


ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

PSALMS –BOOK ONE (1-41)

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OPENING PSALMS

The Rabbis teach that David's favourite poetic device was to begin and end his poems with the same word. This shows Psalms 1-2 are his. J.J.Perowne suggests that the first might be attributable to Solomon as a preface to his father's liturgical collection.

ONE - HAPPINESS

INTRODUCTION & GENESIS FEATURE

The early psalms turn the mind back to Man's beginnings with God. The happy man is like "a tree planted by a river." In Eden there was a "bubbling up" of a great river called Peleg. (Genesis 2.10 & Psa.1.2) There stood the tree of life (Genesis 3.22). The secret of happiness is finding that Eternal Life which as in Eden so today curiously comes back to digesting why Adam was expelled from paradise and why Jesus died on the old rugged cross which Peter calls "the tree" (1Peter 2.24).

HAPPINESS IS NOT...

The Hebrew treasure house of 150 songs opens with "an ode to happiness." Being genuinely happy is in part about our way of life, our work satisfaction and our whereabouts in society

The psalmist writes, **"Do not move with the predictions of those given to terror and noise; do not commit to the bye paths of sinners; do not settle in the community which mocks faith and morality."** A life style of that sort has no purpose and end as "a withered leaf" or "chaff in the wind." The writer says those who will not turn to God shall not rise in the judgement when Jesus defends His people nor stand in the family of the righteous at the end. Happy are the people who have believed and received the Christ of Psalm 22 (which David calls His noblest song) as Lord and Saviour. The ungodly shall not stand in the gathering (or feast) of the righteous"-the wind will see to that.

"They that have my Spirit"
"Those" saith He "are mine"

HAPPINESS IS ENJOYING GOD'S WORD 1-3

"His delight is..." God's happy people like the murmur of the harp; the cooing of the dove; the musings of the lover possess a quiet joy. They who learn to **meditate** with an open bible musing on its principles develop sterling character without dross. The Talmud (Jewish commentary on the O.T.) defines the happy one as "firm and strong". Jacob spoke of his happy son ASHER as producing bread and royal dainties. To feed on the bread basket of God's word is to be truly happy. **The promise** is that you shall be **"like a tree bearing fruit (each fall) every year you live."**

I'm dwelling by a fountain underneath a cloudless sky,
I'm feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply.
I'm living in Beulah land

THE GAP & THE CHRISTOLOGY

And did you know that there is a big space in the very first psalm. Not I think a failure of execution but rather an invitation to the reader to meditate on that Warrior Man and to ask, "Who could that soldier be?"

"Blessed is the soldier..... who does not yield; who does not falter; who does not mock..."

That Man is modelled in Jesus and by grace the disciple can be a soldier too, so let's put Jesus & me in that space in the very first song. Happy is that man-Bob -who meditates on Jesus in the law of God.

TORREY ON 4-6

Charles C. Torrey summarised the first psalm under three heads- separation from the world, occupation with God and His word and the consummation of the world **"The Lord knows the way of the justified, the way of the rebels will perish"**

TWO-NATIONS FOR JESUS

GENESIS FEATURE

"At Babel the Lord confused their language and from there scattered them over the face of the earth"(Genesis12.9).This psalm features the history of nations, the gift of God and the demand of Christ (cf. v.8)"**Ask and I will give you the nations for your inheritances (plural)**" Like David whose kingdom was usurped and regained (Psalm 16.6) the Lord at His glorious return regains His heritage of nations.

NATIONS RAGING -HUMAN GOVERNMENT 1-3

Why do nations clash like waves breaking on the shore? Why will they growl like empty lions? Earth's kings stand up and constitute themselves in unity against Yahweh and His Messiah. (cf. Genesis 49.10)

This psalm is ostensibly *Messianic*. They counsel **"break the yoke"** of God's purpose in Christ for nations; then they add **"let us cast off the shoe"** of His bonds. Nations sold their heritage-spurned the *gospel shoe*. He who rules in heaven will laugh repeatedly and speak (His commands) in a language unknown to them and constantly terrify them hastening the day of his possession.

DIVINE DERISION 4-5

"He that sits in heaven shall smile and speak in language foreign to them" The setting of this assertion is the time of the judgment of nations and the stark reality of that day will be that the LORD is vey foreign to those under judgment-His ways and His voice so authoritative-so unique. David realised that Messiah would of course be from the Hebrew people.

THE DECREE THAT GOVERNS ALL HISTORY,CHRISTOLOGY & REACHING UTTERMOST PARTS 6-8A

"I am pouring out a libation anointing my King on Zion the hill of my holiness." He (Jesus) has the anointing; He is the atonement. **"I will publish the bill"** (like our parliamentary papers) and declare or read it out. **"You are my Son-today I am begetting You"**. **This ancient bill was spoken to God's eternally proceeding Son in the eternal counsels and read at the baptism of Jesus in declaration concerning His death and resurrection, "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased"**(Mark 1.11) As Stephen Tregelles argued in

translating the Hebrew word *dly* with support from Revelation 1.5 Jesus is "The first begotten from the dead" and we are "begotten again to a lively hope" 1Cor 4.15 The Father's promise is two-fold. The appeal of Jesus *on the cross* "Father forgive them" taken with John 17.10 "I pray for those who shall believe in Me through their message" relates to world outreach and winning from the nations a people whom Christ may call His own. The Hebrew word for "taken" is used of catching fish. The commission which is the lengthy and costly work of "fishing for men" is going to be hugely honoured by God in a gathering of the redeemed from all nations.

NATIONS ADVISED OF WHAT IS DECREED IN THE GOSPEL 7-8

The saved of the nations are the gift of God to His well-beloved Son-they are the inheritance of Christ.

"I will declare the decree" matches the word from heaven at the baptism of our LORD "This is my beloved Son" [John 1 33-34 & Mark 1.10-11]. The continuing gospel declaration of the church fills up this promise of God

NATIONS APPRISED OF THE COMING RULE OF CHRIST 9

"You will shatter them with a rod of iron." [Isaiah 30.14 & Jeremiah 19.11]. Jesus parable of the "sheep and goats" in Matthew 25.2 presumes that nations will be called before Him. It also presumes a separation of the righteous from among the rebellious at harvest time. (Matthew 13.30) He will break them in pieces with His sceptre of iron and disperse them as a potter's vessel. The notion of "dispersing" is strengthened by the Hebrew *Piel*.

GOD'S CALL TO THE NATIONS 10-12

1. Understand and prosper O kings. Discipline yourselves O rulers of the earth; (Note: In Israel Judges preceded kings-among the Gentiles Rulers who establish themselves gradually replaced kings). This discipline takes two forms. **2. Serve Yahweh with reverence and rejoice in the house of quaking. 3. Keep kissing the Son** (The Hebrew is *rb* not *rb-*"one separated from the Father or "one cut in covenant sacrifice" not one "built on earthly generation"-in these senses we are to understand "Son of God") lest in His anger you perish as nations of "the way" for His anger will consume quickly -happy are all who hasten to His house.

THREE-THOUGHTS

FLIGHT FROM ABSALOM 1

David's swift flight from the conspirators was as a "bar" shooting through a ring to lodge secure. In this **Mizmor** he appears baffled as to how yesterday's rebellion was pulled off. His opening gambit is, **"Oh, Yahweh, how come?"** Sudden unexpected change is devastating. David had indulged the plausible Absalom. David looks to the LORD for understanding and salvation

EXPLORING THE ORIGINS OF A "PSALM" BEGINS IN GENESIS

A "psalm" is a "song." The Hebrew term is *Mizmor* and you will find Jacob calls a "vessel" or "basket" in which to place a gift for a noble or worthy person a "mizmor".(Genesis 43.11) Such a "presentation" contained balm, honey, spices, myrrh, pistachio and almonds-each of which would be "plucked" or harvested for presentation. The Hebrew language is a religious language and each of these foods has a spiritual significance besides the concrete meaning. Taken in order these signify salvation, doctrine, prayer, atonement uniqueness of Yahweh or Christ and God's watch-care. There are 44 such songs each of which is "the fruit of the lips" -an offering presented to the Lord.

