNTO THE END *Twice*, v. 33; l. 112.

Righteousness must be persevering. "If the righteous turn away from his righteousness, he shall die." The "End" will again be spoken of in the Section of Jubilee. When the year of redemption is come it will be the joyous end, for there shall no longer be any danger of falling back into sin. The end of the law is charity and in the jubilee the law will be transfigured in the glory of the love for which it prepared the way. "In keeping God's judgments there is great reward" (*Ps.* xix. 12), lit. great end. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness." The law was to fence the covenant people and bring them to Christ. . . . Love is

the fulfilling of the law. "Charity never faileth" (1 Cor. xv.). If we keep it to the end, it will keep us for ever.

34. GIVE ME UNDERSTANDING iv. 27; v. 34; x. 73; lxx. 125; xc. 144; cccc. 169.

We cannot keep God's *moral* law unless God give us the *understanding* to perceive its spiritual import. Without this there is no righteousness to be found in the law because there is no life, and righteousness does not consist in the strictness of the letter but in the living fellowship with God which that letter implies. This *understanding* implies the recognition of God's decrees or as St Paul speaks, it implies "the righteousness which is of faith" (Rom. ix). The psalmist promises to *guard the way of God's decrees* and then he will be able to *guard God's law*.

I WILL OBSERVE IT WITH MY WHOLE HEART

This is that loving self-consecration which God requires. "To obey is better than sacrifice." This is no disparagement of sacrifice. Obedience is the *active* expression of love. Legal sacrifice is the *material* expression of love. Neither is of avail without whole hearted self-oblation in love. The heart must stimulate the *action* and inspire the *gift*. The *act* is of no value without the *gift* of self on the part of the worshipper.

35. MAKE ME TO GO

This is a verbal form of that which appears so often as "the way." *Make my way to be in the track of Thy commandments*. We must submit our way to God's guidance. The natural will is not sufficient to guide us even though God point out the way. We need the law of the Spirit of life that we may walk and please God. God's preventing grace will not be wanting to us if we are diligent in whole hearted obedience according to our measure.

THE TRACK *Twice, v. 35 (masc.); l. 105 (fem.).*

The track is that which the feet of Christ have trodden. "He maketh His footsteps a way" (Ps. lxxxv. 14) wherein we are to tread along with Him.

Christ is the living Way for He was in all things obedient to His Father, and His footprints mark that way, showing us how we are to walk therein. We must abide in Him as the life if we would keep God's commandments as our law. He is the Good Shepherd who leads us by His call and He is the Door of the Sheep, being Himself the Sanctuary wherein the sheep are to abide by walking with Him in His Divine fellowship and His Human Example.

THEREIN IS MY PLEASURE

So Christ says, when He comes into the world, "To do Thy will, O God, is my pleasure" (Ps. xl. 9). God cannot make us follow Christ unless there be a responsive pleasure on our part while we yield to His preventing grace. Without such living pleasure the imitation would be a lifeless and mechanical routine.

36. INCLINE MY HEART *Four times (Hiph.) v. 36; (Kal). vii. 51, 4, 112; cc. 157.*

Make my heart stretch towards Thy testimonies. The suasive unction of the Holy Ghost makes the heart sensible of a real pleasure in serving God, a personal delight in doing what God commands simply out of love to His Personal goodness. So must there also be a pleasure in God's sacraments because of personal union with Himself therein, irrespectively of the benefit to be derived from them.

The substantive gift of grace in the Sacraments is as real as any earthly substance which people may seek after because of its commercial value in the world.

The psalmist anticipates the teaching of the Apostle, "Covet earnestly the best gifts." "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth" (*Col.* iii. 2).

Alas! How do people neglect seeking the grace of God's Sacraments, because their heart stretches out after worldly covetousness! What is but for the moment engages the desires of a lifetime. How few have any real desire for the things of the Kingdom of God, although they will last for ever when the wealth of this life has come to nought! We must ask God to

kindle us with devout affections. We must desire and pray for the coming of Christ's Kingdom before we can ask for, or desire, our daily bread.

COVETOUSNESS

The word implies dishonesty, unjust gain. So our Lord speaks of "the unrighteous mammon." The wealth of this world can seldom be without much sin in the acquiring as well as in the using. People pride themselves upon the plunder which they can appropriate, but we have no right to anything unless we give to others an equivalent. We must learn and labour truly to get our own living and are not to exult in getting great advantage at little toil.

God's gifts both in nature and in grace are given to us that we may use them for the benefit of others as well as for our own. Covetousness is that whereby God is dishonoured and man is robbed.

God's testimonies are a Divine co-operative energy, profiting not ourselves alone, when we receive them, but making us profitable to others and enabling us to glorify God.

37. MAKE MINE EYES TRAVEL ONWARD *Twice v. 37, 39.*

We pray that God may inspire the *heart* with heavenly attractions drawing it away from earth, and that He may make our *eyes* travel onwards and not rest upon the *vanity* of earthly show. We must be true Hebrews and our eyes cross over the Jordan of death which separates us from our heavenly land of promise. The things of this world fascinate the eyes so that men seldom give a glance to the things of heaven. If we saw "heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the Right Hand of God" (*Acts vii.*), we should scarcely take notice of the miserable foreground of earth's *vanity*.

VANITY

The things of God are *real*, and all else is *emptiness*, or else our fellowship with God can only be a dream. We cannot serve two Masters. Yet this is what people commonly try to do.

Serve both and displease neither? No: it cannot be. We must "serve one and hate the other or else cleave to the one and despise the other." Faith ought to lay hold upon the heavenly substance. Then we should see the *emptiness* of all that is on earth. If we fully believe in the substantive reality of heavenly things we must give our hearts to long for them. If we give up anything *for* God, we shall enjoy it *in* God, and that will far surpass any possible enjoyment belonging to this lower world. If we have ever had any glimpse of Jesus in His glory, we must look to Him and surely He will show Himself again, but we cannot see Him if our eyes are mainly rivetted by the objects of the present life. The stars of this world's darkness must be lost to sight if the noonday sun is shining upon us from the heavenly glory.

The night and day of the outer heavens are not under our control, but it rests with ourselves whether we will walk as the children of darkness in the night of practical unbelief, or as the children of the light rejoicing in the glory to which we have been admitted. We must pray God so to illuminate our soul that we may see the things of earth in the true character of their *vanity*. Then we shall turn from them in disgust.

O that the eye might be so carried far away in vision of the heavenly light, as was the eye of Saul, that even the outward organ might be made blind to all earthly things. But that happened to him for he was then in unbelief. The vision, if granted to the faithful, would strengthen and would not incapacitate. His eye was made to feel the Divine Light as an external power. Now on the contrary if such vision may be granted, the eye must be carried inward to the interior sanctuary of communion with God, deep down, underlying the natural heart and its sensibilities. The glory of God, accompanying the Church as the Body of Christ, is not an overshadowing majesty like the cloud which was spread over Israel's camp in the wilderness, but an interior, vitality transcending all the action of the outward organ. O that our soul could bask in that flood of glory. It is our own fault that we know so little of it.

Such is the transport which is intended in this verse, not the turning of the eye from one earthly object to an earthly hope or form of God, but the transport of the vision from the world of death to the promised inheritance of Divine love which is quickened within us already as the life of the Church in the righteousness and sanctity of God.

QUICKEN ME IN THY WAY, *vid. ver. 25*

God's way is the way of life. It is the way in which the Good Shepherd leads His sheep out of the world. He leads them through the Door of His own Humanity into the interior recesses of communion with God. He goes before them by giving them higher gifts of life and they follow Him by using that life, the life of Divine righteousness. He is Himself the Way and the Life.

38. STABLISH THY PROMISE

Make Thy promise arise. That Promise is the promise of resurrection. Christ laid down His life in order that He might take it again in a better estate, and might make His people partakers of it. "This commandment He has received from His Father."

The Promise of God is stablished to His servants not by the power of the world but by triumph over death through death. Any power exerted on this side of death would be an earthly triumph and would have no Divine guarantee. Any power must show itself to have an inherent capacity of resurrection from death if it is to claim Divine security. Christ is "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead" (*Rom. i. 4*). The Church is the covenant of a Resurrection-life. We must never regard earthly success or failure as in any way indicating or stultifying a Divine claim. Success must be in opposition to the powers of the world and the probabilities of earthly power, if it is to be conceived as coming from God. Not only has God chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong, but He *must* do so if He is true to Himself and watchful over the eternal interests of His people. The purity of the Church and the power of faith cannot but suffer through any acquisition of worldly

power. We have been so long accustomed to such alliance of heaven and earth that it seems to us natural, and when men wake up to its mischievous consequences they are apt to run into an extreme and think that ties which never should have been can easily be broken. It is not so. No community and no individual can make a fresh start and break with the results of past years. But we must remember whenever God reduces His Church to be the representative of Himself as He was seen upon the Cross, it will not be a token that His promise has failed, but rather that He is calling His faithful few to the battle of the last days, and that the time for His Kingdom to come is close at hand.

UNTO THY SERVANT

Christ speaks in our human nature as "the elect servant." He was pre-ordained of God to be the Head of all creation in our human nature, capable of mediating with God by reason of the Hypostatic Union. In Him the creature is taken up so as to be one with the Creator. Such unification was necessary even if man had not sinned. There must be indissoluble, personal unity.

The Fall of the creature, both angelic and human, was not a foreseen possibility, but an actual necessity. The creature could not remain true to God by its own freewill. The finite could not be identified in will and action with the infinite. It was necessary in the very nature of things that the creature should show its weakness. God would interfere on behalf of His servant to give deliverance from finite incapacity by the institution of an indissoluble covenant of grace in the Person of Christ, the Word.

The whole multitude of angels are established around the Incarnate Person of the risen Saviour, and are secure by the power of His sovereignty. He is the Resurrection of us men, who are in sin, and the life of those who never fell. None will be rejected who come to Him, but none can have security or life unless they receive it from Him.

ACCORDING TO THY FEAR

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (*Prov. i. 7*). The creature must have a true sense of its own nothingness

if it would draw near to God. "Fear the Lord and His goodness" (*Hos.* iii. 5). Such a fear, a Divine awe, precedes the fear of punishment which the sinner must feel. Such fear is the acknowledgment of the Infinite as greater than the finite. So we read of Christ, that He was heard in that He feared. Fear of punishment is selfish, but this fear with which the created mind contemplates the Uncreated, is a due recognition of the Sovereignty of the Personal God. The majesty of God can never be truly thought of, even for a moment, without this sense of Divine awe. The gift of Sonship does not diminish this fear. Rather it increases it: for the communication of the Divine Life illuminates the consciousness, and this fear is only the expression of truth. The Infinite Life and Essence of God which we cannot understand is a reality involving us in relationships to the Eternal which must operate upon us throughout Eternity. How wondrous the joy of God! To know it, and to forfeit it. O who can tell the terrible-ness of the thought! O the joy to know that He loves us with a love infinite and eternal! The knowledge that He loves us demands that we shall walk worthy of His love.

39. THE SHAME WHICH I AM AFRAID OF *Twice*, iii. 22; v. 39.

The sinfulness of nature, no longer what God created it, makes man to be a reproach in the midst of creation. How shall God take away this reproach? By the righteousness of the risen Saviour.

MAKE IT TO GO OVER *Twice*, v. 39; vi. 37.

Already he has said, *roll it away from me*, like the stone from the door of the sepulchre. Now he says, *make it go away*. Just as he desired that his eyes should be transported where they could no longer see the world's vanity, so he desires that the shame which covers him shall be transported. Death is the Jordan. The *eyes* are carried where they shall see the King in His glory in the resurrection which God has promised. The *reproach* must be driven down into the darkness which is the home of sin. That reproach is a spiritual entity which has

possessed the sinner and held him captive, a spirit of darkness which had to be conquered. When the eyes behold the glory of the resurrection, then the evil angels whose dominion has been our reproach shall depart into their torment.

THY JUDGMENTS ARE GOOD *Eight times, v. 39; ix. 65, 66, 68 (bis), 71, 72; lxx. 122.*

However much the evil angels may assail us with tyrannical temptations, nevertheless Christ has conquered them. The Prince of this world is *judged*. By our temptations we are being proved, but man's probation is Satan's condemnation. The faithful who cling to Christ and have their eyes fixt on the heavenly promises which the resurrection of Christ ensures to them bear witness to Christ as their Redeemer from Satan's power.

We fear the power of the evil one, but we know that he could not assail us without God's permission, and we know that the discipline to which He subjects us is good. It is "working the peaceable fruit of righteousness in those who are exercised thereby" (*Heb. xii. 11*).

God can remove our besetting sin, and when it is good for us, He will do so. Meanwhile we must be waiting and fighting.

We ought to think of our sin not as if it were a mere physical infirmity or abstract guiltiness. Just as we have the guardianship of holy angels while we walk in the way of God's commandments, so we are beset by evil angels who seek to draw us into disobedience, and when they have got us into sin they hold us in their power so that we have to fight against them. Every sin that we commit gives the evil angels so much more power over us, besides of course strengthening the habit of sin and making us less able to resist.

Nevertheless Jesus the Lord our Righteousness has conquered all the host of evil and He will help us to conquer. He will make the spirit that puts us to shame depart from us if we look up to Him with faith and penitence.

40. I HAVE LONGED *Three times, v. 40; cccc. 174; (Subst.) iii. 20.*

Longing for God's precepts, longing for power to fulfil them, and

follow Christ in His resurrection! Such is the Psalmist's longing to follow Jesus in righteousness. In CCCC. 174 he longs for Jesus to come.

QUICKEN ME IN THY RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Section ends with the appeal for a living righteousness to be given him, the righteousness of the new man, the Incarnate God. This life of eternal righteousness is "the end" to which he looked forward with a lifelong dedication in the first verse of this octave. Baptism was "a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness." The death has to be made complete by lifelong mortification while we use the gift of the Spirit (*Rom.* viii. 13). The new birth does not become complete until the great day of Regeneration (*Mat.* xix. 28). We must co-operate in its development by keeping our eyes fixt upon the other side of the Jordan which we have to pass. "Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (*Col.* iii. 1). Our eyes travel onward to Jerusalem, for here we feel the "bulls of Bashan" compassing us on every side. The Jordan which we have to cross is the Jordan wherein Christ has obtained recognition as "the Beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased." His death showed Him to be superior to death. By death He burst the bars of our Satanic prisonhouse, and opened for us "the way into the holiest." So does He make death pass away from us. "He that hath the power of death" can no longer hold us under his tyranny. "The accuser of the brethren" is cast out—the promise made to the great Joshua is fulfilled. "I will clothe thee with change of raiment" (*Zech.* iii. 4) The people of Christ have "come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (*Rev.* vii. 13). "The fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (*Rev.* xix. 8), the baptismal robe of eternal life.

SECTION VI

Vers. 41-48

THE FEEBLENESS OF THE CREATURE

APPEAL FOR THE PROMISED SALVATION

And let Thy mercies come to me, *the word of advocacy rebutting Satan's*
O Lord : *reproach,*
Thy salvation, according to Thy *the word of Divine strength,*
promise. *[speaking for us.]*
So shall I have word to answer *the word of truth,* *speaking to us.*
my reproaches
For I have trusted in Thy word. *„ „ speaking in us.*
And snatch not the word of truth
utterly out of my mouth
For I have waited for Thy judg-
ments.

HUMAN NATURE STABLISHED BY THE WORD OF TRUTH

So will I observe Thy law per- *in obedience.*
petually
For ever and ever.
And I shall walk at liberty, *in freedom.*
For I have sought Thy precepts.
And I shall speak of Thy testi- *in boldness.*
monies ever before kings
And I shall not be ashamed. *in triumph.*
And I shall delight in Thy com- *in joy.*
mandments
Which I have loved.
And I will lift up my hands to Thy *in the fellowship of the Cross.*
commandments which I have
loved.
And I will meditate on Thy de- *in the expectation of eternal glory.*
crees.

Six is the number of created completeness and natural power. It lacks grace which the number seven symbolizes. Resting in itself instead of reaching out to God, the creature is seen in its sinfulness, and its very power becomes feebleness. The sixth day is the day of man's creation, probably also of his fall, and certainly of his redemption. That redemption was at once the manifestation of man's sin bringing man to death and of God's power delivering from Satan's tyranny. The letter expressing "six" is the weakest letter of the Alphabet. No words begin with it. The acrostic throughout this Section is merely the conjunction "and,"—the same in all the eight Hebrew verses.

41. LET THY MERCIES COME TO ME *Seven times*, vi. 41; viii. 64; x. 76; xx. 88; lxx. 124; c. 149; cc. 159.

The creature at its best feels its dependence upon God's mercy. He who created us, must still support us or we perish. Created life must always cry for mercy. The Word of God which gives us our being speaks within the hearts which He has created, calling them to look onward and not to rest in themselves. So must they praise the Lord and find their joy in so doing.

It is by God's power that we are created and we have no claim upon Him to do more for us than He has done. We can only look to His mercy which is infinite even as His power, and thus we trust that He will complete His work.

THY SALVATION *Twice*, vi. 41; xx. 81; *Four times in another form*, lxx. 173; cc. 155; ccc. 165; cccc. 174; *Thrice in verbal form* (*Niph.*), 137; (*Hiph.*), xxx. 94; c. 146. *Nine occurrences of this word in all.*

Thy Jesus. The Hebrew name "Jesus" means "salvation." Jesus is the "salvation" to which the creature must look. As the creature came out from God, so it can only be perfected in God. Every perfection which it receives contains an increased evidence that God alone can satisfy. This salvation "comes" to us. It does not take its rise from earth but from the Bosom of the Divine, Eternal, Love.

Eternity is the endless mystery wherein time must lose itself, both past and future. Time is finite, but the successions of time

point to that which has neither beginning nor end. Time comes forth from the Infinite and hurries onward to the Infinite again.

So is it also with space. Space is finite within itself, but in its totality of extension it dies away into the Infinite. God sustains each point of space not by an infinite number of acts as if each point had a separate being, but by one collective, unifying, act so that all points of space in Him are one.

God does not exist in the moments of time or in the points of space, but they come forth from Him, the Infinite, as their origin, and tend towards Him the Infinite, as their end. If He existed in them, He would lose Himself in nothingness. They exist in Him and so their nothingness becomes the manifestation of His will.

Thus does all creation look to God for *salvation*. No finite being can save the Universe from disappearing in nothingness. Reality is a consciousness of perpetuity, and perpetuity is the abiding relation of the creature to God. Nothing is real except as being known to God. Nothing can be known to God without a real perpetuity. The Divine predestination, the Divine memory, the Divine judgment, whether for approval or disapproval, are a threefold law of futurity, presence, and history by which God holds all creation in His own grasp. All things came forth from Him. They exist in Him, and for Him. Jesus is the salvation of all, saving them from nothingness, and He is the Word who created all out of nothingness.

This is true of creation as such, without reference to sin as needing a Saviour to redeem us from the bondage of Satan. The nothingness which derives an eternity from God does not exist alongside of God by inherent self-sustaining power. Neither does it contain God as inherent within itself. It is external to God. Otherwise God would be lost in nothingness. But it exists eternally in God by the relation of the finite to the Infinite. Therefore also God must take it into Himself lest it pass away in its own nothingness. God must take it into Himself so as to exist therein by gracious self-communication. Otherwise creation must have the sense of eternal vacancy, for without God's in-

dwelling it cannot act beyond the transitory efforts of continuous evanescence and disappointment. The creature is so related to God that its whole existence must be a series of disappointments, unless it find repose in the Incarnate God. If the idea of creation be granted, the Incarnation seems to be a necessary consequence.

ACCORDING TO THY PROMISE, *vid. ver. I I* *Six times*, vi. 41; viii. 58; x. 76; ix. 116; cc. 154; cccc, 170.

The *word of power* which creates is also a *word of promise*. God could not create us without an end that should be worthy of our creation. What is that but Himself? As water rises to the level of its source, so must the creature which came forth from God as its origin rise up to God as its end. This longing is a necessity, and it is inconceivable that God should create intelligent beings with such a longing, if He did not intend to gratify it. Mercy, salvation, eternal joy in God are all one.

42. MY REPROACHER, *vid. ver. 39*

Satan is the *reproacher*. The last Section prayed that the *reproach*, the besetting spirit of evil, might be driven away. Now we see that the coming of salvation by the Seed of the woman, Jesus, is the warrant of victory. God coming in the flesh gives us a *word*, yea, a Divine word, wherewith we may answer Satan who *reproaches* us as being his slaves. "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan."

I WILL GIVE A WORD OF ANSWER

Man has nothing in himself that he can plead against the accusations of Satan. "Thou wilt answer (for me), O Lord my God" (Ps. xxxviii. 16). He can plead the righteousness of Christ as having fulfilled the purpose of man's creation. Satan can no longer *reproach* human nature as if it was a defective creation. He did bring this reproach against it when he accused Job. He said that man must be selfish, and would only serve God for hire. Jesus is the Saviour who refutes the calumny of Satan by His endurance even unto death of all that Satan could do against Him. Incarnate Love lived, worked, spake in man.

MY TRUST IS IN THY WORD

By the Word we are created, and by that Word we are perfected in triumphant glory. That Word alone can be our stay, but it cannot fail. The vindication is proportionate to the Word. The glorious purpose which the Word of God vindicates must be equal to the original power exerted in creation. The vindication must therefore be Divine, and the glorious issue must be equal to the glory of His Divine Personality. No creative power can be wasted.

43. SNATCH NOT OUT OF MY MOUTH *Twice*, vi. 43; cccc. 170.

If Jesus is to speak *for* us, He must speak *in* us, *in our mouth*. Unless we speak with the utterance which He inspires, we cannot claim our part in His mediation. "The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it, that is, the Word of faith, which we preach" (*Rom.* x. 8). God will snatch it out of our *mouth* unless it come forth from the *heart*. "With the heart man believeth, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "Snatch not Thy Word from my mouth."

The prayer is here for the gift of *perseverance*. In *ver.* 170 it is for the gift of final deliverance. "Let Thy Word snatch me by the Cross."

THE WORD OF TRUTH *Four times*, vi. 43 xc. 142; c. 151; cc. 160.

Our Lord prays for His disciples, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is truth" (*John* xvii. 17). The Word of God is a *Personal Power* begotten in eternity of the Father, the Representative and Partner of the Father's Mind, acting in eternal unity with the Father by the Procession of the Spirit of Love. Our words are dead and therefore they have no personal existence, being the mere expression of our lifeless thought. But the Son of God is the *living* Word. The Person of the Speaker lives on in the Word that He utters. He is the *true* Word for He is consubstantial with the mind of the Father. He is the *creative* Word by whom all things was made, and the *engrafted* Word by whom creation is brought out of its barrenness to be fruitful in correspondence with the will of the Creator. He is the *legislative* Word revealing the purposes of God to His creatures that they

may do it, and the *sanctifying* Word raising the creature up to the Holiness of the Creator by the communication of the Holy Ghost as a supernatural power of life to the individual.

FOR MY HOPE IS IN THY JUDGMENTS *Six times, vi. 43 (in Thy Word); vii. 49; x. 74; xx. 81; lx. 114; c. 147.*

The Human Nature wherein the Word is incarnate cannot be cast off for ever, although it be subjected to disciplinary humiliation. The judgments of God are *probationary* and therefore the withdrawal of Divine Manifestations cannot be *final*. Christ had to act as man. The surroundings of Divine Omnipotence would have been inconsistent with the feebleness of the instrumentality which was essential if the victory was to be a human victory over Satan. The Person of the Word was the sustaining power and although His mouth spake not with the sovereignty of that Word yet it was only hushed for a season and would speak in fulness of Divine power when the Prince of this world was judged and Jesus went down with Divine Omnipotence to "bruise his head" in Hell.

44. YEA : I WILL KEEP THY LAW

God's promise and man's fidelity go together. If we are true to God's word, God will be true to us. The expectation of the joy that is to be, strengthens us to wait and work amidst all the severity of God's discipline.

CONTINUALLY, FOR EVER AND EVER *Three times, vi. 44; l. 109; lx. 117.*

The word "continual" is specially used of the daily sacrifice. The oblation which God requires must be continual during the course of time and consummated in the secrecy of the eternal. God's law is a manifestation in temporal form, both morally and ceremonially, of relationships which have their eternity in the hidden mystery of the Divine Essence.

45. WALK AT LIBERTY *Twice, vi. 45; xxx. 96 (In verbal form); iv. 32.*

In a large place. This is "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (*Rom. viii.*). Delivered out of the straightness of this

earthly condition and enjoying the *largeness* of the Divine love, the body is no longer held down by the laws of this dead world which we call "space." It shall be "raised a spiritual body" (1 *Cor.* xv.). In this world we have by faith an earnest of that infinite expansiveness which shall be our manifest portion when time and space shall be no more. The heart will be *enlarged* in the full participation of Divine love. Though individuality will remain, yet all the members of Christ's Body shall be one indissoluble substance, with interpenetrative powers, not separable organs, but all living in the supreme unity of the Holy Ghost. This is our Lord's prayer for His Disciples, "that they all may be one as we are, I in them and Thou in me, that they all may be made perfect in one" (*John* xvii.). All the separability and consequent pressure of antagonism which belongs to the present condition of this material world of death will give place to the unfettered largeness of the Divine Will wherein they will walk in the perfect guidance of Divine love.

FOR I HAVE SOUGHT THY PRECEPTS *Five times, i. 2; ii. 10; vi. 45*
xxx. 96; cc. 155.

If we look to God, seeking His precepts, we walk in the liberty of God's omnipotence. Therefore our Lord says, All things are possible to him that believeth (*Mark.* ix. 23). In his perfect subjection to the Divine Guidance he cannot seek to do in the Name of Christ anything that God does not will to be done, but just in proportion to his subjection he comes to share the Divine Omnipotence for the accomplishment of what surpasses earthly power. God's will is his guide and he acts in God's power.

We must contrast the feebleness of earthly possibilities with the spiritual boundlessness of action in the fellowship of Divine glory. Our finite actions have finite aims, but the precepts of God lead us onward to the infinity of God's holy purposes if we are diligent in seeking to fulfil them.

46. BEFORE KINGS *Only in this verse.*

The great ones of the earth are here intended, not as opponents, but simply as auditors. The power of the faithful is of a higher

order than the power of earthly sovereigns. By the word "Kings" we are to understand all who possess any form of earthly greatness, material, moral, or intellectual.

I WILL SPEAK OF THY TESTIMONIES

We must bear witness to Christ in our several positions. The Word of faith will triumph over the world. Kings shall bow down before Christ. This we have seen in the world-wide spread of the Christian Name. We must wait for this world to pass away ere we can see the true fulfilment of the victory of Christ's kingdom. It is to triumph, not in the world, but over the world. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 *John* ii. 17).

I WILL NOT BE ASHAMED

While that victory was being won, there was much outward sense of shame, because of the feebleness of Christ's people. Shame during life ended in a death of martyrdom, but faith triumphed. So S. Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ" (*Rom.* i.). He had come to Rome as the steward of the mysteries, the testimonies, of God. In the proclamation of this power, the sense of his own littleness vanished away.

Now we have to proclaim God's truth against the kings of this world's wisdom. We must not be ashamed of any boasted superiority that reproaches us. We must look forward to the sure victory of faith now as in the former time. We must not shrink from the probation of transitory shame. Only by this can we be counted worthy of the victory. We must endure cheerfully. We shall not be accounted conquerors because we have made truth triumphant by any natural ability of our own, but because truth has made us triumphant through our faithfulness amidst scorn and even in defeat.

47. MY DELIGHT, *ver.* 16.

The outer nature feels shame in contending for Christ, because the outer world is stronger than we, but the inward nature finds

its very delight in meeting this opposition, because the exercise of Divine fellowship is as a well of water springing up within the soul, giving sweet refreshment.

IN THY COMMANDMENTS

God's decrees, which are from eternity (*ver.* 16), God's testimonies in the sacramental communication of Christ's Divine Life to us (*ver.* 24), God's commandments controlling his daily conduct (*vers.* 47, 143), God's law, the abiding covenant with all its promises (70, 77, 92, 174)—constitute an eightfold joy, so that the regenerate soul rejoices in God from everlasting and now and to eternity his joy is to do all as God commands.

WHICH I HAVE LOVED *Twelve times*, vi. 47, 48; xl. 96; lx. 113, 119; lxx. 127; lxxx. 132; xc. 140; cc. 157; ccc. 163, 165, 167.

This delight must be the result of a true love.

How apt is controversy to gender strife and pride! That is from want of love as the true ground for persisting in God's truth. Then there may be excitement arising from contention but not the delight which arises from calmly resting in God who will make His truth and glory to triumph, though we see it not. Our delight must be not in gaining a victory which we see, but in bearing witness, suffering, dying, so as to win a victory which we shall not see in this world but we shall share it in the love of God hereafter.

Love, personal love to God! Faith ^{worketh} by love. The joy of serving God is perfected by the consciousness of Divine power, for whatever God may command He will always supply the necessary strength for the accomplishment of the command. That power is given in the Triune Name (*ver.* 132) which is the source of all sacramental grace, as we are baptized into it. The Name of God is the Eternal Act of the Divine Nature whereby God knows Himself in wisdom and love, and makes Himself known to those who are taken up to live in the power of this Holy Name with filial love as members of Him who is

the Incarnate Wisdom. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God." Then we love God's promise (*ver.* 140) which accompanies us through all the vicissitudes of earthly life, and we love God's precepts. Love is the spontaneous movement of the loving soul received from the attractiveness of Christ's example which we are called to follow, walking in His footsteps.

48. I WILL LIFT UP

How elevating is love when we yield ourselves to its active power !
So in every noble aim which earthly love inspires ! How much more when the Holy Ghost transports us with the love of God.

We shall look up to God's commandments with elevation of heart and this will show itself in bodily self-consecration.

MY HANDS (palms) *Twice*, vi. 48 ; l. 109.

This points to the uplifted Hands upon the Cross wherein the commandments of God were fulfilled. We lift up our hands in prayer, as sharing in that oblation, crucified with Christ. We look to the Crucified and lift up our hands along with Him, for He dwells in us. Our hands have His indwelling Presence for we are members of His Body. As we pray to God we pledge ourselves to perpetuate in our life upon the earth the loving obedience of the Crucified.

MY MEDITATION IN THY DECREES

The mystery of God's loving dispensation must occupy our minds. The people of the world think of the world. On the contrary all our thoughts must be upon God's decrees of eternal, self-communicating Love.

We must have "the same mind which was in Christ Jesus who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame" (*Heb.* xii. 2). We cannot die to the world and its vile pleasures and its miserable ambitions unless we are living unto God, and exulting in the true glory of His Fatherly welcome as our portion for ever, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continually instant in prayer" (*Rom.* xii. 12). In the desire of

earthly glory there is selfishness, for it is an individual ambition, but in the desire of heavenly glory self is surrendered to God, for no one in that heavenly kingdom can live to himself. There we can have no glory but the glory whereby God who is the source of our life, glorifies Himself in us, and that glory is no separate communication. It is the glory of the common life wherein we all shall live in the divine consciousness. That glory is not like the glory experienced on earth, the possession of something which others have not got which may make its possessor an object of envy. The glory of heaven is the love which rejoices in all the glory of God as manifested in all that are around. There the saints shall rejoice each in the glory of all. There the highest dignity is found not in the superiority of faculties which individualize, but in the widespread intensity of love which concentrates. Those are nearest to God and share God's glory most who are most truly absorbed in the energy of His Love. Such is the Communion of Saints. Such is the common life of the Church. Such is the undivided life of the Body of Christ. There is nothing which we can give to others as if it were our own. All that we have we possess along with all the rest as the common gift from Christ the Head to all the members of His Body. All that Christ imparts to others is no less our own because it is manifested in them. The glory of Christ in all His members is the joy of each one by the indissoluble perfection of holy love. That self-forgetful love which the Holy Ghost inspires amidst the discipline of earthly life is the only glory whereby the faithful can attain to find themselves in Him when He cometh in His Kingdom.

So does the creature who attains salvation by God's mercy, rise by Divine assistance to bear witness before earthly power to the supremacy of grace. His loving obedience is perfected upon the Cross and there his nothingness is changed into the triumph of Divine welcome.

SECTION VII

Vers. 49-56

REST IN THE MEDIATORIAL WORD

THE STRENGTH OF THE DIVINE NATURE

Remember the Word unto Thy *The Word of God claims His Divine*
 Servant, *glory*
Whereon Thou hast caused me to *as the strength of His manhood.*
 wait.
This hath been my comfort in my *This has been His comfort during His*
 trouble *ministry of humiliation.*
For Thy promise hath quickened *He looked forward to the resurrection.*
 me.

THE DOOM OF SATAN AND OF THE UNGODLY

The proud have had me utterly in *Amidst all the assaults of the spirits of*
 derision. *pride*
I have not swerved from Thy law. *He has been steadfast as God's elect*
 Servant :
I remembered Thy judgments or- *He has remembered the certainty of the*
 dained from everlasting, O Lord, *triumph*
And took comfort. *whereby the old Serpent should be*
 judged,
A horrible dread hath seized me *He trembles for the ungodly who for-*
 for the ungodly, *sake God's law*
Who forsake Thy law. *and must perish with the devil and*
 his angels.

THE CONFIDENCE OF DIVINE VICTORY

Thy decrees have been my songs *He has looked forward to the heavenly*
 predestination
In the house of my sojourning. *as supplying songs of praise during*
 His earthly sojourn.
In the night I remembered Thy *As the night of Hell was at hand, He*
 name, O Lord, *remembered*
And observed Thy law. *the Name of God by which He*
 would subdue
 the powers of darkness.

THE ABIDING PORTION OF THE CONQUEROR

This is my portion,

This faithful observance of God's command

For I guarded Thy precepts.

is the everlasting relationship which is His eternal portion and glory.

Seven is the number of grace, of rest in the Lord. The seventh day tells us of our being buried along with Christ. He descended into Hell and conquered our enemy. When He descended, it was in the consciousness of the Divine remembrance. His descent was really the first stage of His ascent for when He left the world He commended His Spirit into the Hands of the Father, and passed from His state of humiliation to show His glory in triumph over the enemy. He did not descend as if He were leaving God, but in that descent He was claiming and exerting the power of God which had been hidden during the continuance of His earthly ministry. From the depth of Hell He would carry to the Right Hand of God those who were waiting for Him in accordance with the promises which the prophets had given.

49. REMEMBER *Three times, vii. 49, 52, 55.*

(i) The Psalmist, looking forward to the grave, appeals to the mediation of Him that descended. God remembers His dying servant.

(ii) So in the Holy Eucharist we call to remembrance the Passion and Death of Christ. Our remembrance meets God's remembrance.

(iii) Death is not a token that God hath forgotten. We are buried by Baptism and find the comfort of life in the night of death.

REMEMBER THE WORD

The word which God is to remember is the Eternal Personal Word by whom He makes covenant with His people. The original decree of redeeming Love, announced that this Divine Champion should bruise the Serpent's head. This He could only do by descending with Divine power into Hell where Satan reigned. Then God's Divine power glorified the human *Soul* of Jesus.

So now He cannot make us triumphant over Satan unless He subject us to the violence of Satan's tyranny : but in the midst of this conflict God will not forget us if we are looking up to Him. In every time of darkness we may be sure that "on the third day He will raise us up" (*Hos.* vi. 2). We "follow Him conquering and to conquer" (*Rev.* vi. 2), while He goes before us and leads us out through many a successive Red Sea of difficulties. We become "more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (*Rom.* viii. 13).

WHEREIN THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE

The patient waiting time ere this redemption came was more than 4000 years. We who have begun to experience its power must still wait for its fulness.

The Sabbath in the Jewish week was a waiting time, looking forward to the renovation which the first day of each week should bring. It was a day of incapacity and expectation as our Lord's Day is a day of renewal and spiritual energy. The Sabbath was the day of the grave. In Christ faith glorifies hope.

50. THIS IS MY COMFORT *Four times, vii. 50. (In verbal form) Piel. x. 76 ; xx. 82 ; Hithp. vii. 52.*

Christ descended in the power of the Holy Ghost, "being put to death in the flesh but quickened in the Spirit. So must we learn by the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body" (*Rom.* viii. 13). Then shall we know the Comforter in His fulness. When the Comforter came from the risen Saviour He would "convince the world of sin because the Prince of this world is judged" (*John* xvi. 9). The judgment of the enemy is that for which we have been waiting, and we are still waiting for the judgment to be fully accomplished when "the devil that deceived the nations shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" (*Rev.* xx. 10). The quickening Spirit of the Word comforts the mourner.

