

that we have brought nothing with us] into this world, and we will surely bring nothing out. What heavenly wisdom therefore in being poor in spirit, divesting ourselves of our own will, renouncing an attachment to these perishable goods, of which death will soon deprive us! Jesus, naked on the cross, is the model of that perfect disengagement of heart which characterizes the true christian, and which invites the Holy Spirit to replenish him with his choicest gifts.

20. But thou, O Lord, remove not thy help to a distance from me; look towards my defence.

He returns to the prayer which he had begun in the commencement of the psalm, and repeated in the tenth and eleventh verses. Having now laid before his Father the principal circumstances of his Passion, he prays for a speedy resurrection, which will deliver him from all the malice of his enemies. My enemies, says he, have exhausted their ingenuity, their strength, and their cruelty against me, it now belongs to thee not to defer thy paternal assistance any longer.

The whole life of a christian should be spent in union with God, and he should consider it his greatest misfortune if this heavenly Father withdraws the light of his countenance. He should therefore continually pray with Jesus Christ, that God should never depart from him, and that he should never be separated from God.

21. Deliver, O God, my soul from the sword: my only one from the hand of the dog.

22. Save me from the lion's mouth, and my lowness from the horns of the unicorn.

He points out the nature of the assistance which he requires. Deliver my life from the sword, the instrument of death. The sword is frequently used in scripture, for any instrument of death, as 2 Kings xii. 10 Ezech. xxxiii. 3. Rom. viii. 35.

And my only one from the hand of the dog. He alludes to those dogs of persecution and calumny, of whom he had before spoken, and employs the singular number, as if to shew the perfect union of all his enemies against him. By my only one, he means his life, which he dearly loved, as it was just that the precious life of the Incarnate Word should be loved. Or he calls his soul, my only one, either to shew by this epithet his entire desolation, that his body was on the point of being dissolved, that the entire of his blood was nearly drained from his veins, and that his soul was the only one of his humanity which he wished to save, and for which he said, Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; or to denote the special attribute of the soul, which is its indivisibility and pure spirituality, or in fine, to express by this term the peculiar privilege of his soul, in being united to the Divine Word.

Save me from the lion's mouth: from the mouth of the lions, of whom he spoke in verse 13, And my lowness from the horns of the unicorn. In the 12th verse he had said, that he was besieged by fat bulls; he here changes the term for that of unicorn, a wild beast of a more ferocious character, to shew that the rage of his unrelenting enemies was rather increased than diminished by his dreadful sufferings.

Let every christian learn from hence to estimate the noble nature of his soul, and the danger to which it is exposed in this life. His soul is in a state of af-