SELAH 2

This word is found in 38 psalms-in 7 psalms three times and in psalm 89 four times. Psalm 9.16 yields the expression "pause to murmur/pluck the harp/meditate" (*hl s mygh*) so we are to understand "reflect with gentle background music or humming". The word "selah" has three cognates: (1)"rock" typified by "Petra" linked with the idea of refuge; (2) "to weigh" with the thought of regaining balance, and (3)"to lift up" (the voice) in reponse-hence "Hallelujah". David took refuge at Mahanaim and meditates on how to reverse the situation. The history of the event in 2Samuel 17 gives us a snapshot of David the strategist.

THREE REFLECTIONS AND IMPLICIT CHRISTOLOGY 1-8

David pauses three times: once to reflect on his jeopardy but simultaneously to think **"The LORD shields"**; a second time to reflect while praying that **"The LORD continually listens"** and one more time as he thinks to himself, **"The LORD delivers"**

Others might say, **"There is no salvation...** (no "ample space" or "liberty" as A.Schultens defines "salvation" cf. "If the Son sets you free you are free indeed" John 8.36)... **for him in God."** He thinks of Abraham's defeat of the kings and adopts the promise of God to Abraham by faith (Genesis 15.1). **David is able to say "He is my GLORY" and the lifter of my head** (The Arabic word "glory" defines as "that which can bear up under anything"-God is equal to his needs-and ours!)How different David's Glory-it is not in his hair-but his Trusted One. How different his **"uplifted head"**-not one expiring on a tree but one dying in our place (Also on a tree-though unknown to David) **provided by Yahweh.** How apt the king's words. "Would God I had died for thee, Absalom my son my son!" He thinks of his faithful friends Zadok and Abiathar praying for him and believes God is answering the chorus of prayer in Zion. F.B.Meyer says, "David looked to God dwelling amid the Cherubim"-symbol of atonement. As to **"Calling on God"**(v.4) it is worthy of attention that the words "voice" and "assembly" (Hebrew *lq* and *lq*) are kindred admitting of the social or united nature of prayer and worship-this also Jesus taught in Matthew 18.20.

SLEEPING THROUGH IT ALL 5-6

"I lay down and I was sleeping. I am fully awake" The psalm like a number of John Wesley's hymns was written "on the move". It is a morning composition. The Lord was sustaining him through sleep. Like Abraham he is indifferent to his **"ten thousand"** foes. Like Hudson Taylor he could say "One with God is a majority".

THE PSALM THAT ENDS WITH MUSIC AND MUSING 7-8

David prophesies, **"You have struck all my enemies on the cheek bone. You have broken the teeth of the ungodly"**. In Proverbs 30.11-14 we read of those who dishonour parents as having "teeth like swords and jaws like knives". To read of Absaloms fate as he smashed into a tree is to recognise David once more as a prophet. His final words attest that Yahweh has made "all the room in the world" and is the restorer of his liberty and that God's blessing belongs to His people. **"Your blessing is on you people"**-The Hebrew blessing is best portrayed by "a camel kneeling at a pond". A humbled people regain the divine blessing.

FOUR-WE NEED SOME SPACE

MAGINOT

The eight stringed instrument that David chooses to sing to in this **Mizmor** reflects the eight elements of the faith walk in vv 5-9. The "Nagan" [*Neginoth is the plural of "Gath". The instrument was used by the Philistines in harvest singing*] From 2 Samuel 16: 1 we learn that Absalom's rebellion took place when harvest fruits were being cut down. This song is composed or used on an evening and is a response to deliverance. "Answer me" he says; "Give me grace", he says; "Hear my prayer", he says. His is a "just cause" and God has "**given him space**" Hebrew בָּרַח v.2. To this liberating deliverance the psalm is a hearty response.

SONS OF A WARRIOR

David back home absorbs a bitter experience as he shares with wives whom Absalom defiled. His glory is turned to shame. Absalom his warrior son and the men with him had dealt an unholy blow before their summary defeat. David asks two questions:- (1) How long will you love *pouring out*? (2) How long will you seek *deception*? (Instead of God). The first is a question of morals -the second a faith question. Here a "Selah" is set and the singer muses while the strings murmur. From thought to habit to character to destiny the men of Sodom and the rebels under Absalom daily courted sin and reaped judgement.

HOLINESS

"God has set apart the kind for Himself" God separates the "pious" -those who (1) are within His covenant and (2) are kind to others. The Hebrew term *dys*h was anciently associated with the stork which supposedly fed its young from its blood. God's illustrious are those who are zealous for Him and care for others-not least the young. Andrew Gurnall in the 1640's said, "Man lost God's love and God's likeness and the need is for holiness" George Mueller two centuries later said, "Christ did not come to procure pardon alone but to sit on the throne" Long before either Justin Martyr said, "The holiness of the Christians convinced their persecutors." The distinctive of the zealous is that God hears their prayers. In this especially at the time of evening prayer David rejoiced. A.J.Tozer alerted the modern church to the "lost emphasis" on holiness.

EIGHT STRINGS OF THE LIFE LIVED TO GOD'S PRAISE

1. Be moved to tremble and cease from sin
2. Speak to your heart as you retire to bed
3. Be submissive (Hebrew *mmd*) before Your judge (cf. Zechariah 2.13)
4. Offer family sacrifices -David's manner of speaking of the Passover.
5. Trust in the LORD of the covenant-have faith
6. When men say, "Who will show us the perfect man?" lift up the light of your face on us O LORD
- 7 Seek the Joy that the LORD gives-it's better than harvest bread and wine-it is redemption joy**
8. Sleep confident because only the LORD enables a quiet conscience.

GENESIS FEATURE

"Lift up the light of Your countenance" in v6 takes the composer & singers and potentially the nation back to the source of blessing and faith. It takes us to that early morning when Jacob wrestled with God and saw the pre-incarnate Lord "face to face" to henceforward live a consecrated and holy life in a deep and personal relationship with God This background gives full significance to the "meditations" of the night in vv4-5

SLEEPLESSNESS

Some fail to sleep from fatigue, little exercise, erratic hours, depression, drugs or even drinking coffee. Pathologist Forbes Winslow questioned a man detailed to him for treatment. He asked, "Have you lost money, friends, reputation? To them all he answered "No". "If you cannot tell me why you don't sleep I cannot help you", said Winslow. "I am an infidel", said the patient. David finished his song, "You Oh LORD alone make me to lie down in faith"

FIVE -TRYST

FLUTES

The instrumental accompaniment of this Mizmor is the flute. Think of yourself as a flute-perhaps a surprising thought at first-but rich in illustrative value. Like the flute we must be cut from wood that dies to itself or formed from metal that is refined; we must be emptied of self; we need to be shaped in character and our lives are to be lived joyfully to the praise of God, in harmony with others.

GENESIS FEATURE: ORIGINS OF PRAYER

Abraham's great intercessory prayer for Sodom in Genesis 18 23-32 and his earlier heart-cry to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You" are the first recorded prayers and both are intercessions. Abraham is our pathfinder in "talking back" to God and the earliest type of prayer we have in scripture is intercessory.

TRYST OF PRAYER 1-6

David asks the LORD to **listen to his words**; interpret his murmured needs; listen *immediately* to his cry for deliverance. He adds, "**It is before You I will constantly have been interceding.**"-which Hebrew language expression shows a developing regular life of prayer that David now desires to establish on a daily morning basis. **As day breaks**-as the sun rises- David promises to **put his requests in order as he set the strategy of army battalions for battle** and then **bend forward on my watchtower** to observe the effects. He has learned that the life lived with God must be emptied of wickedness, evil which cuts short any sojourn with God, service mixed with proud boasting, vileness, a spirit of criticism and violence.