IN MY TROUBLE *Seven times, vii. 50 ; xxx. 92 ; cc. 153. (In verbal form) ix. 67 ; x. 74, 75 ; l. 107.*

By the Eternal Spirit, Christ offered Himself in His passion (*Heb.* ix. 14). In all our affliction He was afflicted, and in our

affliction we must use the Spirit of Christ. He is the Comforter by whom we, who were the slaves of Satan, are able to draw near and call God our Father because the Son has made us free (*John* viii. 36) by the gift of the comforting Spirit of life.

The word of the Lord is tried seven times in the fire, but the seven fold Spirit is our comfort in all.

THY PROMISE HATH QUICKENED ME, *vid. ver. 25* *Twice* vii. 50; xxx. 93.

The Apostles were to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father (*Acts* i. 4). That promise was the Comforter, the Giver of Life, the Spirit of the Word.

The cry in this Psalm is nine-fold: Quicken me. The acknowledgment is two-fold: *Thy promise hath quickened me. With Thy precepts Thou hast quickened me* (XXX. 93). The descent into Hell, and the gift of Eternal life in Christ are the sections in which these acknowledgments occur. They tell of the life which death could not destroy, and of the life of glory subsequently given. The account of the Comforter as given to us here is summed up by S. Paul,—“As dying and behold we live” (*2 Cor.* vi. 9). “Christ liveth in me” (*Gal.* ii. 20), represents the other phrase.

51. THE PROUD, *vid. ver. 21*

The evil spirits of pride mock the faithful. We can only meet them in humility for that is the gift of the Holy Ghost. We must be humble before man in the midst of insults, humble before God in the midst of temptations. “God giveth grace to the humble” (*James* iv. 8). The proud are they who please themselves. The humble feel their own nothingness. If we have lost ourselves in God, the proud have nothing in us that they can assail. “The Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me” (*John* xiv. 30). So our Lord spake. We must lose ourselves in Him and we shall be safe.

THEY HAD ME EXCEEDINGLY IN DERISION

The evil see our weakness. Alas! Too often we ourselves are unaware of it! They cannot recognise the power of the

Sanctifier dwelling with us in spite of our weakness and unfaithfulness. Therefore they mock our spiritual claims. We give them occasion to deride us when we think of ourselves as having any good. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (*Rom.* vii. 18). I must not therefore wish to seem what I am not. The derision of others must be met by heart-felt consciousness of our own sin. Our only security is by living ourselves in God. Then the derision of others will be of no account to us.

If we only were careful to turn such derision to account, how thankful should we be for the opportunities of humiliation. It was the saying of an eminent saint: "Scorn nothing. Scorn the world. Scorn thyself. Scorn the fact of being scorned." We must not rejoice in scorn with a morbid self-gratification as if we were made better thereby. We must rejoice in scorn with penitent self-condemnation that we may be made better thereby. Unless the scorn of others makes us scorn ourselves, it does us no good. We shall not scorn ourselves for those things which move the world's scorn, but the world's false scorn will open to us the consciousness of many true causes of scorn which perhaps the world, if it knew them, would rather think to applaud.

I HAVE NOT SWERVED FROM THY LAW *Three times, vii. 51; l. 112; cc. 157. Once "of Divine attraction" in High. form, ver. 36.*

Blessed are they who are scorned, not by reason of their own fault, but by reason of obedience to God's law. Obedience to God's law must be simple and childlike, not artificial or conventional. It must be the pure oblation of personal love to God. God is love and His law cannot be obeyed except in proportion as the obedience manifests personal love to His revealed will.

52. I REMEMBERED THINE EVERLASTING JUDGMENTS, O LORD,
ver. 49

If we would have God remember us in the end, we must remember Him during our probation. Whatever judgments come upon us, we must remember the hidden love which has ordained

them from everlasting in order to bring us to the perfection which God requires.

“We are comforted in all our tribulations” (2 Cor. i. 4), if we bear this in mind. Our discipline shows that God remembers us for good. *His judgments are good.* He thereby would separate us from the evil world. If we remember the love of God as acting towards us in that which separates us from the evil world, we shall find that these judgments unite us in eternal life to Him. The separation from the evil requires the acceptance on our part of the eternal good. That eternal good is God’s own love wherein He would bind to Himself those whom He has chosen out of the world.

I RECEIVED COMFORT, *ver.* 50

It is the personal agency of God amidst the trials of our life which is the foundation of our comfort. There is no spiritual progress outside of God. Spiritual progress consists in an increasing experimental knowledge of God’s Personal Love. Our comfort is to know that God is not acting towards us uncertainly. He is training us for a glory which He predestined for us ere we were created. We cannot enhance that glory by our own imagination, but we must look forward to that glory by submitting ourselves to God’s law. That law includes all God’s dispensation both in providence and in grace, for He orders both alike and they cannot be at variance. Whatever happens to us in the outer world must turn to our spiritual profit in the end, if we accept it in the power of the Holy Ghost as members of Christ. So that we may live by that acceptance to the glory of God the Father, and find our joy therein.

53. A HORRIBLE DREAD HATH SEIZED ME

The contemplation of the ungodly after death is contrasted with the comfort which the Psalmist experiences under God’s judgments as exercised towards him in this present world. Those judgments are to bring us back to God’s law, whereas the wicked forsake God’s law and perish.

THE WICKED *Six times, vii. 53; viii. 61; xxx. 95; l. 110; lx. 119; cc. 155.*

Six is the number of worldly power without God. The Psalmist utters a sixfold wail telling of their evil, both deeds and doom. God's sovereignty in the outer world is a comfort to the faithful, for it makes it impossible that any outer events can turn to the hurt of those who serve God. So this same remembrance wakens a terrible consciousness of what awaits the wicked, for they who forsake God's law put themselves in opposition to all kinds of good. Nothing can be good to those who are not living in obedience to the law of Him who is supreme in nature and in grace. The best things in the world become evil to them, for the whole world, material and spiritual, is one perfect organism. We cannot have the good which belongs to any part of this organism, unless we are living true to Him who rules the whole.

(i) The wicked do not suffer because of God's personal anger as those who offend a finite personality. They suffer by their own free agency because they *forsake God's law*, and God's law is an unchangeable principle equally changeless in nature and in grace. The law of grace discloses to us the moral character of the law of nature, for both worlds come from one mind and are ordered with a view to one common result.

(ii) The wicked seek to overthrow the people of God. (iii) They rob him, *ver. 61*. (iv) They seek to destroy him, *ver. 95*. (v) They dig pits to ensnare him, *ver. 110*. Evil is thus antagonistic to good, but the good are ever bewailing the evil. (vi) The evil will be cast out as dross, *ver. 119*, and are far from Jesus. He who is the Saviour of the faithful is the Judge by whom the wicked must be condemned. In Him the creation of God finds its completeness. He created, as the eternal Word, that material, finite universe, which He assumed as His clothing at the Incarnation. He came forth at the Father's will to subdue the rebel power of Satan. Those who will not accept His grace and live true to the Divine Sovereignty of the Creator must depart into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. They have *forsaken God's law*.

54. THY DECREES HAVE BEEN MY SONGS

The Psalmist loves to praise God for the revelation of His eternal Triune glory, the glory of that Eternal Word consubstantial with the Father which is the Creator of this external universe, the Head of Creation, the Saviour and the Judge of all.

The Creeds of the Church are the highest songs of praise. We praise God by acknowledging what He is in Himself. We praise God for all His wondrous works in Creation, but these are only faint reflections of that Substantive and eternal glory whereby the Three persons of the Godhead abide in everlasting love.

THE HOUSE OF MY SOJOURNING

The outer world is a house where we are strangers, as the Israelites were in Egypt. This phrase calls us to remember that we are to be seeking a permanent Home, of which the promised land was given to Israel as a type.

In the revelation of God's mysteries we learn to anticipate that fellowship with God which shall be our eternal joy. We feel the Triune love compassing us about and lifting us up into the blessed relationships of the heavenly life.

By the grace of Baptism we are made very members incorporate in the mystical Body of Christ. Thus we have already the beginning of that delight in God by grace which shall be the glory of the beatific vision. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 *Cor.* v. 1).

55. I REMEMBERED THY NAME IN THE NIGHT SEASON *Twice, vii. 55; lxxx. 132.*

We are baptized into that living *Name*, the Triune light which not only surrounds the soul as an atmosphere but illuminates the regenerate nature interiorly so that it shall be the instrument of the Divine will and the partner of the Divine activity. The glimmer of earthly consciousness serves but to make misery manifest. By it we see the darkness of sin which shrouds a fallen universe with ever deepening distress. But in this gloom the

Name of God is the stay of the faithful. In the sorrows of earth and the final collapse under the power of death, we sink not into nothingness or despair, but through the extremity of worldly weakness rise by this Holy Name to exult in the blessedness of eternal relationship. God's nature as revealed to us in Himself is the substance of our *praise* in holy song. The same nature communicated to ourselves as a principle of sanctification is the strength of our *obedience*.

THE NIGHT SEASON

Our life in this world is a life of burial, of darkness, of night. The day is with Christ. As born again in Him "we are the children of the light and of the day" (*Eph.* v. 8). Earth is a house of Egyptian darkness and sojourning. Our true home is in Jerusalem, in the eternal daylight of God's Presence, as fellow citizens with the saints (*Eph.* ii. 20).

I HAVE OBSERVED THY LAW

Without this Divine renewal it would have been impossible for man to do God's Will. That living Will requires a living instrumentality for its operation. Love can only be carried out by love. Man's lifeless personality could only stumble if it sought to work along with the living Personality of the Triune God. It were impossible to keep the law of God in the glory of obedient love save as being made truly the children of God in the life of the only begotten Son and the power of the Spirit of grace.

Thus do we look up from the floor of earth and rejoice to sing of the glories of Heaven: and we go forth from the heavenly sanctuary in the power of the Divine Name to observe God's law and attain by obedience to the fellowship of the Light that fadeth not away.

This section is to teach us the deadness of earth lest we die as "those who go down into the pit" (*Ps.* lxxxviii. 4).

THIS I HAD

The comfort of the Divine power hallowing the vicissitudes of

earth and making us safe in the darkness of the grave is the blessed inheritance of the faithful.

BECAUSE I GUARDED THY PRECEPTS

There must be watchfulness in following Christ if we would find true rest in the grave whereby we are buried with Him. We may die to many worldly objects, but unless we die in the grace and fellowship and likeness of Christ, *guarding his precepts*, we do not die to the world.

A dead world is the inheritance of the fallen Adam, but deadness to the world is the inheritance of those who are buried with Christ. They have no portion in this world, but they are inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, and that inheritance is obtained not by external transmission, but by interior communication in fellowship of heart with Christ, the King. His kingdom is not, and cannot ever be, within this world of falsehood. He came to bear witness unto the truth by dying to the world. They who are of the truth and die to the world along with Him can hear His voice. No others can.

How little does the Church know what it is to be militant here on earth as martyred saints were militant who fought for Jesus by dying! It is a sad self-deception when we think we need not fight against the world. It is saddest when we think to fight against the world with the world's own weapons. There is only one ensign of victory around which the people of God can rally, and that is the Cross (*Ps. lx. 4*), only one way of warfare whereby to triumph along with Christ crucified, and that is by being crucified along with Him.

SECTION VIII

Vers. 57-64

THE COVENANT OF NEW BIRTH

EXULTATION IN THE HEAVENLY BIRTHRIGHT

I said, Thou, Lord, art my portion, To observe Thy words.	<i>The covenant established between God and His elect.</i>
I entreated Thy favour with my whole heart :	<i>Man's whole heartedness.</i>
Be gracious unto me according to Thy promise.	<i>God's sure promise.</i>

THE LIPS OF THE REGENERATE

I thought on my ways :	<i>The waywardness of nature.</i>
And turned my feet to Thy testi- monies.	<i>The conversion of the soul by grace.</i>
I made haste and lingered not To observe Thy commandments.	<i>The promptness of obedience. The vigour of action.</i>
The cords of the ungodly enfolded me :	<i>The powers of death.</i>
I did not forget Thy law.	<i>The security of obedience.</i>
At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee	<i>The resurrection at midnight.</i>
Because of Thy righteous judg- ments.	<i>The doom of the prince of darkness.</i>
I am a companion of all them that fear Thee	<i>The communion of saints.</i>
And keep Thy precepts.	<i>The following of Christ.</i>

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE NEW BORN KING

The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy,	<i>All authority given to Christ.</i>
O teach me Thy decrees.	<i>Mercy demands adoration.</i>

The rest in Christ whereby the old man is delivered by death from Satan's reproach is followed by the Section of regenerate life. Eight is the number of regeneration. The eighth day in every week is the recurrence of the first day. Hence baptismal fonts are commonly octagonal. There are countless expressions in Holy Scripture in which the number eight symbolises regeneration. The eight persons in the Ark were the parents of a regenerate world. Eight beatitudes introduce the Sermon on the Mount, the first and the eighth being in unison.

The last Section spoke of comfort amidst affliction waiting for God. This Section speaks of the end as being already attained.

57. THOU LORD ART MY PORTION

An earthly father may provide an inheritance for his son. Not so is it with God. He is Himself the inheritance wherein His sons are to find their joy. His substance is not frozen up in a dead personality like the substance of fallen humanity. It lives and communicates its own inherent life and power to those whom it takes into itself.

I PROMISED

The baptismal promise pledged me to observe God's words, the ten words, and all that they involve. The Jewish Ten developed in the entire self-consecration of Christian life.

TO OBSERVE THY WORDS

If God is our portion, we also are His portion. So the word is used mutually of God and the tribe of Levi.

God gives us His power in His Incarnate Word. He expects us to fulfil His Words by using that power in all the details of life.

58. I MADE MY PETITION IN THY PRESENCE

Literally, *I smoothed Thy Face*. Affectionate, tender, prayer smooths God's Face. This does not imply any averseness or anger on the part of God. It only indicates His delight in making reply. It shows the closeness of intercourse in which the suppliant draws near to God. The Face of God is seen in Christ.

WITH MY WHOLE HEART, *ver.* 2

The prayer must come forth with all the sweetness of self-consecrating love which is to call forth God's answer of love. As God is the substance of our renewed life, and God is love, the power of our prayer can only be in proportion to the exhibition of that love. God sees into the depth of the heart and looks for that love which the Spirit of adoption gives. "That Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (*Rom.* viii. 26). A prayer which is not uttered in the power of the Spirit of love, quickening the whole heart, cannot reach to God.

BE GRACIOUS UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THY PROMISE, *vid.* *ver.* 29

"The Spirit of grace and supplications" (*Zech.* xii. 10) is given to us by God's promise. We must be "praying in the Spirit." As that Spirit is a life, so the whole-hearted prayer must be continual, not necessarily the utterance of words, but the uplifting of the heart. We cannot expect God to give us intermittent grace. He is ever giving. We must be always exercising that life. "Pray without ceasing" (*1 Thess.* v. 17). The power of spiritual prayer will surely be strengthened by exercise.

According as we seek so shall we find. Our approach to God is itself a plea, for it is God's preventing grace which moves the heart to seek. God always gives "grace for grace," first grace to ask, then grace to receive. God fills the heart which is emptied of all other desires, and seeks Him alone. His promise to every one who loves Him is, "We will come unto him and make our abode with him" *John* xiv. 23.

59. I THOUGHT ON MY WAYS, *vid.* 101

"My ways," the ways of the natural heart. The soul that walks in its own ways is far from God. "My ways are not your ways, saith the Lord" (*Is.* lv. 8).

Prayer to God involves penitence whereby we humble ourselves for past sin.

I TURNED MY FEET UNTO THY TESTIMONIES, *vid.* 101 *Twice*, viii.
59; x. 79.

“The law of the Lord, turns, converts the soul” (*Ps.* xix. 8).
If the Lord is our portion we must turn to Him. (*Zech.* i. 3, 4).
We must *turn our feet*. It is not enough to have a general
purpose of regret. We must really draw near with full assurance
of faith and love to seek that strength without which we cannot
walk in the life which befits God’s children.

60. I MADE HASTE

The Psalter has a seven-fold cry to God that He will make
haste to help, and answer his prayer. Here we have the pledge
to hasten that we may obtain the help. Our prayer for help will
certainly be ineffectual if we do not use the help when God gives
it. We can never ask God to do anything for us instead of doing
it ourselves. We ask God to give us the power to do what is
necessary. We must be watching so as to catch what He gives.

I PROLONGED NOT THE TIME

“The spirit is ready” (*Mark* xiv. 38). The weakness of the
flesh drags us back. The regenerate must rise by Divine power.

TO OBSERVE THY COMMANDMENTS

The filial life of the regenerate is continually sustained by
Divine power and always watchful to do God’s will. The rela-
tion of Divine Sonship is not like the sonship amongst men.
Obedience is due from the son to the father, but the two are not
one. The son can disobey and yet he remains a son. Not so
is it with the sonship in God. That sonship has for its very
essence the obedience of the Son to the Father. The Son, says
our Lord, “can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the
Father do” (*John* v. 19). To fail of this perfect submission would
be to forfeit the sonship altogether, for the sonship has for its
vital essence the active unity of will in subjection to the Father.
So it is with the Divine Sonship as communicated to us by grace.
We forfeit the sonship if we fail of doing the will of our Father.

61. THE CONGREGATIONS (*cords*) OF THE WICKED HAVE WRAPPED ME ROUND

Habits of evil, the maxims of society hold down the soul. We have to break away from them if we would do God's will. We have to escape from them by the power of the Holy Spirit, as our Lord's Body rose in spiritual power from the graveclothes in which it was swathed.

I HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THY LAW *Three times, viii. 61; l. 109; cc. 153.*

The Psalmist has not forgotten God's law. Amidst the shock of the world the remembrance of this covenant is his security. Neither does he forget God's decrees, *ver. 83*, nor His precepts, *ver. 141*, nor His commandments, *ver. 176*.

62. AT MIDNIGHT I WILL RISE

The devotion of the Psalmist is evidently an intimation of the rising of Christ at midnight when the wicked were compassing him, and He left His graveclothes in the sepulchre and received all power both in heaven and earth so that He sent His Apostles forth to all nations.

Our midnight watches must be kept in the remembrance of that midnight. Blessed are the hours of midnight prayer!

The early Christians kept their stations on the Saturday midnight before the Eucharist of Sunday morning, expecting that Saturday midnight would witness Christ's return.

We must associate ourselves with Him in His Resurrection in all our offices of devotion. Indeed our whole earthly existence is one prolonged night-season, and in our devotions we must seek by faith to realize the unseen glory of the Eternal Day, which shall shine out to us ere long.

TO GIVE THANKS UNTO THEE *Twice, i. 7; viii. 62.*

Our Eucharist is the great summary of praise and thanksgiving, and our whole life in this dark world must be a Eucharist. Dead to the world and raised to new life with God in Christ, we must abide in continual thanksgiving.

If we fail of continually thanking God for the privileges of our regeneration we shall certainly fail of experiencing them. We cannot take them as a matter of course. Want of thankfulness, want of supernatural consciousness of anything to be thankful for, necessarily deadens the intercourse of the soul with God. If God withholds from us some accidental blessing, we feel that He deals hardly with us, and quickly begin to complain, whether the trouble be of a spiritual character or an external difficulty which bows us down. Thankfulness must lift us up. In the very midnight, our praise to God, unshaken by earthly disturbances, must rise up to God with joyous gratitude for the love which will make us triumphant over all. However much the powers of evil may assail, it is for us "with angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven," to praise God. If we allow the voice of praise to be hushed in our hearts we give Satan the victory.

BECAUSE OF THY RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS

The very things which make the half-hearted complain are just what make the faithful exult. We would not be without God's discipline if we might, for that discipline in all its severity is necessary for the perfecting of our souls. God knows the future which He holds in store for each one of us. He prepares us for it. We ought to rejoice in the confidence that every present trouble is but proportionate to the eventual glory to which God would welcome us with Himself. It is by praising God for His present love in the preparatory discipline that we reach out to appropriate His final revelation of love in the welcome that cannot fail.

63. I AM A COMPANION OF ALL THEM THAT FEAR THEE

The regenerate life is not a solitary existence. Born again in the Body of Christ, the heavenly Jerusalem (*Ps.* lxxxvii, 6), the Communion of Saints, we have the sustaining consciousness of their fellowship in the common life of the whole Body. They have passed through experiences like our own. They are waiting for us to be perfected, that we may all be glorified together. If any

troubles or anxieties weigh us down (whether for ourselves or for the Church) we ought to think of the blessed ones in Paradise, and listen to their song of praise. Their praise is not enfeebled by fears. So neither must ours be. They wait for the triumph of Jesus: so must we. They loved not their lives unto the death, because they loved Jesus as the Lord of life who at midnight rose from the dead. Our lives upon earth must be attuned to the praise which they utter in Paradise. How can we droop with despondency when the souls under the altar are waiting with such awfulness of expectation.

And oh! what multitudes of secret sufferers are living even now upon the earth, patiently bearing the Cross of Jesus! O yes! We all have one fight, one law, one power, one hope, one joy!

THEY THAT FEAR THEE AND OBSERVE THY PRECEPTS

“Whosoever doth not bear his cross daily and come after Me, he cannot be My disciple” (*Luke* xiv. 26).

We see not the solitary struggles in the great war with Satan but as often as we repeat our creed, we must call to mind the reality of the organised warfare in which we all are associated with Jesus as our Head. We are all linked together in the unity of the Spirit, and the united shout of victory shall be heard at last if we persevere. We are all called to be the children of the Truth!

64. THE EARTH, *ver.* 19 *Five times*, iii. 19; viii. 64; xx. 87; xxx. 90; lx. 119.

The earth is not our true home. Man was created to subdue the earth and bring it back from the power of Satan to Divine order and allegiance (*Gen.* i. 28). When Adam failed of this, the race of man became a *stranger* here, under a tyrant's rule. So Israel in Egypt afterwards. Then the general law of humanity was concentrated in a special manifestation with a view to the special covenant of the Redeemer (*ver.* 19). The *regenerate earth* is the dominion of the promised Redeemer, who accomplished that wherein Adam failed. Jesus in the resurrection could say “all power is given unto me both in heaven and earth” (*Matt.* xxviii. 18). This verse crowns the section of regeneration with the assertion

of the Divine Sovereignty belonging to the second Adam. The victory is complete in the spiritual world and Jesus is seated as Conqueror on God's Right Hand. The Seed of the woman is caught up to heaven. The victory, however, must be carried out in detail. The Church militant has this work to do. It is a slow work although a sure one. For this we pray, Thy Kingdom Come. When the seventh angel sounds, then shall be the acclamation of heaven because the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ (*Rev.* xi. 15). Meanwhile we are in *expectation*. "We see not yet all things put under Him" (*Heb.* ii. 8). Indeed in the carrying out of this war the enemy often seems to get the upper hand. We are almost consumed upon earth (*ver.* 87). Yet is this no way contrary to God's faithful promise. The section of *eternal life in Christ* assures us that God has established the earth and it abideth (*ver.* 91). His faithfulness will be seen. The Section dedicated to *worldly power* tells us that the wicked are but as dross. The sevenfold furnace of Divine purification has to extract the pure gold out of the refuse with which it was combined and the material world is exhibited in its worthlessness while the gold that has been extracted is built up in the heavenly Jerusalem (*ver.* 119)

THY MERCY, *ver.* 41

During this period of deliverance we are experiencing the mercy of God in Christ. "As His majesty is, so is His mercy." The *stranger* must rejoice in the *mercy* which calls him by the spirit of adoption so that in the *regeneration* of which this section speaks, he is acknowledged once more to be a Son of God in Christ.

FULL

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (*Ps.* xxiv. 1). This finds its reality in the renewed earth for He is Himself the fulness, and of His fulness have all we received (*John* i. 16). This Divine fulness comes with the baptismal covenant to all nations of the earth. The Catholic Church is the final development of

that covenant of personal life wherein the Psalmist could own the Lord as his portion.

TEACH ME THY DECREES, *ver.* 12

The great decree shall have its fulfilment when He brings again the First-begotten into the world in the day of Judgment. Then all the angels of God shall worship Him, and the rebel shall be cast out. We have to be looking forward to that consummation. We shall learn it in its fulness when God's face shines upon us in the fulness of Christ's glory. In the power of regeneration we shall see Him as He is and know as we are known.

God is the Portion of His Saints, and the whole earth shall rejoice when His people enter upon their eternal inheritance, having "all things" according to the Divine predestination "put under their feet." "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's" (1 *Cor.* iii. 22)

SECTION IX

Vers. 65-72

THE DIVINE GOODNESS

Thou hast done goodness toward Thy servant, O Lord, befitting Thy Word.	<i>God's goodness in predestinating bounty; in the Mission of His Word to fulfil the same; in the gift of illumination;</i>
Teach me good apprehension and knowledge, For I have believed Thy command- ments.	<i>in the experience of the faithful;</i>
Before I was troubled I was wandering, But now I have observed Thy promise.	<i>in the correction of worldly con- fidence ; in the reward of watchful faith ;</i>
Thou art good and doest good : Teach me Thy decrees. The proud have invented a lie against me, I will guard Thy precepts with my whole heart.	<i>in essential personal activity ; in the eternity of bliss ; in vindication of his people from the world ; in affectionate superintendence of the obedient ;</i>
Their heart is as fat as grease : I delight in Thy law. It is good for me that I have been in trouble	<i>in the satisfaction of the faithful ; in providential correction ;</i>
That I might learn Thy decrees. The law of Thy mouth is good for me, Better than thousands of gold and silver.	<i>in mysterious revelations ; in all-surpassing reward.</i>

From the consideration of our covenant of regeneration in Christ we pass on to consider the Divine goodness, for we are made partakers of the Divine Nature. God's goodness is the

foundation of that which should be manifested in us as His children. "We are to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Nine is the number of Godhead, and specially of the Eternal Father.

65. THOU HAST DEALT IN GOODNESS WITH THY SERVANT, *ver.* 39

God's judgments are *good*. They effect righteousness in us. (i) This is His disciplinary goodness, *ver.* 39. (ii) God's actions are *good* towards us so as to win our regard, 65. (iii) We must ask Him to give us *goodness* (*soundness*) of judgment, "senses exercised to discern between good and evil," by correspondence with His judgments, 66. (iv) God's nature is *good* in itself. His nature is ever active. His *goodness comes forth* in all His actions, 68. (v) The *results* of God's dealing with us are *good*. "By being afflicted I have learnt God's decrees," 71. (vi) God's *word* is *better* than any material wealth, 72. (vii) The *final good* is accomplished by Christ as our Divine surety setting us free from Satan's machinations, 122.

The word "good" occurs eight times in this Psalm, the eightfold characteristic of the Children of God as being regenerate. "He that is born of God doth not commit sin," (1 *Joh.* iii. 9). Of these eight occurrences six are in this Section which sets forth the goodness of God.

The recognition of God's goodness in His Providence is the necessary preliminary to the acceptance of their benefit. We have to test God's acts by His character, not His character by His acts. We pronounce a person to be good because he does what we consider good: but the acts of God come forth with the glory of His goodness resting upon them. We see but a small part of what God does. His actions are infinite. Their goodness transcends our apprehension. We know that what He does must be good because all our ideas of goodness can only be derived from His Supreme Will.

No finite power can be the source of good, for goodness of every kind must be substantive and infinite. Temporary good

is not good in itself, for if it were, its cessation would be an evil. It derives its character of goodness from the goodness of the Supreme Agent by whom it is utilized.

Our finite apprehensions are incapable of passing judgment upon that which is good, for we only know finite good in its accidental details. Our consciousness must be lifted up into the infinite order of things in order for us to apprehend the true and absolute good which is infinite and eternal.

As all good comes from the Infinite, so nothing but good can come from Him. "Shall the same mouth utter blessing and cursing?" (*Jam.* iii. 10). The thing is impossible. All the infinite good must be absolutely one, and if there were evil mingled with it, it would not be infinite. The various kinds of good are but manifestations under the various forms of finite existence by which the absolute, infinite good approaches our senses. Goodness could not be made more good by the removal of some accidental form which to our senses seems to be evil.

Good is a substantive reality. By natural reason we are more sure of the existence of the absolute good, although it is to us invisible, than we can be of any phenomenal existences to which our senses can testify.

Evil is a negative reality, but it has no substantial existence. It is a negation. It has no collateral existence, coeval with the good whether independent of it or derived from it. It exists only as being antagonistic to the good. It loses true existence by antagonizing. Else good and evil would co-exist eternally, but they are mutually exclusive. Evil exists accordingly as a creature falsifying the uncreated goodness of eternal substance and truth in the apprehension of finite intelligences.

The uncreated Word is absolute goodness unassailable in itself by any evil, but evil is an existence collateral with the creative action of the Eternal Word and therefore it has that inferential existence which is derived from the Eternal Word whose work it mars. Satan as the rebel against God's Creative Word is the author of all evil, "a liar from the beginning." He cannot cease to be unless the Creative Word should deny Himself and uncreate

all that He has made, reducing all phenomenal existences to nothingness. Satan must bear upon himself all the results of the evil which he has occasioned.

Evil is not formally the creature of God, but it is the result of the highest gift which God has given to His creatures, the gift of freewill. Substantially it is God's creature, for it is the perversion of the faculty of freewill. So the prophet says of God, "I make peace and create evil" (*Is.* xlv. 7). All evil is perverted good.

Evil is as inseparable from creation as freewill is, for if no created finite will swerved from the will of the infinite good, it would be evident that the freedom of action was in some way destroyed.

Moreover, what is good in the Infinite requires an infinite intelligence to apprehend it. The finite intelligence therefore could not rightly approve the Infinite. There must be features in the Infinite which the finite intelligence cannot grasp; and consequently the finite must either set its own judgment aside in order to accept the higher judgment of the Infinite Wisdom or else it must rise up in rebellion against it.

So with ourselves. We are not to imagine that we can see with our finite intelligences the perfect goodness of God's government. We see enough of its goodness to lead us to trust Him with perfect confidence. This is the life of faith. But instead of accepting this as a difficulty in the way of acknowledging God's inherent and absolute goodness, our reason teaches us that if the Infinite work of creation were such as our finite intelligence could approve, it must lack the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness which alone are worthy of the Infinite God.

Evil cannot be obliterated without nullifying creation, but evil is conquered by the redeeming power of the Incarnate God and in Him the prince of this world is judged and the creation which he had enslaved is glorified.

THY SERVANT

The foregoing considerations show that we must be the servants of God if we are to experience His goodness, not because He deals otherwise than in goodness with any, but because we cannot

know His gracious action unless we ourselves are acting in subordination to Him and doing His will.

ACCORDING TO THY WORD

The Word is the Personal power of God by whom all things were created. By Him they are redeemed. By Him they are ruled. He is the joy of all "that have ears to hear." The true pleasure of all creatures is the voice of the Word speaking through them.

66. TEACH ME GOOD DISCRIMINATION AND KNOWLEDGE

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (1 *Cor.* ii. 14). Thus does the Apostle express the inherent opposition between the finite and the infinite.

A true power of discrimination or spiritual taste is God's gift. The Hebrew word is akin by its signification to the word sapientia, wisdom, correct taste in matters of moral import.

The Spirit of wisdom is also the Spirit of knowledge, and enables us to apprehend spiritual facts which surpass our carnal power of consciousness. The intellect may know certain truths in the letter, but not in the experience. We may know the life of an horse, but we only know it by certain outward analogies and results. To know it truly we must be what the horse is.

So with the things of the Spirit of God. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Now we, says the Apostle, "have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 *Cor.* ii. 11, 12).

So then in order for us to contemplate the goodness of God, we must have the Spirit of Divine goodness. We must be living in the life of God. This is no additional faculty of nature which God gives us. It is the gift of the Divine nature itself by the power of the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son whose fellowship lifts us up into the active relationships of the Eternal Trinity. It is the gift of a new nature. It is the

gift of a new birth. So our Lord says, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The necessity of the new birth exists in the very nature of things. Without a participation in the Infinite, we cannot know the things which belong to it. No change of sentiment conduct or intellectual power suffices. There must be an inspiration of life, a gift of the Spirit of God.

FOR I HAVE BELIEVED THY COMMANDMENTS

Eve disobeyed God, trusting Satan. We must believe God and obey Him.

Faith accepts the word of God in spite of any difficulties arising from the natural sense. Faith is the offspring of true reason, but faith acts in a sphere where reason cannot follow it. Reason vouches for the authority which faith obeys.

The Word of God is a word of command, for God speaks to us in the relationship of authority. He never speaks merely for our information, nor that we may act independently of Himself. He speaks in order to make known His will. Hence the Psalmist speaks of *believing God's commandments*. So Abraham believed God when he offered up Isaac, looking to receive him back again from the dead with an increase of benediction according to God's promise. (*Heb. xi. 18, 19*)

Faith cannot argue as to the *fitness* of the command, if reason has established the *authority* of the speaker. We know that if we disobey God we forfeit His Blessing, but however great the trial of our faith may be, as was the case with Abraham, God will surely bring about some proportionate good, although we cannot foresee it.

Faith worketh by love, and "love is the fulfilling of the law." Faith, however sorely it may be tried, does not act grudgingly, but with confidence in God's truth and love towards His goodness, knowing that everything comes from Him, and rejoicing to be wholly devoted to Him.

Love is indeed that spirit of *discrimination and knowledge* which God gives to those who believe His commandments, a

Divine illumination. It "gives understanding to the simple" (*Ps.* xxix. 7).

BEFORE I WAS TROUBLED *Four times, ix. 67, 71; x. 75; l. 107. In subst. form three times, vid. ver. 50. Seven times in all.*

Life in this world is continuous trouble. So to all mankind but specially to those who are nearest to Christ, for all the trouble of mankind came upon Him by the living sympathy of His assumed Humanity with every human sufferer.

We need however special sufferings to rouse us and bring us back from sin, for trouble is the necessary consequence of every sin. Whenever we break the commandments of Him whose law rules the universe both spiritual and material, we necessarily put ourselves in antagonism with the whole constitution of nature. Sin is not a personal matter outside of nature, which God may settle with us in some arbitrary way. He has His gifts of love whereby He helps forward those who serve Him faithfully, and Satan also exercises the assaults of his hatred against God's faithful people so far as God permits him with a view to their fuller trial and greater reward. This however is not the time in which God executes commonly His vengeance upon sin, or His true reward of the faithful. That will take place at the last Great Day. God permits special troubles to come to us now in order to arouse us. They are the tokens of His love with which He overrules Satan's enmity against man for man's own good.

Here we may consider the Psalmist as speaking of the human race in general. Before the humiliation of Christ in the sufferings of the Cross, all mankind were lost to the sense of sin. The resurrection of Christ was a turning point in man's history throughout the world. The baptismal covenant was the institution of a world-wide return, however imperfect, to Divine obedience.

I WAS WANDERING *vid. ver. 10*

Man was *wandering*, homeless and aimless and helpless. The religions of heathendom did not meet the necessities of the human soul. It was Calvary which first provided a home, a hope, and a

Saviour. St Paul describes the Gentile world as "strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (*Eph.* ii. 12). They were *wandering* in sin. God would not dwell with men because they in their wanderings were flesh (*Gen.* vi. 3). [Mr Margolionth suggests indeed an alteration for this somewhat difficult text, "his body is flesh." The meaning however is much the same. His earthly body made him wander from God.]

The Humanity which had thus wandered Christ assumed. The word "I" is emphatic. The *servant* with whom God has *dealt so graciously* has gone astray. The elect servant of the Lord is identified with the sinful race. He is their Representative, being of one substance with them. His Passion was not only an exhibition of Humanity in its ideal perfection, but it was a gathering up of all the energies of man which had wandered in sin, gathering them back into the energy of a perfect obedience. He drew back that which had wandered so that the reality of sinful individualities in all their countlessness was reconstructed and renewed in the perfection of redemptive obedience in Christ's all-enduring temptation. Thus it was that Christ felt the iniquity of that which by the power of the Eternal Spirit He restored to its original ideal. Thus was manhood in Christ once more acceptable to God.

Christ therefore says, *I was wandering*. In thus *acknowledging His ways*, and speaking as man's Representative, He pleads for mankind. He is one with them by Incarnation and He calls them to become one with Him by grace, while He pleads for all who heed the invitation.

NOW HAVE I OBSERVED THY PROMISE

"For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the Cross" (*Heb.* xii. 2). Here too He speaks not only in His Individuality, but as the Representative and Head of the newly created manhood, for these are "made the righteousness of God in Him." All His members are those who, having learnt the evil of sin wherein they were perishing, have come to Christ assured that

“all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (2 Cor. i. 20).

