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(16) *Fruitful-ness of the life. In his self to every-ness it fur-*

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nd. (19) *The simplest ruin. depends upon the a very straight*

according to worldly tests, but he may be very crooked when measured by divine standards. This text does not say that unrighteous people shall not have a good reputation in this world, but that they shall not stand **in the judgment**. The psalmist doubtless intended this to refer to the "general course of God's righteous judgment," using the form of a human tribunal as an illustrative figure of speech. We have a right, however, to read into the text all that later revelation has made plain to us. (20) *The line of division is already drawn between the righteous and the wicked.* (21) *Godly people stand approved by God only because they are sheltered by Christ's righteousness; where, then, will the ungodly appear in the day of judgment?* **Sinners in the congregation of**

the righteous. Literally, they are often to be found in such congregations now, and it is well they are. We wish more of them would assemble with God's people, but the cause for sorrow remains—that they are extraneous to the "congregation of the righteous," and do not stand in the truest sense as part of it.

6. The Lord knoweth. Not merely notices but oversees and cares for them with the most tender providence and the utmost detail of grace. (22) *"Thou God seest me" expresses a truth which should give us comfort in trouble as well as admonish us if we are neglectful. The way of the ungodly shall perish.* Their temporal success often leads to eternal ruin. (23) *All moral ruin is the result of wasted opportunities.*

CRITICAL NOTES.

BY PROFESSOR M. S. TERRY, D.D.

The anonymous character of this Psalm has left room for all manner of critical conjectures as to its authorship and date. Some ascribe it to Solomon; some to Ezra. Many think that Jer. 17. 6-8, is clearly a paraphrase of portions of this Psalm, and hence its composition must antedate the time of Jeremiah. But it may be replied that the Psalm itself is as likely to have been suggested and inspired by that passage in Jeremiah. It is impossible for any critic to determine positively which is the original in two such passages. The probability is that it is a late psalm, placed here as a suitable poem to the Psalter. Such questions are purely critical and literary, and do not in the least affect the real value or beauty of the Psalm.

Verse 1. Blessed is the man. The word translated "blessed" is in the plural in the Hebrew, and may be taken as an exclamation, "O the blessednesses!" or as a statement of fact, as if the word took the place of a verb, "manifestly blessed is the man," etc. This plural may be explained as idiomatic, like "riches," "means;" or as suggestive of the fullness and variety of happiness enjoyed by the godly man. **Walketh . . . standeth . . . sitteth.** A gradation corresponding with **counsel, way, and seat**; also with **ungodly, sinners, and scornful**. The "ungodly" are the loose, uneasy, unstable, restless agitators who have some wicked "counsel" to propagate; the "sinners" are those who have "missed the mark," fallen short of the true end of life, and "stand" centered in habits of open wrong on well-known "ways" of evil; "the scornful" have reached a still more settled condition of obduracy, and "sit down" in the convention of those who hate the light, and mock at righteousness. The three clauses are no doubt poetical variations of the same general sentiment, namely, that the truly blessed man has no fellowship with any of the wicked, in any of their evil ways; but we see no reason why any exegete should refuse (as some do)

to recognize the obvious gradation of sentiment in the three parallel clauses.

2. The law. This word is here designed to represent not merely "law" in the narrow technical sense, but the wider meaning of "divine revelation." It means Jehovah's commandments, statutes, judgments, promises, warnings, reproofs—all that his grace and wisdom have made known—to the fathers by the prophets. **Meditate.** Soliloquize; talk with himself; ponder in his own heart. So the law is food for the mind, and furnishes **delight** to him who keeps it ever in his thoughts. Comp. Ps. 119. 97. It is to him a world of light and treasures which he never tires exploring.

3. By the rivers of water. Or, "Over the streams of waters." The double plural suggests a number of streams flowing from one fountain-head, like the rivers of Eden (Gen. 2. 10). The tree is thought of as **planted** so closely beside the water as to hang over it. **Bringeth forth its fruit.** Literally, "Giveth its fruit." **In its season.** He always comes to time and disappears not like the leafy but fruitless tree which Jesus cursed. **Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.** Compare the assurance recorded in Rom. 8. 28.

4. Not so. In the Hebrew these words stand first, and so give noticeable emphasis to the transition from the first to the second strophe of the psalm. **Like the chaff.** This simile notably corresponds with that of the tree in the previous verse. The allusion is to the manner of winnowing on an Oriental threshing-floor. The wind blows the light and worthless "chaff" away, while the grain falls to the ground and is preserved.

5. Therefore. Both a logical and essential consequence. Because of the light and worthless character of the wicked, and in harmony with the figure of the chaff, therefore they **shall not stand**