COVENANT LOVE AND WORSHIP 7-8

Because of the greatness of mercy and covenant love David is ever drawn to the temple. He asks that no hindrance will impede his worship. He Prays "**Give me 'to be constantly your righteousness' because of the twisted powerful oppressors around me.**" The psalmist is going to be a consistent believer with a life that stands out in testimony and courage.

TRYST OF WORSHIP 9-10

David is inspired to go worship the Lord by the greatness of God's covenant love. He promises to "**bow low**" in awe and on his knees with his forehead on the ground in the holy tabernacle v.7. Abraham adopted this posture in Genesis 22.5. Against the background of his expulsion from Jerusalem, he says, "Lead me back into the house of your righteousness" v.8. David requests that God keep his path of life straight through this tryst v.8. David has learned that **the rebellious fail to show up for worship** (v.5). Those who turn from God have **no fixed word in their mouth** (v.9); **their inward heart is fallen; their throat is a burial place and their tongue a lottery**-who knows what they might say. Paul cites this deadly deceit with the current evils of Nero in mind in writing to Rome (Romans 3.13) David profoundly believes that evil men press the self-destruct button sooner or later. **O Strong One they will fall like a tree chopped down by their own axe. They have flown against You like evil birds.** This is less imprecation than implication. They will be destroyed as flies that collide with a searing light.

JOY AND CHRISTOLOGY 11-12

David closes with four prayers:

1. Let all who take refuge in you have radiant face
- 2 To eternity cover them like Moses in the rock Exodus 33.22
3. To eternity let them sing to endless ages
4. Let those who love your name exult in Your victory

For You bless the righteous Oh LORD. You surround him with a "crown of thorns" or shield (Hebrew חמץ) Here the source of all triumph is characterised in "The righteous one bearing the crown of thorns". Every rebellion is a Pyrrhic victory. The cross is the means by which all prayer is answered and the Christ is the person to whom all worship is rightly directed.

SIX-THE NAME

LOOK WHAT'S IN THIS BASKET!

This song is a Mizmor. You may like to trace 6 constituents of this "Presentation basket" (Salvation, a Doctrine, and a Prayer lesson, Atonement, The Unique LORD and the God's Watch-care.) I have selected the following:-

S Return O Lord & deliver me v.5 **D** How long...in a twinkling vv3&10 **P** O Lord heal me v2

A Lord give me grace v2

U O Yahweh v1, 2,3,4,5

W The Lord has heard my weeping

EIGHT-STRINGED LYRE

There is music in the name of the LORD-here is an octave of biblical theology in the name of the living God

1. **JUDGEMENT IN THE NAME O Lord do not finally convict & sentence me in your quick anger or admonish me as a Father would in your hot anger.** Divine punishment as in the case of Ananias & Sapphira may mean death. It may mean chastisement as with Gehazi
2. **GRACE OF FORGIVENESS IN THE NAME O Lord be gracious for I am sad**-literally "hanging my head" so "ashamed" & contrite v1
3. **HEALING IN THE NAME O Lord heal me for my bones shake.** The shaking suggests a nervous reaction. v.2
4. **LIFE ABUNDANT IN THE NAME "O Lord, How long?"** says David, **"do I stay this way?"** My soul is very shaken-despondent". v.3
5. **SALVATION IN THE NAME O Lord Cause me to be saved by a Yeshua salvation because in death one does not begin a relationship with You.** v.5 David believed the setting right of his life also belonged in this context. The Lord has heard my voice of mourning. Spurgeon called tears "liquid prayers" **"I am fatigued with groaning, I set my bed swimming with tears, I am aged because of enemies"** David was very tired as well as nervous-but on the positive side he opened his heart and failure to Bathsheba and the whole experience could be read in his face-it "aged him" is his own words.
6. **PRAYER IS ANSWERED IN THAT MIGHTY NAME "For the LORD has heard or hears the voice of my weeping or mourning."** David has besieged God in prayer v.8
7. **COMPASSION IN THE NAME "O Lord hear my call for grace" 9a**
8. **JOY IN THE NAME OF THE LORD "O Lord Take my song"**-the prayer that says it all. This psalm finishes gloriously "In a wink - quite suddenly David's enemies turn back and feel ashamed.

SEVEN-ENTHUSIASM

A REEL

The title "Shiggaion" means a dance as one intoxicated. This is a song David sings as he dances with the whole enthusiasm of worship. Great musicians can move and play. David was a great musician. This is a joyful answer to Saul's spin-doctor Cush. The other meaning of Shiggaion is "to wander"- Perowne declares to mean "irregular rhythm". In preferring the former I stay close to Bullinger's canny advice, "The inscriptions are for Enoch's who walk with God and not for Jubal's who handle harp and organ" David remembered the days of Saul's pursuit-the informants and the lifestyle of a hunted man. He remembered being preserved as a fugitive lurking in a dozen dens. With his band of men he was harried from Nob to Gath; from Gath to Mizpeh and Moab, from Moab to Engedi and Keilah and Ziph, from there to wild Maon via Engedi to Hacilah and Jeshimon by the Dead Sea and finally to Kirjath-Jearim and Hebron **to the crowning day.** Our principle prayers even today are "Lord save my soul" and "keep me as an ornament of the gospel."

DAVID-WHO TRUSTED IN SPIRITUAL MORE THAN GEOGRAPHIC SECURITY 1-2

O LORD I take refuge in You. Salvation (Hebrew [v]) from Satan or pursuers is an act of God. Deliverance is a process -a preserving of an ornament (Hebrew [x]) much like sanctification. David says **"In God I trust"** (The Hebrew for "trust" is hsb meaning "a store of resources"-used 24 times in Psalms) He believed himself better secured by divine resources than the safety of his numerous bolt- holes though he knew the hills and valleys of Israel better than Rabbi Burns knew the lovely meadows and sweet flowing streams of Bonnie Scotland. As he plays he dances on

DAVID-WHO LOATHED THAT SIN SHOULD RIPEN IN HIS LIFE 3-5

O LORD if there is iniquity in my hand, if I have cherished or poured evil over one at peace with me let the enemy persecute my soul remove my landmarks and tread me down and my glory abide in the dust. David pauses in song and plays on as he dances

DAVID-WHO SEEKS DIVINE INTERVENTION 6-7

O LORD arise -cause a Passover lifting up. Awaken O Strong One constitute judgement for nations that seek You .For this testimony return on high. Here we have David as prophet foretelling the resurrection and ascension of Christ who is gone up to prepare for final judgement .Time and again in the psalms there is what can only call pellucid prophecy of Christ's resurrection. David dances with the enthusiasm of an intoxicated lover as prophets were wont to do.

DAVID -WHO REJOICED IN GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY & CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS 8-16 CF GENESIS 18.25 (KEY TO THE PSALM)

O LORD govern and defend me according to my filthiness and precious hidden righteousness The term *mtk* is apt to express both *the filthy stain of sin* and the *preciousness of righteousness*. How both can co-habit is the mystery of the saved but yet imperfect saint. Here David comes as near as the O.T. ever can to expressing "imputed righteousness". **The Lord will be Mediator of nations-let the wickedness of the wicked fail and establish a RIGHTEOUS ONE. A Strong Righteous One tests as a refiner of metals the heart and inner affections. God is my shield who saves the right in heart. God is provoked all day long. When will He turn and sharpen His sword prepare His bow and His instruments of death, His flaming arrows.** Here is our Mediator and the one who sits as a refiner of silver in our lives. Here also is the judge of the wicked. David's dance is a victory reel of one who is redeemed -whose security and assets are bequeathed by Another, his righteous Mediator.