THOU ART GOOD AND DOEST GOOD

This is the Divine contrast to man's sinfulness. *I was wandering. Thou art good.* Yea, and all the good that came to me, comes from Thee. *Thou doest good.* I, in wandering, wandered from Thee. Thou art the only good.

TEACH ME THY DECREES

Those decrees illustrate God's goodness. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (*John* iii. 16). Thus is the goodness of God manifested in the decree of the mediatorial kingdom. The humiliation of Christ at the Incarnation, and the elevation of Humanity by Christ's triumphant death upon the Cross are the great Decrees to which the Psalmist points continually, desiring to learn the mystery which they involve.

69. A LIE, *ver.* 29

The devil, the father of lies, is the tainting principle which inspires all the imaginations of man's fallen nature. Hence mankind are his children, just as when renewed by grace they are God's children. He deceives men. He accuses those whom he has deceived.

THE PROUD HAVE FORGED A LIE AGAINST ME

The proud worldlings think of the child of God as if He were like themselves. They cannot realise the character of the heavenly life, its strength, and its aims. They falsely accuse the regenerate man as if he were still far away from God through sin.

The Psalmist has entreated that God would remove from Him the way of lying, *ver.* 29. God has accomplished that entreaty by lifting him up into the Divine goodness. Human goodness would not avail.

The accusation of Satan becomes a lie when we have had our sin blotted out by regeneration in Christ and subsequent sins by the penitential discipline of absolving grace. We are no longer Satan's slaves.

But the responsibility on our side remains. As Adam fell, so may we fall. We must take heed.

I WILL GUARD THY PRECEPTS

God's precepts must not only be observed by us as a duty. They must be guarded as a treasure. They are the condition of our abiding in that regenerate life of which Satan seeks to rob us.

We cannot rebut the accusation of Satan if we are not fulfilling the law by that supernatural power of holiness whereby God hath made us to be His own.

Those precepts therefore are a watchword of defence against our false accusers. They are written by the Spirit of life "upon the fleshy tables of the heart" with living power to perform them.

WITH MY WHOLE HEART

As I would *seek God* with *my whole heart*, I must *guard* all the intimations which he has given for my guidance and support whilst seeking Him. The enemy are continually striving to draw us away from God by false attractions according to the susceptibilities of our several dispositions. They cloak their suggestions with such forms of plausibility as will most readily win our regard. We are not therefore to wonder that suggestions of the evil one seem to be innocent, good, and profitable. We must test everything by the pattern of the Cross. The more they assail us whether by temptation or accusation, so much the more earnestly must we guard God's precepts *with our whole heart*.

70. THEIR HEART IS AS FAT AS BRAWN

Such is the dulness of a heart not quickened by Divine goodness. It has been left to itself to grow insensible by reason of the fatness of sensual gratifications.

This is true of all forms of worldly absorption, and not merely of the coarse indulgence of carnal pleasure.

It is true of the eagerness of the millionaire to make more money whereas Divine love would make him use it for God's glory. So also the man of science may find a like absorption drawing him away from Divine thoughts because his whole intelligence is consecrated to the investigation of natural truth. Even the pursuit of philanthropic schemes of culture and beneficent amelioration may cause the same stagnation of spirit unless the glory of God is steadily kept in view.

Unless the blood of Jesus is circulating through the heart so that His members do all things with the life of Divine love which characterizes His lifelong self-oblation, the heart of man will surely harden in the same suffocating self-satisfaction. There may be much activity, even religious activity, but unless the thought of Jesus is kept steadily in mind, as the strength and also the aim of every action, its beginning and its end, the heart will necessarily sink down in spiritual unconsciousness, not feeling its spiritual needs because it is destitute of all spiritual aspirations.

AS FOR ME, I DELIGHT IN THY LAW, *vid. ver.* 16

After all surely the slaves of worldly pleasure find no real delight in that which enslaves them, of whatever kind it may be. Excitement, mirth, fear, strain of work and crushing anxiety may make a man insensible to the absence of joy which leaves his life a heartless void of misery. The life that is quickened by the Blood of Jesus, the heart that beats in union with Him, must have the gladness of heavenly joy amidst all the changes of earth. The law of the Cross looks painful to those who see it afar off, but it is full of delight to those who are crucified with Jesus. Other objects sadden the earthly life and fail in eternity. The law of Jesus dying upon the Cross for the glory of the Father cheers every faithful soul in every suffering, and crowns the loving soul at last with the welcome of eternal felicity.

IT IS GOOD FOR ME THAT I HAVE BEEN IN TROUBLE

Trouble is a *good*. Why? It makes the soul experience the worthlessness of everything but God. God is good. Nothing but God is good. Trouble is good for it is the only true aspect of existence outside of God.

So true is that half of the truth which oriental philosophies retain in their pessimism. Were created phenomenal life the only life, the only good would be to pass into unconsciousness. But how different is the teaching of the Psalmist to that of Buddha! Created life is not a mere deceitful dream from which we may relapse into nothing. It is a creation. Upholding this deceitful creation, there is a Personal God in whom all goodness is found. Trouble does not drive us to seek absorption into nothingness. Trouble drives us to seek for joy in God our Creator.

THUS HAVE I LEARNT THY DECREES

Our passage through this world is a responsible progress towards God. It is well that we are placed in an evil world, for otherwise we never could learn obedience nor could we merit the joy of God's approval. Even Jesus "learnt obedience by the things which He suffered" (*Heb.* v. 8). Trouble is good not because it eliminates the spirit from the body, but because it makes us fly to God the Father of all, and use our outward life with all its evils as a means of sacrifice giving ourselves to His glory. So thus in the evil which we see, we appropriate the glory which we cannot see. The evil is the antagonist of God, and we enduring evil on behalf of God, become partakers by loving effort in all the goodness of God's love.

THE LAW OF THY MOUTH

The Personal God is the ruler of all things, ordering them by His word, according to the counsel of His own will. The law of God's mouth is a creative utterance, giving phenomenal substance to all that exists outside of Himself, and enduing all things with form and order which image forth His own interior

substantive and eternal goodness. That law is the authoritative upholder of all things, so that what remains true to the form which the Creator gave, lives in the participation of the Creator's truth and goodness. Creation could not be without freewill, for without this none could choose the true eternal good, and without the choice of the creature and the approval of the Creator there could be no goodness, no love. That which did not remain true to the form which the Creator gave to it, became "without form and void" (*Gen. i. 2*). Thus originated evil, the formless, the unsubstantial, the wasted world of earth. In this world we find the traces of God's goodness in all the forms of goodness which fill creation, like carved stones of some ancient temple, beautiful in themselves, but broken, worthless, used for the building up of hovels on the site of their ancient glory. So the substance of God's creation remains as the outcome of His Word, and the forms of His creation remain, but no longer fitted for His original purpose. The unity of the universe is destroyed by the alienation of Divine powers from the purpose of the Divine mind. The beauty and glory of creation testifies to its fall more than mere worthlessness could do. *The law of God's mouth* appeals to all creation wherein there is still lingering any faculty of love, any desire of restoration by Divine interference. That which is satisfied with itself, and its lingering traces of broken beauty, perishes. That which is to be saved must be taken out of the condition of death which the absence of God's acceptance involves. God cannot choose for His new building that which rejoices in its empty pride. *The law of God's mouth* reorganises, for the new creation is a restoration of the old world to its unfallen glory. It is not the beginning of a new plan, but the perfecting of that which originally failed through the creature's evil choice. *This law* vivifies, for from the mouth of the Most High, the sanctifying Spirit proceeds. He breathed *externally* on all, to sanctify it in the original creation. Now by the Incarnation of the Word, the Spirit of the Word vivifies as an *inherent* power the creation which God has chosen so that it may be delivered from the state of ruin and raised to a higher

condition of Divine correspondence than belonged to it at the very first. Then it was overshadowed by God. Now God comes to dwell in that which He creates anew. *The law of God's mouth* is the joy of the soul which regains the capacity of hearing God's voice. There is no aim so delightful as that which God's law indicates. *This law* remunerates those that act in obedience to it. The law of natural obedience had a penalty for disobedience. The law of restorative grace has a promise, a glorious reward, for all who yield themselves to its sway, a law of goodness continually developing with all the exhaustlessness of God's Infinite Sovereignty and power.

The fall of the original earth and the restoration of the Church are set forth in type by the denunciations of the prophet against the land of Israel. The Lord maketh the earth empty and maketh it waste . . . the city of confusion (TOHU) is broken down; "every house is shut up, that no man may come in" (*Is. xxxiv. 11*). The land of Israel, chosen of God, should perish as the world of old. "Ye shall die like Adam" though called by a special covenant "to be gods," partakers of the Divine nature (*Ps. lxxxii.*). Edom was, however, the special type of those who fell from the Divine predestination and should never be restored. "He shall stretch out upon it, the lines of confusion (TOHU) and the stones of emptiness (BOHU) (*Is. xxxiv. 11*). Edom represents the people whom God called out of the world as the seed of Abraham, but they despised their heavenly birthright, they chose earth, they became the cruel antagonists of their brother Israel, they perished without hope.

The soul must rejoice to welcome *the law of God's mouth*. Otherwise that law will overwhelm it in destruction. Nothing could be saved out of Jericho. Nothing could be saved out of Edom. Nothing can be saved out of the carnal Israel which rejected Christ. They must come to the Body of Him whom they rejected, and seek to have the promises fulfilled to them only in Him. Nothing can be saved out of earth's glories. They help not the Church of God. They desolate it. The original law of death rests upon all that is around us on the earth. *The law of*

God's mouth is the law of the Cross whereby we die to the world in Christ and with Christ. But, oh! how good is this law! If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him (2 *Tim.* ii. 11). It is the law of eternal life, for "God hath given unto us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 *John* v. 11, 12).

THOUSANDS OF GOLD AND SILVER

The gold and silver of this world are but the evils necessary for the work of this evil world. Man when he was created, needed them not. He lived by the Word of God, *the law of God's mouth*, until He fell. Sin gives them their value. Sin makes them instruments of sin. They are objects of delight to us, because we delight in sin. We may gain God by losing them. We shall gain closer access to God the more we give them up to Him. If we use them for ourselves, they become our tomb. They cannot help us when we die. If we use them for God by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit changes evil into good. But "hardly shall a rich man enter into the Kingdom of God." If the spirit is to change the gold and silver in our hands so as to make them instruments of blessing to us, that Spirit must also change us so that the rotten clay of our fallen nature may be changed into the better gold and silver whereof the heavenly Jerusalem is built up, the silver of a humanity purified in the furnace of sevenfold affliction along with the Incarnate Word of Wisdom, the gold of a Divine life shining with the lustre of eternal love.

SECTION X

Vers. 73-80

MORAL PERFECTION

- Thy Hands made me and stablished me :
Give me understanding and I shall learn Thy commandments.
They that fear Thee shall see me and be glad :
Because I have waited for Thy Word.
I know, O Lord, that Thy Judgments are right,
And in faithfulness Thou hast caused me to be troubled.
O let Thy mercy be my comfort,
According to Thy Promise to Thy servant,
Let Thy compassions come unto me and I shall live :
For Thy Law is my delight.
Let the proud be ashamed, for with a lie they thrust at me.
But as for me, I meditate on Thy Precepts.
Let those who fear Thee turn back to me :
And they shall know Thy Testimonies.
Let my heart be perfect in Thy Decrees.
That I may not be ashamed.
- God's creation involves a gift of understanding proportionate to His commands.*
- The faithful soul an object of contemplative joy to those who fear God.*
- by patience waiting for the Incarnation.*
- by penitance accepting God's discipline.*
- by faith looking for comfort through God's mercy in the promised Redeemer.*
- by acceptance of Jesus Christ so as to become a Son of God through His name.*
- by putting the world to shame through steadfastness in following Christ.*
- so shall the faithful soul win such as fear God to seek the new, sacramental, covenant.*
- so shall we rise to the moral perfection worthy of the image of God wherein we were created.*

The number "ten" is symbolical of moral perfection. It is the number of the written law. The ten pieces of silver, the hundred sheep, of the parables represent the perfect creation of God of which one was lost, but it was found again, and the original integrity was restored.

THY HANDS *Twice*, x. 73; cccc. 173.

Other creatures sprang into existence at the bidding of God's Word. Man was the special work of God's Hands. The Hands of God seem to represent God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth" (*Ps.* xxxiii. 6). The making of man, however, was a mysterious elevation of the created organism into a capacity of correspondence with God. Man was made in God's Image. This was not a resemblance of external form but a sealing of the spiritual nature with the stamp of Divine capacities and the formation of the external body so as to fit it to be the instrument of that Divinely communicated image and likeness.

We know not what laws of self-development and growth, God may have enshrined in the germs of the original creation. The harmonious progress of the organic world is the result of the inworking of the original creative voice of God. As the voice swells out by a continuous law of sound, so we can understand the creative voice making the universe to grow without break or jar in the succession of phenomena advancing to perfection. But the law of natural growth could not overstep the gulf which separated the creature from the Infinite Creator. It was necessary that God should take hold of the creature so as to lift man up into a condition of life suitable for the Divine fellowship.

HAVE MADE ME AND STABLISHED ME, *ver.* 5

God made our nature that we might serve Him. He did not make it for nothing. He made it so that it might be a fitting instrument for His Divine purposes, and He made all other things

that man might use them for His glory in carrying out the purposes of God's supreme Wisdom. Man would have been the sovereign of creation in a much higher sense if he had not lost His sovereignty by the fall. His senses would have been conscious of the secrets of nature in a way far beyond our present possibilities. Man has now to accomplish by weary toil in ignorance what he would have accomplished by the power of the spirit with joyous intuition. He could see for instance into the sacramental virtues of the forbidden food. He had to repress his longing for he had to rely upon God's word of prohibition.

Moreover, man by the fall became the slave of many wants. He lost the sustaining, gladdening, illuminating, glorifying, immortalising presence of God within Himself and he had to accomplish for himself by toil and experiment much that was needless in the glory of His original formation.

But God did not merely make man, He established man. His permanent nature had a fixt law of life, and growth. His relation to the world around him was fixt. He was the microcosm, summing up in himself all the world, over which he was to rule.

If he was to rule the world he must do so in subjection to God.

God's purpose in creating man was not set aside by the fall. Man was to reign over everything not only on earth but the starry host. This is the end of man's moral training that he may sit upon the Throne of creation. When the first Adam fell, God sent His Son as the second Adam to claim the kingdom of the universe. Therefore angels sang praise at His birth and the wild beasts worshipped Him in the wilderness, and the evil spirits acknowledged His authority.

GIVE ME UNDERSTANDING THAT I MAY LEARN THY COMMANDMENTS

The moral law needs an understanding heart. God's commandments need to be learnt ere they can be fulfilled. It is not enough for us to know the latter as "it was said to them of old time." We must hear the voice of Divine Wisdom speaking:—

“I say unto you.” As man’s nature is formed upon the basis of God’s Image, the law imposed upon man has its roots in the eternal principles and Relationships of the Divine life as received from the Triune God.

74. THEY THAT FEAR THEE AND SEE ME WILL REJOICE

The Psalmist is *a companion of all them that fear God*. The saints all of them rejoice in the perfections of others. Love is the fulfilling of the law and we cannot be fulfilling the law unless we rejoice in every act of holiness which is done by others just as if it were our own.

BECAUSE I HAVE HOPED IN THY WORD, *ver.* 49

The hope which we have of Christ’s appearing is a joy which strengthens others as well as ourselves. How great will be the joy of the saints in the resurrection when they see all the faithful arising in the full glory of their sanctification, their bodies shining in the glory of Christ as He has manifested Himself by grace in the life and works of everyone.

75. I KNOW *Three times, x. 75, 79; c. 152.*

We know the things of God more surely than we can know the things of the world. We know them by living in God.

THY JUDGMENTS ARE RIGHTEOUSNESS

The righteousness of God acts towards us in His holy discipline. “We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?” (*Heb.* xii. 9). He chastens us not “of His own pleasure, but that ye may be partakers of His holiness.” Others may chasten so as to punish, but they have no power to communicate the energy of righteousness. God never chastens us without communicating to us the fellowship of the Spirit whereby He would draw us to union with Himself.

The chastening Hand of God is full of blessing for He calls us to live with His own power. If He were to leave us unchastened,

He would leave us to our own earthliness and we must perish in our sins.

IN FAITHFULNESS THOU HAST AFFLICTED ME

Our perfection consists in victory over Satan. If God had not suffered Satan to afflict us with manifold temptations, He would not have shown His faithfulness. This He shows by strengthening us that we may resist those temptations.

How important it is for us in all times of trouble to remember God's faithfulness and that He looks for faithfulness upon our part so that we may grow stronger in the covenant of love! Every suffering we may have to bear is only an element of the suffering by which the obedience of Christ was perfected. In all our weaknesses while we suffer, the grace of His suffering comes to us that in our suffering we may not shrink from the conflict, but may be perfected along with Him in the strength of Divine Love (*vid. ver. 30*).

76. LET THY MERCY BE MY COMFORT

We are comforted not in ourselves but in God. *God's mercy* is our *comfort*. We are comforted not because we have a claim upon God, but because God has a claim upon us. He who has done so much for us looks to perfect His work within us. The work of His grace is glorious within us in proportion to the shame and weakness out of which He raises us. God's mercy does not act towards us without our own corresponding endeavour. We must accept the revelation of our misery that we may rejoice in the manifestation of His mercy. We must see ourselves and rise out of ourselves. We must see His mercy and feel its undeservedness. We must see His promises and reach out after the glory which He offers to us.

ACCORDING TO THY PROMISE TO THY SERVANT

The servant can only look for mercy. He knows the imperfection of his service! He looks for mercy to be a true Divine comfort because of the security of God's Promise.

77. LET THY COMPASSIONS COME TO ME *Twice, x. 77; cc. 156.*

Faithfulness chastens (*ver. 75*). Mercy welcomes (*ver. 76*). Compassion descends with love (*ver. 77*). God came to take hold of man that He might form man according to the law of moral perfection. God comes to man by taking upon Himself a human heart, that that Heart may be a centre of recuperative power, renewing man from the evil of his fallen condition to live with the energy of a child of God.

THAT I MAY LIVE

Our life is in the Incarnate Son of God.

(i) The Psalmist desires the life of the resurrection opening the eyes to the heavenly vision (*iii. 17*). (ii) He desires Jesus, the perfect man, to come to him with the fulness of Divine mercy and human confession (*x. 77*). (iii) He desires the spirit of strength to uphold him against the power of the world that he may live (*lx. 116*). (iv) He desires the spirit of understanding that he may live in the fellowship of the Divine wisdom (*xc. 144*). (v) He desires that His soul may live to praise God for that is the perfect end of man. The soul learns to live truly while the nature is offered in sacrifice upon the Cross (*cccc. 175*). The fivefold cry of redeemed humanity! Five is the number of humanity and of sacrifice.

THY LAW IS MY DELIGHT, *vers. 92, 174*

The natural man shrinks from the law of God but that law is the delight of the perfect. "He looketh into the law of liberty and continueth therein. He shall be blessed in his deed" (*James i. 25*).

The Psalmist does not desire God's compassion to exempt him from keeping the law, but to give him life that he may keep it. "Jesus!" is his exclamation. "Thy law my delight!" (= 1776 = 2 × 888) is like an appeal to Jesus. Jesus in Greek = 888. That number when found in words of Old Testament constantly points to Jesus.

78. LET THE PROUD BE ASHAMED

God has made man. The only hope for man is in God's mercy, his only solace in God's compassion. If we think highly of human nature under the self-confident boast that we can act of ourselves, we disparage our Creator. We must not think much of ourselves even though some few of God's original gifts may be our portion. The gifts are His. From Him they come. They can be used only in Him. He can take them away.

The proud must be ashamed in the end, for all that they have will be taken from them by death, and then all will profit them no more. As they assailed Christ so they assail us.

WITH LIES THEY HAVE DISTORTED ME

(i) The resurrection of Christ must always be remembered by us as showing the futility of all that pride can do (*ver.* 21). (ii) Nevertheless the proud mock us by reason of our fidelity to Christ (*ver.* 31). (iii) They forge a lie against us but that does not destroy the integrity of our interior devotion (*ver.* 69). (iv) They shall be ashamed for the lies with which they seek to draw me away from God's moral law (*ver.* 78). (v) They dig pits for me to fall into (*ver.* 85). (vi) The suretyship of God is my only refuge against the violence of the ungodly (*ver.* 122). Our perfection has to be tested by the endurance of lying temptations and lying accusations.

A LIE

By the adverbial use of the substantive, the idea becomes almost an impersonation. God is faithfulness. The proud who go about to destroy me are, as it were, a walking lie (*vid. ver.* 29).

I WILL MEDITATE ON THY PRECEPTS

We must *meditate* upon the precepts of Christ if we would escape the deceits of the world. The soul must be living in secret fellowship with God if we are to act in the faithful observance of His commands.

79. THEY THAT FEAR THEE AND KNOW THY TESTIMONIES

The Psalmist is a companion of those that fear God (viii. 63). They rejoice to see him (ix. 74). They turn to him and acknowledge his victory when the proud have undergone the shame which their lies bring upon them (x. 79). The saints share our struggle and rejoice in our victory,—our companions in earthly discipline, our companions no less in the final triumph.

They know God's testimonies, the power of sacramental grace. They lived in its power. They rejoice to see us living in the same power. So the Body of Christ grows to its perfection.

80. LET MY HEART BE PERFECT IN THY DECREES *Twice, i. 1; x. 80.*

To be perfect in the *way* we must be perfect in the *heart*. The heart, the seat of the moral understanding, must be perfect in the love whereby we rejoice in God's eternal glory, the decrees of Divine life. These must have for us a personal reality, if we are to live worthy of them, so that we may be true to our moral nature as created in God's Image.

SO SHALL I NOT BE ASHAMED

The proud are *ashamed* who live for the *world*. It fails them in the end. Those who live in the love of God's *eternal truth* shall *not* be ashamed for they have their portion with the saints in the day of *judgment*.

Adam and his wife were ashamed when by their sin they had driven away the glorifying presence of God which clothed them. If we are true to the law of moral perfection with a heart united to God in holy love we shall not be ashamed, for we shall regain that clothing of Divine lustre which Adam lost.

The new Jerusalem descends from heaven, having the glory of God (*Rev. xxi. 11*).

Man was created in God's Image to live by God's Spirit for God's glory. If he failed of this he must know the shame of nakedness. Whatever created glory he may have, he must feel this shame unless he is clothed with the Divine glory as the

outcome of an interior Divine fellowship. There can be no true image of God without the life of God, no true obedience to God's law without the moving principle of God's love. Man's nature cannot be true to itself without the supernatural gift of Divine life. It is too glorious a creation to find an adequate place amidst the creatures of earth. Man cannot be true to God without God's indwelling, personal presence. His nature is lower than that of angels, but he is formed to act in a higher relationship than belongs to the angel host. He was formed in order to conquer Satan which no angel host could do. He was formed to receive the crown of glory and honour at God's Right Hand. If he fail of this he fails of all. Human nature for its perfection demands the Incarnation of the Son of God to be its Head and the illuminating Spirit of Eternal love to be its life.

Man who is the work of God's Hands must live true to God's Word in the power of the Spirit of love. Otherwise he cannot attain the moral perfection which belongs to his natural being.

SECTION XX

Vers. 81-88

THE STATE OF EXPECTANCY IN THIS SINFUL WORLD

My soul pines away for Thy salvation, I have waited for Thy Word.	<i>The soul personally waiting for salvation by the Incarnate Word.</i>
Mine eyes pine away for Thy Promise, Saying, when wilt thou comfort me?	<i>It feels the burden of the flesh pining for the promised help of the Holy Ghost the Comforter.</i>
For I am become like a wineskin in the smoke : I forget not Thy Decrees.	<i>Human nature is like a worthless skin in the smoke. The faithful soul longs for God's predestined glory.</i>
How many are the days of Thy servant ? When wilt thou work Judgment on my persecutors ?	<i>It feels the wearisomeness of life in the world. It waits for the Prince of this world and his power to be cast out.</i>
The proud have digged pitfalls for me, Which are not according to Thy Law.	<i>The worldly seek to draw the faithful into sin, Because they hate God, whom he serves.</i>
All Thy Commandments are faithfulness They persecute me with a lie. Help Thou me !	<i>God's Truth and the world of falsehood are at continual strife. The faithful feels himself powerless.</i>
They had almost brought me to nothing on the earth : But as for me, I have not forsaken Thy Precepts.	<i>He can do nothing to avenge himself. He can only die. But he will serve God faithfully and God can give him the promised life of a better world.</i>
According to Thy mercy, quicken Thou me.	<i>In his helplessness He casts himself upon God's mercy that he may receive this gift of Divine life.</i>
And I will observe the Testimonies of Thy mouth.	<i>In all things he will be true to the covenanted requirements which God has proclaimed.</i>

The number "twenty" is a form of "two." It therefore tells of the Incarnation. It points on to "three." It indicates expectation, the human looking to be glorified in the Divine.

The twenty pieces of silver for which Joseph was sold indicate the insufficiency which belongs to a type whereas the thirty set forth the Divine fulness.

81. MY SOUL PINES AWAY WITH LONGING *Four times, xx. 81, 82; lxx. 123; (Piel) xx. 87.*

This wasting away of the expectant soul is implied in the Old Testament. Lord, how long? (*Ps. xiii. 1*). It is the cry of the souls under the altar as they wait for the glory of the resurrection (*Rev. vi. 9*).

The journey of life is a weariness to the soul which can anticipate the joy of the heavenly home. Nevertheless the meat which God provides sustains the faithful so that in the strength thereof we can go to the Mount of God. God helps us on our way. Otherwise we could not endure unto the end.

THY SALVATION, *ver. 41*

This form of the word seems to imply Jesus crucified. It has the cross for a prefix.

The enemies with whom the pilgrim was contending in the last section were essential to the development of his moral perfection, but they weighed down his spirit. He looked for a mighty arm to be his deliverer.

Jesus was the object of longing in the Old Testament. He is the object of longing in the Church. "Even so: Come, Lord Jesus" (*Rev. xxii. 20*).

I HAVE HOPED IN THY WORD, *ver. 43*

Nature faints with longing, but faith lives on with the strength of God. Jesus is that Word.

82. MINE EYES PINE AWAY WITH LONGING FOR THY PROMISE

"Though the vision tarry, wait for it" (*Heb. ii. 3*)

The Psalmist looks to God with hope of the resurrection. With the eyes of "my flesh, I shall see God" (*Job* xix. 27).

The "Word made flesh" is the fulfilment of the promise, which shall have its completeness in the glory of the life hereafter.

WHEN WILT THOU COMFORT ME? *ver.* 50

Are we able to drink the cup and to be baptized with the baptism of Jesus? Jesus, the Incarnate Saviour! The salvation promised through His death! This was the twofold hope, "an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast." For this we make our cry.

The cry must be a cry of patient expectation, not of fretful despondency. "Lord, how long?" In truth the promise cannot be given until we are ready to receive it. Our times are in God's Hands, but He orders all as He sees to be for our good. Even now we are able to say, Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation! But the more we have seen, so much the more do we long. Faith longs to be lost in the joy of the perfect vision.

83. I AM BECOME LIKE A WINESKIN IN THE SMOKE

Humanity no longer having the inherent Godhead is like a shrivelled wineskin. It is dried up. It was formed to contain the wine of Divine Love. Now it is useless.

IN THE SMOKE

The *smoke* belongs to the vengeance upon the earth. "The smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (*Gen.* xix. 28). The smoke of Satanic darkness! The skin which should have been a source of joy by reason of the interior life of God, hangs in this world amidst the hellish smoke of spiritual evil that has lost its original Divine brightness.

I FORGET NOT, *vid. ver.* 16

The *bottle* is hung up, because there is *no wine* to be found in it. The *soul* is left as if it were no longer the home of *Divine life*. But there is a hope for the soul that the Divine life will be restored. There is the expectation of a Redeemer who shall

renew the human race with the infusion of Divine life. Therefore the soul while expressing its present misery avouches its confidence in *God's Decrees* which are to effect its deliverance. It waits not in case of being possibly wanted but with a *certainty* that *God's Decrees* have a great future in store for it. They will issue in a dispensation of love.

84. HOW MANY ARE THE DAYS OF THY SERVANT ?

The faithful soul is God's servant although enslaved by Satan. The Psalmist looks forward to the promised Redeemer who shall remove this slavery and enable him once more to serve God in the freedom of a new life.

EXECUTE JUDGMENT ON THEM THAT PERSECUTE ME *Five times,*
xx. 84, 86 ; c. 150 ; cc. 157 ; ccc. 161.

The prince of this world shall be judged. Such was the Psalmist's conviction. Now his judgment is manifest by the coming of the Holy Ghost. Now therefore the spirit of adoption brings us freedom. The freedom, the judgment, are true, but they wait for the consummation of all things ere they can be manifested in their completeness. At length the persecuting power of evil shall be cast into the lake of fire (*John* xvi. 11 ; *Rev.* xx. 10).

The saints under the altar ask, How long ? God does not give them a direct answer, but a moral solution of this inquiry. The length of time is not absolutely fixt by God's decree but the final result is contingent upon man's conduct. When the number of God's elect is complete, and their brethren have accomplished the tale of martyrdom, then shall the end be.

This seems to be the meaning of our Lord when He speaks of the last Day as being known only to God. It is not chronologically fixt by God's eternal decree, so that it can be placed in a prophetic chart which might inform the created mind respecting it. It is determined by a moral relation to man's trial, and that involves the interposition of man's free will as an element of the determination. God's foreknowledge does not interfere with

man's freewill for God knows all things not by succession of time but in a sphere outside of earthly contingencies. A merely predictive knowledge destroys human free-will so far as the prediction goes. The prediction of certain details does not interfere with this, for periodic occurrences leave the intervening spaces free. The prediction of the final catastrophe on the contrary would necessitate an anticipatory judgment. Otherwise the human race might not have had full time for its moral probation or it might be lingering on when probation was no longer possible. Human knowledge of the day of judgment would therefore be at variance with God's disciplinary government of the world. Faith must be tried by resting patiently, expectantly, humbly, in acquiescence upon God's determination of the length of trial.

85. THE PROUD HAVE DIGGED PITS FOR ME

The persecution lasts as long as the expectancy. When God has shown the sufficiency of His grace in the number of faithful martyrs, then will the end be. Then will the enemy be cast out. But it is necessary that the enemy should remain unjudged until the end, for if the enemy did not persecute there would be no wail in which God's saints could show forth any meritorious obedience. There could be no victory of faith, if the unbelieving had not upon their side all the various powers of evil.

Alas! we are distressed at the unbelief which surrounds us. That is not the really Christian way of looking at evil. If we had not such evils to contend with, we should have no opportunity of carrying on our warfare. We are distressed, and make compromises, and look to worldly possibilities and lay down our arms. We ought on the contrary to be stimulated to spiritual energy by the sight of the evil which it really rests with ourselves to conquer by the use of God's grace. Then we should understand that we could make no terms with evil, treating much that is evil as if it were neutral, neither evil nor good, but a ground of alliance where the faithful and the unbelieving might as truly work in accord as if there were no God or devil whom we were respectively serving. Then we should never look to get

the better of evil by merely social arrangement nor to forward the cause of God by the co-operation of His enemies. Then we should live for God, and in God, and we should lay down our lives, being perfectly assured of the victory of faith. Earthly life without such war were nothing worth!

We merit nothing with God because He has given us great gifts. Wealth, genius, character, friends, influence, none of these things make us useful to God. God does not recognize any merit in anything that we have done in the world however useful and glorious it may be. There is no more merit in our using God's gifts than there is in a stone falling to the ground. The results of conduct are fixt by natural law. The only merit profitable for man is the merit of suffering. When we suffer out of love to God then we are acting in obedience as being called to the higher order of life, wherein we may dwell as God's children acting in the power of the Holy Ghost. No one has ever given up anything for Christ without receiving an abundant reward, but the reward is proportionate to the suffering which the sacrifice involves, for the suffering is the measure of the love. Divine love anticipates the joy for which we long.

We must then expect the *proud worldling* to *dig pits for us*. The object of the proud is to get rid of the faithful from the earth. They will seek to ensnare us by hidden devices if we will not succumb to their domination.

WHICH ARE NOT AFTER THY LAW

They want me to tread in ways that seem safe like the covered pits in which a wild beast may be caught, but they have hidden devices of evil which will destroy me if I tread upon these places. They are outside the *way of Thy commandments*. If I fall in the snare it is because I have done something *outside* of Thy commandment even if not *contrary* to it.

It is not enough for us to plead upon any occasion that God has not *forbidden* a thing. We have to consider whether it is within the terms of what God has *commanded*.

86. ALL THY COMMANDMENTS ARE FAITHFULNESS

In *vers.* 76, 78 *the faithfulness* of God and *the lie* of the proud were contrasted. So it is again here. God's commandments are faithfulness, sure of effecting the proper result, for God is Eternal Truth. No delay can make the accomplishment of His Word to be doubtful. Delay makes God's power more manifest.

THEY PERSECUTE ME WITH A LIE

As the whole world lieth in the wicked one (*John* v. 19), the whole system of apparent good round about us is the lie which characterizes the evil one in all ways. We see the world, as it were, through a coloured atmosphere of diabolical presence. We must close our eyes to this and keep the commandments of God with the obedience of faith. If we live in personal communion with God we have "ears to hear what His Spirit saith unto the Churches." Then our eyes are opened to behold the things of God in an extra-mundane relationship. We know this world as being God's creation so that we have to serve Him therein. But we know it as being a fallen world, so that the aims of life have no attraction for us. Although we use God's creatures according to the necessities of this evil day (*Matt.* vi. 34) yet we look beyond this world and its suggestions. The origin, the power, the issue of our actions is not a matter of this world's accident, but of Divine relationship. Hence we have to consider all the circumstances of life as constituting God's vocation. Everything must be done with personal reference to Him.

BE THOU MY HELP *Three times, xx. 86; cccc. 173, 175.*

Hence it is that we look to God for help to keep us and sanctify us in the truth, that we perish not through the lie of the great murderer. We must resist him, steadfast in the faith (*1 Pet.* v. 9). We must take the shield of faith wherewith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked (*Eph.* vi. 16). God is our helper by His essence, *ver.* 86, for the Father is the source of love, by His Hand, *ver.* 173, for the Son is the instrument of love, and by his judgments, *ver.* 175, for the Holy Ghost is the power of love.

87. THEY HAD ALMOST MADE AN END OF ME

The word "pining" occurs three times in this Section, and remarkably illustrates the character of present insufficiency and long continued expectation which characterize the number "twenty." The oppression of the proud made the Psalmist almost pine away.

So it may be with us, but if it is "almost" it must not be "altogether." "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day" (2 *Tim.* i. 12).

UPON EARTH

In outward appearances they seem to get the mastery, but all that is of earth must pass away. Earthly judgment applauds them as conquerors. But that must not shake my confidence.

If I had only an earthly nature I must sink down in exhaustion. But God forbid that this should ensnare us. "We receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (*Heb.* xii. 28). The end of earth! The eternity of heaven!

AS FOR ME, I FORSAKE NOT THY PRECEPTS

God will not forsake us, if we do not forsake Him.

88. QUICKEN ME ACCORDING TO THY MERCIES

The soul bound down in earthliness and ready to pine away looks for the quickening power of grace. This is its earnest expectation. Life, Divine Life—that is the one object for which the soul longs. The gift is ineffable. God's mercy is its only measure. Human desire cannot anticipate it nor formulate it. The soul dies to earth in its exhaustion that it may live to God in the fulness of His mercy.

I WILL KEEP THE TESTIMONY OF THY MOUTH

The word occurs eight times in the plural, referring to the sacraments whereby the gifts of the regenerate life are given unto

us. Here only does the word occur in a singular form. The manifold gifts of God are summed up in the unity of the Divine utterance. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God" (*Rom.* viii. 16). His sacramental presence, ever present in the hearts of His people, is like the Testimony which gave its name to the ark when the children of Israel were in the wilderness.

SECTION XXX

Vers. 89-96

ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST

THE ETERNAL SOVEREIGNTY OF THE WORD

For ever, O Lord,
Thy Word is stablished in heaven. *His Throne in Heaven.*
Thy faithfulness is to all genera- *His changeless government of the*
tions : *earth.*
Thou hast fixt the earth firm and *His own fixity the stability of His*
it abideth. *creatures.*
They abide this day according to *For they all fulfil His will.*
Thy Judgment :
For the universe serves Thee.

