

that is shriveled and dried up by intense heat. In Palestine green valleys are quickly rendered parched and desolate by intense heat. (5) *Every pain sent by God may be turned by us into an angel to beckon us nearer to him.* If a child burns his finger with fire or cuts it with a sharp knife, the pain is very great. This is to guard him against the fire or knife the next time. If no pain ensued he might be so careless as to cut or burn his hand so severely as to lose it for life. So God sends suffering after sin to deter from sinning. It is uncertain whether the expressions of verses 3 and 4 are figurative, referring to mental anguish only, or whether they suggest that David's trouble of conscience resulted in illness and physical suffering.

**5. I acknowledged.** This was during Nathan's visit (2 Sam. 12, 13). About a year elapsed between the commission of the crime and its confession. **Have I not hid.** By the two psalms written at this time (one of which was given to the musician of the temple service) he publicly made known his sin and confession. Nothing was palliated or withheld. **Thou forgavest.** The original expresses the immediateness of the pardon. (6) *Thorough healing will depend on thorough probing and removal of the evil that caused pain.* (7) *God's forgiveness has a breadth and power which man's can never possess.*

**6. For this.** Rather, *Therefore let every one.* David presents his own experience of pardon as an encouragement to others. **Mayest be found.** Literally, *in a time of finding.* The meaning is, let no one delay, for there is a time of not finding (Prov. 1. 28). **The great waters.** Conviction of sin and punishment come like an overwhelming mountain torrent. Penitence will arrest the impending judgment; persistence in sin will cause the offender to perish. **Not come nigh.** He will be safe like the one who stands secure on a rock out of reach of the raging flood. (8) *If we seek the Lord early we are sure to find him.*

**7. Thou art my hiding place.** An allusion either to the terror-stricken manslayer and the city of refuge, or to the rocky crags which were inac-

cessible to an enemy. **Compass me about.** A little while ago every event of life was an accuser, but now wherever he turns he finds a new song. "It suggests the picture of a company of singing angels, joining hands about the son that was lost and is found, and making him the center of a circle of joy."—*Van Dyke.* (9) *Some of the richest lessons of wisdom are learned under the rod of discipline.*

**8. I will instruct thee.** David is addressing another godly person overtaken in transgression, and offers to point out to him the path of safety. (Compare Luke 22, 32, and Psalm 51, 13.) **With mine eye.** The Revised Version has, "I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee." The idea is that of one who is telling another what way he is to take to reach a certain place, and he says he will keep an eye upon him, he will not let him go wrong. The popular view which represents Jehovah as the speaker in this verse and the next seems to us forced and inaccurate, although it is upheld by a few scholars.

**9. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule.** The mule is a proverbial type of stubborn persistence. **Bit and bridle.** If men will not be governed by reason, God will use force. **Lest they come near.** Better, "else they will not come near"—will not be subject to your control. (10) *Saints are drawn to God by love, sinners by fear.*

**10. Many sorrows.** From them there is no escape and in them no victory while he remains wicked. **He that trusteth.** This implies that he has confessed and forsaken his sin, and now gives himself up to God in trustful obedience. **Compass him about.** Surrounded on all sides by mercy, harm can come to him from no direction.

**11. Be glad in the Lord.** The cause for exultation is in the knowledge, possession, and enjoyment of God. **Shout for joy, all ye.** The saved cannot refrain a hearty outburst of song, and kindred spirits must share the joy of a pardoned soul. (11) *There is no need to seek for pleasure in the way of sin, while there is such fullness of joy at God's right hand.*

### CRITICAL NOTES.

The story of David would be very incomplete without some reference to his poetical works, for David was not simply a great king but a great poet as well. As the composer of sacred lyrics the world has never seen his equal; at least, no hymns of any age or clime have exerted the influence upon the enlightened nations of the earth as those commonly ascribed to the pen of David. The Book of Psalms, the hymnal of the ancient Jewish Church, is better known the world over than any other collection of sacred songs. That David was the author of a very large number of these is es-

tablished beyond reasonable doubt, despite the efforts of modern destructive critics to refer all the psalms to a post-Davidic age, if not to post-exilic times. Though the titles of several psalms have been shown to be untrustworthy, it is a great mistake to reject the superscriptions of them all for that reason.

It is a wise arrangement of the Lesson Committee to introduce at least two psalms for our study this quarter. These reveal to us not only the poetic talent of David, the warrior king, but also the tenderness of his feelings, the depth of soul, and

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