DAVID-WHO SINGS IN SOFT TONES OF CONFESSION 14-17

The evil ones who conceive trouble and birth lies (like Cush) meet their end in a pit they dig for themselves. As for David he concludes **I will SING the name of the LORD my beloved Strong One SOFTLY-the name of the one who is uniquely high as I acknowledge His righteousness-** after all the joyous dancing David is still and subdued. The music of the sweet singer of Israel softens to dulcet tones as he honours the name of His beloved Saviour **Elyon** in contrasting silken refrain.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE PSALM

1. David starts with his own righteousness which springs from a heart "declared perfect" [*mnt*] He is as clear on "imputation" as any modern believer. A study of his psalms will make this very plain. For this reason his songs can be incorporated in Christian worship without loss to the central Christian doctrine of justification.
2. David prays for a complete end to rebellion and the establishment of the righteous. He looks for the Messiah!
3. David recognises that God is righteous and daily tests the strength of the heart and feelings of every man as an iron foundry tests the strength of its metals.
4. David finally proclaims "I will cause myself to praise the LORD according to His righteousness and softly sing His name as the highest sign of righteousness.

EIGHT-EXCELLENCE OF CHRIST

AN EXCELLENT NAME 1

O LORD our Adonai how excellent [*ryda*] is Your name in all the earth

The name of Christ is glorious as the spring-time (Hebrew *rda*) when the swelling earth gives birth to glorious colour and beauty. The first of months in the Jewish calendar is associated forever with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Holy land in spring is a treat for the eye. Wreaths of delicate flowers adorn the grass, shrubs like the bougainvillea gladden the eye-in Browning's "Springtime" a similar scene transports the poet who writes, "Whoever wakes in England sees some morning unawares that the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf round the elm tree bole are in tiny leaf". Again in the furthest west of the Canadian Rockies glory bursts forth in spring. This joyous splendour of creation is outrivalled by the global joy and lasting beauty of Jesus' resurrection played out in the lives of his people. The writer continues **"You who must give your splendour freshness or majesty unto the heavens"**. Christ who has so adorned the earth is gone up to the heavens to carry the freshness of his rule over the church to that glorious place.

AN EXCELLENT HOPE 2

How the Lord has blessed the families of the earth! How He has used the weak things to confound the mighty!

The "avenger" has been halted by those God nourished to defend his people. Moses halted Pharaoh's tyranny: Joseph saved Israel in famine; David smote Goliath in war and little Josiah lived to reform Judah around the book of the law. Cyrus, adopted in infancy, decreed the rebuilding of Jerusalem, while Daniel defended Israel in captivity and Solomon built the temple. In modern time Mary Slessor, one of seven in the household of an alcoholic, born in a home without a toilet, carried the gospel to Calabar. Above all these names is that of Jesus who was born in a manger during the fury of Herod's infanticide and went on to enter Jerusalem to the chant of infant voices and give His life to break the stranglehold of Satan and accomplish the redemption of His people.

Jesus did not just "silence" the Avenger. His death ensures the coming end of Satan's work. He **"put an end to the contention"**. Satan's arrows of accusation are ineffective in heaven.

EXCELLENT FRIENDSHIP AND THE GENESIS FEATURE 3-5

David says **"I see the hosts you made-moon and stars that you positioned, what is fleshly man that you remember him or the child built from Adam's line that you search for them, care for them, visit them, chasten them."** It belongs to the stature of David the prophet that he "sees" man not so much in the context of the heavens but in the context of God's care and Christ's visitation. "Fleshly man" is God's broken image in human life. Augustine comments "Enosh & Ben-Adam-God sought the stubborn corrupt race of man-Adam, brought amongst us His regenerating grace so man's old carnal miserable nature yields to grace"

What is the son of man that you should or will visit him? (Hebrew *mdpt*) Calvin counted divine visitation "a wonderful thing". "The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us" (John 1.14) Jesus came "to this dark squalid place"(2 Peter 1.19) **"on man diminished but a little from Divine excellence (Heb 2.7 You have distributed crowns of glory and honour."** In a purple passage Pascal waxes like lyrical with David marvelling at the divine association in the words "Grandeur & littleness; excellence & corruption; majesty & meanness". "The wonder of it all is that God gave *royal status* (Hebrew *rf*[-a word that reflects the ancient Phoenician senate custom of distributing diadems to public servants) to His people making us through this "visitation" "kings and priests to God". (Rev.1.6; 5.10) He is our friend and this excellent friendship yields participation in His kingdom of Love

AN EXCELLENT SHEPHERD LEADER 6-9

Man is master (Hebrew *lcm*) **over sheep oxen dumb animals fowl and fish.** In the historic visitation prior to the flood God saw man's violence. Yet He spared a remnant of animal life with Noah. In the visitation of Christ new pastoral leading was granted mankind. We anticipate a further "visit" (Hebrew *ydqpt* is future tense meaning "You were visiting" and "You will visit") our excellent Lord Jesus Christ who in His future visit will truly spread his Springtime Glory world wide.

CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE "OVER THE MOON"

The ancient fathers of Rome wore a symbol under their sandals as they sat on their seats along the wide streets. It featured the moon in her phases and was indicative of their belief that earthly things would change. They could imagine an era better than the present and they were said to be "over the moon". Christians who look to the return of Jesus have a just claim to be "over the moon" about our excellent Saviour and His coming rule.

NINE-JUDGEMENT'S RAZOR

DEATH OF THE SON

Applying an "Enoch" in preference to a "Jubal" interpretation we are looking at the central spiritual battle of the ages in the death of Christ however suited the ancient tune might be to what Calvin calls the "tacit challenge of the sons of men to the sons of God"

ACROSTIC STYLE

The psalm bears comparison with Psalm 119 with its 22 sonnets each based on a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This long song employs 11 letters -half of the Hebrew alphabet in its versification. The style is suited to memorisation.

CALVIN'S ANTITHESIS

Any reading of the psalm cannot evade the contest between the LORD and earthly power. The setting has to be in the latter days-especially in the light of its emphasis on God's second work -following the work of redemption-i.e. the work of judgement.

THE CHALLENGE WILL BE OVERCOME 1-6

David begins "I will sing wholeheartedly" and writes of miracles with a difference. "I will write of all your self enacted miracles, I will sing and exult over You, I will make music to Your name O Elyon." David rehearses his experience of the past, **"By turning back of my enemies were stumbling and being destroyed before Your face. The Lord not David won the battle. "You laboured for my right and cause. You are sitting on the throne judging righteousness. You rebuke nations. You destroy the wicked. You wipe nations away for ever ("For an age and still") like wiping a dish. "O Enemy, ruins created by war are finished" David prophesies the power of Christ's advent throne which easily clears adversaries and brings and end to wars**

NAILS OF ASSURANCE IN TROUBLED TIMES 7-10

Enemy cities are like uprooted plants. Memorials of them destroyed

Jehovah sits for an era, establishing His throne of judgement. The session of Christ & national judgement are in view. He will rule the globe as to salvation righteousness. He will govern the peoples in right ways. Matthew 25.32 describes the advent of that rule when Christ shall gather the nations before Him. The LORD will be a refuge for the crushed ones and a refuge in times that are shortened or vintage times. Those who know your name will trust You, for You have not forsaken those who seek You with zeal.

DAVID ASKS THAT NATIONS THAT FORGET GOD BE "SHAVED" AND HUMBLED 11-20

Present music for the LORD who sits in Zion-teach among the nations His repeated action-His going over it all again. (Hebrew *wytll* [signifying the appearance of Christ "a second time" in judgement) *This a call to finally evangelise all the nations of the earth.*

When He requires blood he remembers (the slain) He does not forget the cry of the humble. Lord, give me grace. See my trouble from those who hate me. Keep raising me from the gates of death that I may add to all Your praise. This would suggest David wants to have a part in reaching the nations even after he is gone. This unusual prayer has been granted as in generation after generation his words have led men to God. In the gates of the daughter of Zion I will rejoice in your salvation. Nations have sunk in or sealed the sepulchre or destruction they made. They intercepted themselves with the net they hid. Ultimately armaments meant to protect wreak havoc on earth Pause. Talk to yourself about that.