MAN'S OBEDIENCE VOLUNTARY

If my delight had not been in Thy *Man must perish amidst the troubles*
Law, *of earth.*
Surely I had perished in my trouble. *Unless he delights to do God's will.*
Never will I forget Thy Precepts *God calls man by obedience to higher*
life.
For with them Thou hast quickened
me.

MAN'S TRUE LIFE IN ETERNAL SUBJECTION TO GOD

I am Thine! Save me! *Man belongs to God by a living*
Covenant.
For I have sought Thy Precepts. *God saves those who seek Him.*
The ungodly looked out for me, *The ungodly seek to destroy man by*
to destroy me. *leading him into sin.*
I give my understanding to Thy *The remembrance of the hidden life of*
Testimonies. *sacramental grace must make us*
watchful so as not to be ensnared
by them.
To all perfection I see an end : *All things in this world come to an*
end.
Thy Commandment is broad to the *God's Word reaches beyond this world*
utmost. *with a never ending sovereignty.*

“Thirty” is an emphasized form of the number “three.” Its meaning is therefore naturally expressed by the title which is prefix to this Section. It begins with the Word of God enduring for ever in heaven and it ends with the contrast between the eternal commandment of God and every perfection which comes to an end.

89. **ETERNITY** *Ten times*, vi. 44 ; xxx. 89, 93 ; xl. 98 ; l. iii. ; xc. 142, 144 ; c. 152 ; cc. 160. *Once of past eternity*, vii. 52.

This is the first word and this is the leading idea of the Section. God's *judgments* are an eternal *predestination* by which creation is to be perfected (*ver.* 52). God's *Word* is the utterance of that judgment *to everlasting*.

THY WORD

God's Word is not a transient utterance dying out when its effect is produced. It is an eternal existence. It sustains the life which it originates. “The heavens and earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store” (2 *Pet.* iii. 7). It does not come forth from God, as the breath from mortal man. It comes forth from the Eternal and abides in the unity of the Eternal Essence. It abides one with God although it comes forth from Him. It does not lose its Personal character by this procession. It is begotten in the Eternal Mind, personally coequal with the Father from whom it is begotten, and it calls into existence out of nothingness that world external to God which constitutes created life. It does not lose itself in creation so as to be immanent therein, for then the creature would be Divine.

This same Word subsequently assumed created life, and form, of the substance of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Ghost. Since the Incarnation the Word of God has been immanent in the Church which is His Body. We are baptised into the created Body which He assumed, so as to be members of Him, and thus we as Christians are made partakers of the Divine Nature. “This is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” (1 *John* v. 11).

THY WORD IS ESTABLISHED

This word occurs of God's manifestation in the midst of the heavenly host. "God standeth in the congregation of princes" (*Ps. lxxxii. 1*). It is the Word of God who as God occupies this Throne of Divine Sovereignty. The Being of the Father abides in its hiddenness. By the Word of Creation He makes Himself manifest to His creatures according to the order of their creation. The highest intelligences cannot see behind the Word which created them. "No one hath seen God at any time. The only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (*John i. 18*; reading of Revised Version). The Word of God is the Godhead in the relationship of Son as being begotten in the Mind of the Father eternally. He makes God known by His voice in revelation, but the Divine Nature cannot be seen of man. The Word took flesh in order that we might see His glory. The human intelligence can apprehend the mystery of the filial *relationship* of the Son to the Father although we cannot understand the Divine Nature, but we cannot apprehend the mystery of *eternal self-existence* in God. We can only know and approach the Father as manifested by His creative and mediatorial Word.

The first order of the created universe is not at variance with the Personality of God, but the Eternal Personality is unchangeable and therefore the laws of Creation which His Word has ordained and still upholds are unchangeable according to His own fixity of will. The will of a created being is liable to change because it is based upon accidental phenomena. As circumstances vary, the will necessarily varies along with them. But God has no circumstances. All the circumstances which attend created individualities are the outcome of His Eternal Word, created with a definite predestination and developing in the perfection of harmony.

Without the Word of God leading created objects onward to their intended results, creation must stagnate. There can be no real power of self-development in a created thing. If it contains

a principle of evolution, it must have received that principle from a creative lawgiver. Things must remain as they are unless there be some power external to initiate progress. Powers may be lost by decay, but they cannot be generated without infusion from without.

The Word of God is the first principle of life, having Eternal life in itself, derived from the Father (*John* v. 26), and communicating life to creation, with powers of evolution which are always harmonious because they always depend upon the original unchanging will which that voice expresses. God from all eternity foresees what is to be the completeness of the Cosmos which He through countless ages would bring to perfection.

Evil is the result of decay, when the creature endued with free-will falls away from the sustaining power of the Word of God, but the work of God does not suffer by reason of such lapse. The Word of God calls forth fresh elements of power in creation not by change of will, but by harmonious development of energy. There is never any change in God's working whatever the developments may be.

This is the foundation of the principle of typology in Holy Scripture. All the successive types are but the utterance of the Word of God moving onwards to spiritual developments which the lower material organism had symbolically enshrined. The evils attendant upon the material universe are not defects of the Divine Eternal Word. They are occasioned because the created universe has lost the life to which it should have clung. So by the freewill of Satan, the earth lost the glory of God's Creative Word and became formless and void. So the human race has become involved in calamities by failing to "abide in the truth" of God's creation.

Nevertheless the Word of God is operating through all this world of ruin. The principles of morality are eternal and triumphant in their struggle against the misery of the world whether diabolical or human. God's Word works God's Will in spite of all.

An evolution of perfect goodness, order, light and love, is going on, and the evil will be cast away but the Cosmos of the

Divine intention will be accomplished so as to merit the fulness of the Divine Love (*John* iii. 16). The heavenly Jerusalem will be seen at last, having the glory of God. The Lamp thereof is the Lamb of God, the Incarnate Word. All its splendours are the communication of that Word, evolving itself in the harmonious progress of the Body of Christ. The whole creation will be gathered up into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

So does the Word of God endure for ever in heaven. The redemptive struggle is a development of power in the midst of wickedness. It is not a change of the mind of God towards His creatures, but a development of creation according to the mind of the Creator.

“All were created by the Word of God and for Him. He is before all things and by Him all things consist.” The Word of God cannot be broken. God in creation is gradually calling forth an existence which shall serve to the manifestation of His own hidden glory as the Home which contains His Eternal Word and lives with the life of the Incarnate.

90. TO GENERATION AFTER GENERATION

The generations of men pass away, but the purpose of God remains sure. As in the development of material organism, the successive forms are the development of a continuous law of structure, so in the spiritual consummation the Word of God will be manifest speaking throughout successive generations with changeless faithfulness.

THY FAITHFULNESS

God's *Word* is not only the expression of His unchanging will. It is a pledge of covenant between Him and His creature. The perpetuity of the laws of creation is therefore guaranteed not only by the changelessness of the Divine will but by its truth. No creature of God can suffer because God changes His mind. The creature suffers because it is not true to the law under which God created it, but the evolution which the Divine Word may accomplish in creation is always in *faithfulness*, leading the creature

onward to higher ends, but never causing any retrogression to the detriment of powers already given.

THOU HAST MADE FIRM THE EARTH AND IT STANDS

It is the Word of God which has fixt the earth in space. The Psalmist did not regard the earth as resting upon some other foundation. It stands firm as it is by God's will. The unseen powers which maintain it in its fixt course are of God's appointment.

91. THEY STAND THIS DAY ACCORDING TO THY JUDGMENT *Twice,* xxx. 90, 91.

They *stand*, not that they are motionless, but that they are firm. The plural shows that the earth is in its fixity as part of a great mechanism. All parts have their appointed movements; otherwise they could yield no service. God's Word, God's judgment, unifies all.

THE UNIVERSE ARE THY SERVANTS

The Psalmist could not tell what the purposes of creation might be, but he knew that this glorious universe had not been created for nothing. It far surpassed man's possibilities. It was carrying out a Divine purpose.

In another Psalm he reveals to us that this universe which is so far beyond man in his present condition shall be made subservient to man in a future development of man's being. The Word Incarnate, the God-man, will rule all (*Ps. viii.*).

92. UNLESS THY LAW WERE MY DELIGHT

Who is the speaker? Surely it is the Incarnate Word Himself. His meat was to do His Father's will. Therein was His delight.

We must speak these words, as being united with Him. Wondrous is the delight to feel that all the powers of creation are our fellow-servants carrying out God's will. We in the midst of their necessary obedience have the privilege of yielding to God a voluntary service by the gift of free will and we have herein the

pledge of exaltation to serve God in a higher order of life when created mechanism shall give place to the newly developed world wherein righteousness shall dwell.

I SHOULD HAVE PERISHED IN MY TROUBLE xxx. 92; (*Piel*), 95; (*Poel*)
cccc. 176.

O the glory that is set before us! God's *word* is the comfort of the faithful amidst the trouble of this sinful world (*ver.* 50). That word is the sustaining *law* wherein the soul delights (*ver.* 92). The soul taking up the triumphant burden of the Cross (cccc. 153) claims the Eye of Divine Law as the witness of its trouble because it has not forgotten God's law.

That *law* is the soul's delight, for the fellowship of Jesus in His *Passion*, His Trouble, is the sure warrant of fellowship with Him in His *glory* (2 *Tim.* ii. 11). Now therefore the soul instead of perishing, gains the higher participation in the glory of Christ's Kingdom by drinking of His cup of anguish. "My delight!" *vid. ver.* 77.

93. I WILL NEVER FORGET THY PRECEPTS

God's Word is the source of delight to those who cherish it, but we must be listening attentively both to its imperative commands and to its hortative encouragements. It must be a joy to follow in the steps of Jesus. We must keep His pattern constantly before our eyes. The *vision* of the glory would but make us despondent in the deadliness of our bondage. The *precepts* of the Cross encourage us to step forward through the darkness.

WITH THEM THOU HAST QUICKENED ME, *ver.* 50

The word of life which keeps the material universe in its orderly motions calls the faithful to the higher life of the Divine Covenant. Our life consists in our spontaneous accomplishment of God's precepts. The lifeless creation obeys God's law, but finds no life therein, no choice, no love. Life is not mechanical action, however perfect. Life is love. Love is voluntary self-surrendering

energy. The life, the enèrgy, of love is ever becoming more and more intense by voluntary exercise, choosing God's glory and attaining to it.

94. I AM THINE

Love which follows God's precepts knows itself to be bound to God with a higher law than that of necessary service. It is not merely the slave of temporal arrangements, but the partner of eternal interests. It belongs to God essentially and therefore indissolubly and completely. "He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love" (1 *John* iv. 8). This is the bond of Eternal life which the present Section celebrates.

If I were my own, I should be lost, for my own self is nothingness. Praised be Thy name whereby Thou hast taken me into Thyself. I am Thine. Unless Thou canst perish, I am safe whatever may happen in the world around me.

Jesus in speaking to the Eternal Father says, "All Mine are Thine." The mediatorial life gives admission to the Eternal Kingdom. As Christ the Head is one God with the Father, so are we, His members, partakers of His Eternal and Divine Sonship.

None can thus belong to the Father unless they are partakers of the mediatorial life of the Son. There is but One life, the life wherein the Father and the Son abide for evermore one God. So our Lord goes on to say, "All Thine are Mine." Only in Christ, as His living members, can we belong to the Father.

Wondrous life! It is our privilege to receive it! It is the very glory of Christ, the Incarnate God, to give it. Therefore He says "I am glorified in them," *i.e.* My glory as Mediator consists in my making them partakers of my glory as the only begotten Son.

O SAVE ME *Three times, xxx. 94 ; c. 146 ; (Niph.) lx. 117.*

We are not to think that all is done because we belong to God. That knowledge is indeed the beginning of eternal life, but it is

only the beginning. The life eternal in itself requires a perpetual appropriation on our part. No power can take it from us, but we may forfeit it by our own negligence. This however is not all. We cannot put forth the necessary co-operative energy unless God helps us so to do. Hence we need the grace of perseverance as a gift from God. That gift is most precious. It is a gift of continual increase. Section XXX. speaks of the gift of life: Save me out of death. Section C. will speak of the gift of perseverance and final perfection: Accomplish in me the work Thou hast begun: Save me out of this world of continual assaults. (1) Save me for I have sought Thy precepts giving myself up to Thy service. (2) Save me for I have observed Thy testimonies living in the power of Thy grace.

I HAVE SOUGHT THY PRECEPTS

The Psalmist has sought God and His precepts. Thus he looks to be admitted into the covenant life of God's law, that by the power of the Holy Ghost he may fulfil its commandments.

95. THE WICKED HAVE WAITED FOR ME TO DESTROY ME

Satan destroyed our first parents, taking away from them the life which God had given them in Paradise. Now his seed would destroy those who in the Seed of the woman look to find safety.

I SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THY TESTIMONIES *Three times* (Hithpolel)

xxx. 95; xl. 100, 104.

We need to use the gifts of grace bestowed upon us in the sacraments with an understanding heart. The powers of natural food and medicine operate upon our bodies without our consideration or knowledge. The powers of grace require the co-operation of our own will and understanding, for it is our spiritual nature which they are intended to influence. The action of the mind and of the will is as necessary in their case in order that we may assimilate them as the process of digestion is necessary in the other case for the bodily invigoration.

96. ALL COMPLETENESS HAS AN END

Things grow to their completion. As they have a beginning so they have an end. The primary idea may be fulfilled but nothing which is progressive can attain to a finality of quiescence. As soon as man has reached his maturity he begins to decline.

I HAVE SEEN IT

Natural observation forces this lesson upon our attention. However perfect a thing may be, all that is of earth must crumble away. What starts from incompleteness must end in decay.

THY COMMANDMENT

God's commandment has perfection in itself from the beginning. It issues forth from the mouth of God. It is the utterance of the Spirit of God. It comes forth from the eternity of God. It lives with the eternity of God. It has life in itself. So our Lord speaks of His own Personality:—"As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." God's primary word involves all subsequent developments.

EXCEEDING BROAD

The command is universal in its extent. The area which is under its control is ever enlarging itself. The earthly extension can never reach beyond the sovereign enclosure of God's command.

Many people seem to imagine that God's commandment spreads out into laxity by the breadth of its compass, as if it must adapt itself to the things which it includes.

The meaning of this verse is the very opposite of this. Whatever new forms the development of the creature may assume, it can never exempt itself from the rigorous demands of God's commandments. They hold the world as tightly now as they did when they were first promulgated. The organic life is as rigorous in the forms of fullest muscular development as in the embryo. God's law for the development of His Church as a

living organism is as fixt now as it was when the apostles first handed on their powers for its government and growth to the first generation of their successors.

Divine Life must be continued irrespectively of all human fancies or conveniences until we all come to the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ (*Eph.* iv. 13). The Incarnate *Word* has promised His living presence to be with His Church "alway, even unto the end of the world" (*Matt.* xxviii. 20), and that promise necessitates the permanence throughout all nations of the institutions which God has *commanded* for the maintenance of His Church.

There is a covenant of life by which a tree grows, or an animal. It can grow by no other. So there is a covenant of eternal life by which the Church grows. It can grow by no other. Nations may rise and fall according to the accidents of their position. The gates of Hell cannot prevail against the Church. It must continue with the power of Divine Life, but also that Life must operate according to the Divinely appointed organism.

Moreover the individual members of Christ have no limit as that of earthly growth to which they may attain and rest therein. We grow by the power of the Holy Ghost, each one of us from the littleness of our earthly vocation to the infinity of God who calleth us. The Word whereby He calls is immeasurable as Himself. The call to each individual is immeasurable as the Word. He calls us to Himself that in Him we may find the eternity of His command not lost in vague immensity, but perfected in eternal Truth and order.

Growth by the power of the inherent Word is not the growth of incompleteness passing through changes until it ends in decay. It is the manifestation of an original Divine impulse leading the creature onward to find eternal completeness in the sustaining power of the Word which gave it that impulse and that Word is unchangeable.

SECTION XL

Vers. 97-104

THE PROBATIONARY DISCIPLINE OF GOD'S LAW

THE SCHOOL OF DIVINE LOVE

How I love Thy Law ! All the day long it is my meditation.	<i>Life a continual practice of holy love with intelligent obedience.</i>
Thy Commandment makes me wiser than mine enemies, For it is mine to eternity.	<i>The wisdom of loyalty to God's commandments is eternal. It surpasses all the wisdom of the world. It does not end in death.</i>
It gives me more intelligence than all my teachers, For Thy Testimonies are my meditation.	<i>There is a higher intelligence in sacramental illumination, Than can be gained from earthly teachers.</i>
I have more understanding than the aged, For I guard Thy Precepts.	<i>The understanding which is developed by many years of earthly activity does not equal what is gained by studying the example of Christ.</i>
I hold my feet back from every evil way, In order that I may observe Thy Word.	<i>We must refrain from every evil if we would reverence the Incarnate Word and follow Him.</i>

GOD THE PERSONAL TEACHER

I have not turned aside from Thy Judgments, For it is Thou who trainest me.	<i>If God personally rules our hearts training us for Himself, We shall yield ourselves to all His external discipline.</i>
How sweet is Thy Promise to my palate, More than honey to my mouth !	<i>To talk of God's promise and anticipate His joy Is better than sweetness of earthly delight.</i>

THE ATTAINMENT OF WISDOM

By Thy Precepts I get understanding, Therefore I hate every track of falsehood.	<i>In holiness Christ quickens us with holy intuitions So that the false ways of the world are an abomination to the soul.</i>
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“Forty” is the number of probation. This Section accordingly treats of the spiritual growth of the soul which has been proved by God’s law and the joy which it has experienced by fidelity in not departing from God’s judgments.

97. O HOW I LOVE THY LAW *Three times, xl. 97; lx. 113; ccc. 163.*

It is love which has to be proved in the school of obedience. Earthly schools have their trials of skill and strength whether of mind or body. The school of God is the trial of love, for God is love. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost” (*Rom. viii.*), and we must be “made perfect in love” (*1 John iv. 18*) if we are to attain to the end of our calling.

How readily do we substitute other tests in the hope that God will accept them! But love is the only offering that God accepts, and it is sufficient of itself, for it is Divine.

Many love to do many things for God, but God does not look at the things we do. He only regards the purity of love where-with we do them. “Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing” (*1 Cor. xiii. 2*).

It is difficult for the earthly soul to love God with perfect purity. One form of earthly admixture after another needs to be purged off. The silver must be purified seven times in the fire. We are ourselves unconscious of the dross which remains even in our best actions. How we ought to rejoice in the afflictions which crush out the natural self.

We would often like to give ourselves to God uncrushed, unscathed, as if we had loved God perfectly from the first. But that cannot be. We must rejoice in every wound which has caused some of our corrupt blood to be taken away from us. If we have rejoiced in the wounds, we shall find that they have enabled us to glorify God far more perfectly than any natural ability could have done. If our blood is taken away, so that we feel exhausted, and it seems as if nature had nothing more that it could do for God’s glory, we shall find that the Heart of Jesus by which our renewed nature lives, will cause His precious Blood to

stream through us with Divine life in place of the corrupt blood of sinful passion which has been taken away.

Our joy must be to be dead, to die more and more to self with every trouble! O if there were nothing within us remaining to die, then we should indeed find our probation perfected! Rejoicing in the life-blood of Jesus we should indeed cry out to God, O how I love Thy law!

ALL THE DAY LONG

We are the children of the day if we are living in the love which Jesus communicates. That day is a day without end. The day of grace is the dawn of the day of glory which shall be our inheritance in heaven.

IT IS MY MEDITATION, *vid. ver. 15*

God's law sets forth our relationships towards God, and towards others as being created by Him. To meditate upon God's law is to bear in mind those relationships.

We cannot isolate ourselves in a selfish sentiment of dreamy love to God. We might as well attempt to bottle off some of the sunlit air and take it as our private possession into a dark place. We can only meditate upon the law of God's love in the full sympathies of Him who gave it to us, and in the example of Him who fulfilled it and calls us to fulfil it by the living gift of His grace.

The darkness of many clouds which mar the outward manifestation of the bright day, will pass away if we meditate upon the love of God who has ordained the discipline of earthly sorrow in order that man might gain the brightness of His love which underlies all probation.

If we fulfil our own duties as the law of love requires, we shall come to see why many things are as they are. We shall see how great, how manifold, are the opportunities of grace which love can utilize. If we had not been placed in a world where there is much evil to conquer, we never could have risen to share in the victories of love.

Angel hosts have not the troubles incident to our earthly posi-

tion. If we had not been called to live in a world which needed to be redeemed by the Cross of Christ, we could not have risen to share the wonders of grace which surpass all that angels can know.

98. THY COMMANDMENT HATH MADE ME WISER THAN MINE ENEMIES

The enemies have only "the wisdom of this world, which cometh to naught" (1 Cor. ii. 6). The true wisdom is that which can only be known by living in the love of God. The eternal wisdom reveals Himself within the faithful by the power of the Holy Ghost, when He calls them to suffer along with Himself. "The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom unto the simple." Simple loving obedience lifts up the mind to God.

The enemies are the seed of the serpent. They hate the Seed of the woman for they hate God. "Fools despise wisdom" (Prov. i. 7). They despise the Incarnate Wisdom. So also they necessarily despise those who abide in Him.

The moral wisdom which holds fellowship with God is of a higher order than the intellectual wisdom which investigates the secrets of nature: and yet the moral wisdom opens the heart to perceive even truths of the lower world. The natural faculties are apt to be shrivelled up by the very intensity which is requisite in order to carry on certain investigations of science, but the Divine wisdom which fills the loving heart opens all the sympathies of nature to apprehend truth in every aspect.

IT IS WITH ME TO ETERNITY

This wisdom does not come to nought. It abides *for ever*. It shall find its full result in eternity.

99. I HAVE MORE INTELLIGENCE THAN ALL MY TEACHERS

Human teaching does not avail in the school of Divine wisdom. Others may teach, but their teaching avails not without the teaching of God's Holy Spirit.

Wisdom recognises the end for which things are done. We live for an eternal end, the glory of God, whereas the wise of this

world live for an end which does not endure beyond this present life. Death puts an end to all the boast of this world's wisdom. The true wisdom is the glory of eternity.

Intelligence adopts the right means toward the end which is desired. Human teaching can only guide outwardly. It can enforce the carnal ordinances, but the spirit of love is necessary in order to appreciate their truth.

Neither *wisdom* nor *intelligence* are mentioned elsewhere in this Psalm. Divine intuitions are the clear vision of the spiritual intelligence when the soul has become purified from the blindness of sin by living in active obedience to the Divine wisdom.

THY TESTIMONIES ARE MY MEDITATION

We must meditate upon the spiritual purpose of God's sacramental gifts if we would attain to profit by them.

By obedience we learn practically what God would have us do for Him, the requirements of His law. By meditation we learn intuitively what God is doing for us by the grace of His sacraments. What God does reveals to us what He requires.

100. I HAVE MORE UNDERSTANDING THAN THE AGED

The experience of life gives facility in doing the actions of this world but not the actions of the heavenly life. Alas! with years and routine we are too apt to lose the freshness of love which makes our works acceptable to God. We come to do them superficially and not with an understanding heart.

I GUARD THY PRECEPTS

It is not our own facility of performance which gives us the understanding wherewith to fulfil the work of holiness. That understanding has to be gained by watchfully guarding the precepts where Christ calls us to follow in His steps. We cannot know holiness save by knowing Christ.

101. I HAVE REFRAINED MY FEET FROM EVERY EVIL WAY

Naturally we walk in the evil of the world around us. In refraining we hold ourselves back. God's grace is our strength for

holiness, but there must be the effort of our own will co-operating with Divine grace in order to avoid evil.

We need probation in wisdom, choosing the end, and in intelligence meditating upon the means, and in understanding, as a practical habit. We need also the negative probation so as not to walk in the ways of the sinful world, the path of evil custom.

THAT I MAY OBSERVE THY WORD *Twice, xc. 101; High. part, lx. 115.*

The seed of the Word must not be trodden down on the roadside by the foot of man.

The regenerate must cleanse his path by ruling himself according to the example of the Incarnate Word. We must observe that Word if we would keep from evil.

102. I HAVE NOT DEPARTED FROM THY JUDGMENTS *Twice, xl. 102; lx. 115.*

We have to turn aside from the deceitful pleasures of the world. The world turns aside from the discipline of God.

We must welcome God's judgments whatever they may be, being assured that they are working out our purification.

The faithful soul desires to learn God's judgments, remembers them, sets them in store, hopes in them. The great probationary test is to accept them when they come. *I have not turned aside from them.* We may know the blessedness of the Cross. Are we thankful when God calls us to feel its weight!

FOR IT IS THOU WHO TEACHEST ME

We know the love wherewith God acts towards us. Therefore we are sure that His judgments are good. Truly disciplined love will rejoice in this knowledge without shrinking.

God is the Teacher. In love He teaches, and He is teaching me to love. What is there which I need to learn? Love includes everything. Teach me to love Thee, O Thou loving God!

As Christ bore His Cross, so must we be glad to bear our Cross if we would be His disciples. "The disciple is not above his master."

The "Thou" is emphatic. It is the personal knowledge of Christ as bearing His Cross which stimulates us to accept it as the law of life. By the Cross He conquered Satan. We must follow Him conquering and to conquer. But without our Cross we cannot follow in the battle of the Lord.

103. HOW SWEET ARE THY PROMISES TO MY PALATE

It is the joy of life to tell of God's promises. The Psalmist would keep the taste thereof present to his consciousness. His probation is manifested by his refraining himself from evil pleasures such as this present world can give and rejoicing to talk of those promises which shall have their fulfilment in the world to come.

SWEETER THAN HONEY TO MY MOUTH

One of the many links between Pss. xix. and cxix.

The honey may be in the mouth for a few moments. It is soon gone. The sweetness of God's promises he would renew continually. Their sweetness is ever fresh to him while he speaks thereof. Yea! as time goes on they become sweeter, for the accomplishment is nearer, and it cannot fail.

104. UNDERSTANDING ACQUIRED BY GOD'S PRECEPTS

"To get understanding" is emphasized by the repetition of the word (*vers.* 95, 100, 104).

God's precepts are the stay of the Psalmist's thoughts. As he meditates on them, he sees more and more of the Divine goodness. He becomes "perfect in love," one with Christ.

THEREFORE I HATE EVERY PATH OF LYING *Four times, xl. 104; lx. 113; lxx. 128; ccc. 163.*

The falsity of the world becomes more and more apparent. The father of lies has made the whole atmosphere of life to be a lie. So in St Paul we have the phenomenal spoken of as the lie. Satan is using all these false appearances which carry men captive as means for their destruction. We have to be proved

whether we will keep aloof from the world not only when the evil is manifest, but also at all times, because of the evil which saturates the world in which Satan rules.

God's precepts supply the law of faith. "Satan goes about seeking whom he may devour and we must resist him, steadfast in the faith" (1 *Pet.* v. 8).

This is the first expression of hatred which occurs in the Psalm. Our hatred of what is evil and false must be the outcome of our love to God's law, our personal love to Him who is the Truth. We love not abstract goodness but the Personal God who is the source of all goodness, the Giver of the law. So we must hate all evil, not merely as a natural annoyance but as a personal rebellion against God. The personal rebel against God is the personal tyrant from whom we need to be set free.

We need to be thoroughly proved, both as to whether we love God and as to whether we hate Satan.

Evil cannot be to us a matter of indifference so that we should let it pass. Such is the merely superficial evil of the world which our senses experience. To that we must rise superior, accepting it as a means of external discipline which should turn to our good. Not such is the essential moral evil of Satan's domination. This we must hate, for it is not a mere thing, occasioning inconvenience. It is an active personality opposing itself to the Personal goodness which we are called to share along with God as His children. Evil will be manifested hereafter in its personal hatefulness to all eternity. Now it is veiled. We only know it in its effects. It does not exist in the Divine Eternity, but it is coextensive in duration with created volition. Unless the free will, and therefore the moral agency, of the creature be done away, it must last as long as creation lasts. The finite creature cannot know what love is, unless it hates what is unworthy of love. God's infinite love is creative, surpassing our imagination. Man's love is finite and discriminative, adoring the Creator's goodness, and hating that which is opposed to it.

If we would attain to the end of our probation as befits those who love God's law we must "refrain our feet from every evil

way," we must "not depart from God's judgments," but accept the Cross, for the chastening is the token of our Father's love. We must "hate every path of lying," for Satan's lie is the utterance of the Prince of this world, rebelling against God and seeking to work man's destruction. All must die eternally who listen to his falsehood and reject the way of truth. Many are the ways of lying in this sinful world. There is but one way of truth, and that is He who comes from the Father that He may call after Him all "those who are of the Truth" (*John* xviii. 37). Christ is come into the world for judgment (*John* ix. 39), to test and prove mankind whether they will accept the heavenly wisdom. He will come into the world again to exercise judgment for the reward of those who have "loved His law" and the condemnation of those who have "loved the lie" (*Rev.* xx. 15). Every day is the probation progressing, and those who have not "turned aside from the judgment" of the Cross shall find the "sweetness of the Divine promise" for "all the promises of God in Christ are yea, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God by us" (*2 Cor.* i. 20).

SECTION L

Vers. 105-112

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

Thy Word is a lantern to my feet	<i>The Incarnate Word,</i>
And a light to my tracks.	<i>a lantern for the feet by fellowship in human nature, a light for the track by the infinite glory of Divine personality.</i>
I have sworn and will raise up the oath in living power.	<i>The redeemed in Christ are sworn to</i>
To observe Thy righteous Judgments	<i>a risen life of righteousness.</i>
I am troubled to the uttermost :	<i>The suffering of this sinful world shall</i>
O Lord, quicken me as befits Thy Word.	<i>be exchanged for the glory of Jesus in the regeneration.</i>
O Lord, accept the free will offerings of my mouth :	<i>The voluntary offerings of filial love</i>
And teach me Thy Judgments.	<i>accepted of God.</i>
My soul is in my hand continually :	<i>The discipline of God's corrective providence to be accepted by us.</i>
And I have not forgotten Thy Law.	<i>Life a continual struggle, But God's sovereignty must always be maintained as supreme.</i>
The ungodly have laid a snare for me :	<i>Life continually subject to Satanic fraud,</i>
And I have not strayed from Thy Precepts.	<i>But God's precepts must always be our protection.</i>
I have inherited Thy Testimonies as an eternal possession :	<i>God's sacraments are an inheritance of eternal life, strengthening us for victory.</i>
For they are the joy of my heart.	<i>They are our joy in the midst of our struggle. So Christ makes us free.</i>
I have inclined my heart to work Thy Decrees eternally and to the end.	<i>In their strength we are to be conformed to the eternal decrees of the Divine covenant For ever unto the end when earth shall pass away in the transformation of heavenly triumph.</i>

We come to the jubilee Section. It is bright with the guiding presence of the Divine Light. The Psalmist claims the testimonies of God as his inheritance. It is an inheritance of joy which cannot be lost.

105. THY WORD

The word Incarnate is the Giver of freedom to mankind, enslaved as they were under the power of Satan.

A LANTERN TO MY FEET

It is not a halo round the head, nor a meteor dazzling to the eyes. It is an illumination of practical energy realized in daily converse by those who act in its power.

By the Incarnation the Word of God is a guide close to us so that we may follow Him and place our feet in His footsteps. "Righteousness goes before Him and makes His footsteps a way" (*Ps. lxxxv. 13*). The light shining thus where He has trodden makes His earthly example a brilliant line of lustre in the print whereof we may rejoice to plant our feet and walk in the heavenly power of the life-giving righteousness wherewith He acted.

A LIGHT TO MY TRACKS, *VER. 35* *Three times, l. 105. In verbal form, Hiph. lxxx. 130, 135.*

This is the only verse of the Psalm where the word "light" occurs. We might perhaps have expected that it would occur oftener. The Word is the Light of Light. "In Him is Life, and the Life is the Light of men" (*John i. 5*). But this Psalm is the Psalm of pilgrimage through the darkness. "The Light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not." The Light guides secretly. Only those who follow His footsteps watchfully can see the Light. The Light is the earnest of the great outshining where there shall no longer be any darkness. The Word of God is a light to the tracks of the faithful. Those who walk in the Way see the atmosphere around them bright with the love of God, but as during the years of humiliation, the Son of God being in the likeness of sinful flesh did not use the Light within Him as a

perpetual principle of transfiguration, so while He is sanctifying us sinners He calls us to behold that Light which is our Life, not with the outward organs of vision but with the spiritual power of faith. It is none the less present, none the less glorious.

The lantern implies the Humanity in whose steps we are to tread. The Light implies the Godhead of Christ in whose heavenly power we are to press onward. It is the all-surrounding glory of the Sun of righteousness shining in the high heavens over our head.

106. I HAVE SWORN

The faithful soul swears to be true to God, as God also has sworn to maintain the Priesthood of His only begotten Son. The Mediator, God and Man, is the all-sufficing power of the Oath for each party in this Covenant. We pledge His Manhood as the security of our obedience. The curse of rejecting Him, our only Saviour, must fall upon us, if we live not true to the Covenant. God pledges His Eternal Godhead consubstantially present in Christ and hypostatically united to the Manhood. If He would draw back from the promises made to the faithful in that Covenant, the Person of Christ must be rent in two.

I HAVE RAISED IT UP

The resurrection is the power in which the oath shall be kept. By the resurrection the Son of God makes us free from the slavery of death. We must live as having died in Christ and risen again. God raises us up. We must walk in the new life thus given.

TO OBSERVE THY RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS, *vid. ver. 7*

We observe God's righteous judgments as children of the resurrection by watchfully acting in the strength of the Divine Life wherein we are new born.

107. UTTERLY AFFLICTED, *ver. 67*

This phrase describes the Passion of Christ. It was utter. Nothing could be added to it. Its extremity was the test of the

human faithfulness as the resurrection was the power of Divine approval. The humiliation was unto death, according to the fulness of the oath. The answer of God must be in resurrection, according to the fulness of His eternal life. Hence the Psalmist cries out for the Divine response.

QUICKEN ME, O LORD, ACCORDING TO THY WORD

The life must be manifested in quickening power as befits the ever-living Personal Word. The Humanity died. The Word could not die. The Word laid down the human life which it had assumed, but the Word had another life wherein it lived while soul and body were separated in human death. Christ laid down His life, but He did not lose His life. He had the power of His life while He was remaining in outward death. "He laid down His life in order that He might take it again. This was the commandment which He had received of the Father" (*John x. 17*).

This sets before us the jubilee of deliverance from the power of the usurper whom Jesus slew when He set us free. We see here the death of Christ not as a substituted penalty, but as a glorious triumph in our nature over the common enemy of God and man.

The Word was true to fulfil the engagement undertaken at His first coming. He went down into the grave with a living Soul. The work was finished, whereby God's glory was to be vindicated against the rebel. In His resurrection He was manifest as the Word of the Father. We as His members have to follow His steps, even into the valley of darkness, but not to remain there according to the original debt of our nature. We come forth to live for evermore according to the glory which the Son of God gives us. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (*1 John iv. 9*).

108. ACCEPT, O LORD

The covenant established between God and man through Christ makes God accept our offerings. They are pleasing to Him. They have a value in His presence by reason of the

fragrance of the merits of Christ which rests upon them. So the Apostle beseeches us by the mercies of our God "that we present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, through Jesus Christ" (*Rom. xii. 1*).

THE FREE-WILL OFFERINGS OF MY MOUTH

The freed soul must pour forth praise to God. What have we that we can give to God? We can give to Him *whatever He has given to us*. Let us not think that any gift of His to us can be *so great that we cannot give it to Him back again*. Has He not a right to all? Shall we enjoy anything that we hold back from Him? Shall we not enjoy *everything* manifold more if God vouchsafes to let us call upon Him to enjoy it along with us?

Surely He puts it in our power, just *in order that* we may find the joy of giving it to Him!

How lifeless is everything unless God's loving fellowship lifts it up above the routine of earthly needs!

Then again, let us remember that God will accept the *smallest* offerings of our mouth, if we are giving Him all we can. He can fill the smallest gift with all the consciousness of heaven.

The mouth of the faithful speaks by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Therefore what we promise to God comes forth from our mouth with the sanctity of Divine power.

If we would have God accept the *free-will offerings of our mouth*, we must take care not to draw back from what we have promised.

We may be confident that the more we give to God, the more we shall have to give.

