

the soul, which, though invisible now, shall be sufficiently visible in the day of the revelation of all things. And the history of the past combining with the experience of the present, shows that there is a deep, earnest longing for redemption in the heart of man—that the groans of creation are distinctly audible—and that ever and anon the cry comes from the heaving bosom of humanity—"O that the redemption of Israel were come out of Zion!" In order to satisfy this felt necessity, and to wash away the stain of guilt from the deepest recesses of our immortal nature, the Psalmist exhibits Christ as the only sacrifice for sin. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire," says Messiah, anticipating his own sufferings—"burnt-offering, and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me." It was felt that the Jewish sacrifices, though enjoined by divine authority, yet did not take away sin, but only brought it to remembrance; that they merely sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, and pointed forward to a nobler sacrifice. But the blood of Christ reached to the mind and conscience, cleansing from all sin, and this sacrifice, in token of its perfection, was offered once for all. Now, though the Messiah is described as God's darling, or beloved one,—as holy and obedient to his will—yet he suffered severely both in body and soul, and complained that he was despised by man and forsaken by his God. His enemies pierced his hands and his feet—they gave him vinegar to drink—they parted his garments, and cast lots over his vesture—and they vauntingly said—"He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him,"—language exactly parallel with the contemptuous address—"save thyself and come down from the cross." Now holiness and happiness, sin and misery, in the moral government of God, are invariably conjoined; and were we, in any single instance, to trace personal suffering to the laws of nature, and not to personal guilt, we make the monstrous supposition either that the laws of nature are independent of the will of God, which is downright Atheism, or else that his providential dispensations are a series of unrighteous acts. If man, therefore, had not sinned, not a pang would ever have been felt, not a sigh heard, nor a groan uttered, nor a tear shed, but life, without one moment's pain or sorrow, would have been his earthly inheritance. And since it is proved that Messiah was perfectly holy, and that he nevertheless, suffered, it must be obvious that he died for the sins of others, and that as "the great high priest of our profession," he offered his human nature on the altar of his divinity.

3. *The Psalmists represent Christ as a royal priest, conquering his enemies.* The Messiah is not only described as a sacrifice, but also as the priest of a peculiar order. Unlike the Jewish high priest, he did not merely discharge the duties of his office, between thirty and forty-five years of age; but "he abideth a priest eternally." This was deemed by the Psalmist a circumstance so unusual, and so completely opposed to all existing arrangements, as to warrant the solemn and emphatic language—"The Lord hath sworn and I will not repent. Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." It is manifest, therefore, that Christ is the antitype of Melchisedec, and that he discharges the functions of his priestly office in heaven. The Levitical priest slew the victim in the outer court of the temple; but it was only offered when, on the great day of atonement, he went into the most holy place, and sprinkled its blood before and upon the awful symbols of Jehovah's presence. In like manner, Christ's crucifixion was the slaying of the victim, and the sacrifice was not offered till Christ rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, the holy place not made with hands, where he "appears in the presence of God for us." There he intercedes for us on the ground of his perfect sacrifice, and pronounces on his people the priestly blessing.

But the Psalmist, in the 110th Psalm, represents Messiah as a king, in consequence of his priesthood, obtaining a victory over all his foes. The best exposition of this part of the Psalm is contained in Zechariah, vi. 13: "He (the Branch) shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory; and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." In these passages, Messiah is said to sit on an equal throne at the Father's right hand, participating with him in the government of the universe, equally cherishing the scheme of redemption, termed the counsel of peace, and advancing the interests of his everlasting kingdom. The powers of darkness and wicked men, under the leadership of Satan,

are on one side. Holy angels and renewed men, under the guidance of the Captain of Salvation, are on the other. Believers, as spiritual warriors, and as emblematical of the sacred nature of the contest, are clothed in priestly attire. Though the contest is long and desperate, yet there are already sufficient indications which side shall obtain the final victory. Those states that have opposed the gospel have been broken in pieces; and even now the ruins of empires and the crash of fallen thrones, remind us of the smiting of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands. But the victory shall not be complete till Messiah himself shall pursue the flying hosts of his enemies, and instead of desisting from the pursuit, he shall drink of the brook in the way; and then refreshed and invigorated, he shall lift up his head in triumph. This indicates the period when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to his Father; and when all who refused to bow to his sceptre of mercy, shall be broken by the rod of his power. As king, he is head over all things for the benefit of his body, the Church; and as a Lamb, the symbol of atonement, he is in the midst of the throne, to bless his people and to curse his enemies.

4. *Messiah, in consequence of his victories, bestows spiritual blessings on his followers.*—When an eastern general obtained a triumph, he usually bestowed gifts on those who had signalled themselves in the war. In allusion to this military custom, the Psalmist thus addresses the risen Savior in his ascent to the throne of heaven: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." When the disciples saw Christ ascend into heaven, till a cloud concealed him from their sight, they only beheld two angels, as men clothed in white; but the Psalmist represents them as two myriads, as if all the angels had rushed forward to welcome the risen Saviour, and to celebrate the jubilee of the universe. The reason of this diversity arises from the fact, that the disciples only saw what took place on this side of the cloud, while David, by the spirit of prophecy, saw the transactions above and beyond it. As he passed through the heavens, through all their regions of grandeur and beauty, he received in his triumphal ascent, the homage of the principalities and powers in heavenly places; and in addition to the crown of nature and providence, he now wears the crown of redemption; and, as a conqueror in his triumphal march from the field of contest to the capital, carried with him numerous prisoners, as trophies of war—so Messiah has led captivity captive, the powers and principalities of darkness—and has not only received honors for himself, but has also given gifts to men. This prediction began to receive its fulfilment, when, on the day of Pentecost, the risen Saviour bestowed miraculous power on his disciples, and poured out the influences of the Holy Spirit in larger measure. And these gifts are still bestowed, whenever there is a revival of religion in the Church, and when times of refreshing are experienced from the presence of the Lord. But this is only the commencement of Messiah's triumphs. His kingdom shall not be always as narrow and circumscribed as it now is. "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth." The nations of this world shall successively rise and fall, like the waves of the sea; but, in striking contrast to them, "He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba; prayer also shall be made to him continually, and daily shall he be praised." His name shall continue as long as the sun, and the whole earth shall be filled with his glory.

Thus do the Psalms contain all the doctrinal instruction, and all the spiritual edification which is to be found in the New Testament. There is, however, an important difference between them. In the Psalms, the light of divine truth is diffused; but, in the New Testament it is concentrated into a focus. Thus we have a description of Messiah's person in one Psalm, in another, of his sufferings, and in a third, of his triumphs; while, in the New Testament, all these views are combined in one description, and all the scattered light diffused throughout the past ages, meets in the Sun of Righteousness. Had we never, for example, seen the sun, and, on a clear, transparent day, had we traced quite up to their source all the rays of light that illuminate the system, would we not conclude that such a centre is the sun? And, in like manner, when we perceive all the scattered light diffused throughout all past revelations meeting in one centre, it is surely obvious that this centre is the Sun of