THE CALL FOR DIVINE INTERVENTION AND "THE RAZOR"

The wicked will turn to join with Hell-all nations that forget God for the abysmally poor shall not be forgotten for ever and the expectation of the needy shall not perish on and on. Rise O LORD Let not fleshly man prevail. Judge nations right before Your face. O LORD Place a razor [*hrmm*-probably a term deriving its meaning from "double resistance"] before them-that the nations may know they are men of flesh. In Acts 17.31 Paul takes this message seriously when speaking at Mars Hill. As the music plays out as David invites all men to think on the solemnity of the judgement of Yahweh Elyon

TEN-JUSTICE FOR ALL

DAVID FINDS THE ANSWERS A second Alphabetical in which David finds resolutions to the spiritual issues of his and our generations

WHY IS GOD SO FAR AWAY? 1-4

Yahweh Why do You stand to minister in the distant house? The LORD is ministering-but He seems so far away. Why do You hide your testimony in a time of rivals? (Hebrew *myl t* "to turn away or hide he eyes) Let the guilty besiege themselves; let the guilty glory in lusts of the soul. He blesses the plunderer rejecting Yahweh. In pride he does not enquire after God Nietzsche -born of parents brought up in manses, said "Christianity was a curse" and claimed "God is dead". There is no strong God in all his purpose (Hebrew *hmz* fornication rape incest)

WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER? 5-7 The wicked writhes and brings forth. Your judgements are from on high. The wicked sniffs at all who siege him. To him there will be no ills for ages. His mouth is full of deceit. (Literally ""tripping others up" and "guilt") David paints a picture of the man who acknowledges no higher power.

WHY DO PREDATORY PEOPLE KEEP LURKING? 8-11

He sits in ambush in walled villages. In secret he slaughters the innocent. His spying eyes watch to ambush the poor victim of black skin. (Hebrew *Jlj* primary idea is "burning scorching" allied to Arabic root "to be black"-Gesenius) **He lurks like a lion to seize the poor. He trails him to his den. He crushes and crouches that the helpless black ones** (Hebrew *myaklj* from *Jlj* unused root Arabic "to be black" or "wretched"-Benjamin Davidson) **may fall by his sheer strength.** These predatory villains like lions select victims. Here is an early biblical record of whistle-blowing on the racist to set beside that of opposition to Moses' wife. **He says in his heart, "The Strong One (God) has forgotten. He has hidden His face He will not see the conquest/innocent".**

WHY IS THERE NO JUSTICE? 12-15

Arise Yahweh Strong One. Lift your hand. Do no forget the poor. Why do the wicked insult the Lord? He says, "The LORD will not tread this path!" (Literally "follow the assaulted and assailant") **You have seen it for You observe...** (Hebrew *fbn* meaning "watch without engaging. God abides until He can radically overhaul circumstances)... **to pay back vexation with Your own hand. To you "the Man" of black skin commits himself in the market** (Hebrew *bz[* relates to being sold as goods) **You are a real helper of the orphan. Break the arm of the wicked-tread the way-follow the guilty till none is found.** Here David expresses more than noble sentiment. He wants radical justice. The "broken arm" in those days would mean the end to this violent trader. David wants the practice uprooted. His righteous indignation is like that of Wilberforce in the 19th C-who under God dealt a death blow to the trade world-wide.

THE END OF THE MATTER 16-18

Hear the breathed prayer of the humble. The Lord is king for an age and ever after. The nations have been destroyed out of His land. You have heard the "breathed desire" of the humble. You will cause the poor to listen, O Yahweh. You sharpen your ear. You settle their heart. So that the terrorising man will not rise or so act again. David looks back to the end of "infanticide" -the iniquity of the Amorites which after 400 years God ended through Joshua-"the nation was destroyed out of Israel". God's ear is sharp. Black victimisation will stop-terrorising men-often called "vile or evil men" in the psalms, will be pursued. The innocent will live a settled life. That for David is the hallmark of a just and righteous kingdom. David like Joshua works and prays for a "root and branch" end of this current evil.

ELEVEN-STEADFAST

THE ANCHOR OF HOPE

On the high external face of the garden tomb an anchor has been cut in the rock. **In Yahweh I trust** says David as he bursts into song. The writer to the Hebrews gives us his take on this resurrection hope that is now written on the world's great devaluing currency-the dollar; he writes, "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, which enters into that within the veil where Christ is"(Hebrews 6.19) It was Charles Simeon of Cambridge who named this psalm "the song of the steadfast" just weeks before the declaration of American Independence. That era was blessed by "steadfasts" like Henry Martyn of India, William Carey, the missions' pathfinder and William Wilberforce, the champion of slaves.

IN HALCYON TIMES THE LORD IS THE SOURCE OF HOPE 1-3

In Yahweh I trust (Hebrew *hsh* "take refuge under the shadow of wings") How can you say to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain? (The Hebrew for "bird" *רִפְּחַ* is most frequently used of the sparrow and the "mountain is the "mountain of you all"-or Moriah- the place of the tabernacle) David uses the sweetest wordplay saying "How can you flex your bows to target in the dark the straight in heart?" (i.e. the man who flies straight to God) **If the columns of morality and nobility tear themselves down what does the righteous do?** (Hebrew *l [p* "create" "attempt" "make") The question put another way is, "What work can they get?" It is about their hope not their reaction. Like Bunyan when England proscribed the puritans it was gaol and the support of a blind daughter making shoelaces. Like Zimbabwe in 2008 it is "hope in God." A further question needs to be asked. **"Why did David flee to his mountain?"** He fled because his hope was ultimately not in the strongholds of the desert but the mountain of God. Why so? Because there the Lord was present to forgive, to answer prayer, to give success, and because He had chosen that mountain where Abram offered Isaac -even the "sides of the north" of Moriah as the place where the hope of all mankind would pinion in the atoning death and resurrection of Christ. In Halcyon days the steadfast resort of people and nations everywhere is the atoning work of the cross and the well-being ushered in by the risen Lord of Hebrews 6.19

IN HALCYON TIMES THE GOOD INSPIRE HOPE 4

Yahweh is in the temple of His holiness. Yahweh is in the heavens of His throne The psalmist is looking to God who saves, whose searing purity is awesome. God alone is Holy and God alone can save. The throne of Yahweh represents salvation provided, prayer answered and judgement dispensed with justice

It is not to the rich in their aggrandisement or the learned in their ivory towers that a nation looks in its despair; is to the good that have courage to stand for the right. David emerged from a crucible of bad times as he trusted in the Holy One and became a "man after God's own heart"

IN HALCYON TIMES THE SINCERE RETAIN HOPE 5-6

Sincerity is living under the eye of God-aware that God is nigh. The old sculptures completed the tops of their statuary with finesse-adding no wax - the word "sincere (Latin) sine cera. "English "without wax") People who live close to God have hope; people without God await judgment. Sincere believers are the Refiner's silver and the wicked as dross in His judgement.

(a)**Refinement God's eyes behold** (Hebrew *hvj* "see as by vision") God sees as the prophet away into the future. **His eyelids or "quick-winking" eyes try** (Hebrew *ijb* as in "testing metals") **the sons of men.** It is as if God signals His love and His warning and his judicious long-distance understanding. There is a feeling of "I see what you are doing-I am looking deep inside" about God's view. The verbs for "trying" are reflexive so the Hebrew reads, **"The Lord looks for Himself in or inside the sons of men and He tests the righteous for signs of His (God's) character"** The idea is best presented in Malachi 3.3 where the Lord tests us as an assayer of silver would do, looking in the pot for his own image. Another example is Jeremiah 6.22.

(b)**Judgement The wicked** (Hebrew *[vr* "noisy rushers") and those who love violence (Hebrew *smj* a word used in Lev. 11.16 & Dt. 14.15 for the night hawk "derives from the root "hot" and can be transliterated "Hamas") **His soul hates.** There is nothing in God that responds or reflects in persons who boil over in unrighteousness & violence **He shall rain on the wicked forked lightning or fire-coals;**

fire of brimstone and wind hot as an oven or "poisonous heat"(we would say "fumes") These are three cups the wicked drank at Sodom and for the latter day David as a prophet foresees judgement of air and sky re-instated.