TEACH ME THY JUDGMENTS

If we desire to make offerings to God, we shall be ready with cheerfulness to say to Him, Take what Thou wilt. It is not a generous spirit which would give one thing, but upon condition of holding back another. We must make the greatness of God's demands upon us the very measure of His love. He does not speak like a brutal conqueror, saying "whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes I will take away" (*1 Kings xx. 6*) in order to show

pride and power. But He speaks to us and says, Trust in me, and give me all that is pleasant in thine eyes that I may give thee more than all. Give to me in penitence and I will restore all to thee in glory.

109. MY SOUL PERPETUALLY IN MY HAND

The freed soul is ever ready to make ventures for God.

The Psalmist accepts God's judgments and man's hostilities. Instead of looking to rely upon human help, he is prepared to find that men assail him even by reason of his steadfast devotion to God. But that does not make him waver.

He has to wage a stand-up fight all alone.

BUT I DO NOT FORGET THY LAW

The covenant of the Divine law gives him a ruling motive in life which never fails.

He belongs to God. Has he not just said, "I am Thine"? He anticipates the Apostle's words, "Ye are not your own, but are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body." God has taken our flesh into union with Himself, and God gives us the blessed gifts of the Spirit as the dowry by which He would claim us.

110. THE WICKED HAVE LAID A SNARE FOR ME

He has to meet not only violence but treachery. His only security amidst the deceits of Satan is by giving close heed to God's precepts.

The outward snare is but a small matter, if it do not touch the soul. We must be watchful amidst all the allurements of earth. Harmless in themselves, they generally have the great enemy looking out to use them so that he may make us captives.

I STRAYED NOT *Twice, l. 110; cccc. 176.*

In the joy of jubilee he can say I strayed not. His heart is absorbed in the glory of the liberty which he celebrates. Yet when speaking of the triumph of the Cross he compares himself

to a strayed and perishing sheep. He feels his misery, owns his sinfulness, but his heart is not bound by the evil. He is true to God in his heart.

III. I HAVE INHERITED

The jubilee is the recognition of Divine Sonship. That Sonship has not been forfeited. The bondman is set free *by* this Divine appointment to claim his inheritance. Now then we must return each one of us to our Divine inheritance with joy. A new era of Sonship begins for us. "Now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is."

THY TESTIMONIES

The sacraments as the testimonies of God's covenant make the Divine inheritance sure to the faithful. They are our inheritance, for they not only signify our relationship as outward tokens, "they are what they signify," for they contain the substantive grace of Christ's mediatorial power.

Our inheritance does not disappear by the casualties of time. Our covenant with God is made in the presence of the elect angels (1 *Tim.* v. 21). The Incarnate Word is Himself the instrument of Divine assurance. When Jeremiah bought the field of Hanameel, he took witnesses and weighed him the money even seventeen pieces of silver (*Jer.* xxxii. 9). Our inheritance shall be sure to us when the years of our captivity are ended.

FOR EVER

This inheritance is "incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for such as are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 *Pet.* i. 4).

THE JOY OF MY HEART, *vid. ver.* 14

What a joy it is to be inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven! Many find their earthly inheritance disappoint them when they

enter upon it. Our inheritance surpasses all that the earthly heart can imagine. In the use of Divine sacraments we ought to experience an increasing joy, as we learn more and more of the power which they contain.

112. I HAVE INCLINED MY HEART TO FULFIL THY DECREES, *vid.*
ver. 51

As there is a heart-joy so there must be a heart-service.

FOR EVER UNTO THE END, *vid.* *ver.* 44

The joyous service of earth shall expand into the joyous service of heaven. The reward of another world is not a payment for something done here upon the earth but an expansion of the energy by which earthly service has been rendered so that we shall act true to all the glorious powers of the Body of Christ. The Spirit of Sonship will be our strength, the glorified Body of Christ will be the Substance of our eternal activity. The discipline of earth's toil and sorrow is fitting the bodies of the faithful to be absorbed in the energy of that glorious Body, "the House not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 *Cor.* v. 1).

This last verse may be translated, "The reward is for ever," as it is said in *Ps.* xix. 11. "In keeping of them there is great reward," but *ver.* 44 seems to lead rather to the other rendering, "For ever to the end." The word "the end" is the same "the heel." The heel must be bruised ere the reward shall be given.

The joy of heaven is active joy in participation of the life of God. The probationary fulfilment of the Divine decrees on earth will find itself perfected in Divine fruition.

"For ever" is the characteristic of that enjoyment. The probationary fulfilment is "to the end." The end belongs to human effort. The eternity, to the fellowship of God. The end of effort—the last stamp as it were of "the heel" ere the creature springs into the ocean of Divine love—loses itself in the endlessness of eternal, unwearied, joyous, boundless, energy.

SECTION LX

Vers. 113-120

WORLDLY POWER

<p>The double-minded I hate : And Thy Law do I love. Thou art my hiding-place and my shield : Upon Thy Word do I wait.</p>	<p><i>Love to God necessitates hatred of the world.</i> <i>God a hiding- place and a shield } amidst the assaults of the world.</i> <i>Reliance upon God's Word for protection, our joy.</i></p>
<p>Depart from me, ye evil doers And I will guard the Commandments of my God. Hold me up according to Thy Promise and I shall live : And let me not be ashamed of my expectation.</p>	<p><i>Alienation from the falsity of worldly temptation our only safety.</i> <i>God (a) our sustenance in life.</i> <i>(b) our sure satisfaction.</i></p>
<p>Support me, and I shall be safe : And I shall look to Thy Decrees continually. Thou castest away all who wander from Thy Decrees : For their boast is only a lie. Thou puttest away all the ungodly of the earth like dross : Therefore I love Thy Testimonies.</p>	<p><i>(c) our joy whilst we rely upon Him.</i> <i>God (a) trampling down those who reject His grace.</i> <i>(b) purging off with fiery power those who live for the world.</i> <i>Hence (a) the love of God's sacramental Presence with us now.</i></p>
<p>My flesh trembleth out of awe towards Thee : And I fear Thy Judgments.</p>	<p><i>(b) the awe with which we have to accept His discipline.</i></p>

Six is the number of worldly completeness and we may take Section VI. which has for its only acrostic the weak conjunction (1) "and" as symbolising worldly weakness while the present Section

sets forth the hatefulness of worldly power. The power of the world is "dross." The world with all its power must come to nought in presence of the Divine judgments.

113. THEM THAT IMAGINE EVIL THINGS

The double-minded—"halting between two opinions (1 Kings xviii. 21) who pay homage partly to the religion of Jahve and partly to heathenism, and who are therefore endeavouring to combine faith and naturalism" (*Delitzsch*).

Those who would serve God and Mammon whatever form the world may assume—wealth, sensuality, intellect, influence—dishonour God by the very worship which they give to Him. Sublime phrases used with reference to an idol or false God, created by the intellect and sculptured by the hand, do not raise the religion to be worthy of God, but they degrade the very idea of God by attributing His glory to objects which are incompatible with His glory. The gleams of Divine Truth which linger traditionally around ancient mythological forms of philosophy, do but serve to melt the snows they brighten. They do not bring lustre, integrity or love to the false systems which they adorn. The more truly they express what belongs to the absolute, the infinite, the living, the Personal, God, the more blasphemous is the suggestion that any false object of worship can have part in them.

Even the noblest objects of God's creation cannot share with Him the glory of true love. We love them as coming from Him and possessing such manifestations of goodness as He may have communicated to them. We love them subordinately to Him as exercising faculties of love which tend towards His glory as their proper end. The love of the fellow creature is an essential element in the love which any creature can have towards God, but true love in its completeness comes to each one from God, and lifts each loving soul up to God. It cannot take its rise from any lower idea of social goodness nor can it exhaust itself in any lower effort of social regard. What is to be loved in relation to God has to be hated in opposition to God. There can be no

rivalry of claim any more than the height of a mountain can be measured against the distance of a fixed star. The love of God is supreme, solitary, all-inclusive. Any unit divided by infinity gives nothingness as the result. So it is that our Lord says, "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (*Luke* xiv. 26).

The love of God sustains all true love as an element of worship ordained by God Himself, but it crushes all idolatry.

I HATE, *vid. ver.* 104

There cannot be double mindedness in heart and single heartedness in action. Where there is love of good, there must be hatred of evil.

Hatred if it arises out of self-seeking is but one of the sins of the flesh. True hatred is the consummation of true love, love that clings to the truth. Such hatred is the result of a Divine understanding by which the things of God have been made plain to us. No hatred can be true which is not simply consecrated to God's glory.

True hatred makes us ready to suffer anything for those whose evil is the object of our hatred. As Christ died for the sinful world so must we be ready to bear any suffering for any sinner if we can deliver him from his sins.

Divine hatred does not exult in worldly triumph over enemies. The more we hate sin, the less can we feel ourselves to be superior to any sinners, for we shall feel the greatness of our own sin and hate ourselves the more.

The hatred of the evil towards the good is the passing forth of their own ill-will by which they would injure the good in every way that is in their power. Their self-outpouring is the utterance of hatred because they are evil essentially and any feeling of love would be an element of goodness which they cannot possess.

The hatred which the good have towards the evil is the antagonism which makes any alliance with the evil to be impos-

sible. The good does not strive against the evil by making the evil suffer, for any victory over the evil by inflicted suffering would be an aggravation of the evil, not a cure thereof. The good struggles against the evil which it hates by the endurance of suffering in proportion to the hatred which it bears towards the evil. By such suffering the good seeks to conquer and destroy the evil, turning it to good by the bleeding wounds of its passion as the blood filled with the life of love penetrates into the evil heart with transforming power if the heart of the evil be not so dead as to reject its influence.

This regenerating endurance in struggle with evil is one aspect of our Lord's Passion, expressing His hatred of the world as it is, while He suffers in order to exercise the love of God to that ideal world which having been originally created in good is by this struggle to be restored to its original predestination in so far as it will yield to the beneficent victory.

This antagonism between good and evil must be unending, for in the spiritual realm there can be no such thing as neutral morality. Spiritual existence is an active force so that good and evil meet in continual and necessary conflict. As seen by us in this present condition of things, the spiritual is for the most part so encumbered by material surroundings that neither good nor evil are seen in this spiritual essence.

Moral action is the manifestation in material relationships of the spiritual force whether of good or of evil. The material instrumentality involves combinations of such a kind that good and evil forces may be traceable in one and the same resulting action. The material however is transitory. The spiritual is eternal. The spiritual forces though they may be combined in this world where the evil by means of the material continually holds the good in thrall, do not really coalesce. The spiritual evil is none the less because of the spiritual good that it may utilize. The spiritual good for the most part perishes by the combination, for the true spiritual good ought to repudiate all such alliance and the spiritual good can only live by the immortality of God, in the love of God. Its true life is to die to all

that is material that it may live in God alone. Then it cannot fail of victory over the spiritual evil. The spiritual evil has no power of abiding triumph save by the instrumentality of the material.

Hatred in this world can never be without an admixture of love, for there is an element of good in all, and this may be awakened by the grace of Christ's redemption. God loves the world because of the beautiful forms of goodness which He has stored up therein. It is not until the evil shall be hardened in final impenitence that God can withdraw His love. Even then it is not true to say that God withdraws His love. It is the impenitent soul which rejects it. So also must we love the very worst of men as individuals whom God has created for good.

Love requires heaven to be opened that we may contemplate every object of love as existing in the glory of the Divine life. In like manner hatred cannot be complete unless hell be opened to view so that we may see evil in its consummated and unchangeable hatefulness, the irreclaimable perversion of the self-seeking will acting in antagonism to the sovereign goodness. Evil must be hated increasingly as it tends to this final antagonism.

We often hate what gives us outward annoyance and yet deal very laxly with what endangers the stability of God's work. This must never be allowed. The laxity of the creature ready to allow the fellow creature in the disregard of God's law, because of some temporary consideration which inclines us in its favour, is no true exercise of love, or pity, because it introduces into our relation with others an element of temporary alliance whereby we combine against eternal truth. We fail of loving the individual when we tolerate in him the evil which must work his ruin by alienating him from that which is his true good.

Unbelievers scoff at love and hatred as if they might be exercised arbitrarily according to the deceitful impulses of natural regard and outward circumstance. This arises from our being so apt to substitute selfish convenience and personal familiarity for love. In this world we easily project an image of ourselves upon others and love ourselves in others. Kindred interests, tastes, and habits bind us together in what we suppose to be love unless

they develop some form of rivalry, but such community of interests is not love. Love must be tested by self-sacrifice not measured by self-gratification. Love is not a current of the affections to which the individual yields himself whether by choice or by habit so as to find pleasurable association with others whose reciprocity is a matter of immediate fitness and enjoyment. Love is an inherent tendency to recognize goodness whether actual or possible. Love will surrender everything else in order to bring the possibility of goodness which is involved in God's creation to that reality of expression which we desire.

If we love evil persons, we do not love them as being evil: we love them as containing a possibility of good. True love will shrink from no suffering if it can develop that possibility of good and make it actual.

Love is the action of good towards good, but in our *double-minded* world, a world of twilight in which neither good nor evil is known in its absolute reality, self-seeking will often claim the name of love while it yields its homage to what is evil refusing to see the evil, because such recognition of the evil would in some way be wounding to self-love.

Perfect love is the action of the supreme goodness towards itself. There is but one supreme absolute essential goodness, only One Being whose whole nature is beneficence. "Thou O God art good and doest good" (*ver.* 68). God is the only self-existent Being and therefore He is the only true object of love. He created all out of nothing, and He gives to His creatures subordinate powers of loving and subordinate claims to be loved, but these they can only have in proportion as they rise out of their nothingness and live in participation of the Creator's life.

This Divine Goodness, full of love, worthy of love, acting in love, is the substance of God, who knows Himself in the threefold eternal relationships of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The goodness is indivisible. The relationships are eternal.

Self-love in the creature is sin, for the finite goodness which God communicates is not worthy of the infinite homage which love would give, and the sins of the fallen creature destroy even

the limited action of love so that we can love none outside of God. To love ourselves except in God and for God's sake, is to love what is evil in ourselves. But God cannot fail of loving Himself for all that is Himself is infinite, absolute, and good, demanding infinite love as its necessary recognition.

The Divine Personality is a substantive, living, existence. God has no body, parts or passions. The human personality exists in a body external to itself, and self-love is love for the organism in which it exists and acts. The personality is only the lifeless image of the Divine Personality. There is no substantive personality which can accept the love. Whatever love might be given to it, belongs to God, the living Triune Personality, whose Image it is.

Created Love is the outcome of accidental circumstances. We love one person by reason of natural impulses whereas we do not love another person although he may be in every particular as suitable to be loved. The accidental link is wanting which elicits the love. In God there is nothing accidental. God is love. His love flows forth with infinite power towards all. If any fail of accepting His love it is because they fail of giving it the welcome by which alone it can be received.

God does not love His creatures because they exist in His Presence. He created them because He loved the ideal which they were to embody. Sin is the failure of the creature to correspond with that ideal whereby it should have existed in the Divine Love. God does not hate evil as if He alienated His beneficent will from the creature that sinned, but His hatred of evil is the permanent action of that love which the creature puts aside. The sinful creature does not outrage an abstract law of goodness. He puts away from him the individual law of creative goodness in which he ought to find his joy. His suffering is not an *ex post facto* penalty, but wilful antagonism to a predestination of goodness. It is because the Divine Sovereignty is true to its beneficent decree that the sinner suffers.

The Divine love therefore towards the rebel becomes a manifestation of hatred, not in the sense of ill-will towards one who

has missed of accomplishing an appointed work, but as a continuous exercise of love whose purposes the sinner refuses to accept for his own advantage.

Eternal punishment, God's hatred of the lost, whether angels or men, is according to the same law.

It is not a vindictive exercise of Almighty power, but the antagonistic relationship which the soul has hardened into changeless opposition, so that its measure of punishment is according to the measure of Almighty beneficence against which it has put itself in self-willed contention.

Our own love of goodness and our hatred of evil must be conformed to the same law.

We cannot invoke God's eternal love which holds the whole universe in the glory of imperishable completeness and subordinate it to the accidental desires of our finite interests, picking and choosing from the treasury of omnipotent beneficence what may suit the foreground of our own limited observation. If we love as God loves, then our love is true to the Eternal Wisdom. If we think to exercise a larger love than belongs to Him whose "commandment is exceeding broad," we cannot increase the moral area of the Divine goodness, but we rise up in defiance against the infinite goodness of the Divine predestination.

The hatred therefore of which the Psalmist speaks is not the hatred which belongs to ill-will. It is the hatred which is necessitated by absorption into the Divine Love. Evil necessitates that hatred by its antagonism to Divine Love whether in great matters or small.

In the redemption of the world by Christ we see this hatred exhibited in its fullest extent. God loved the world as it existed according to the ideal of His eternal predestination. Christ died in struggle with Satan in whom all the evil was concentrated. Christ suffered at the hands of Satan all the injury that Satan could inflict. Satan exhausted the power of his malevolence. Christ's suffering in the flesh was at once the measure of Satan's power to assail Him, and the measure of the hatred wherewith He as man bore the rebellion of Satan against God.

He calls us in like manner to follow Him, bearing whatever of suffering Satan may inflict upon us as His members, and taking that suffering as the measure of our hatred of the Satanic rebellion.

The suffering of Christ's people as they thus carry the Cross in conflict with Satan is not penal. We are pledged to fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Church militant has to meet the army of hell. This hatred is the antagonism which perfect love must feel towards those whose life is under the inspiration of hatred. Our perfect love to God must be the means of winning back to obedience in the sweet captivity of love those who are bound down by Satan in the hard slavery of Satanic rebellion. Unless we are true to this antagonism we cannot have any share in this victory. It is only the Breath of God inspiring us with hatred of Satan's tyranny which can enable us to carry out the glorious triumphs of redemption and win souls that are sin-bound to the glorious liberty of love.

THY LAW DO I LOVE *Three times, xl. 97; xl. 113; ccc. 163.*

Such is the Psalmist's confident exclamation! It is only true love to God which can win the victory of saints.

114. MY HIDING-PLACE, *ver. 19*

God is *our hiding-place* if we abide in love, for God is Love. In the fight against Satan we do not wish to come prominently forward as those who in an earthly battle seek the distinction of heroic deeds. Our heroism is to abide in God. He knows every heart that is true to Him. Better it is for us if man does not know. The victory is not ours. The victory is the Lord's. It is "the victory of faith." Any admixture of our natural self mars the victory.

MY SHIELD

God is an entire *hiding-place*. We must never be distressed at being "hidden with Christ in God." That is our true condition in this world, but we have also to come forward and fight. Then

we must not fight in our own strength, but "take the shield of faith" (*Eph.* vi. 16). The victory is a supernatural victory even though God may call us to have some part in its achievement.

I WAIT FOR THY WORD, *ver.* 43

It is in the power of the Incarnate Word that we must press on to conquer the world.

115. DEPART FROM ME, YE EVIL-DOERS, *ver.* 101

We are to meet evil in the victory of faith, not by grappling with it, but by dismissing it. "Get thee hence, Satan." Parleying with evil leads to compromise, and that is what this Section specially denounces. They who would win the victory of God must be entirely one with God.

I WILL GUARD THE COMMANDMENTS OF MY GOD

We must be true to the orders of our great Captain. The Lord of hosts goes forth with our armies and we must be true to Him.

116. UPHOLD ME ACCORDING TO THY PROMISE

We need not doubt God's fidelity to His *promise* if we are faithful to His *commands*.

I SHALL LIVE

We need not fear to lose the life of the body in the wars of the Lord. We have another life: and martyrdom is the sure token of eternal life. We must have God *upholding* us against the assaults of Satan, and the temptations whereby he would draw us out of our hiding-place.

We are not to think that we are safe because at times we do not *feel* our danger. We are in danger unless we are resting in God as our constant protection.

LET ME NOT BE ASHAMED, *ver.* 6

Shame is death. There can be no glory unless we are upheld in the life of God. The Holy Ghost upheld our first parents

while they were true to the spiritual law of life, obedient to God's word. They had no shame then, for their bodies shone with the upholding lustre of God's indwelling presence. When that presence was withdrawn, they were ashamed, for they were spiritually dead.

MY EXPECTATION *Twice, lx. 116; (Pie) ccc. 168.*

The expectation may be a matter of long delay, but it will surely be accomplished.

The material world is only for the present moment. The promises of God are sure for ever, so that after long waiting we shall not be ashamed. The end will surpass our expectation.

117. NOURISH ME

The word is used in Judges xix. 5, 7, and 1 Kings xiii. 7: "Come into the house and nourish thyself, eat bread." God will nourish us with spiritual food in this evil world. The heavenly refreshment sends us on our way rejoicing. We must not seek the refreshment which the world could give.

I SHALL BE SAFE, *ver. 94*

God *upholds* us by the sustaining power of His promise of life. He *nourishes* us with the communicated energy whereby the heavenly food enables us to triumph as we advance in safety along the way of life. If we would be *safe* we must "rejoice in the Lord alway." Without such joyous experience of God's nourishing power we can scarcely abide in safety.

I WILL HAVE RESPECT UNTO THY DECREES

The upholding power of sacramental grace for us upon the earth is the exercise of that Triune Love which God reveals to us as His own Eternal Life. We must be always looking upward to the glorified Jesus, our Saviour and our joy. "Looking away" from the things of this world and its visible but deceitful objects of reliance, "to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (*Heb. xii. 2*).

CONTINUALLY, *ver.* 44

As our need is continual, so must the prayer of faith be. The continualness of our prayer corresponds with the eternity of God's action.

118. THOU HAST TRODDEN DOWN

However the worldly power may for a while assert itself in pride, God will tread it down.

THOSE WHO WANDER FROM HIS DECREES

Those who will not submit themselves to the obedience of faith but set God's revelation aside, must experience the power of Christ's victory when "He shall bruise the nations with a rod of iron." Worldly pride makes men wander from God's revelation.

THEIR BRAGGING IS BUT A LIE

The prince of this world is the father of lies and the pretended power of this world is but what he promises. The falsity of all that belongs to the world will be apparent when the kingdom of truth shall appear.

119. THOU MAKEST TO CEASE

Thou makest a Sabbath. The overthrow of worldly power was when Jesus descended into Hell. That was indeed a Sabbath, such as when the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea.

THE WICKED OF THE EARTH, *ver.* 53

So will God make all boastful unbelief to cease from the earth. His fiery presence will consume them.

AS DROSS

As the dross is cast away and the silver is kept so God will make the wicked to cease and the fire which searches through mankind will make the faithful to be separate as the silver that has been purified.

THEREFORE I LOVE THY TESTIMONIES

The faithful are those who abide in the sacramental life. There is nothing which has a natural capacity of standing such scrutiny. We must be living up to the Divine Covenant.

120. MY FLESH TREMBLETH FROM DREAD OF THEE

Such is the weakness of nature even in the elect. Blessed indeed we are if we know ourselves to be thus incapable of merit by any natural gift. Pride by reason of any natural gift only transforms what might have been profitable so as to make it like the dross. Blessed they who know the power of heavenly grace which can make the greatest weakness flow forth in power and purity like precious metal from the ore!

Fear of Thee. It is the personal consciousness of the Majesty of "Him with whom we have to do" which stirs this holy fear. If we would be accepted we must be living worthy of the personal holiness of God.

I AM AFRAID OF THY JUDGMENTS, *ver.* 63

Fear of God is the characteristic of the regenerate life (viii. 63) and so of separation from worldly power and its callous indifference (lx. 120). The more we have to inspire us with worldly confidence the more must we tremble lest we be involved in the worldliness which brings down God's displeasure.

SECTION LXX

Vers. 121-128

THE LIFE OF GRACE

- I do Judgment and righteousness** *The cry of the Elect Humanity suffering in this evil world.*
Leave me not to mine oppressors.
Be surety for Thy servant for good : *The expectation of the Divine Word whose meekness will put aside the oppression of Satan's tyranny.*
Let not the proud oppress me. *Nature pines for the promised salvation.*
- Mine eyes pine away for Thy salvation :**
And for Thy righteous Promise.
Deal with Thy Servant according to Thy mercy *Grace looks up for acceptance according to God's decrees.*
And teach me Thy Decrees.
I am Thy servant. Give me understanding *The faithful servant looks for illumination as to the mysteries of grace.*
That I may know Thy Testimonies.
It is time for the Lord to act : *God will surely come with power so as to fulfil what in the law was empty.*
They have made void Thy Law. *The inheritance of Divine love fulfilling the commandments is better than any power of material wealth.*
- Therefore have I loved Thy Commandments** *Grace and truth are dear to the faithful.*
Above gold, yea, above fine gold.
Therefore all Thy Precepts about all things I acknowledge in their uprightness,
And every track of falsehood I abhor. *Falsehood however pleasing to nature is his abomination.*

Seven is the number of grace. The Psalmist speaks as a child of grace living with the perfect righteousness of Christ. This Section applies as well to Him by whom grace and truth came as

to us to whom it came, at least to those of us who receive Him. He has not chosen the great things of the world, that perishing power of which the last Section spoke. He hates every false way. His whole ministry is for the manifestation of His truth, to establish amidst this world of falsehood the kingdom of the truth by dying to the world's false pretences.

121. I HAVE DONE JUDGMENT AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

This is the fifth occurrence of the word "righteousness." "Five" being the special number of the Jewish covenant, it seems to imply the fulfilment of the righteousness of the law. The word occurs twelve times in all, and since "seven" is the number of grace this Section seems to be at once the consummation of the old law, and "the bringing in of everlasting righteousness" (*Dan.* ix. 24). "Twelve" is the number of the Incarnation, and both Jew and Gentile are made one in Christ (*Eph.* ii. 14). "The righteousness of the perfect man, born of a woman, born under the law," leads on to the righteousness of faith to be accomplished by those who are made partakers of grace in Him.

LEAVE ME NOT TO MY OPPRESSORS *Three times, lxx. 121, 122; Subst. lxxx. 134.*

It is the cry of one who feels himself to be in bondage although he has not merited it.

The oppressors have no claim upon him as their prey.

The speaker can claim the promise of the law that "the man which doeth these things shall live in them" (*Gal.* iii. 12). The verse therefore points necessarily to our Lord Jesus Christ. He claims freedom for Himself. He is the Son of God who not only claims freedom for Himself, but having conquered Satan, gives freedom also to us.

This verse is emphasized by the remarkable character of the verse which follows. Verse 122 is the only verse which contains none of the special words by which the law is designated in this Psalm. It is a dividing verse. A new covenant has its beginning in this development of grace as the reward of perfect obedience.

122. BE SURETY

This verse standing thus alone in the Psalm is almost identical with Is. xxxviii. 14: "I am oppressed, undertake for me," *i.e.* "be surety for me."

The Divine Person is surety for the perfect Humanity. The Psalmist has proved his claim upon the suretiship which is the foundation of the New Covenant. We claim the same surety as being members of Christ. He is the Head of the Body, the Church. Her name is "the Lord our righteousness" because she is identified with Him (*Jer.* xxiii. 6, xxxiii. 16).

TO THY SERVANT

It is the Son of God who speaks, but He speaks as being "born under the law," and therefore calls Himself by the name of Servant. He is the elect Servant. His Person is the Divine Surety.

FOR GOOD

There was no goodness under the old law, only "the shadow of good things to come." The appeal is made that the promised good may be realized.

Judah became surety to Jacob for Benjamin's safe return (*Gen.* xlv. 32). It is the Lion of the tribe of Judah who is surety for the deliverance of the Son of God's Right Hand from the Egypt of worldly power and Satan's tyranny. The *suretiship* of Divine Benediction alone can make the *sacrifices of rebellious Judah* "sweet or acceptable to God" (*Jer.* vi. 20). The incense of Sheba was in vain, but when the Lord comes into His Temple, and has purified the sons of Levi, "then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be *pleasant* unto the Lord, as in the days of old" (*Mal.* iii. 4).

The mediation of the Incarnate Son is the suretiship of acceptance for our Christian worship.

THAT THE PROUD OPPRESS ME NOT

The *oppressors* are the *proud* who will not acknowledge the Heir. They seek to keep the vineyard for themselves. Yet is

the Divine Life beyond their power to touch. "They cast Him out of the vineyard and slew Him" (*Matt. xxi. 39*) in intention. They could not kill but they seemed to do so. He submitted to them outwardly, but He remained all the while Lord of the vineyard in a life which could not be taken away.

123. MINE EYES FAIL FOR THY SALVATION, *ver. 81*

The longing for Jesus is the beginning of the work of grace. We may notice that on the former occasion the word "salvation" had the Cross as its formative initial (*vers. 41, 81*). Here is simply the name of Jesus. The longing of the O.T. was for Jesus crucified. Now that He has become our Surety we long for Him to come in His glory (*vers. 123, 155, 166, 174*). The numerical value of "Thy salvation" is $806 = 2 \times 13 \times 31$. This expresses that Jesus is the Divine Redeemer, for "thirteen" is the number of redemption and "thirty-one" is the number of Godhead. "Thy salvation" in the other form is $1196 = 4 \times 13 \times 23$, where we have "redemption" as before, while "four" tells of the Cross and 23 is another number pointing to redemption and the Good Shepherd.

THE PROMISE OF THY RIGHTEOUSNESS, *ver. 7*

The Redeemer for whom we long is the Lord our righteousness, and we are made the righteousness of God in Him.

124. DEAL WITH THY SERVANT ACCORDING TO THY MERCY, *ver. 41*

"Mercy and truth are met together" in the new Covenant for God herein deals with us as the members of His only-begotten Son.

TEACH ME THY DECREES

God's merciful dealing consists in His revelation of Himself to His people. This is much more than the remission of penalty, although the removal of moral blindness is from the first a form of remission. The knowledge of God in the Eternity of His Love and His predestination of mankind to behold His glory in

Christ is the real act of Divine mercy quickening the soul to share in the Divine Life. "They shall be all taught of God." This is the promise which comes to us in Christ.

125. I AM THY SERVANT

He has been diligent in yielding the service which the law required. He longs to know the mysteries which the ceremonies of legal obedience shadowed forth. He has observed them in obedience to God's command. He longs to see the King's Face. Only in that vision can the love of the faithful servant find its satisfaction. The servant longs to be treated as a friend (*John xv. 15*).

GIVE ME UNDERSTANDING, *ver. 27*

Moses expressed his grief that the people had not understanding (*Deut. xxxii. 28, 29*), but the gift of understanding was to rest upon the New Covenant. "They shall be all taught of God" (*Heb. viii. 11*).

I SHALL KNOW THY TESTIMONIES

We must take care that we really do cherish the mysteries of grace with spiritual intelligence. We must not be content to perform our sacramental duties in an external way. They are outward signs of inward realities, and we ought to search into those hidden realities as the Spirit of God will enable us. We need not doubt that if we are diligent in seeking this knowledge, God will give it to us. He will open our understanding increasingly. The intuitions of spiritual devotion are God's gift and must not be confounded with intellectual effort. "God will give His Holy Spirit to all them that ask Him." Mysteries are revealed, not argued.

126. IT IS TIME FOR JEHOVAH TO ACT

The day of grace is come. Now shall the hopes of past ages be fulfilled. "The fulness of time is come for God to send His Son to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons" (*Gal. iv. 4*).

THEY HAVE MADE VOID THY LAW

So our Lord speaks: "You have made the Word of God of none effect through your traditions." The Jews had destroyed the law which was committed to them. It must be taken away and given to others "who will render to him the fruits in their seasons" (*Matt.* xxi. 41). They made it void, by treating it as but a literal covenant, and the letter was empty. The substance is that grace vouchsafed in Christ of which the letter had only the outline. Now it is time for God to come in Personal Substantive reality filling up the worthless outline. The law was shown in its emptiness. It never could make the comers thereunto perfect. Now God comes and acts. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. God is righteous in Himself and makes those to be righteous in the fellowship of His spiritual activity who believe on Jesus.

127. THEREFORE I LOVE THY COMMANDMENTS

The evil conduct of men does but bring out the more forcibly the goodness of God's law, its scope, its extent, its results, its necessity; Jesus is "made unto us righteousness." We love His righteousness while we act in the power of His Life. Grace is a Divine active principle, lifting us up in the New Covenant to the fellowship of God.

ABOVE GOLD, AND ABOVE FINE GOLD

God's law is the vital principle of social blessedness. For want of it society decays. No amount of wealth can make up for its neglect. The love which God commands is the exercise of the communicated loving Spirit of life whereby God Himself acts. No external gift from God can equal this. What is external to God is lifeless. Love is the very nature of God. We appropriate its blessed life by acting in its living power according to the covenant of regenerating grace. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Love is the edifying power of the Body of Christ. Love is the heavenly gold whereof the New Jerusalem is builded together

so as to be at unity. Love is the life of God wherein all the work of God is perfected and made worthy of Himself.

128. THEREFORE I JUSTIFY ALL THY PRECEPTS

Love cannot criticise in detail. The goodness of all God's appointments surpasses our conception. In joyous conformity we must bow down, not bending them to our own preconceptions. What though man may make God's law of no avail! The fault is his. God's law of grace and truth comes forth triumphant.

Thou hast proved man by the law given of old! Man could not keep it. Thy law condemned him. Now Thy law is seen in its lifegiving power! It renews him to a holiness in fellowship with Thyself. It raises him out of the deceitful appearances of this perishing world. It leads him to the glory which shall abide for ever. That is indeed a law which giveth life (*Gal. iii. 21*).

EVERY PATH OF LIES I HATE

So does this Section close with the avowal which the previous Section necessitated. If we would be perfect in the way of truth, we must hate the paths of this false and corrupt world. The gift of grace enables us thus to rise out of the degradation of the transitory to the glory of the Eternal. Grace, preventing grace, prepares us for the life of the regenerate.

Sixty, the number of the preceding Section, symbolized worldly power. All that is of the world must be put away as dross (*ver. 119*). It is worthless. It is full of falsehood. The law of the mosaic covenant was itself but specious. There was no real righteousness belonging to it, for it did not give life, and there can be no righteousness where there is not life. The fault was not in the law. That came from God and was spiritual in its demands, worthy of God from whom it came. It was man's deadness, making him incapable of spiritual conformity to the law which caused it to be ineffectual. It only served for man's condemnation.

SECTION LXXX

Vers. 129-136

THE COVENANT OF NEW BIRTH

Wonderful are Thy testimonies : Therefore doth my soul guard them.	<i>The mystery of new life which the regenerate soul must guard.</i>
The opening of Thy words gives light, Making the simple to understand.	<i>Our new birth as children of light requires simplicity of heart that we may obtain the spiritual understanding.</i>
I opened my mouth and panted, For I longed for Thy command- ments.	<i>The soul hungering after righteousness.</i>
Look upon me and be gracious unto me, In the exercise of Thy judgment towards those who love Thy name.	<i>Prayer for the personal revelation and grace which belongs to the regenerating covenant.</i>
Make my steps firm by Thy promise :	<i>Prayer to be established in obedience looking forward to God's promises.</i>
And let no villany lord it over me. Redeem me from the oppression of man :	<i>Prayer to be redeemed from the bondage of natural corruption.</i>
And I will observe Thy precepts. Make Thy Face to shine upon Thy servant	<i>Prayer for the personal illumination of God's countenance to guide the soul onward in holiness.</i>
And teach me Thy decrees. Streams of water ! so mine eyes run down	<i>Compassionate love for those who are strangers to the covenant.</i>
Because men observe not Thy law.	

WONDERFUL, *vid. ver.* 18

As this word expresses the *mystery* of the Eternal Personality which underlies the Incarnation it expresses also the *mystery* of

our assumption personally into the Divine Life as a result of the Incarnation. "We are made partakers of the Divine Nature" (2 *Pet.* i. 4). This is what our Lord intends when He speaks of the *mysteries* of the Kingdom of Heaven being made known unto the Apostles, and hidden from the wise of this world. These mysteries need to be grasped by faith, whereas the natural wisdom of man only avails for such processes as can be carried out by natural reason. The habit of looking to natural reason and its deductions blinds men to the objects of faith, just as it also tends to destroy the sensibility of our natural perception of beauty and art. Our nature in its present condition is such that one part of it cannot be assiduously cultivated without injury to others. When therefore our Lord speaks of Divine Truth being hidden, He does not mean that the intellectual revelation was held back, but that it required a capacity for its reception which those whose minds were absorbed in the philosophy of the natural world could not retain.