IN HALCYON DAYS THE LOVE OF GOD MAINTAINS HOPE 7

For Yahweh is righteous. He loves the righteous. His face beholds the straight The Hebrew reads, "His faces -they behold the righteous one". Here is the great enigma which only a Trinitarian doctrine of God can fathom. God the Father and God the Spirit behold Christ the righteous Son as the lamb. The meaning is also that the Father Son and Holy Spirit behold the one made righteous by the Father's choice, the blood of the Son and regeneration of the Spirit. High theology-but how can this help in austere and troubled times? It is the very essence of optimism for the righteous is assured of the Lion-like strength of Christ in his weakness; His ox-like burden bearing grace in trouble; His manly redemptive love in failure; His eagle-like immediacy to support when calamity seems inevitable.

When all around my soul gives way He then is all my strength and stay.

In every high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil

TWELVE-WORDS

THE KING IS CONCERNED ABOUT

Who can doubt the power of words? Jesus said, "By your words you shall be justified and by your words you shall be condemned". Israel once said, "Why not speak a word to bring back the king?" but no-one had done! Solomon said, "Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver". This song or Mizmor is for the "eighth" or octave below "bass" voices or older men-appropriate to the generation the King reveres and the theme which plainly lambastes a growing trend of smooth talkers-a category that would make our "spin doctors" look almost respectable.

GENESIS FEATURE-LANGUAGE DEFINES CHARACTER

As scripture opens we read again and again "And God said." The words indicate that God "threw light on many aspects of creation for Adam to whom the story was related. God's word is luminous and sure. Man's word is changeable and dubious. The Hebrew *rbd* is used for the "words of men" and *rma* for God's word. Dutch etymologists established that the first has to do with "order" or "construction". The second (Genesis word) has to do with "revelation" or "light-bearing". The Hebrew reader will notice that deceptive human lips play with words. In v5 proud men think of themselves as a source of revelation. In v6-8 the Lord established His right as "the" light of the world. The psalm contrasts the "words of the foolish" and the "words of the wise"

PLEADING WORDS 1

Act for my salvation Lord for the zealous man has failed. (Hebrew *rmg* "he has done all he can") **The faithful are passing from Adam's sons** (Hebrew *ssp* like our "pass" means they are "dead" or they are "moving elsewhere")

FLATTERING WORDS 2

Each man with his friend keeps speaking "little nothings" or lies. With lips divided by lot they continue to speak with two minds (Hebrew *bl||blb*) "heart and heart" So the "this way and that way" the "maybe" and "maybe not" of speech reflects a heart only in part given to truth and part to deception. The lips show where men cast their lot of decision.

BOASTFUL WORDS 3-4

May the Lord cut off or remove all flattering lips and the tongue that speaks great things. Here is David the prophet declaring that pride will fall as surely as Satan fell.

They say, "We have become mighty by our speech and our lips." "Who is God over us?" These honour the power of speech not God's grace.

PROMISSORY WORDS 5

"From the oppression of or violence against the needy and the groaning of the abysmally poor I will arise", declares the Lord. "I will place him in the house of salvation he has longed after for himself."

PURE WORDS 6

The declarations of the LORD are "bright words" (Hebrew *rhf* "unalloyed") **melted or bonded in a place of finishing** (Hebrew *lyl*) **belonging to earth, strained** (Hebrew *qz* like wine through a cloth) **seven times.** The straining of God's word through many sanctified prophetic sieves produced the unity of holy scripture comprising the Law; writings; prophets; the gospels; Acts; epistles and the apocalypse.

FRESH WORDS 7A

You will guard them (Hebrew *rMV* as a "watchman observing their progress") **and You will keep them fresh and luminous.** (Hebrew *rX*) encompasses the ideas of "defence" "freshness" and "brilliance") They unfold under God's sovereignty-they meet the needs of the present as easily as the past

ENDURING WORDS 7B-8

You will preserve them from this generation and for an age. The divine words endure as Luther testified by the embroidered Latin tag on the amulets of his servants which read, "verbum dei in aeternum manet." **Evil men have been prowling around -proud and voluptuous ones belonging to the new generation** (sons of Adam) David displays a percentage concern about numbers of haughty and very fleshly (we would say "sexually-active") young men in the generation rising up-long on talk and promise but short on character and revelation.

THIRTEEN-MATURE

DAVID CHOSE NOT TO WAIT FOR AN ANSWER

When Pilate did not stay for an answer that was "erotesis". David springs four questions on the LORD and does not await an answer. Memory is a gift of God. It would be strange if God Himself should forget. Indeed He chooses "to remember our sins no more" but does

He also choose at times to leave us alone? Like David we want speed of execution in events-God seeks to develop character instead often by a more gradual approach than we could wish.

UNTIL WHEN? 1-2

The expression "How long" (Hebrew *hna d[* means "sometime we'll meet" or "when it's time-giving the appearance that David is presenting meeting and intervention as inconvenient to God)

How long O living LORD will You wander (Heb *jz*-like a wandering horse) **from me perpetually?**

How long will You hide? (Heb. *r ts* "to veil the face") God may keep His reasons private-cf man's sin.

How long shall I compensate for Your counsel in my soul? (Heb "compensate" *hyv* "to pile up wood") How long shall I take counsel in my soul having daily sorrow? The Hebrew word gives us the picture of a woodcutter asking how long he is to continue piling up wood

How long will my enemy rise against me? David would rather be a doorkeeper than take refuge in the tents of the wicked.

WHY ALL THE DESPONDENCY?

After 2 Samuel 7 when David brought back the Ark to Jerusalem amid national festive joy a series of events that brought his kingdom to the brink of ruin is catalogued in the following 18 chapters of 2 Samuel 7-24. These are:- The Bathsheba affair; Uriah's murder; Nathan's rebuke; the death of his infant son and his nervous reaction; Amnon's incest with Tamar, the murder of Amnon; Absalom's treason; Shimei's curse "You bloodthirsty rogue"; Ahithophel's treacherous counsel; Absalom's untimely death; the trumpet of Bichri, "We have no part in David"; Joab's cowardly mortal assault on righteous Amasa.; the three year famine; near death in battle with Philistia.; David's trust in numbers and the death of 70,000 following the census; Adonijah proclaims himself king. No wonder he longed for a drink from the well of Bethlehem -and some loyalty.

I HAVE DONE MY PART 3-4

I have actively trusted You-answer me. O LORD my God enlighten my eyes (Hebrew *na* meaning "to bring back cheer" or "to bring back life") **turn to me lest I weary myself to death** David is spot on-trusting the Lord is all that is required!

Turn to me lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed"

Turn to me lest he who shuts me up may not dance in glee because I am shaken (Lit "tottering") David's kingdom was being presented as if it were "on its last legs" by his detractors

The Hebrew word "lest" *np* means to prevent by" turning towards" or by" facing" one's adversary. The word is dynamic. The action of God is equally dynamic in response to faith. David's prayer is placed with the LORD in complete faith (The Hebrew Hiphil "performative" of the verb "trust" shows new confidence after his prayer for enlightenment) **How very vital is prayer-it changes the whole perspective here-it even leads to further spiritual growth as v.6 shows.**

HELP PLUS 5-6

But I will trust in your covenant love; my heart shall dance a reel in the house of Your salvation. I will sing to the Lord because He has so greatly benefited [lmg] me

The psalmist reassures himself of the covenant and the promises God made to him. He still believes them implicitly. He comes to one of his numerous joyous crescendos and we find he promises to inwardly dance in the tabernacle itself. The LORD has done three things through this experience. Whatever has been going wrong-the LORD continued to "save" him. He was living singing and believing in the covenanted future.

David uses the word *lmg* (v.6) which Albert Schultens showed was primarily used in agriculture to "cover fruit" and promote ripening by warmth. It was also used of nurturing an infant till he or she is weaned and then it was applied to cherishing someone by lavishing benefits on that person.

(1) He has weaned him from his problems. They don't seem so pressing after all

(2) He has given him "camel loads" of help in his life already.

(3) He has matured or ripened him through the difficulties he has had to face.

DAVID KEPT HIS CROWN

I once heard John Philips of Moody Bible College tell of how as a young man he felt like the World No.1 draughts player. An old man from town sat down to play with him. He soon spotted a move. Click, click click-he had taken quite a few pieces from the senior player. Doesn't this fellow know he can't win by losing checkers like this? He's a push-over. Then the old man leaned over the board. Click, click, click, click click-"crown me", he said. Then click, click, click, click, click- with that one piece the old man took every remaining checker. We can afford not to be concerned about a few material things if we are going for a crown. **David had many set backs but he gained and retained his crown.**

FOURTEEN-GOD

THE FOOL'S HEART 1

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God". For David there is no question about the existence of God-only about whether He is treasured in the heart of the righteous man or rejected and despised in the heart and affections of the foolish. For David Nabal was the quintessence of "folly". This man showed wanton lack of appreciation of his wife and servants and of the God of Elijah who saved Israel from idolatry close to his Carmel fields.

The word "fool" in Hebrew means "to wither", "to die".

*The owl atheism sails on obscene wings across the noon
Drops his blue fringed lids and shuts them
And hoots at the glorious sun in heaven
Crying out, "Where is it?"*

They are prodigals; they have enacted repeated "abominable rollings." (Both Hebrew terms *b[t* and *ll* [are terms used for overt sexual acts) **None does good.** This phrase is used by Paul to describe the total corruption of man.

*A desert without an oasis, a night without a star
A dunghill without a jewel a hell without a bottom
(Spurgeon of the wicked)*

THE LORD AT HEAVEN'S BALCONY 2-3

The LORD looked from heaven's window to see if any prudent one were in existence. Here is the humour of David-showing the reality of God's existence-but confirming the disappearance of the good man. God was looking for two things, "those who turned their minds" to him; who "taught doctrine" on the one hand and on the other those who "tramped their way to God" or "frequented His presence"

NO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE 4-6

Have all those who undertake deep evil (in the moral sphere) have no experience.(i.e. intimacy in the spiritual sphere? **They are devouring my people as they swallow their food. They do not call on the living God for help, invoke or celebrate him. At the time they need help they fear a great fear.** Joseph Addison in the "Tattler" preserves a rare passage on the hardened sinner. He writes, "The ship began to roll. The atheist fell to his knees and confessed to the chaplain that he never believed till that day there was a god. One of the hardest tars said, "Throw him overboard". The wind fell. Two days later on land the man denied he had ever repented-he went to a duel-was run through-then again he became as good a Christian as when at sea-but finding he was but superficially struck he turned into one of England's greatest freethinkers"

THE LORD IS DEFINITELY PRESENT AND REAL 5-7

Through the circuit of the years of the righteous the Lord is present. You evil ones put to shame the counsel of the poor but the LORD is his refuge. The LORD provides & has provided salvation to Israel from Zion. The LORD is in the house of the returning of the returnings of His people. Jacob will dance, Israel will be glad. Here David counters the atheist and supplies the ultimate answer. First the believer is conscious of the LORD through all his days. Second the poor has real backbone and values the teaching he has received. Third the Living LORD who turned His people back in the days of Nehemiah and in the 1948 returnings will come back amongst them Himself in accordance with the promise given to Moses in Deuteronomy 30.5 In that return to end all returns old Jacob will be there and the nation of Israel will be there and the Lord Himself will be there-and every knee shall bow

FIFTEEN -ACCEPTABLE STRANGERS

ASYLUM-STAYING IN THE U.K.

Today we are aware of the huge impact of immigration to Britain. People who reach these shores need to undergo a process of naturalisation to be accepted as citizens. New provisions mean they must go through a ceremony in which they recognise their new citizenship and responsibilities.

WHO SHALL ABIDE? 1

A Mizmor of David (one of 44)

Who shall abide in Your tent or dwell in Your holy hill?

This psalm carries 10 marks of the man who will be an accepted "stranger" with God and a permanent resident with God in His holiness. In Judges 5.17 the question is asked in the LXX, "Why does Dan live as a stranger-why "stay" or "abide"(Greek παροικος) among ships and Asher sit at leisure by the sea? The fact is that few Jews are found among the seafaring communities. Yet Dan and Asher represent the righteous enjoying the house of God to which our very nature is estranged. The question "Who shall abide?" is answered because "God gave us a place in His kingdom just as God allocated space in Canaan for Dan and Asher!"
The Holy hill of God is where His presence is-anciently by the ark at Jerusalem or actually in heaven between the Cherubim

THE TEN SIGNS OF THE PILGRIM 2-5

(1) HE WHO LIVES COMPLETE OR WITHOUT BLEMISH OR "FINISHED"(Hebrew *mymt*) This is the idea to which Jesus gave perspicuity in John 5.6 and on 12 separate occasions The LORD was not into partial healing or partial saving. The ancient priests looked for blemish in the sacrifice-not just in the wool or skin or limbs but in the vital organs.-so the Lord looks on the heart. In 2 Peter 3.12 we are encouraged "to look according to His promise for a new heaven and earth wherein righteousness dwells-seeing you look for such things be diligent that you may be found in Him in peace without spot & blameless. In the 4 Sermon Matthew 5 21-6.34 the Lord dealt with evident righteousness. Literally "One declared just and employed in the ministry of justifying grace"

(2) HE WHO PRACTICES RIGHTEOUSNESS. Who continually does what is straight. Acts 10.35 "He that works out that righteousness shared with him by God is accepted"

(3) HE WHO SPEAKS THE TRUTH IN HIS HEART Speaking here means "speaking in an orderly way" The Hebrew word for speak is cognate with one which means the seat of the oracle of God-the mercy seat(Hebrew *rbd* and *rybd*) He speaks "faithful"; he talks "covenant truth" in his heart. His heart is like the mercy seat-to it the blood is applied. It is cleansed.

(4) HE WHO DOES NOT BACKBITE WITH HIS TONGUE He does not walk around teaching or spreading slander (Hebrew *lgr* meaning "to teach the innocent or spy or slander".) In matters which belong to the tongue he does not harm other. John Philips of Moody in commenting on this psalm mentions Mary Livingstone of whom he says "backbiters murdered Mary Livingstone as surely as if they had plunged a knife in her heart on April 27 1862" She joined David because prattling tongues said they were separated. But after a struggle with the malarial river country and with little children at her tails she could follow the explorer no more. By here graveside David wept, "My Mary my Mary the longer I knew you the more I loved you"

(5) NOR DOES EVIL TO HIS NEIGHBOUR The man who is accustomed to the presence of God-the praying man-the bible-loving woman does not "create brokenness, unhappiness, bad water, an outcry"(Hebrew [*r* for a neighbour

(6) HE DOES NOT LIFT UP IN CONVERSATION THE FALL (HEBREW *hpr*) OF HIS NEIGHBOUR

(Hebrew *hpr*-which may mean "idle remiss, careless, letting down") Not the "fall" of a neighbour but our neighbour's welfare in our desire. In no way is the believer to hurt or diminish the welfare of a neighbour

(7) IN HIS EYES THE MORALLY VILE IS DESPISED

Such person will have no credit in his eyes. Wrong is wrong. The idea of "the despised" is of a snail melting as it goes along. The person who cultivates the presence of God will not walk with the ungodly.

(8) THOSE THAT FEAR THE LORD HE CONSIDERS GLORIOUS.

He considers such to be persons of some weight. The god-fearer is increased in honour and encouraged by the person near to God. Saints are here to help one another.

In Reformation times Calvin advised Bullinger to show all due respect to Luther though he was "tart" "because of the excellency in him".

(9) HE SWEARS TO HIS INJURY AND DOES NOT CHANGE

(The Hebrew "change" *mm* speaks about "change of mind"). A very good example of this is found in William Shakespeare,

His words are bonds his oaths are oracles
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,
His tears pure messengers, sent from his heart!
His heart as far from fraud as heaven is from earth!"