Our nature has faculties of sense, of reason, and of affection. With the bodily organs we perceive outward things, the beauty of expression in words as poetry, in music, in painting, and other arts. The imaginative faculty may be cultivated to the detriment of the intellectual or *vice versâ*. The faculty of reason may be similarly developed so that we lose all enjoyment of material form, being absorbed in the sequence of abstract thought, and indeed we may be so given to certain trains and forms of reasoning as to lose touch with all else. Similarly we are deadened to objects of pure affection, by the power which mind or body may exercise over us. The spirit cannot have its share in our totality, if all things are regarded only by the mind or the bodily sense. The spirit deals with the interior world of the affections. We may know the characteristics of the affectionate nature by external contemplation, but the intellect does not develop the interior exercise of the affections, so that we should gain a practical experimental knowledge of their vitality. A writer of fiction may pourtray the tenderest and loveliest features of affection but he does not thereby come to participate in them. He only knows

them as the unreal images upon a wall. The wall is unmoved by what is imaged upon it. So is it with man's heart.

It is then by a law of nature that God has hidden the mysteries of the interior, the spiritual, world, from the wise and prudent. The life of affection is but a dream to those who know the external world, the intellectual universe and the phenomena of matter, as the only things that are real. Love which looks to objects of delight altogether distinct from our present phenomenal existence, may be known as a degrading passion, but as an elevating principle of higher life it has no place. It may shine out in an heroic tale as a bright meteor but it leaves the nature to settle down upon the realities of time, the objects, whether material or intellectual, which are not dependent upon our own personal and perishing interests. Things are real which outlive us. As for the interior world, we die, our fancies die with us. Our affectionate nature does not grasp the spiritual universè from which we are separated by the imprisonment of time and space. So to the wise of this world, the idea of a life which death cannot touch seems to be nothing but an illusion.

The reason is evident. Our nature has no self-dependence. Body and mind rest upon the outer world. We are creatures and cannot separate ourselves so as to live distinct from the creation to which we belong, in the self-sustaining individuality of our personal being.

Our personality is itself created, and it requires a resting-place mightier than itself, just as the faculties of mind and body require a permanent material universe wherein to act.

Our personality however has no such environment. We see others round about us who are persons like ourselves : but they are separate from us. We cannot rest upon them for interior living support. It seems as if we ought to have had a universe of living personality in which to bear our part. What is personal is only to be appreciated from moment to moment. In truth, we are dead persons, floating in a hazy atmosphere of consciousness, but as no one has life, there is in none of us the capacity of giving life to any other.

When man was created, and God breathed into Adam the breath of life, he had a life which Eve shared when her body was formed from his body. If man had remained in the state wherein God created him, there would have been a transmission of life unifying the human race, so that all who were born of Adam would have possessed this common, spiritual, personal, life. As we are one in origin, we ought all of us to have been one in act, and in consciousness and in love.

As it is, we are dead to one another, because human nature is dead to God. We are one in origin, as being all descended from Adam, but we are each one of us broken off from the common mass of humanity. Our true and proper action as persons no longer exists because each one of us is but a lifeless and useless fragment of an organism that ought to have acted with undivided unity of living power, no member of the human race living for himself, or acting by himself, but all of them sharing in the universal joy of a common life.

What man was to have been is what God calls us now to be, by our regeneration in Christ.

Christ is the Second Adam. As He is the Son of God abiding eternally in the Divine Life, He brings that life along with Himself into the human body and soul which He assumes. He is not a dead person, for He did not assume human personality. The Life of His Divine Person is His for ever. He calls us away from the prison house of our dead personalities, to live with Him in eternal life, by becoming incorporated into Him. He is the Resurrection Principle of Humanity and the Life of every individual who is rescued from the death of fallen Adam.

So then if we are to come to Him that we may have life, we must have a spiritual nature longing for that life which man has lost. The philosophy of the intellect can no more scrutinize this vitality than the genius of the painter can depict it. Body and mind need to be taken up into a higher order of action. The affections are elements of our nature by which we are capable of receiving it. The more the outer nature satisfies our soul, the less capable are we of accepting it. The delusions of the spiritual

imagination hold us back from grasping it, even while they seem to help us in formulating its aspirations. We need a real gift of life, Divine Life, given to us by assumption into the Humanity of Christ which lives with this Divine Life.

It is not enough for us to come to Christ owning Him to be "a Teacher come from God." His teaching can only touch our intellect, even though our affections may be stirred by the longings which He suggests. We must, as our Lord said to Nicodemus, be "born again." We must come to Him not that He may satisfy the convictions of our understanding but that He may communicate the power of Divine Love. Nothing that we have by nature helps us in thus rising superior to ourselves. All that is of nature is mere encumbrance, needing to be quickened by the new life which is in Christ. That life is Love. "The Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." He is given unto us for He dwells in the Humanity of Christ glorifying it, and He proceeds eternally from God the Son as being the Image of the Father. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for" (*Heb. xi. 1*), and reaches out into that realm of personal life for which man was originally created, and in which alone man can find perfection. A childlike heart is therefore necessary if we would enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. We must receive the grace of Christ with the simplicity and submissiveness of little children. Faith is the organ of our human nature which lays hold upon the gift of life, "faith which worketh by love."

The Kingdom of Heaven in which we become partakers of the regenerating grace of Christ is the renewal of that living organism which ought to have been developed in the human race if Adam had never sinned. By reason of his sin, human nature has been multiplied in persons born with dead souls having nothing in common but outward and transitory interests. In the Kingdom of Heaven, that is in the Body of Christ, "we are builded together" into a unity of organic action, having Christ as the One Head of the Body. The objects of the outer world and individual interests as derived from it, are only accidental to us.

Death does not affect us, for it is only the separation of our living organism from the grave-clothes of our outward existence. Our personal life in Christ is set more free to act by being rescued from the trammels of the outer nature. We have thus *before* death died to this world. The outer death lifts us into the experience of the life wherein we are new *born*. "We are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory" (*Col.* iii. 3, 4).

How wonderful shall be the manifestation, when "God shall be glorified in" us as "His saints"! (*2 Thess.* i. 10).

This Kingdom of Heaven, the renewal of human nature to the glory of its original predestination by the incorporation of the faithful into the Body of the Incarnate Redeemer, is that city to which holy men of old looked forward, "having foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (*Heb.* xi. 10), the holy Jerusalem which St John saw in prophetic vision "descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious. The glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb" (*Rev.* xxi. 10, 11, 23). So does St Paul speak of the *mystery*, "the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (*1 Cor.* ii. 7, 8).

129. THY TESTIMONIES

This new birth is conveyed to man individually by "the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (*Tit.* ii. 5). In order to be enrolled in the Holy City, as having been "born there" (*Pss.* lxxxvii. 4), we must be "born of water and of the spirit" (*John* iii. 5). So is our outward nature taken up into the fellowship of Christ's Body and our persons, dead by nature as derived from Adam, are quickened with Divine Life by the gift of the Holy Ghost. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (*Rom.* viii. 9).

As we must come to Christ by faith seeking His gift, so Christ

takes us unto Himself by the Sacraments which He has ordained as the means of grace. Therefore our Lord ere He ascended sent forth His Apostles to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them" (*Matt. xxviii. 19*).

This discipleship was not merely an outward scholastic training which the Apostles were to give as representatives of the Great Teacher. By baptizing the nations they were to make them disciples of the Holy Ghost, "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (*1 Cor. ii. 13*).

Baptism and the other ordinances which the Apostles were to minister were testimonies to the covenanted action of the Holy Ghost who had been given to the Apostles. This Holy Spirit used their ministry for the accomplishment of His Divine purposes. Our Lord had spoken of His Apostles as "stewards over His household" who should give His people "their portion of meat in due season" (*Luke xii. 42*). This therefore is the title which St Paul claims for the Apostolic ministry. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (*1 Cor. iv. 1*).

These testimonies are *wonderful*, because they enshrine the mysterious grace of the hidden life. He whose name is *Wonderful*, comes to us in them and takes us up into the *mystery* of His own Eternal Being in the fellowship of His glorified Humanity.

THEREFORE DOTH MY SOUL KEEP [*guard*] THEM

The outer nature cannot of itself apprehend the workings of Divine mystery. We must not on that account regard spiritual operations as non-existent. On the contrary we must cherish them with the more care, lest we violate the Divine sanctity belonging to them. God is present in His Sacraments with sanctifying power, and if we do not yield ourselves reverently to be sanctified thereby we cause that power to act against us.

The mystery of Divine action which nature cannot trace makes it needful to treat them with great care, and the glory of the Divine gift which is beyond what any human estimate can equal calls us to be watchful lest we lose so great a treasure.

The Divine gift is not only a sublime *wonder* in itself which we must contemplate with adoring love. It *lifts us up* into the fellowship of the Divine Love so that we may be worthy of Him whom we adore. We cannot hold fellowship merely as men with God, for we cannot by nature be worthy of His Love, but God by His mysteries of grace lifts us up into the covenanted life of His dear Son, and we are called to hold blessed fellowship with God by being lifted up out of our unworthiness to speak to Him as our Father with all the claims of a true adoption whereby the glory of the only begotten Son clothes us as born anew in Him.

For our own sake we must *guard* the sacramental grace which Gods gives us. That is not all. God Himself delights in giving that which is so necessary for us to receive. The wonder of God's Love in thus rejoicing over us must make us rejoice in receiving His gifts. Alas, that men should be so negligent in seeking what God finds joy in giving! Let us learn from the joy of God to form a truer estimate of His gifts. We must share His joy while we receive the *mysteries* of His grace. We must experience His joy while we *guard* His bounty. So shall we enter into the joy of our Lord when the full wonder of His gifts shall be revealed in the glory of His saints (2 *Thess.* i. 10).

130. THE OPENING OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT

Baptism is the sacrament of illumination. By the covenant of new birth we are admitted to be "the children of the light and of the day." The Word Incarnate is "Light, Of Light," and we are taken into the Nature of God which is Light by the words of Christ's appointment, being baptized "into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

This is not the light of an external revelation, but the regenerating Light of a new nature. As an external revelation, the Light when it comes only serves to intensify the darkness to which it is opposed. "The Light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not" (*John* i. 5). Not comprehending it, the darkness is necessarily at variance with it, so that as the word in St John probably means, the darkness could not overtake it, but was

at strife with it. So at the beginning God separated the Light which was "good" from the darkness which was evil.

The gift of this Light was not vouchsafed under the Jewish dispensation, although it was set forth as a promise by the prayer of priestly benediction. Now it is ours. The Face of Moses shone with an external light, but did not illuminate the heart of the people. Quite the reverse. It terrified the hearts of the spectators, so that Moses put a veil before his face because they could not bear to look upon it. The words of Moses made men tremble before the light. The opening of the words of the Incarnate Redeemer fills the heart with light for they are opened by the power of the Holy Ghost. He opens the mouth of God speaking in Christ, and He opens the ear of the soul to receive the Divine Word. We are born again "of the Spirit."

IT GIVETH UNDERSTANDING

The natural man cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God, for they belong to a higher nature. If the Holy Ghost gave the soul a clear vision of Divine Truth merely in outward expression and form we should not benefit by it. It is *wonderful, a mystery, a secret*, transcending human understanding (*Jude 13-18*).

Therefore when the Spirit opens the words of God to the soul, He opens our *understanding* also, that we may accept the words. He is "the Spirit of understanding" and lifts us up into the fellowship of the Wisdom of God. He gives us "an ear that we may hear what He saith unto the Churches" (*Rev. ii. 7*). Unless we have the ear thus opened to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom our formal acceptance of revealed Truth avails us nothing.

Understanding delights to search into the depth of what it contemplates. An Arabic illumination may be to any one a beautiful piece of artistic colouring, but to one who knows the language the letters have a meaning. They speak to the intelligence. So there is much belonging to the Christian revelation which is beautiful to the philosopher or the philanthropist, the man of ordinary culture, but the Divine meaning is not thus brought

out. There must be that fellowship with the Eternal Word and Wisdom of God which the Holy Ghost communicates. Unless the Holy Ghost gives the *understanding*, all the teaching of God is only like the letters on the wall which none but Daniel could read. The heart must be purified that we may read.

How great is the delight, to unravel the mysteries of nature, to discover truth for which perhaps generations of wise men have striven in vain! How much greater should be the delight of love exulting in the manifestation of the Eternal Wisdom which God vouchsafes to the faithful by the power of the Holy Ghost, the gift of spiritual understanding! The love of the Truth! (2 *Thess.* ii. 10).

TO THE SIMPLE

The same word occurs in Ps. xix. 8. "The testimonies of the Lord give wisdom to the simple."

We are not to think that we can attain to spiritual understanding by the processes of natural reason. There is always more danger of our "darkening counsel by words without knowledge" (*Job* xxxviii. 2). The light of God shines upon the intellect only through the heart. Unless the heart be purified, no keenness of intellect can apprehend God's Truth. Hence in Holy Scripture the *heart* is always mentioned as the organ of *moral discernment*. The Light of God forsook man's heart when Adam sinned, and it is only through the opening of the ear of the soul in the inner chamber of the heart, that God's Truth can be regained. It is through the affections that God makes Himself known. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love" (1 *John* iv. 8). Thus it is that a new life is communicated to man's moral nature, the life of the Spirit of God which is the gift of spiritual understanding.

The "simple" is one who is open-hearted, not cunning to detect the sophistries of the world, but ready in all singleness of purpose to accept Divine Truth. Truth is not really attained by the rejection of specious falsehoods. By such reasonings we may mark out, as it were, the ground where truth must lie hidden. But it is the childlike heart which really catches the blessed

vision. As a child may recognise a mother's face in a crowd, so the childlike heart is illuminated with the power of the Holy Ghost to receive the mysteries of the Kingdom. So must we "as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby" (1 *Peter* ii. 2). We must advance in the understanding of the things of God by this same character. "Mysteries are revealed to the meek," and we must eschew the "philosophy and vain deceit" which in successive ages under various pretexts is Satan's snare to draw us away from the Spirit's teaching.

131. I OPENED MY MOUTH AND DREW IN MY BREATH

The metaphor is taken from a wild beast yawning to swallow its prey and sucking in the wind, as he follows after it. Such is the longing of nature for Divine Truth and yet it is all in vain. Nature pursues hungrily but only drinks back its own breath.

I YEARN AFTER THY COMMANDMENTS

The soul is really hungering for the commandments of God, although perhaps it does not know what it desires. The wild efforts of nature can never satisfy the soul which was formed to find repose in simply doing God's will.

How Saul "ravined as a wolf to devour the prey" (*Gen.* xlix. 27)! But the power of God arrested him, and he cried out, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

132. LOOK THOU UPON ME

The soul in its natural estate of spiritual hunger roams through the dark wilderness but finds not the prey whereon to feed. God must look upon the soul. The needed food must come from heaven. It cannot be found on earth. "The lions roaring after their prey seek their meat from God." The God of nature will not neglect the children of grace. He who fed rebellious Israel with the food of the body will feed His faithful ones with the Bread of heaven. His Light nourishes the intelligent soul. We should see God looking forth upon us while we feed on Him.

BE GRACIOUS UNTO ME

This verse is the second clause of the priestly Blessing. "The Lord make His Face to give Light to thee and be gracious unto thee" (*Num.* vi. 25). It is the Fatherly look whereby He lightens the regenerate soul. Grace comes by Jesus Christ, grace as the quickening principle of new life. The Father looks upon us through Jesus Christ. In His Presence is the fulness of Light. No man hath seen the Father at any time, but when God the Son became Incarnate, He did not lose the sight of God. He made human nature worthy to live in the Light of God. Then was the Face of God revealed in the Manhood of Jesus Christ.

God's look wakens the heart to a reciprocal gaze through the mediation of Christ, and thus we find the joyous fellowship in the adoption of Sonship through the new covenant.

AS THOU USEST TO DO

Lit. Such is Thy judgment. It is not by any arbitrary choice that God looks graciously upon us, His acts of benediction are vouchsafed according to a *righteous judgment*. "To him that hath shall be given." If we use God's grace, God will give us "grace for grace." Our progress in Divine Life and Light is a *judgment*. God's will acts Personally towards us with increasing power as He sees us drawing nearer to Him in truth.

We do not grow in grace according to the proportion of natural effort. With every effort of ours God bestows an additional gift of Grace by His own bounty far exceeding what our effort could originate. Each continued gift, each renewed gift, each increase of grace, is a *personal gift* of God's Love to the loving soul.

So also if we neglect God's gift, failing to correspond with His active Love, we shall find Him *withdrawing* even what He has already given. Such is the *judgment* of His discipline.

In all the operations of grace whether for increase or decrease, we must recognize the Personal act of God correspondently with our own use or misuse of that which He has already done.

THOSE THAT LOVE THY NAME

The *Name* of God is the foundation of His Covenant. The Name expresses the eternal Personal relationships of God within Himself. We are baptized into His Name; and so are taken up into those Personal relationships. Thus by the power of the Holy Ghost we are called to abide in the love of the Father and the Son. That Love must be our Life.

Our original election was the act of God's personal love towards us, while we were yet external to Him. Our growth in grace is the continuance of His Love to those who act true to His Covenant. His own eternal relationships wherein He lives and acts, constitute the life of those who are taken into Him. As He is Love eternally by His threefold Personality so His Love operates upon them and in them, and if they live in His Name His Love comes forth to Himself through them that He may rejoice in them. The Father loves the Son, and all who are incorporated into the Body of His Son, and the Son loves the Father with a love which He causes His members to share as their very life. The procession of the Holy Ghost which is the consummation of this undivided act of eternal love is the glorification of the Body of Christ, glorifying all the members along with Christ the Head, while they rejoice in the Divine Love as their eternal life.

So does the Face of God shine upon those who *love God's Name*. That Light is more than a radiance coming upon them from on high. It is an absorbing power lifting them up into the knowledge, the fellowship, the Life, and therefore the Love, of God.

There can be no true love of God save by loving the Name of God into which we are taken. We may worship God, serve Him, admire Him, by natural acts of intelligent homage, as a Being far too great for us to approach; but the gulf between the Creator and the Creature remains such as no human effort can span. Love implies likeness, equality, unity. We cannot love God save as being taken up by grace into the Covenant of His Name, *i.e.* the *participation of His Nature*.

By nature we may honour God, each one of us as separate units. We cannot love God. *He* is too great for *our* love. *We* are not worthy of *His*. We love God as being taken up into the Body of the Only begotten Son. Thus we are taken up to live in the love of God, as the Co-equal Son loves the Father. Our love is not the unworthy affection which the finite might render to the unknown Infinite. It is an act of the Body of Christ in which we are each one of us called by grace to share. We must love the Name of God because it is this Name which gives us the privileges of the Christian Covenant.

Hence our Lord says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in My Name*, He will give it you" (*John* xvi. 23). He does not receive us as separate suppliants, but as living with the *communicated life* of His Co-equal Son in the unity of His mystical Body.

Thus it is that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (*Rom.* v. 5). The Holy Ghost by whom the Son of God assumed our Nature, comes now to us personally in the Christian Covenant and regenerates us in the Name of the Blessed Trinity, so that we are taken up into the Eternal Love wherein Christ is glorified.

We cannot know God save by the supernatural love of which we are thus made partakers in the Divine Nature. We must love God with a true Divine love. We cannot have that love save in the living power of the Holy Name.

So God looks upon us, and is gracious unto us. We as partakers of His grace in Christ look up to Him and rejoice in His love. That love is a discriminative love, *a righteous judgment, a Fatherly acceptance*. We love Him, because He first loved us (*I John* iv. 19). Wonderful love, for which man was formed in God's Image, and wherein he is consummated by the fellowship of the Holy Ghost! O wondrous Name of the Eternal Trinity! O ever-living, ever-loving God! O wondrous Mediatorial grace of the Incarnate Saviour which lifts us one by one to abide in this Name! O wondrous gift of the Holy Ghost which illuminates the regenerate with the joy of the Father's countenance to live for ever in the love of this Holy Name!

133. ORDER [*make firm*] MY STEPS, *vid. ver.* 5

The Regenerate life is a progress heavenward in the power of the Holy Ghost. We are not suddenly transported nor carried as lifeless objects to the end which is set before us. We have to take step after step, by separate acts of our own will corresponding with the power of the regenerating Spirit.

In Sect I. the Psalmist desired the firmness of the way of perfection. Now in Sect LXXX he desires that he may have grace to walk firmly in that way, "that he may continue" and make progress "in that state of salvation into which God has called him." The law of the outer world is firmly established (90). The law of man's physical being is firmly established. He prays that his spiritual progress may be equally firm so that he may be true to that "living way" which the unchangeable will of God has ordained for him.

Christ is the Truth, and we must be true to Him if we would experience the power of His Truth. We must "walk in Truth" (2 *John* 4).

IN THY WORD [*promise*]

The Word is the way, but as we walk therein we must keep the end ever in view (1 *Pet.* i. 9). We therefore "walk not as uncertainly," but with a sure promise, reaching out after that which is set before us. The Word is the law of life. He is the Beginning in whom we are born anew, and He is the End in whom we are established eternally. His own promise is, "Abide in me, and let my words abide in you and ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" (*John* xv. 7).

God's help is assured to us. We can make no progress without that continual help. The greatest saint cannot take a firm step save by the power of the Holy Ghost. This co-operation is promised to us if we will seek it. God's grace is not a general readiness to help us in special difficulties. It must be sought in the smallest steps of life. Otherwise we shall find ourselves unable to profit by it when we feel our need. If we lose hold of

God's sustaining Hand in the ordinary steps of daily life, we cannot grasp it again in the emergencies of unforeseen difficulty and danger.

THE DOMINION OF WICKEDNESS

Nothingness. This is the form under which wickedness is recognised in this place.

As God is the only *Substance*, firm and abiding, so wickedness is *nothingness*, unstable and deceitful. We renounce the "vanity" or emptiness of this wicked world. All reliance upon any form of earthly power is idolatry, the worship of nothingness. "Covetousness is idolatry" (*Col.* iii. 5).

The world appeals to our outward sense and so it gets dominion over us, drawing us away from the substantive realities of faith.

We must *feel* our own *nothingness*. It may often seem to us that the nothingness of the world cannot get hold of us. We see through it. Alas, no! We are so much akin to it that we have no power to hold ourselves back from its deceptions. We must abide in the power of grace.

From the nothingness of the world we have been delivered in the covenant of our new birth, receiving the *grace* of Christ. This is the *substance* of the sacraments, the very communication of the Incarnate Godhead. "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (*John* i. 16). This fulness alone can rescue our nothingness from the dominion of falsehood.

134. DELIVERANCE FROM THE WORLD

Redeem me. This is the exercise of God's power. Redemption in Holy Scripture is an act of power, not of purchase. "A mighty Hand and a stretched out Arm." Such is the agent of redemptive power. The Arm of the Lord is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity stretched out for our defence. The strong Hand is the Humanity of the Incarnate Son which grasps our nature and snatches us out of the power of the enemy.

The idea of purchase in Holy Scripture is subordinate to that of victory. The Blood of Christ whereby we are redeemed is the

regenerative Blood whereby we are rescued from the bondage of our fallen estate in death. Christ gave His life as ransom, but it was in *struggle, not in judicial compensation*. On the contrary He laid it down that He might *take it again*. He laid it down that He might *bind* him that had the power of death, and set us free from the hand of the enemy.

The Latin word "Redemption" has given prominence to the idea of purchase, which is quite unknown to the New Testament. There is no one who *receives* the life which Jesus gave for our deliverance. He Himself took it up again that He might make us partakers of His victorious Life over which death can no longer have any power. He by His triumphant descent into Hell accomplished the Gospel as originally given at the gate of Paradise, bruising the Serpent's head after the Serpent had bruised His Heel.

THE OPPRESSION OF MAN, *vid. ver.* 121

We are redeemed from the tyranny of Satan.

But the seed of the Serpent was still to be at enmity against the Seed of the woman. The victory of the Seed of the woman must therefore redeem us from the oppression of man. All mankind are by fallen nature the seed of the Serpent. We need therefore the redemption of Christ to rescue us from the *world*.

This includes both the external violence of the ungodly, and the inherited corruption of the natural heart which holds us down. The blood of the Paschal Lamb marked the houses of the Israelites so that they perished not with the Egyptians. They were the Firstborn of God by *typical* representation in Egypt because the Son of God was to be born of that nation. *Our* redemption is no longer typical but *vital* for we are born again into the adoption of God's children by the covenant of grace. So it is that we are "redeemed from the vain conversation received by tradition from our fathers, by the precious Blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 *Peter* i. 18).

It is in the power of this new birth that we are to rise superior to our natural earthliness. It is only in this power that we can

gain the victory over the antagonism which the Church militant will have to bear in every age of her existence. The alliance of any worldly power is always full of danger because we need to be delivered from every worldly power. We cannot be partakers of this redemption by the Blood of Christ except in so far as we are dead to the world in the Body of Christ. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 *John* v. 4).

We must never expect the oppression of man to cease as long as we are in the world. As redeemed by Christ we are "dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God" (*Col.* iii. 2). The oppression of man must not make us quail as though some strange thing happened unto us. It is the very law of our pilgrimage as regenerated in Christ that we must endure such oppression. It does not imply that God has forsaken His Church, but we may always be confident that the manifestation of the redeeming power will be just proportionate to the outward suffering, and the Divine gifts will be given to glorify God's people with heavenly triumphs in proportion as they bear the outward violence of the ungodly.

MAN

It is the inheritance of Adam from which the Psalmist seeks to be delivered. Deliverance from man's fallen condition requires a Divine Redeemer. "No man however great can redeem his brother or make atonement unto God for him." The oppression of sin holds all down. "Man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (*Psa.* xlix. 8, 13). A power is required which shall raise man out of the oppression of original sin. That power is the regenerating grace of Christ. The gift of the new life to man "covers him," clothes him with that glory of Divine righteousness the loss of which left our first parents in the shame of their nakedness.

KEEPING GOD'S PRECEPTS, *vid. ver.* 4

It is only as being clothed with the righteousness of Christ our Redeemer, that we can keep the precepts which God gives. That

righteousness renews us in the likeness of God so that by regeneration we are enabled again to appear in the world as God's representatives. We do indeed still bear upon us the likeness of sinful flesh even as Christ bore it. The gift of the Divine life makes no change in us before the outward eye. But the life of God interiorly communicated makes atonement for us, covers us with a penetrative life and glory in the presence of God. It is a living power by which we are to claim access into the holiest, being renewed by the Blood of Jesus. Our outward nature which makes us groan by reason of our corruption has to be sloughed off by death. As Satan tried Christ in the wilderness, to prove whether He were the Son of God or no, so he tries us, and seeks by the oppression of Adam, that is our sinful flesh, to deprive us of the life of Christ the Second Adam, given to us by the Spirit.

Nevertheless the promise remains, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. xii. 9). It is in the power of this new life in Christ that we must *keep the precepts* of Christ for by this power we are able to keep them.

135. MAKE THY FACE TO SHINE, *vid. ver. 132*

The opening of God's words gives light, but there must be the loving light of God's countenance to perfect that light in holy joy. Saul saw that *Face*, but his companions only saw the *Light*. Simple-hearted love rejoicing in the light of God's truth gains spiritual understanding. Then God will look upon us and be gracious. Then we see Him in the truth of that Personal light which beams from His countenance, while He accepts us personally with ineffable love. So will He teach us His decrees. Thus is the redeemed soul gathered up into the joy of God's children.

THE TEACHING LOOK

The personal fellowship whereby God draws us to Himself is not a dumb fellowship, for it is the revelation of the Word of God both *to* us and *within* us. The voice speaks to the ear, but the eye speaks to the heart. "Jesus turned and looked upon Peter."

So from His Throne of glory He looks upon us during our pilgrimage and we must be continually "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (*Heb.* xii. 2). Space does not separate us on earth from His Throne at the Right Hand of God. We do not look to Him as a lifeless figure. We look to Him as partakers of that same life wherein He lives. Our looking to Him is in response to that look wherewith He looks upon us. That look reveals to the faithful, loving, soul all the mind of Christ. One glance reveals the secrets of eternity. It is an eternal glance which sinks into our nature and fills us more and more with the Divine Wisdom. O that indivisible Wisdom! It is the very Spirit wherein Christ is glorified, whereby He looks on us, and glorifies us. That power in all the oneness of its life, takes possession of our nature in all the multitude of our necessities. So He teaches us the decrees of God, the predestinating love whereby Christ is to be glorified in His saints and they in Him, that "God may be all in all."

136. RIVERS OF WATER

So Jeremiah exclaims: "Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water" (*Lam.* iii. 18).

The soul taken up into the teaching of the beatific vision must bewail those who reject it. "O that thou hadst known the things which belong unto thy peace!" If we would be perfect in God's law we must have the fulness of that love wherewith God's law calls all unto Himself. There can be no selfish delight in God's love. Our love must be coextensive with the Divine. As we rise out of a state of sin to the experience of God's love, we must *feel the outrage* done to God's glory by those who will not welcome His love by the observance of His law.

The Redeemer suffered for the sins of men by reason of that perfect love which He had to the Father in His human nature as well as in His eternal Godhead. He knew the fulness of that love which was rejected, and He felt the rejection. He knew the infinite consequences of glory to which that Love was leading mankind and He felt in His Manhood the infinite dishonour of

God which every act of sin involved. He *wept* for every act of sin because it was an *offence against God's love*. He did not suffer by the demand of offended justice, but at the hands of offending sinners. He could not bear our fleshly nature in His own Divine purity without *suffering for all mankind*. His indignation was the measure of His compassion. Both were Divine. The compassionate love wherewith He redeemed was the reflection in time of the predestinating, eternal, love wherewith He created.

Our union with Christ demands a like compassion from ourselves, a like compassion, arising from the same cause. The love of God must be the moving principle of all our tears. We feel the sins of *others* as if they were *our own*, for all sins are rebellion against that indivisible all-comprehensive love of God which is our life. The world-wide penitence in which we share will be the measure of the love wherewith we are sanctified by Christ's redemption.

So then this lamentation fitly closes the Section which is dedicated to the covenant of life. The faithful soul hates all that is of the world, as being in rebellion against God, and yet since the world is God's creature, created for participation along with itself in the law of eternal love, it cannot but weep in contemplation of its loss.

So Jesus wept over Jerusalem. It were a selfish joy which could be satisfied with a sense of personal security, remaining indifferent to the sorrows of a sinful world. The regenerate life seeks not selfish gain but God's glory. "It is not God's will that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." The freewill of man is a mystery as much beyond our solution as the Divine life is, into which we are raised by new birth. But his destruction is of himself.

The Psalmist turns from the sinner's doom to adore the ineffable righteousness of God.

SECTION XC

Vers. 137-144

DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS

THE VITALITY OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN HIMSELF AS THE SOURCE

Righteous art Thou, O Lord, And true is Thy judgment. Thou hast commanded Thy testi- monies in righteousness	<i>God's righteousness essential. administrative. operating in sacra- mental ordin- ances.</i>
And in exceeding faithfulness.	<i>with constant faithfulness.</i>

THE PSALMIST'S EXPERIENCE

Therefore my zeal hath consumed me.	<i>He must bear witness even to death</i>
Because mine adversaries have for- gotten Thy words	<i>Against the false claims of those who rejected God.</i>
Thy promise is tried in the furnace to the uttermost	<i>Earth's trials prove the purity of God's promise :</i>
And Thy servant loveth it.	<i>The greater the trial, the more must God's servant love it.</i>
I am small and despised,	<i>He does not meet the world with worldly power,</i>
Yet do I not forget Thy precepts.	<i>But He remembers the work which the Father has given Him to do.</i>

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS SEEN IN ITS RESULTS

Thy righteous quality is righteous- ness for ever :	<i>Righteousness in God is an eternal active principle :</i>
And Thy law is truth.	<i>The Truth to which Jesus bore witness before Pilate.</i>
Trouble and anguish have found me :	<i>He bears witness upon the Cross.</i>
Thy commandments are my delight.	<i>God's commandments triumphant in joy.</i>

THE VITALITY OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN HIS SAINTS

Thy testimonies are righteousness for ever. *The righteousness of God flows on in sacramental life:*
Give me understanding and I shall live. *We must have spiritual perception so as to rise up to its power.*

From the regenerate life in which the newborn soul rejoices to acknowledge the light of God's countenance, we go on to consider the Divine Righteousness, the Life of God in Himself. The contemplation of God is naturally the subject of Sections IX and XC. In the preceding Sections the Psalmist was as a newborn babe desiring to be fed. Thus he hungered after righteousness. "Teach me Thy statutes," *vers.* 64, 135. Those statutes or decrees are the manifestation of God's eternal Being, which is praised in the Sections following. *Ver.* 64 praised God for His power manifested by the resurrection in all the earth, the regeneration of our globe. *Vers.* 135, 136 told of man's final redemption and beatification closing with a lament for them that forget God.

137. RIGHTEOUS, *vid. ver. 7*

Righteousness is our first conception of God. It is through righteousness that we advance to contemplate His Love, but Love without righteousness would be unworthy of God. It would not be true love. As we find ourselves in the Divine Presence, our satisfaction is to know that He is *righteous*. We are by nature unworthy of His Love, but He who created us out of nothing will surely make us worthy of His Love by the communication of His Righteousness. His Righteousness is a self-communicative power enabling us to be worthy of Him in every degree of fellowship to which He calls us. He *created* us in righteousness potentially. He will *consummate* us in righteousness in actual union with Himself eternally.

UPRIGHTNESS, *vid. ver. 7*

The discipline by which God leads us onward to the final judgment is upright. We shall see in the end how all the providences of life have been true to God's original purpose of fitting us for

fellowship with Himself. All come from God's righteousness, and all are true to God's design. All come from His love, and all conduce to making us perfect in His love so as to be worthy of it. The uprightness of God's judgments trains us in conformity to His righteousness. We must yield ourselves up to Him with an unfeigned, *i.e.* an upright heart.

138. THOU HAST COMMANDED THY TESTIMONIES

God's righteous judgments are the discipline of His external providence, *ver.* 7. His testimonies are the means of communicating inward and spiritual life. Without such interior gift we could not profit by the outward. The inward gift to which those testimonies bear witness is nothing less than the life and nature of God. The sacraments are the testimonies to God's inward truth. All creatures are substantially external one to another, but God enters the soul from within. His Being underlies what He has created. Creatures touch one another externally in finite existence but the Infinite will of God created and sustains all as an underlying principle because all came forth from His will. His testimonies therefore are the witnesses to His invisible action.

IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

As God's action accompanies these testimonies, they must partake of God's Righteousness. Righteousness is not accidental to God. No act of God can be dead or neutral, neither good nor bad. The essential Divine goodness is a Blessing which hallows every external act of God. God therefore has commanded these testimonies as the means of communicating His righteousness.

The psalm looks forward to a system of Divine grace which should be worthy of God, a life-giving system. The law was weak through the flesh. It could not give life, therefore it could not raise man to Divine righteousness (*Gal.* iii. 21). The sins of the Israelites frustrated the intention of Almighty God. They gave themselves up to the false worship of those among whom they were, and consequently the true law of God was never carried out. God gave them statutes which were not good (*Ezek.* xx. 25).

The Presence of God was withdrawn from Israel and God sent an angel whereas He would have led them on in all the power of His Holy Name.

Nevertheless the ordinances of the law were symbolical of what God would do. God would send His Son, and He would send the Spirit of His Son into the hearts of those who should be admitted to the New Covenant. Even the law therefore was given in righteousness as preparing the way for the perfect law of Christ. Those testimonies signified God's will although they failed to give the gift of God.

FAITHFULNESS, *vid. ver.* 30

They were given also in faithfulness. They were unfailing.

Righteousness implies the power of Divine Life accompanying what God has ordained. Faithfulness implies the security of the Divine promise. These testimonies are sure and certain signs. We may profane them by misuse, but the Divine operation is unfailing. St John says "God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins" (1 *John* i. 9). God accompanies the testimonies which He has commanded with the unfailing action of His own all-righteous life to make those righteous as partakers of His Divine Nature who accept His gift with an upright heart.

139. MY ZEAL

"The zeal of Thine House hath eaten me up" (*Psa.* lxxix. 10).

The anger of God with His covenanted people is called by this name, jealousy. "Shall Thy jealousy burn like fire for ever?" (*Psa.* lxxix. 5). It is the expression of love when bursting forth in anger against one who has been proved unworthy. It is the expression of anger in wedded love, and the people of God are wedded to God by the covenant, so that His love has a claim of righteousness.

To be identified with God necessitates a jealous anger against those who are unfaithful to God. Such is the zeal of the Psalmist. His anger is stirred because people approach God's ordinances as if they were forms void of spiritual purpose like the ceremonies of the heathen. Heathen offerings were only "offerings of blood"

(Ps. xvi. 4). There was no spiritual power attaching to them. So these carnal-minded worshippers approached God as if He required the death of victims to propitiate Him instead of looking to the life which He, the living God, would give to the worshipper, not requiring the death of the sinner, but desiring to raise the sinner out of death and lift him up to life and righteousness.

CONSUMED ME

The same word occurs in Ps. lxxxviii. 17, where the prospect of the terrors of hell overwhelms the soul. The Psalmist's interior indignation is like the indignation of Almighty God. The righteousness within Him is the very communication of the Divine righteousness which judges the world. Consequently the sense of the sinfulness of the world which He hates although He is identified with it by coming into the world, consumes Him with an interior indignation and grief. This interior grief consuming Him is equal to what He will have to meet externally when He descends into Hell. Here He suffers, there He will triumph, but He must experience all the power of Satan while exerting against Satan the anger of God. The power which crushes Satan is a Divine Act within His human soul which bruises the Serpent's Head because it is stronger than the Serpent. He can no longer suffer by the antagonism, but He must exert in His impassible glory a human power equal to crush the rebellious host of Hell.

FORGETTING GOD'S WORDS, *vid. ver. 16*

How have they forgotten? They have not forgotten the outward letter. That letter indeed in itself was "not good." Had that been only what they thought it to be, it were well that it should be forgotten. But they had forgotten Him who spake the words, and consequently they had forgotten the spiritual purpose of God's law. They took it and made it their own, to serve the purpose of their own earthliness. They boasted of God's words as a prerogative and forgot that they were a responsibility.

MINE ADVERSARIES *Three times, vers. 139, 143, 157.*

The Psalmist is the centre round whom the saints would rally, Sect. VIII. In Him they find the resurrection-life of the true law. But as He is identified with God, being the one Word which was the living principle of the many words of the law, He impersonates before them with authority the righteousness of God. He is therefore the object which God's enemies must assail. God has sent Him to fulfil the law in its spiritual power and so to manifest the life of Divine love in which He lives. To this life He invites them. This only angers them. They will not "come to Him that they may have life" (*John v. 40*). They boasted of Moses. They forgot the glory of God. They understood not how Moses wrote of the Divine Prophet, requiring them to give heed to Him whom God would send, that they might have life. They believed not Moses' writings. How should they believe his words? (*John v. 47*).

140. THE TRIAL OF GOD'S PROMISE

God's promise is tried by many an outburst of calamity. The antagonism which the Psalmist has to meet in God's name is just what is *required* in order that he may have an adequate *experience* of God's truth. It seems as if the promise must fail under such circumstances. "We thought that this was He who should have redeemed Israel." But no! All hopes are vanished! It seems as if God's promise were burnt up! It is tried to the uttermost! It has failed beyond human recovery. When the recovery comes it is seen to be Divine.

But then the trial of God's promise is also the trial of the recipient. If God's Word must be tried, we also must be tried, to see whether we have accepted God's Word in God's sense. The heart must be purified from carnal demands that it may finally rejoice in the manifestation of the spiritual power when God's Word comes forth triumphant. So all trials which happen to the Church are ordained for our moral trial that we may use God's grace aright, and for the trial of our faith that no seeming

victory of the powers of darkness may cause us to doubt the security of what God has promised.

THE LOVING SERVANT, *vid. ver. 17*

The elect servant rejoices in God's promise, not for temporal advantage but for eternal glory. The promise is nothing short of God Himself. God is the object of His love. God will be manifested when the discipline of time is over. "Then shall we also appear with Him in Glory." Then shall we obtain in all its fulness that which we have loved.

Meanwhile we have to accept the promise in faith, and the trials which seem to overthrow the promise strengthen our faith, for love is strengthened by what it endures for the loved object and faith worketh by love.

The glory of Christ is the reward of the Passion, so that as man He has merited by His obedience, what He inherits eternally as God. Jesus rejoiced in His sufferings to show forth His obedient love to the Father. He could not love God more than He did at the very first, but in the struggle of the Passion His human nature developed fresh energies of ever-increasing power, by which that love could be set forth in human action, and the growth of those human faculties is the foundation of the merit whereby He is glorified in His Resurrection. Thus did He love God's promise, and rejoice in His sufferings.

We must have the same love and the same joy by the power of the Holy Spirit which He gives, that we also may share in His glorious reward.

The natural flesh delights in the things of the flesh, but the soul which rejoices in Christ delights in the Cross, delights in tribulations, just because they make manifest the eternal truth and love of Christ. In them we experience His constraining Love lifting us up above the objects of sense.

141. I AM SMALL

Wonderful mystery of the Incarnation. It is the basis of those *wonderful testimonies* of which the last Section spoke. The

Infinite Son of God coming into the world assumes the smallest form of animal existence. He is conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin.

"Littleness," as exhibited in human form, was one of the predicted characteristics of Messiah.

Zoar, the little one, was a type of Christ to whom we must flee for refuge while His judgments are being poured out upon the world around (*Gen.* xix. 20). "The small one shall become a strong nation" (*Is.* lx. 22). Bethlehem was "little among the thousands of Judah" (*Mic.* v. 1), but that littleness enshrined the greatness of God the Redeemer. David himself was the youngest of his father's sons and Samuel was commissioned to anoint him for the covenanted throne of Israel while, in a state of domestic insignificance, he was taking care of his father's flock.

The world is great but empty. Christ is small but "in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 *John* ii. 17). "Of His fulness have all we received and grace for grace" (*John* i. 16). We cannot have that fulness to fill the world's greatness. We must die to the world's greatness if we would live with the littleness of God. Then indeed we shall grow with the greatness of God until we attain to that greatness in all its fulness of manifestation.

OF NO REPUTATION

The smallness of outward appearance is followed by the smallness of outward esteem. As the world by its wisdom knows not God, so it must despise the Incarnate God. This is almost a title of Messiah, "the despised One." He, Barachel the Blessed of God is "the Buzite," the despised of man. In *Psa.* 15 He speaks as one "despised in His own eyes," and so twice in *Is.* liii. 3, "He is despised and rejected of men . . . He was despised and we esteemed Him not." So is He the Elect Servant of God, for as the Apostle says, "Things which are despised hath God chosen" (1 *Cor.* i. 27). If we would do the work of God, we must be content in like manner to be despised. We must not accept it

as a possible necessity, but joyfully as the true law of Divine power. Unless we are despised of the world we cannot expect to be chosen for God's work, or profitable in doing it.

We must take care that we are despised *for God's sake* and not by reason of our own negligence. To do all we can and still to be despised is the true Law of God's servants. So will the power of God shine forth in us.

TRUE GREATNESS IN DIVINE MEMORY

The Psalmist has a measure of greatness altogether distinct from that of the world. It is the greatness of the Divine Life. "He never forgets God's precepts." This sense of God must be the secret principle of all true greatness. Esteem through human excellence avails not. We can only be truly measured by the Divine approval, and that will be surely given according to our actions. Those acts can have no value except as they spring out of Divine precepts. We must follow not only God's commands but His guidance as set before us in the life of Christ,—all that will be pleasing to Him. We are not to invent schemes of greatness for ourselves but perform all that God commits to our care, valuing all things, however small, in the greatness of His love. Whatever we do partakes of our own littleness, but whatever we do in remembrance of God's precepts partakes also of God's greatness. It is an act of Divine Life. The smallness of earth passes away, but the greatness which belongs to a covenant of mindful obedience cherished in God lives with the eternity of God's life. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 *John* ii. 17).

Christ was always occupied about His Father's business. Therefore at the end He could say, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (*John* xvii. 4). His accomplishment of that work was perfect, advancing with every moment of advancing life, and living in every moment with the eternity of God. The Infinite Word of God was the Personal power operative under the littleness of the assumed Humanity. Our littleness partakes of His greatness while we live in Him.

142. EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS

God's essential Being is Righteousness. Therefore God is essentially a social Being. A monad cannot have either righteousness or love; for such qualities demand a coequal Person towards whom they can be exercised. Love is but the expression of righteousness in blissful energy.

In a monad there can be no action, for an act implies parts, and since in the Infinite God there can be no parts, there must be in God relationships, the archetype in the solidarity of the Infinite Essence of our imperfect finite activity. Our acts are broken acts. Beginning, middle and end are parted one from another by our finite law of existence. The act of God is One and indivisible, eternal, infinite.

The love of God the Father and the Son abiding in the Unity of the Holy Ghost is the name whereby we recognise the Oneness, the Activity, the Righteousness, of God. His Love is not an affection such as belongs to our imperfect nature, which may be exercised or may be quiescent. It is an essential characteristic of God. Love is in us an affection moving the parts of our nature to certain outward action. Love is in God the inherent, self-derived, law by which He is what He is. It is in Him the all-comprehensive goodness, the mysterious solidarity of life, so that the Son of God is not merely like the Father because He possesses love, but He is the reflective, coequal, action of the Father's love, abiding in the eternity of the Father's life. Thus the Love of God lives in the unchangeable relationships of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and therefore as it is the life which originates all God's creative actions, this love cannot cease to operate, according to God's originative will, in all the modifications of created life to which He has given existence by His word.

So does the righteousness of God shine out in all the relationships of God's finite creatures. Whatever is not true to His righteousness, falls away from His Word by which it was created, falls away from His love, falls away from His sustaining life.

What does not abide in the life and in the love of God falls away from His righteousness: but all creation, as being derived

from the original fount of life, is formed to live in mutual acts of righteousness and love. The impulse of what God has created is to live for another, not to live for self. To fail of righteousness, to fail of love, to cease to live for something beyond self, to exist for self alone, is to stagnate and to die. God created all to act in righteousness. God's testimonies renew His creatures in righteousness and love.

There are two words used in this verse for "righteousness." They cannot be distinguished in a modern language. Delitzsch expresses the difference well. The one word [צְדָקָה] "is here the name of the attribute and of the act which derives its special quality therefrom." The other [יָשָׁר] "is the name of the permanent state which is altogether in keeping with the idea of the right."

So then the hidden wisdom, power, and goodness of God abiding in Himself everlastingly are the law of God's action, and are manifested to us in the relationships which His creatures are formed to exercise.

THE TRUTH OF GOD'S LAW

God's *law is Truth*. Creation is the operation of God's Word. It comes forth in all the fulness of Divine power. It has no power in itself. Whenever any law of creation is regarded as having power in itself, then creation becomes the lie. Unless we hear the word of God speaking in all creation and in the relations of God's creatures, we mis-hear the word, and surrender ourselves to the lie. The dumbness of the material creation shuts off from the ear of sense the glorious voice of the Creator, whose continual utterance makes it to be what it is.

The natural heart of man is prone to look to the superficial appearance rather than to God from whom it comes. So Satan led Eve to look to the fruit of the tree as existing in itself, and not to the power of God as creating and sustaining it.

Faith is the apprehensive power whereby we lay hold upon God, as being superior to all the sequence of functions which

bear the created universe upon its course. "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God" (*Heb. xi. 2*). This word is the all-holy manifestation of Truth. It is the sanctifying power. We cannot bring holiness to God. We must receive holiness from Him. Our Lord prayed, "Sanctify them through the Truth: Thy word is truth" (*John xvii. 17*). So He says to Pilate, "Every one that is of the Truth heareth my voice" (*John xviii. 37*). They rise superior to the accidents of time, and can wait upon God's will, however much the immediate appearance of events may seem to discourage them.

The truth of God's law is only made the more manifest by the lie, for the refusal of man's will to accept God makes manifest the sovereignty of that changeless will which he refuses to accept.

God's voice speaks in the changeless laws of nature. Natural consequences of inevitable evil follow upon disobedience. God's voice speaks in the changeless laws of grace. The consequences of evil follow as inevitably, operating in the spiritual sphere as certainly as the natural consequences which belong to His material creation operate in the world of matter.

143. ADVERSITY FINDING US, *vid. ver. 139*

The Psalmist's "adversaries had forgotten God's word." They were not "of the truth." They are "of their father the devil, and he is a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth," *i.e.*, in the life of God (*John viii. 44*). He treated His own greatness as if he were self-dependent. So he rebelled and fell. The adversaries are, therefore, summed up in the one great adversary. "Trouble" is here represented in a personal aspect, *finding* the Psalmist. There is indeed no such thing as abstract adversity. All living joy is but fellowship with God, and all adversity is fellowship with Satan from whom adversity comes. As we rise out of Satan's power we rise out of adversity, we rise from the fallen world to the glory of the uncreated life. God's people suffer in this world, not by God's anger but by Satan's tyranny.

ANGUISH [*straitness*]

The word occurs three times in the curse which hung over Israel if they were to forsake the covenant of God (*Deut.* xxxviii. 53, 55, 57).

The Psalmist represents Messiah. He speaks as bearing Himself the suffering whereby His rejection was to be avenged. Trouble has come like a flood upon Israel and upon Israel's representative. The little one of Bethlehem, the sufferer of Calvary, bears all that the enemy can do to separate Him from God. He bears all, so that showing Himself unmoved by all, He may triumph over the false power of the evil one. He is the impersonating Royalty of Truth. They that are of the truth must recognise Him as triumphant by the endurance of these sufferings. He as the Redeemer will deliver from Satan's tyranny those who take refuge with Him. Those who reject Him must bear the doom which Moses of old had spoken.

THE JOY OF GOD'S COMMAND

The Son of God could delight in the suffering which He had to bear as being what God had commanded Him to accomplish. By bearing in His human nature the outward suffering, He rejoiced to manifest the interior action of the Divine Word, acting throughout His human faculties. The suffering of the flesh was the exercise of Divine Love for the glory of God in struggle with the enemy, and therefore however much the anguish of Satan's tyranny seized upon Him, He rejoiced to bear all, so that He might crush the rebel.

So should we also "glory in tribulations," not seeking them as if there were some value in suffering for suffering's sake. There is no blessing to be found in any suffering unless the suffering be borne in a spirit of love, acknowledging that it is given to us by God's command. Then must it be our "delight."

144. RIGHTEOUSNESS COMMUNICATED BY GOD'S TESTIMONIES

The Sacraments convey living righteousness as being the organs through which the Holy Ghost acts. "This is the record that

God has given to us eternal life" (1 *John* v. 11). Amidst all the troubles in this world of Satanic domination, our delight is to know that we have received a kingdom which cannot be moved (*Heb.* xii. 28). Our life in that kingdom rests upon the righteousness of God Himself. He is continually acting towards us in the ordinances of grace, and so we rise up to live in Him.

LIFE IN GOD

Faith delights in God's commandments and welcomes the gift of living righteousness. It is made perfect in love rising up to the eternal relationships of the Divine love. The gift of a spiritual understanding enables us to exercise this life that we may be enabled "to know the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (*Eph.* i. 18). For this understanding we must continually pray that it may be developed within us more and more. It is the vision of love. "This is life eternal." This is the knowledge which none but the loving soul can win.

SECTION C

Vers. 145-152

INTEGRITY OF HEART

THE CRY OF THE FAITHFUL ONE

- a.* I call with my whole heart :
Hear me, O Lord ;
I will guard Thy decrees.
- b.* To Thee do I call :
Save me,
And I will observe Thy testi-
monies.
- a.* He looks for an answer corres-
pondent with God's eternal de-
crees, i.e. the eternal Sonship :
- b.* He looks for salvation from His
present distress according to the
sacramental promises of the
Covenant, i.e. the economy of
the Incarnation.

THE CRY OF RESURRECTION

- I am beforehand in the dawn,
And make appeal :
- I wait for Thy word.
- Mine eyes are beforehand with the
night watches ;
To meditate on Thy promises.
- Early in the morning while it is yet
dark :
- He appeals with the Confidence of the
Incarnate Word.
- The eyes of His humanity look forward
through the darkness of ages
Meditating upon God's promises which
shall be fulfilled in the dispen-
sation of grace.

HIS PRAYER

- Hear my voice according to Thy
mercy :
- Quicken me, O Lord, according to
Thy judgments.
- Hear me in mercy beholding my createa
weakness.
- Quicken me with the life of resurrection
according to the perfection which
Thy judgment beholds in me.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES

- a.* They are nigh that follow after
mischief :
- They are far from Thy law.
- a.* The powers of death are nigh at
hand with their malicious prose-
cution.
- They are far from Thy law and
must perish.

b. Thou art nigh at hand, O Lord :
 And all Thy commandments are truths.

b. *Thou art near to me in this distress,
 And all Thy Commandments are true, so that I am secure because I have kept them.*

THE PERFECT DELIVERANCE

Beforehand I know from Thy testimonies

*Long since, even from the foundation of the world,
 I have known with regard to Thy Covenant :*

That Thou hast founded them for ever.

That Thou hast established it to Eternity.

Man's integrity must correspond with God's changeless eternity.

145. I CALLED *Twice, 145, 146.*

WITH MY WHOLE HEART, *ver. 2*

A whole-hearted cry is the utterance of faith. In vain do we pray unto God, if all the while we are relying upon some other power to accomplish our desires. We must "cast all our care upon Him." So we learn to "put our whole trust in Him." God will not hear us if we co-ordinate Him with other objects of reliance. A whole-hearted cry will trust God equally to answer by refusal as by granting our petitions. We must trust His power, His wisdom and His will. Such is the trust which the Triune God demands of us.

A whole-hearted cry has God for its sole reliance and God's glory for its sole desire. The heart is the sphere of love, and we must not cry to God as if He were our servant, and bound to do for us whatever we desire. We must cry to Him as our Father so that we can desire nothing unless it be for His glory to grant it. If we shall glorify Him better by going without it, even though it be by dying, we shall still be content.

ANSWER ME, *ver. 26*

Our Lord could say "It is finished." Therefore He could appeal with a true claim of filial love to have His prayer answered.

We must surrender ourselves with the like integrity. Our claim for an answer can only be made with an entire self-oblation, accepted in Christ and strong for the future by the grace of Christ. Christ's work was done. Now He could leave the world.

I WILL GUARD THY DECREES

The decrees of God are centred in the Divine Sonship. We must be living in the strength of that Sonship, if we would have our petitions granted. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name"—that is the decree of acceptable prayer, the name of Christ.

146. O LORD, UNTO THEE DO I CALL

It is the seventeenth appeal to the name of Jehovah. The Psalmist calls upon God to fulfil His covenanted love while the cry is sustained by integrity of devotion. What we need is salvation.

SAVE ME, *ver.* 94

It is the second appeal for salvation. He belongs to God by regeneration (*vii.* 94). He looks for God now to grant him final salvation as being perfected.

I WILL OBSERVE THY TESTIMONIES

This final perfection can only be obtained by persevering diligence in using the ordinances of grace, observing them by living true to all their requirements.

147. I PREVENTED, *ver.* 148 *Twice, 147, 148*

If we are not on the alert to do God's will, we cannot fulfil it completely.

THE EARLY DAWN

"While it was yet dark" Jesus rose from the dead, and we cannot have our part in His resurrection unless we are rising up by His grace ere the darkness of this earthly night be past away.

We must not wait as if there might be a clearer revelation. Amidst the darkness of earth we must be walking as the children of the day.

The "cool morning breeze" which is "the early dawn" signifies to us the power of the Holy Ghost.

I CRIED

"The Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The cry comes from a condition of distress. Such was the cry of Jonah from the belly of hell (*Jon.* ii. 2) and of the Psalmist (lxxxviii. 14).

I HAVE HOPED, *ver* 43

A *sixfold* hope abiding to the redemption on the sixth day. This is the sixth and last occurrence of the word in this psalm. That hope is now perfect. The lifelong cry of the diligent soul which has been always prompt to fulfil God's will proclaims the hope with confidence. It is a hope assured by the Eternal Word.

148. MINE EYES, *ver.* 18

It is the *sixth* occurrence of "mine eyes."

In *ver.* 18 he prayed to have his eyes opened to spiritual things. Now the eyes of faith are perfected in looking through the darkness to behold the mysteries of heavenly light.

Mine eyes prevent the night watches. Again the Psalmist repeats his word.

His whole being was ready for God by the power of the Holy Ghost breathing upon Him amidst the darkness of the world. His eyes by diligent exercise of grace look to God and see what the natural eye cannot see.

THE NIGHT WATCHES

"In the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud" (*Ex.* xiv. 24). So must we be anticipating by faith the intervention of God

for our deliverance from all enemies when the proper moments shall come. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for."

TO MEDITATE, *vid. ver. 15*

Again, the *sixth* occurrence. He began with meditating upon God's precepts. Now he abides with meditation upon God's promises. It is the promise of the Spirit of life which God gave to Abraham by a covenant of mercy.

As the night watches of this dark world pass by, his heart is fixed in meditation upon the glory of the Eternal Day. He waits for the Sun of righteousness to appear with healing on his wings, as promised to Abraham.

ACCORDING TO THY MERCY, *ver. 88 Four times.*

Quicken me, xx. 88, cc. 160. Lead Thy servant, lxx. 124. Hear my voice, c. 149.

The appeal to God's mercy is sevenfold, vi. 41 ; vii. 64 ; x. 76.

149. ACCORDING TO THY JUDGMENT, *ver. 132 Three times, lxxx. 132 ; c. 149 ; cc. 156.*

As Thou art wont. God's rule of action is not arbitrary but judicial. He gives life to those who seek it rightly. The gift of life is a gift of righteousness. The Jews did not attain to the righteousness which their own law set before them, because they sought it not by faith in God's *promise*. They sought it not *according to God's mercy* (*Rom. ix. 31*).

150. FOLLOWERS OF MISCHIEF

The Psalmist waits to be quickened unto eternal life in accordance with God's promise to those who seek Him. He contrasts with himself the multitude of the ungodly who follow after mischief.

Their heart is not whole with God. Consequently they and the Psalmist are at variance.

FAR FROM GOD'S LAW

They are *far from God's law*, even though perhaps they falsely make a boast of it. God's law is spiritual, and only those who are

quicken in the Covenant of faith can enter into its meaning. The carnal-minded worshipper does not see the wonders of the law, and its spiritual power.

151. NEAR

The Psalmist feels confidence even though enemies are near, in the consciousness that *God is near*. Again we have the repetition of the word.

How ignorant have I been of God's nearness to me!

The enemies do not know their own danger and sinfulness.

TRUTH

The Kingdom of Truth is ready to be revealed. Christ is Himself the personal Truth, establishing the kingdom for all who are ready to hear His voice. All His commandments are true.

The kingdom of truth and the kingdom of falsehood, the kingdom of Eternal Life and that of him who was a murderer from the very outset! They that love the Truth, and they that are seeking mischief, follow their respective leaders.

152. OF OLD TIME

The same word as in *ver.* 140. It signifies "that which goes before."

All preceding ages have been carrying out the original work of Divine predestination. As I look back I see how God by the various dispensations of His Providence has been building up His covenant with the chosen people so that it cannot be shaken.

CONCERNING THY TESTIMONIES

The events of Providence are the outward preparation for the kingdom of Christ, and all the sacrificial appointments of earlier times, as His covenant was developed in the perfection of the law according to the pattern of heavenly things, were ordained so as to be an organization which should be glorified in Christ, but should never pass away.

THOU HAST FOUNDED THEM FOR EVER

God has "founded the earth upon the seas" (*Ps.* xxiv); "He hath founded the earth for ever" (*Ps.* lxxviii. 69). The changelessness of earth is, however, but a shadow of the glorious eternity of the new earth wherein righteousness shall dwell. God's work founded in this lower world shall be made to shine forth in its glorious substance when the earth itself shall flee away. God says, "Mine hand hath founded the earth" (*Is.* xlviii. 13). And underneath the veil of this material universe, amidst the afflictions of earth's furnace, God has "founded His new creation with sapphires, to be established in righteousness" (*Is.* liv. 11, 14); "The trial of the faith of God's people is more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire" (*1 Pet.* i. 7). That faith is the substance of the things we hope for, the real though unseen communication of Divine powers which our faith contemplates and appropriates. That Humanity of the Incarnate God is what we have to lay hold upon in the sacraments of the Gospel. The ascended Humanity of the Son of God is that foundation whereon the Church of God is built for ever and ever. "His foundations are upon the holy Hills of the Divine glory" (*Ps.* lxxxvii. 1). In the sacraments of the Church, we must not fail to see the enduring substance of this Divine fellowship.

The material universe is but the outward chamber wherein the glory of this heavenly universe is to be displayed. Man is to be raised to the Throne of God where Jesus now sits in our nature, and then the testimonies which have served for the discipline of our period of childhood shall give way to the fulness of the glory of our "inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved now in heaven for us" (*1 Peter* i. 4).

SECTION CC

Vers. 153-160

THE EXPECTATION OF THE SUFFERER

APPEAL TO THE TRIUNE GOD

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| <p>a. Behold my trouble and deliver me :
For I do not forget Thy law.</p> <p>b. Shine in my cause and redeem me</p> <p>c. Quicken me according to Thy promise.</p> | <p>a. (<i>To God the Father</i>) the faithful servant cries out for help.</p> <p>b. (<i>To God the Redeemer</i>) that He will come and rescue humanity out of the power of Satan.</p> <p>c. (<i>To God the Sanctifier</i>) that He will quicken him with the life which is in the Only begotten Son, according to God's promise.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

THE MANIFOLDNESS OF THE REDEMPTION

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Salvation [JESUS] is far from the ungodly</p> <p>For they do not seek Thy decrees.</p> <p>Manifold are Thy compassions, O Lord.</p> <p>Quicken me according to Thy judgments.</p> | <p><i>Salvation is far from the ungodly.</i></p> <p>a. (<i>The Divine Personality of Jesus.</i>)</p> <p><i>For they do not seek the eternal decrees of God's promised love whereby the Only begotten Son is marked out as the Redeemer of the world.</i></p> <p>b. (<i>The sufficiency of His oblation of the Humanity.</i>)</p> <p><i>Manifold are Thy compassions, O Lord, even as our sins which need them.</i></p> <p><i>Thou hast taken on Thyself all our burden, by assuming our nature.</i></p> <p><i>Quicken me according to the merits of Him whose love to Thee has been proved in its perfection.</i></p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Manifold are my persecutors and adversaries. *Manifold are the persecutors who have assailed the Only begotten Son, during His humiliation amidst all the powers of darkness.*

I have not swerved from Thy testimonies. *He is the Son of Man and His fidelity has been proved thereby.*

THE FIDELITY OF THE SUPPLIANT

I saw the treacherous dealers and loathed them : *How hateful are the false cloaks of religion which the world puts on.*

For they observed not Thy promise. *They heed not Thy promise.*

See how I love Thy precepts, O Lord : *Look upon me for I love Thy precepts.*

Quicken me according to Thy mercy. *Quicken me according to Thy mercy.*

DOXOLOGY

The sum of Thy Word is truth : *The Word of God is the Life and the Truth.*

All Thy righteous judgment abides to eternity. *All God's righteous judgments are eternal in their issues.*

“Two hundred” is a number expressing deficiency, expectation. It is a progress from unity which looks forward to find its completeness in the number “Three.” The number three is the smallest number in which we can recognise totality and completeness. The line has its beginning, its middle and its end. The triangle furnishes the smallest number of sides by which an area can be enclosed.

153. BEHOLD MY TROUBLE

The last Section spoke of the integrity of heart with which the Psalmist looked to God. He cried but the answer did not apparently come with the needed relief. He is left in suffering. The cry of His self-oblation must be tested with *patience*. His affliction will at length draw forth Divine acknowledgment.

We must remember that this law applies to all, from the passion of Christ to our own small sufferings. We must look upon suffering, not as if God required a certain penalty from

us ere He could be favourable, but as the token of God's love whereby He is fitting us to receive those great rewards which are yet in store.

DELIVER ME

The cry to be loosed from this affliction will not be unheeded. God will deliver. His deliverance will be through the gateway of suffering, not by some preternatural exemption from its burden. He did not let the suffering come because He was indifferent to our weakness. He knew how hard it would be to bear. He proportioned it to the strength which He had in store for our assistance. As it was for our good that He permitted it at the first, so He will not take the suffering away in such a manner as to make us the losers.

The benefit which we gain from the suffering may be either in the patience with which we bear it or in the earnestness of faith with which we ask to have it removed. In either case there must be an entire surrender of self to accept God's will with perfect love. Otherwise neither the continuance nor the removal of the suffering will do us any good. Let us remember that God cannot take away our suffering in order to give us temporal relief according to our natural desires. That would be to subordinate the great purposes of His love to the unworthiness of our own finite wishes. God must act towards us so as to obtain for us the greatest benefit of which we are capable. We cannot wish that He should remove what is for our good, unless in removing it He give to us an equal good. A deliverance which should take us out of earthly trouble and prevent our acquiring heavenly joy would be no deliverance. We ask for deliverance, but we must desire that earthly discipline shall fit us for the blessedness of life with God. Otherwise the prayer would be profane.

So then the more hard we feel our discipline may be to bear, the more earnest must be the surrender of ourselves along with the sacrifice to cry out for God's glory in lively faith. Intense

must be the cry of faith made perfect through love,—Deliver me and take me to Thyself in all the fulness of that love whereby Thou hast called me unto Thyself.

I DO NOT FORGET THY LAW

If God delivers us, all will be well; but we do not ask Him to deliver us otherwise than with a full remembrance of His law. We would not go back from the carrying of the Cross to rest satisfied with the ease and self-indulgence of the world.

154. AVENGE THOU MY CAUSE

Our troubles in this world come from the assaults of Satan. Our deliverance is not a simple act of deliverance, like the rescue of one who is drowning. It is an act of contention by which we are rescued from the grasp of the enemy. No soul can be delivered from the power of the enemy without a special victory on his behalf by which Christ avenges him upon Satan. This ought to make us realize what our deliverance is, whereas we too readily acquiesce in the idea of trouble of any kind, as if it were a mere impersonal condition of misfortune.

REDEEM ME

The work of our deliverance is an avenging of our cause against the tyrant who has us in his power, the prince of this world. We are not to think that his power came suddenly to an end because our Lord crushed him with an eternal triumph. Jesus goes forth conquering and to conquer. We are individually the objects of His triumph. We have to share with Him, using His grace to fight against the devil.

QUICKEN ME

The struggle: the conquest of the enemy: the renewal of Divine life in the redeemed. These three stages of our deliverance are here set before us.

We have not to be saved from death by the death of Christ, for we are already dead by our natural condition as fallen beings in

this sinful world. We have to be raised out of death by the strong redeeming arm of Christ, and quickened by the Spirit of life in newness of life.

ACCORDING TO THY PROMISE

The gift of life is the promise set before the redeemed. We must not think of our redemption as if it were satisfied by our being set free from some of the evils of our prison-house on earth. If we retained the life of earth with every outward joy, that would not satisfy the soul of man. We must be quickened with a supernatural life as the children of God, by the communicated power of the Holy Ghost in the Body of Christ. That is the promise, and without that promise the death of Christ as effecting a new relation between ourselves and God would be powerless. There must be a real gift of a new interior relationship between ourselves and God. Nothing short of that can satisfy the soul of man, for man was created for God. O how this promise transcends all our possibilities of conception! And yet without its accomplishment we must be the slaves of sin and death for ever!

155. SALVATION FAR FROM THE UNGODLY

The ungodly rest in this evil world. They do not desire salvation. They do not feel their need of it. God does not withhold salvation from them, but they do not seek it in the way that He appoints. They perish because they believe not. Their not believing is manifest because they do not seek in the way by which God invites them.

THEY SEEK NOT THY DECREES

God does not limit His salvation by the fact of ordaining necessary means of grace. If He did not appoint means for carrying out the covenant of life, the covenant would be made subordinate to man's slothfulness or other evil tendencies which keep men back from fulfilling what God has appointed. If we were taken into heaven without having our idiosyncrasies subdued, we should carry all the evil world with us, and redemption would be nullified.

There must be a surrender of self if we are to live true to God. We must, therefore, submit to God's terms, and realise that our observance of them is the recognition of God's authority, without which all the work of redemption would be vain.

156. MANY ARE THY COMPASSIONS *Four times, cc. 156, 157; ccc. 162, 165.*

The *compassions* point to the sympathy of Christ in His Humanity struggling against Satan for our deliverance. Indeed His compassions are the counterpart of our sufferings. In all our afflictions He was afflicted. There is no suffering of man in which He did not share. There is this difference between our suffering and His compassion. We cannot help our suffering. We would avoid all suffering if we could. We do not see the relation which exists between evil and the physical suffering which it occasions. Jesus entered into the suffering condition of our humanity by His own free will. Jesus saw the spiritual evil which underlay every physical pain. Jesus saw it as a blow of malice struck at humanity whether collectively or individually by that evil spirit. Jesus endured the suffering for the glory of God, triumphing over the enemy in the struggle by the love which He had to the Father. Jesus by sharing in the struggle gives forth merit from His suffering Humanity to enable us to triumph over Satan therein if we will abide in the fellowship of His Love.

The compassions of Jesus are coextensive with our sufferings by the identity of manhood wherein He suffered. The compassions of Jesus are great with all the power of God by reason of the Divine Personality. This made His sufferings glorious with the sanctifying Unction of the Eternal Spirit. By His Humanity He embraces us. By His Divinity He uplifts us. In conflict with the enemy He felt the experience of our need. In the exaltation of redeeming Love He calls us to experience the joy of His reward.

QUICKEN ME

How the reiterated appeal rings through this Section. A three-fold appeal! (*vers. 154, 156, 159*). They set forth respectively the original promise of the Redeemer, the compassion of the Re-

deemer in His suffering, the Redeemer's mercy to them that love Him.

ACCORDING TO THY JUDGMENT

While man is delivered, Satan is judged. Christ by His endurance sounded the depths, as it were, of Satanic malice. The Cross was a judgment-seat. On this was manifested both the perfection of love wherewith the Incarnate Redeemer triumphed, making our Humanity an oblation worthy of God, and the infinite doom of hatred wherewith the powers of evil blindly exerted the fulness of their malice in impotent efforts to retain in slavery the manhood which God had created to share His glory.

157. MANY ARE MY PERSECUTORS

The repetition of words seems to set forth the multiplicity, the stir, of the redeeming conflict. Many the mercies (*ver.* 156). Many the persecutors (*ver.* 157). Much the spoil (*ver.* 162). Much the peace (*ver.* 165).

MY PERSECUTORS AND ADVERSARIES, *ver.* 139

The world of evil is continually persecuting, but in the covenant of God the Psalmist finds continual security and encouragement.

I HAVE NOT SWERVED FROM THY TESTIMONIES

In the sacraments of grace he hears God continually calling to him, "Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you" (*ver.* 36).

158. I SAW THE TREACHEROUS DEALERS

Their life is continually cloaked in false pretences. "An open enemy I could have borne." It is this constant setting forth of worldly plausibilities which makes the faithful soul so distressed in this world. They set forth an aim which is apparently the same as our own and yet it destroys the reality of what we hope for, by reducing it to the mere level of earthliness. "I would thou wert either cold or hot. Because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (*Rev.* iii. 15).

I FELT LOATHING

The world's alliance is worse than the world's hatred. It is utterly insufficient to meet the needs of the soul. The world's antagonism drives the soul to seek satisfaction in God. In death we find life. But the world's compromises prevent us knowing where we stand. We have to keep up a semblance of courtesy, while yet we feel the hollowness of all the world's conventional smoothnesses.

THEY OBSERVE NOT THY PROMISE

God's eternal truth is the only stay which can give permanence to our relationships. The world does not look to the eternal kingdom. The bond which links us with the treacherous worldling may be snapped at any moment.

159. SEE, *ver.* 153

See my *affliction!* See my *love!*

The joy of the soul is to know that the eye of God is upon it at all times. That eye is the eye of eternal truth and love. The soul is lifted up out of trouble by the consciousness of God's eye taking notice.

I LOVE THY PRECEPTS, *ver.* 47

This is the eighth utterance of His love. The regenerate soul feels the love of God shed abroad in the heart. The ninth, the final utterance of love, is the absorption into the personal fellowship of God in His glory where the treacherous persecutors cannot any longer mock him with their deceits.

QUICKEN ME ACCORDING TO THY MERCY

The soul feels herself stirred by the Divine ecstasy of love. This is the final, the ninth appeal for that life which is all love, Divine love in the Divine majesty. As His majesty is so is His *mercy*. The Divine majesty is the only measure of that life in the consubstantial glory of God whereby the soul will love even as it is loved.

160. THE SUM OF THY WORD

The "Two Hundred" of insufficiency give place to the "Three Hundred" of the final triumph. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Christ came to bear witness unto the Truth in this deceitful world. Now the truth will shine out in all its fulness. The kingdom of Truth abides, and the world passes away.

TRUTH

All that is phenomenal is gone. Truth remains, the personal consciousness of God's love. This is no mere absorption into formless abstraction. The personality, the consciousness of the Eternal abides. We do not leave reality for dreamland. We leave the dreams of earth so as to learn the reality of God in His Infinite Truth, with a knowledge infinitely surpassing all earthly imagination. This knowledge is eternal life, the life of God Himself, given unto us in His Incarnate Word as we are lifted up into the glory of the Creator.

EACH OF THY RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS IS EVERLASTING

This life of eternal glory is the sum of all the experiences of earthly life. Not one of those judgments passes away. We live on in the individuality of our earthly discipline and the all-comprehensive glory of the Divine substance. Then shall we know how God in His love has been leading us through the difficulties of life. Then shall we see the glory of the merits of Christ. Then shall we experience the blessedness of every detail in which we have faithfully corresponded with the grace given to us by Him, and in Him, our Head.

The Head, the Sum, of the Divine Word is Truth. Jesus is the Head of the Body in whom all the promises of God are fulfilled. He is the Way whereby we are perfected. He is the Truth wherein we are established. He is the Life wherein we live for ever with the Light of God.

SECTION CCC

Vers. 161-168

THE VICTORY OF THE FAITHFUL

GOD'S WORD OUR STRENGTH AGAINST THE POWERS OF DARKNESS

Princes have persecuted me without a cause :	<i>The Divine Word as a groundwork of awe</i>
My heart standeth in awe of Thy words.	<i>Wherewith to resist the principalities of this evil world.</i>

THE TRIUMPHANT JOY OF LOVING OBEDIENCE

I rejoice in Thy promises :	<i>The joy of God's promise</i>
As one that findeth great spoils.	<i>a treasure of victorious spoil.</i>
As for falsehood I hate and abhor it :	<i>The abomination of this false world.</i>
Thy law do I love.	<i>Love to God's law.</i>

PRAISE TO GOD TRANQUIL WITH CONFIDENCE AND HOPE

Seven times a day do I praise Thee :	<i>Sevenfold praise</i>
Because of Thy righteous judgments.	<i>Responding to God's judicial discipline.</i>
Great is the peace of those who love Thy law :	<i>Peace in the love of God's law,</i>
And they have no occasion of stumbling.	<i>Free from every stumbling-block.</i>
I look forward to Thy salvation, O Lord :	<i>Expectation of Jesus the Saviour</i>
And do Thy commandments.	<i>While obeying His commandments.</i>

*THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE COVENANT WHEREIN
GOD WATCHETH OVER US*

My soul observeth Thy testi- *Observance of God's covenant.*
monies :

And loveth them exceedingly. *The love which it requires.*

I have observed Thy precepts and *Walking in God's presence.*
Thy testimonies

For all my ways are before Thee.

The number Three speaks of Divine Life. So in Section III. we had the Divine Life of Resurrection : in Section XXX. Eternal life in Christ : now in Section CCC. the victory of the faithful. This Section sets before us the triumph over the powers of death, the glory of the kingdom of life.

161. PRINCES, *vid. ver. 23*

These are the "principalities and powers in heavenly places" against which the children of God have to contend. They rule the affairs of this evil time and organise the events of the political world so as to thwart and overthrow the Church of Christ.

They form a part of that "council of gods" (*Ps. lxxxii. 1*) in the midst of which God reigns over the universe, "the sons of God" (*Job i.*), who act under God's control. The Prince of this world is the rebellious one along with his subordinate spirits. He cannot act without God's permission, but he is always seeking to do evil to those who serve God. He accuses them before God, and God suffers him to try his faithful servants as he tried Job. Yet God always sets limitations and if God's people are faithful, they will be victorious over him. Jesus conquered him when He descended into Hell, having endured the utmost temptations that the powers of evil could bring against Him, in all the sufferings of His three and thirty years of life upon the earth. Satan was to bruise Messiah's Body, but he could do no more. Messiah followed him into Hell that there in the power of Godhead He might bruise Satan's head. The victory was complete. The wondrous results will not be fully seen until the devil is cast into the abyss of fire along with his evil angels. Meanwhile he is going about seeking whom he may devour

(1 *Peter* v. 8). He is still acting as "the accuser of the brethren" (*Rev.* xii. 10), but Christ has given us His Holy Spirit so that in our regenerate life he cannot harm us if we abide in Christ. He is ever trying our faithfulness. We cannot resist him by any powers of our own, but if we are watchful against him God will shelter us with His grace and God will bruise Satan under our feet shortly (*Rom.* xvi. 20). "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 *John* v. 4).

PERSECUTE, *ver.* 84

We have to wait through life bearing this persecution. So must we take up our Cross and follow Christ. These evil powers persecute us with a lie, making outward things seem different from what they really are. As Satan accuses us before God, so he maligns God towards man, dealing with us as he did with our first parents in Paradise (xx. 84, 86). Satan could not harm them while they obeyed God and continued in God's word. When they gave heed to Satan's lie, they lost God's protection. The Divine glory which clothed their bodies was stripped from them. The Holy Ghost was withdrawn from within, so that their souls were dead.

Ever since that time human nature has been the slave of Satan, but God promised that the Seed of the woman should be the Redeemer. Therefore the Son of God took man's nature upon Him, and that nature was still subject to Satan's tyranny, so that he could inflict upon Christ every form of suffering. The Person of Christ was nevertheless free, and Satan could not draw His will into estrangement from the will of God, for His Person was the very Word of God, one with the Father.

It was in resistance to these temptations that the perfection of Christ was manifested (c. 150). He never swerved from the "witness unto the Truth" which He came to bear in the fulness of Divine royalty (*John* xviii. 37). Many they were that persecuted Him (*ver.* 137), but all was in vain. They were to exert against Him all the power which they possessed. Otherwise His victory would not have been complete. He speaks to His

Apostles as having "continued with Him in His temptations" (*Luke* xxii. 28). This was the purpose of His life in the world. He did not meet Satan by outward spiritual antagonism, for that would have been an exercise of Divine Omnipotence, and if He had thus acted the victory would not have been the victory of human nature ; but He met Satan's violence with Divine endurance, so that His sufferings attested the Divine Truth which was His life. They persecuted Him without a cause. His Divine character and His faithfulness to God as His Father were the cause of Satan's assaults.

WITHOUT A CAUSE

God says to Satan that he had moved him to destroy Job without a cause (*Job* ii. 3). Job was a type of Christ's Humanity. Satan accused him falsely, and his afflictions were to be the proof of his integrity.

So we have six times in the Psalter the same word, and always used of the causelessness of Christ's sufferings, always-in what are called the comminatory psalms, except this one occurrence in this Section.

The word is "gratuitous": and as grace is unmerited, a gratuitous gift, so the sufferings of Christ were unmerited, a gratuitous assault of the evil one.

We are not, therefore, to be surprised whenever any form of suffering comes upon us. Let us remember that it is the gratuitous assault of Satan, whose only object is to draw us away from God. We are to share Christ's victory, but that can only be in proportion as we share His struggle with Satan. "There can no temptation happen to us but such as man can bear : and God is faithful who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make the way of escape that we may be able to endure it" (*1 Cor.* x. 13). God will give us grace proportionate to Satan's assault, but we must be careful in the use of that grace. Otherwise we shall forfeit all the merit which God's grace would enable us to win. Satan assails us causelessly in his hatred, but God will help us gratuitously in His love. He does

not suffer us to be persecuted causelessly, because He desires thereby to make us more than conquerors (*Rom. viii. 37*). "The proof of our faith being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be proved by fire, shall be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (*1 Pet. i. 7*).

THE HEART IN AWE OF GOD'S WORD, *vid. ver. 120*

The Human Heart of Jesus, as the seat of the understanding and the will, was in awe of the Divine Person of the Incarnate Word. The two natures of Christ are set before us in this verse. It expresses, if one may reverently say so, the Divine Self-respect of our Lord Jesus. All His Human actions were done in the awful sense of His Divine Nature.

We must, in like manner, cherish the fear of God's word, a personal sense of responsibility to the Divine Word. It is the consciousness of a personal relationship to the loving God who has spoken to us, which is necessary to set us free from the paralyzing terror of the persecuting enemy.

162. THE JOYOUSNESS OF GOD'S WORD [*promise*], *vid. ver. 14*

We cannot triumph against the hosts of darkness unless we are rejoicing in God's promises. The personal pronoun is emphatic. By it the Psalmist distinguishes himself from the enemies which beset him. His joy, by reason of God's promise, is what makes him to be himself. He cannot rejoice in anything else. God's word rules him. God's promise fills him with joy.

GREAT SPOILS

The joy of a conqueror. The ways of God's testimonies give the joy of a treasure, as when a man buys a field (*ii. 14*). The Divine riches filling our empty Humanity. God's promise stimulating us with future hope, and that hope is to be realised through struggle. The reward is set before us as the spoil of our enemy. It is the joy of victory through Christ.

FINDETH, *vid. ver.* 143

The struggle is great, but the spoils of victory shall be greater than we thought to win. "It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love Him." If we do the battle of the Lord of hosts we shall win far more than the perishing spoil of the enemy whom we conquer. We shall win the infinite reward of the eternal love.

163. THE LIE, *vid. ver.* 29

The lie is the natural world, which seems so real for the moment, but after all it is a mere deceit. We lose things eternal by seeking for that which must soon be lost.

HATRED AND ABHORRENCE, *vid. ver.* 104

If we really love the things eternal we must hate what belongs only to time. That which we love in time can only be loved with a view to eternal glorification. Therefore our Lord says, we must hate all, even our own life also, if we would be His disciples. Thus must we take up our cross (*Luke* xiv. 26, 27). This is our protection (xl. 104). The victory of Divine love is that wherein the soul rests with entire satisfaction. Natural hatred is perfected in abhorrence while we look through the deceptive exterior of worldly promises and see the abomination which is concealed therein. The loving soul loves what God gives, and abhors what God withholds, for it knows that it cannot turn to good. Our Lord triumphed over Satan, abhorring the whole world as a Satanic gift, and refusing to receive anything except according to the ordering of Divine Providence.

THE LOVE OF GOD'S LAW, *vid. ver.* 47

All that God gives must be loved for the sake of God the giver. This law of hatred, therefore, is not at variance with the legitimate exercise of natural affection. The law of God, which regulates all natural affection, strengthens it in all truth. The duties of natural affection are imposed upon us by God, but no ties of natural

intimacy must hold us down so as to interfere with the supreme demand of love to Him.

We must accept all the circumstances of life with the duties which arise out of them as being God's law for our own selves. Thus we shall find a delight in everything, whether of joy or sorrow, because it is to us a means of glorifying God. God speaks to us in the relationships of the outer life as much as in the revelations of the spiritual life. The objects of time are not to be chosen for the gratification of our outward nature, but for the fulfilment of Divine commands. They are the tests of a self-sacrificing spirit, such as belongs to Christ. "If any man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen" (1 *John* iv. 20). The greater the difficulty which holds any man back from loving his brother, the greater is the triumph of divine love whereby that love is exercised.

164. THE SEVENFOLD PRAISE *Twice, vers. 164, 175.*

The day of life in Christ is a day of sevenfold praise. It is the praise which the sevenfold Spirit enables the soul to pour forth. The whole day of life becomes a continuous Hallelujah victory in the power of this Holy Spirit: "The light of the sun shall be sevenfold as the light of seven days" (*Is.* xxx. 26).

The seven day-hours of the Church are the expression of this sevenfold power. We sing God's praises in the sanctuary as being partakers of that victory wherein Christ calls us to dwell with Himself, having delivered us from the world of deceit and the persecutions of Satan.

If we love God's promise we must be continually praising Him for it. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and we must praise God for them as being already given. If we fail to praise we fail to appropriate.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS, *vid. ver. 7*

The Psalmist entered upon the way of perfection looking forward to learn God's righteous judgments (*ver. 7*). Now he has traversed as it were the six days of a new creation in the moral universe

and praises God for those judgments by which he has been trained for the victory. This sixfold discipline of the Passion prepares him for the peace belonging to the seventh day of the grave (*ver.* 165).

So must it be with all of us. We must learn to praise God for the successive dispensations of sorrow by which He would fit our souls for Himself.

165. THE GREAT PEACE, *vid. ver.* 156

Great are the compassions of the Lord; great the multitude that persecute; great the spoil of the victory; great the peace of those who rest lovingly in God's laws (*vers.* 156, 157, 162, 165).

That peace can only be measured by the persecutions which are hushed, but the hushing of those persecutions is something more than the cessation of outward strife. It is a power which works within the soul and gives it peace even while the outward strife continues. It is the peace which has solaced martyrs with holy joy while bearing many torments. It is the peace of God which passeth understanding which keeps both heart and mind, the affections and the intelligence, calmly triumphant amidst every outward form of trouble. It is an active power lifting up the soul into fellowship with Him who is peace. The indivisible love of the Eternal Godhead is the joyous peaceful bond of the regenerate creation.

The love of the deceitful world brings strife and disappointment, but the love of God's law brings joy in the midst of all external contrarities (*ver.* 163); and peace is the recognition of Divine glory in the universal consummation of all desires.

NO OFFENCE

The discipline of the Cross if it is accepted in the love of God does not in any way disturb the tranquillity of the soul. "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread, and He shall be for a sanctuary. But He shall be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a jin and for a snare to the in-

habitants of Jerusalem" (*Is.* viii. 14). So must the Cross ever be to those who have not learnt in the school of the Passion to accept with loving hearts the righteous judgments of God. Those who live in the love of God's law and are not merely contentious as to its outward observance shall find God Himself to be their sanctuary, the living glory of the heavenly Jerusalem. The Cross is to them no cause of stumbling. Nay! It is the very foundation principle of the Cruciform City, the heavenly Jerusalem.

166. SALVATION ANTICIPATED, *vid. ver.* 116

The Cross is a stumbling block to the natural reason, but it is by the Cross that we look for salvation. There must be the bruising of the Redeemer's heel if He is to win the victory. Our peace must not therefore be disturbed by any overthrow as we follow Jesus along the way of the Cross. "The persecutions and tribulations which the faithful endure are a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that we may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which we suffer. God shall give us rest, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels" (*2 Thess.* i. 5). So by the Cross we look for Jesus, and Jesus is salvation.

He may Himself be considered as using these words, because He looked for the salvation which He was to accomplish and in which His Name would be eternally verified.

We use them, both as looking for that salvation which He accomplished on the Cross and also looking for that development of His saving power whereby He, through the Cross which He gives us, fits us to be partakers of His salvation.

DOING GOD'S COMMANDMENTS, *vid. ver.* 65

Salvation consists in being set free by new birth to keep God's holy will and commandments. We cannot therefore look for His salvation unless we are walking true to God's commandments in that salvation wherewith Christ has made us free.

Salvation consists in life along with God, but life is action, and

therefore we cannot have salvation unless we are living in active unity with God.

Doing God's commandments does not mean simply the doing of some things which God has commanded, but such a subjection of our whole being to His living control that we can do nothing of ourselves, but everything only as He inspires. So our Lord says, "The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise" (*John v. 19*).

167. KEEPING GOD'S TESTIMONIES

The commandments are the *law* of salvation. The testimonies are the *instrumental means* of salvation. He has prayed, "Quicken me" (*ver. 88*). "Save me" (*ver. 146*) "that I may keep." Now having attained the gift of salvation, he pledges himself: "My soul doth keep." It is his soul's constant intention. He reiterates the assurance, "I have kept" (*ver. 168*). His living personality, His humanity, saved from the tyranny of the Evil One, has kept God's precepts and testimonies, the personal conduct or example and the sacramental grace of Christ.

168. WALKING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

God said to Abram, "Walk before my Face and be thou perfect" (*Gen. xvii. 1*).

He who would walk in the way of perfection must always feel the eye of God to be upon all his ways. Ways which God seeth not are ways which God loveth not—ways of sin. To walk in the conscious sight of God, looking to Him and seen by Him, is the pathway of Divine Love. The Son is eternally with God in the unity of the Divine Substance. The humanity of Christ is taken up into that fellowship by the Incarnation. We are called to abide in the same mutual loving regard as being incorporated into Christ.

This perfect fellowship, walking with God, is the consummation of the victory of faith—faith lost in sight by the illuminating presence of the Spirit of Love.

SECTION CCCC

Vers. 169-176

THE PLEADING OF THE CROSS

THE CRY OF THE SOUL SEEKING FREEDOM FROM EARTHLY SUBJECTION

- Let my cry come before Thee, O Lord :
- Give me understanding according to Thy Word.
- Let my prayer for grace come before Thee :
- Deliver me according to Thy promise.
- a. *The cry of the soul*
as it longs for the Wisdom of the Incarnate Word to make clear the mystery of redemption.
- b. *The cry of the soul*
as it feels itself subject to death and longs for the promised redemption to be fulfilled.

THE SOUL LOOKING UPWARD IN CONFIDENT PRAISE

- My lips shall overflow with praise :
- When Thou hast taught me Thy decrees.
- My tongue shall sing of Thy promises
For all Thy commandments are righteousness.
- Let Thine Hand be my help :
- a. *The predestination.*
*Our mouth shall respond with praise to the decrees of God's mouth by His Eternal Word
When human nature has learnt obedience in the school of Christ's Passion.*
- b. *The righteousness.*
*We shall sing the song of Redemption
When we are perfected in righteousness by the Passion.*
- c. *The sanctification.*
God's Hand will be ready to help us in our need with all the grace of Calvary

For I have chosen Thy precepts.

If we have chosen God's precepts as our portion following the example of Christ.

THE SOUL FINDS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH THE
DEATH OF THE CROSS

I have longed for Thy salvation,

He has longed for the Salvation pledged in the name of JESUS.

O Lord :

"Thy law is my delight."

And Thy law is my delight.

Let my soul live, and it shall praise

Though I die in the flesh, let my soul live in Thy praise.

Thee :

And Thy judgments shall help me.

The Cross which manifests Thy triumph over sin shall be my help. It is the Gate of Eternal Life.

THE FINAL APPEAL

I have wandered like a lost sheep,

Human nature was like a lost sheep.

Seek Thy Servant :

Thou art the Good Shepherd! By Thy Cross Thou seekest those who will hear Thy voice and follow Thee.

For I do not forget Thy commandments.

I give myself to do Thy will for ever.

The Hebrew alphabet seems to symbolize the Jewish religion, for it leads us to the Cross. The letter T is the closing letter. This was the mark which the man clothed with linen and having a writer's ink-horn was to set upon the foreheads of those who sighed and cried for the abominations of Jerusalem (*Ezek. ix. 4*). The Psalmist, speaking of the old provocations of God's people, says: They limited (literally, marked with a cross or crucified), the Holy One of Israel (*Ps. lxxviii. 41*). David marking the Gates of Gath with Crosses seems to typify the triumph of the Cross over the gates of Hell (*1 Sam. xxi. 14*).

As the form and the name, so also the number of this Section points to the Cross.

Four is the number of the Cross by reason of its four arms. It is also the number of universality as indicating the four points of the compass, and the Cross is the emblem of Christ's triumph over all the earth. Forty carries on the idea of probation which is the test of obedience by suffering. Four hundred may be expected

to give a consummation of the idea. We have that number given to Abraham as the term of Egyptian bondage for his seed (*Gen.* xv. 13). The burial ground which Abraham purchased was worth four hundred shekels (*Gen.* xxiii. 15). Esau came with four hundred men. His coming was a terror to Jacob when Jacob was returning from his long exile, and thus typifies the power of the grave which the greater Jacob meets when He leaves the world and goes to the Father (*Gen.* xxxiii. 1). The company with David in the cave of Adullam are a type of those who are baptized into the death of Christ. They were four hundred men (1 *Sam.* xxii. 2). The slaughter of the Amalekites, when David's two wives were taken captive, seems to be intended as a type of the destruction of the world, and the four hundred young men who escape upon camels are a symbol of the redeemed (1 *Sam.* xxx. 17). These references indicate four hundred as expressing the pleading of the Cross.

169. THE CRY OF THE CRUCIFIED

This Section apparently begins with the loud cry of the Cross. It is not really a complaint, but a cry of any kind. The cry of the well-beloved rises up to the Father's Face. It is a cry of wonder, a cry for understanding. This may seem strange to us, but in truth even the human understanding of the Eternal Son could not know with active knowledge the mystery of redemption, until by His own act He had brought that mystery to its completion. It required that He should be glorified at the Right Hand of the Father. Although He knew intellectually by receptive knowledge all that awaited Him, yet He needed experience to exalt Him as man above the sphere of Humanity in order to know humanly the mysteries through which that glory should be attained. So then we have Him crying out upon the Cross in the words of the Psalmist, Why hast Thou left me alone? That question could only be answered by taking the manhood into the fulness of glory belonging to the Eternal Wisdom.

The answer would be given when the loneliness of the strife was over, and the Human Nature of Him who was leaving the world

and going to the Father should be glorified in that fellowship with the Divine Counsels which He possessed as the Consubstantial Son before the world was.

THE INFINITE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ETERNAL WORD

In the cry of wonder upon the Cross the Humanity cries out for an infusion of *understanding* such as befits the Person of the Word with which it is hypostatically united. *Give me understanding according to Thy Word.* He pleads for *understanding* not as if ignorant, but that He may attain in *act* what He foresees by Divine *power*. His act of redemption attains its completeness by that attainment of *understanding* which is above created expression. God knows what He does by doing it, and so the Soul of Christ rises to gain full Divine knowledge by the completeness of Divine action.

Make me to understand! The first cry was in Section IV. 37, as He enters upon His life of humiliation to bear the Cross. The second, Section V. 34, that He might be true to God's moral law in a spirit of love. The third, Section X. 73, that He might be true to the law of human nature as the creature of God's Hands. The fourth, Section LXX. 125, that He might be true to the law of grace and the sacramental powers whereby His Body should be built up by the Divine testimonies. The fifth, Section XC. 144, that He might live eternally in the righteousness of the Divine Life. The sixth completes the series: that His manhood may be glorified in the Divine Wisdom of the Word triumphant over all the ignorance incident to the finite nature wherein He has suffered humiliation.

In the full manifestation of the Divine decrees whereby He reigns as the Eternal Son, He will enter upon that glorious Sabbath of Divine Praise which shall be the End of the Way (*ver. 171*).

170. BEFORE GOD'S FACE

"Let my cry *be near Thy Face.*" He speaks as claiming the nearness of Personal fellowship in the Divine Unity.

“Let my supplication *come before Thy Face.*” The phrase thus seemingly repeated must be understood with a difference. The Son of God is ever in the Bosom of the Father. The Manhood has to be brought thither. Hence He asks that His supplication as Man, His prayer for grace, may come with acceptance before the Face or Person of the Father. The Godhead and the Manhood speak in this twofold cry with befitting exactness. The Godhead is consubstantial with the Father: the Manhood is taken into God.

When Jesus asks that His supplication may come near, may be accepted, He does not ask as if there could be any refusal. The Divine Unity of the Sonship necessitates the welcome of the Manhood, but the law of created life requires that He, as man, shall ask for that which by the Father’s creative Love is His inalienable prerogative. The moral nature of His Manhood must act worthily of its predestination and cling to God by prayer. His Manhood would lack Divine Life, if it did not live in the continual outpouring of this Divine longing. The two natures must be exercised in a combined act.

So the Humanity looks to be *delivered according to God’s promise.* The phrase is not as in *ver.* 169, “in a manner worthy of Thy Word,” but as befits the Humanity “in a manner worthy of Thy promise.” The Eternal Person had a claim of dignity. The Humanity had the assurance of a promise.

THE PROMISED DELIVERANCE

In Section VI. the prayer was, “Snatch not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth.” He claimed on behalf of His created nature the perpetual immanence of the Divine Word.

Now in this Section of the Cross when His human obedience has been perfected the prayer rises up “Snatch me away according to Thy Promise.” It is not that the two natures may be separated so that the lower nature should be lost, but that His Incarnate Being, with the Human Nature now made perfect through suffering, may be taken from this world. “If ye loved me, ye would

rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father" (*John* xiv. 28). In accordance with this saying He prays now to be delivered.

171. THE UTTERANCE OF PRAISE, *vid. ver. 13*

Praise will follow after obedience when the Crucified has been delivered according to the promise. His lips recounted with devout acceptance the judgments which He would have to meet in accordance with the Divine predestination when He entered upon His pathway of obedience (ii. 13) as the Incarnate Word. Now He looks to ascend to Heaven and His lips will praise God for the reward vouchsafed to His triumphant Humanity.

LEARNING OBEDIENCE

At the outset He vowed to offer this Eucharistic sacrifice when He had learnt God's righteous judgments (i., *ver. 7*). In ix. 66, He asked for Divine Light to be with Him that He might have good discernment and knowledge. In l. 108 He asked for the free-will offerings of His humanity to be accepted while He learnt God's judgments.

There is a sixfold progress in His learning God's decrees. *First*, His eternal consciousness of the Divine Beatitude supplies the motive for His Human Soul. He sees the joy set before Him as the Incarnate Word (ii. 12). *Secondly*, He must experience humiliation to the dust by death upon the Cross (iv. 26). He contemplates the gift of universal power upon the earth renewed by God's mercy as His reward (viii. 64). So He rejoices in the experience of God's goodness and graciousness as delivering Him from the proud enemies which surrounded Him (ix. 68). He rejoices in the kingdom of grace in which He as the Elect Servant experiences the fulness of God's mercy in the sacramental ordinances of His kingdom (lxx. 124). He calls for the Divine Countenance to shine upon Him according to the blessedness which He had with the Father as He entered upon His progress. In this vision the regeneration of humanity is complete (lxxx. 135). Now then He in this seventh utterance can rejoice in the restfulness of thankful praise, the Sabbatical

acceptance of the Elect Servant. He has been taught by the development of His manhood what were the Divine Decrees of old, the predestinating love of the Creator (cccc. 171).

172. RESPONSIVENESS OF JOY TO THE DIVINE PROMISE

The tongue of the Incarnate is the pen of a ready writer (*Ps.* xlv. 2). "He speaks what He has seen with His Father" (*John* viii. 38). There seems to be a distinction between the *inarticulate* joy of the Humanity praising God in the experience of the Divine Bliss to which it is exalted,—the *lips* pouring forth grateful love as with the smile of childhood,—and the *articulate* correspondence of the glorified Person of the Incarnate now that the Humanity has perfectly learnt obedience by suffering and therefore shows itself to be worthy of the original promise,—the *tongue* celebrating the righteousness of God's judgment which He has shown forth in detailed action while struggling against the devices of the enemy. His *perfected* righteousness as man is as it were the echo of the *predestinating* righteousness of God. He speaks what He has seen in Divine eternity, which is also what He Himself has done in human obedience. He has been perfectly correspondent to the Father's mind. No detail of His temptation took Him by surprise. He knew when He came into the world how He was to be bruised of the Serpent, and every wound that the Incarnate Son has received becomes an articulate expression in glory of that which the Eternal Wisdom came to accomplish in suffering.

God's *righteous commands* are the outline of His Fatherly *promise*. The Glorified Son receives what the Father gives Him, not in the uncircumscribed universality of Divine beneficence, but in the formulated experience of the Divine approval.

173. GOD'S HELPING HAND

God's *Hand* seems specially to signify the formative, *creative* power of Godhead as exercised towards man by the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. So God "formed man out of the dust of the ground" (*Gen.* ii. 7), as we have already read

in this psalm, "Thy Hands have made me and stablished me" (*ver.* 73). The touch of God distinguishes man from other animals. It communicates to man a moral nature in affinity with God. After man had been created, "God took not hold of Angels, but he took hold of the Seed of Abraham" (*Heb.* ii. 16). Here again the Hand is the Divine instrument. Then the strong Hand of *Redemption* and the outstretched arm of Divine Love set forth the two natures of the Redeemer. Upon the Cross Jesus commends His Spirit into the Hands of the Father, the glorious welcome of Divine Sonship.

Here we have the appeal *Let Thy Hand be for my help*. It is in the active power of the Divine Sonship that He goes forth triumphant from the Cross. That eternal relationship gives Him His claim of Divine recognition now that He is leaving the world.

THE WILLING OBEDIENCE

The human nature has not been dragged along the path of perfection without moral effort. He is "the servant whom God hath chosen" (*Is.* xliii. 10). He has also chosen God. Joshua bade the children of Israel "choose whom they would serve, but he and his house would serve the Lord" (*Josh.* xxiv. 14). The true Joshua has *chosen God's precepts*. At the outset He chose the way of truth, God's judgments as the law of the Passion, God's testimonies as the grace of the all-holy covenant (iv. 30). Now He can say, It is finished, for He has never swerved from the choice of God's precepts, but has exhibited in everything the character of the well-beloved.

The Hand of God will not fail to help Him whose Hands are lifted up upon the Cross in prayer to God. He is God and Man in One Person, and the two natures cannot be divided.

174. THE EARNEST LONGING

In Section III. 20 the soul was breaking out with earnest desire. The mighty impulse of resurrection-life was stirring the Psalmist. In Section V. 40 He longed for God's precepts, and to be quickened in God's righteousness. Now He longs for salvation, *i.e.* for Him

whom God hath sent to be our salvation, even for Jesus. The words, as spoken by Jesus Himself, express His longing to show Himself as the Saviour of all. As used by us, they imply our longing for Him to come and bring to us that salvation which He has obtained, and which we can have only in Him. To long for Jesus is to long for the Cross.

THY LAW MY DELIGHT, *vid. ver. 77*

The third time of this exclamation! God's compassions bring life: Hence my delight therein! (x. 77). No salvation in any other: Hence my delight therein! (xxx. 92). The salvation ordained of God: Hence my delight therein! (cccc. 174). The name of Jesus sums up all. The phrase itself, according to the value of the Hebrew letters, gives us 1776, *i.e.* 2×888 , which is the name of Jesus. He is the fulfilling of the law, the impersonation of the law, obliterating the curse of the law's emptiness while He gives power to live in the fulness of its truth. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant and the Giver of the new law, of which the old law was but a type. He initiates the law of power and love in His own Body that His members may be set free from the law of sin and of death, and so may enter into the joy of their Lord.

175. THE LIVING SOUL

Four times He has prayed for the conditions necessary to life —*that I may live*. Continued life is the reward of the faithful servant, looking to live as the Word of God (iii. 17). Divine compassion belongs to Him who is true to the moral perfection of man, and therefore ought not to be involved in the universal death of humanity, for God's law is His delight (x. 77). So He looks to be stablished according to God's promise, and not be ashamed of the hope belonging to His redemptive mission (lx. 116). He looks for His Human understanding to be transfigured according to the righteousness which is everlasting, given forth in sacramental ordinances of Divine life (xc. 144). Then again: God's promise for the future is the hope which sustains His life

(vii. 50). God's precepts, remembered in daily practice, are the powers which sustain Him as risen above the earthly present (xxx. 93). *Nine* times He has prayed, *Quicken me*. Now He is entering the region of the dead. His Body will be left dead upon the Cross. But His soul shall not die. He goes forth with inalienable life, glorifying His Soul, emancipated from the enslaved condition of mortal man, "free among the dead," to conquer Satan and bruise the serpent's head in his dark prison. Adam was made a living soul, but he died. Jesus, though His Body dies, shows Himself to be a living Soul, triumphant for ever in the Cross (cccc. 175).

EVERLIVING PRAISE, *vid. ver.* 164

The dead soul of the sinner sinks into silence in the grave. The living Soul of the Redeemer bursts forth in the utterance of praise when it goes forth triumphantly from the Cross and shows that death has no power over Him.

Seven times has this blessed Soul praised God during earthly life in the power of the sevenfold Spirit (ccc. 164). Now is the eighth, the consummating, act of praise. It is the moment of quitting this world of death. The praise which the new life utters begins to assert itself upon the Cross.

THE HELPING HAND OF DIVINE JUDGMENT, *vid. ver.* 86

By the Cross "the prince of this world is Divinely judged," and the Seed of the woman receives the help of Divine vindication. The judgment is twofold. Christ is judged and accepted. He is the true Job who comes forth triumphantly from the assault of Satan. Satan is judged and rebuked (*Zech.* iii. 2 ; *John* xvi. 11). God did not interfere with Divine power against Satan during the time of our Lord's humiliation ; but now that the Soul of Christ descends into Hell, the Elect Servant goes forth in the fulness of Divine Majesty with the help of God. The Philistines were discomfited by the thunder of Divine power and were smitten before Israel (1 *Sam.* vii. 10). Calvary is the stone of help. There is the sepulchre hewn out of the rock, with the stone lying upon the

mouth of it, between the watch-tower of Mizpeh on the heavenly height, and Shen, "the tooth" of death.

176. THE LOST SHEEP, *vid. ver. 92*

Christ speaks in the name of Human Nature, as having gone astray from the way of God's command, from the requirements of the Eternal Word. The Humanity wherein He served God was the very humanity wherein the first Adam had forsaken God. Human nature is the lost sheep in the wilderness, whose recovery was the cause of joy before all the angels of God. On the Cross, Christ, as bearing our sins, acknowledged the guilt by which He, coming to be the Redeemer, was subjected to the outward conditions of death that He might redeem us from death.

I HAVE WANDERED, *vid. ver. 110*

He bore the nature, and the likeness, of the sinful race, being made sin for us (2 Cor. v. 21). But speaking in His own Person He could assert His innocence, His personal fidelity to God's commandments. He had not been taken in any of the snares which were laid for Him (l. 110). He walked in the liberty of His own redeeming power, although for a season subjecting Himself to this Satanic claim.

GOD SEEKING MAN

God seeks man by sending His Son to call man back. Until the coming of the Elect Servant there was none whom God could seek, for they were all gone utterly out of the way. The call of the law was utterly ineffectual. There was no living soul to answer.

Now the voice of the Redeemer rises up to God from Human Nature with a cry of penitence. Now He calls upon God to seek man. "The time of figs was not yet" when Christ came to the tree and found leaves only, nothing but the empty show of outward worship. Now the cry of the Crucified testifies to life, penitence, obedience. In the Person of the Crucified, God looking down from Heaven beholds Human nature clothed with the glory of Divine Righteous-

ness, although it seems to be lying still under the curse of sin. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (*Gal. iii. 13*). God beholds Human nature interiorly renewed by the Incarnation of the Divine Word, and He who heard the groanings of Israel in Egypt, hears from the lips of the Incarnate Sufferer the filial cry which cannot be rejected.

THE OBEDIENT SERVANT

He who fulfilled the law is a servant, but the voice which the Father hears is the voice of the Son. "In the days of His Flesh when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared, though He was the Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, and being made perfect He became the Author of Eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (*Heb. v. 7-9*).

As a servant He appeals, being very Man; but He appeals to the living God as a Son, being very God. No one but the Son of God could plead this perfect obedience.

CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE, *vid. ver. 16*

The word of God, delighting in the Father eternally, *cannot forget* God's word as the law of His assumed Humanity (*ii. 16*). Humanity, re-born in Him, although hampered by the cords of man's sinful estate, is ever mindful of the regenerating sonship (*viii. 61*). Though He seems to be laid aside as a skin hanging in the smoke, still He does not forget (*xx. 83*). Amidst the deadness of earth He lives with a heavenly hope, with a heavenly life. He is kept alive because He never forgets God's precepts (*xxx. 93*). In the jubilee of a nature ransomed from the power of the enemy, amidst all threatenings, He ever remembers God's law (*l. 109*). As the Divine Representative He is consumed with indignant zeal because His enemies have forgotten God's words. He is small and His enemies despise Him, but He ever remembers God's precepts. He lives a Divine life upon the earth, hated for

God's sake, but never forgetting God (xc. 139, 141). In this watchfulness He confidently expects the Father's recognition (cc. 153). So now, upon the Cross He can plead for God to seek Him in the fulness of a love which He has never violated. He has not forgotten God's commands (cccc. 176). *He never forgets*: an eightfold assertion of His fidelity, the utterance of regenerate humanity. *His enemies forget*. This ninth utterance speaks of Divine judgment. His human zeal corresponds with God's indignation.

The Psalmist went forth at the outset looking for the joy of those who should be perfect in the way, walking in the law of the Lord. He closes his psalm, looking back with confidence because He has never forgotten God's commandments.

He has been obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore He can now look upward to ascend in the fifteen psalms which follow, which we call the Psalms of Ascent.

Then shall the praise of the Lord arise from all the multitude of His servants (*Ps.* cxxxv.).

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