(10) HE DOES NOT GIVE HIS MONEY AT INJURIOUS RATES

(Hebrew *JCn* "to bite") So money or mammon is not the god of the one who lives near the Lord. About 1981 the fair trade movement was beginning to take hold. A programme to help the Windward Islands was developed. People were encouraged to buy oranges fish and bananas from those parts. Alexander Cruden once said, "It is as lawful to have interest on money as rent on land"-what really matters is the righteousness of the interest and rent.

(11) AND HE DOES NOT TAKE A BRIBE AGAINST THE INNOCENT

Bribery alters a level playing field in matters of finance-it is criminal.

He who does these things shall not be shaken totter or be put under yoke (Hebrew *mm* as a noun means "yoke")

Andrew Bonar put the question of this psalm in a riddle.

Now who is he say if you can
Who so shall gain the firm abode,
Pilate shall say "Behold the man!"
And John "Behold the Lamb!"

The one who does these things revels in Christ and is restrained reliable respectful-not one who will totter. Let us then practice the presence of God

There is a place of quiet rest near to the heart of God
A place where fears do not molest near to the heart of God
O Saviour keep me by Thy grace near to the heart of God.

SIXTEEN-CHRIST'S RESURRECTION PROPHESED

MIKTAM A Golden Psalm which echoes Easter People whose hope is the "risen Lord." The Hebrew word that describes this and a quiver of psalms from 56-60 is *mj km*. The word probably links to *mtk* which means "that hidden away". It is taken by Abulwalid to mean "pearls". Gesenius takes it to mean "gold". It was the habit of artistic Arabs to engrave great sayings in gold and place them on public pillars as we would hang portraits in art galleries or as Basilea Schlink placed lustrous words of scripture or verse strategically at geographic beauty spots worldwide. This is a "golden poem", "a pearl" to the composer that will repay careful elucidation for today's commentator.

KEEP ME O GOD AS A SHEPHERD FOR I SHELTER 1

(Hebrew *hsj* -used especially of God-the shelter of the Powerful One (Hebrew *la*) in You as in a powerful rock (cf the flint rock of Deuteronomy 32.37) The idea of sheltering from the heat of the sun in the shadow of a mighty rock is a helpful haggadah or comment though the quotation from Isaiah 30.2 extends this idea to the Lord as "founder" of the nation (Hence Hebrew *rllx* and *Lx* or "rock" and "shadow")

YOU ARE SAYING AND HAVE SAID CONCERNING THE GOD OF MY LIFE 2

"You are my Lord". My goodness, excellence or good cheer is nothing when worn in your presence or as a veil (to hide what I am) or when I am rushing to make up the distance between it and Yours (renderings of the Hebrew *l* [-meaning "according to Yours. This is the first big "No" of three (Hebrew *lb*) in the psalm. David says "No" to personal righteousness.

IT BELONGS WITH THESE THE HOLY ONES SET APART IN THE EARTH AND NOBLES OF MY ENTIRE DELIGHT 3

The psalmist can take his place with the *rda* "Spring" people of the earth-those who are as praiseful as the birds of spring, as glorious in colour and clothing as a spring garden, as good as the purest lamb.

THEIR PAINS LABOURS AFFLICTIONS GRIEFS WILL BE GREAT WHO RUSH HEADLONG OR EXCHANGE OR BUY 4

(Hebrew *rhm*) (Another God) **No I will not pour out libations from blood** (sacred to God the creator) David's second "Big No"-the third follows. I will not lift up their names upon my lips. You would not hear David if he lived today extolling other faiths or even using the names of other gods. He refers to "other gods" in the psalms but never by name. This is the third "Big No"

YAHWEH IS THE PORTION OF MY INHERITANCE AND MY CUP OF LIBATION 5

Like the weight and value of the basic unit of silver coinage the God gave His covenant promise to David stamped worth and value on His inheritance through relationship with him who said, "I will build your house"

THE LINES THAT MEASURE OUT LAND HAVE FALLEN TO ME IN DELICIOUS PLACES 6

"Yes" the inheritance linked to me is splendid as the stars. (Hebrew *hrpv*) This is "Big Yes" No.1-David says "Yes" to his splendid heritage. David who loved Bethlehem and the family epic we read in "Ruth" looked for the "seed of David's race" of the future and had a

view no less far-reaching than Abraham of the many, many believers who would come through the "seed" of his household by promise and covenant of God.

I WILL CONTINUALLY BLESS THE LORD WHO INSTRUCTS COUNSELS ADVISES ME 7

BIG "YES" NO.2 My reins correct me in the night. "Reins" can mean kidneys but the derivation can also be "separate" or "disparate" things following Schultens and the Hebrew root. (Hebrew *myal k*) The scripture agrees with what generally happens at night. The heart and emotions are moved by dreams on what the conscious mind has been contemplating. The dual help of such contemplation is that both heart and mind come into play and as with Samuel his great mentor so David found God speaking with him in the night seasons.

I HAVE CONTINUALLY (PIEL "REPETITIVE") PLACED THE LORD BEFORE MY FACE AS SUFFICIENT FITTING AND ENOUGH FOR ME PERPETUALLY 8

Here is the sweet singer of Israel singing "Enough for me" Jesus Jehovah was enough for David, for Moses, for Jonah-and for us too. Now comes his triumphant "third Big No" Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

BECAUSE OF THIS MY HEART SHINES WITH JOY AND MY GLORY DEVOLVES FROM YAHWEH OR ROLLS ON 9 (Hebrew *llg* like a book, like a whirlwind, like wheels in history.) David is drawing a conclusion from his relationship with the covenant God of whom he speaks. The one who gave him his kingdom is ultimately the source of the glory and the coming glorious king **who will roll on through the ages gloriously**. Now comes David's third and most significant "Big Yes" Yes my flesh shall rest in hope. Here David prophecies the fact that in death as in life he finds his future tied up with the coming Lord who will bring life and immortality to light.

CHRISTOLOGY This psalm is quoted 4 times in the New Testament. (1) John 20.9 "They did not yet understand by His mediation (teaching after the resurrection) the scripture that He must rise from the dead (2) Acts 2 25-28 Peter urges that David proposed the Lord's victory over Sheol (cf Psalms 9.17 & 139.81) (3) Acts 13.35 Here David is presented as certain of "sure mercies" as a forgiven man despite his murder of Uriah & adultery with Bathsheba.(4) 1 Cor. 15.4 I make known what was delivered to me-"How that Christ died".

FOR YOU WILL NOT LEAVE MY SOUL IN SHEOL NOR WILL YOU SUFFER YOUR HOLY ONE TO SEE CORRUPTION 10 Here David is speaking of his own soul God will not allow the psalmist to roam through Sheol like a cow without a bond.(Hebrew *bz*) Equally he was convinced-and note this crucial linkage with the first part of the psalm-that God's Holy One-and that ruled him out-because his goodness could not approach God by description(verse3)-so he is speaking of the "seed" -the promised Lord. "He will not see corruption." The body of Jesus saw no corruption -even the painting of the **deposition by Rembrandt** gives testimony to this doctrine.

YOU WILL MAKE ME KNOW BY EXPERIENCE THE NARROW CHARIOT PATH 11

-the place where these rolling wheels will proceed through history-the path of those who live literally "the path of lives"-the experience of abundant shining joy in Your presence-the experience of sweetnesses at your right hand perpetually. David here talks of three great experiences awaiting him. He will experience a myriad of lives following the path to God and of God; he will one day experience the joy of the Lord's presence intimately and also the pleasures such as came to Naomi as she saw her children's children and after much turmoil she found rest in the house of Boaz-so in larger fashion David will find joys brimming over at the right hand of his lord. This is by any standards a golden psalm. Every line as inspired so pertinent to Christ and His resurrection and glory is identifiable as truth germinal to the New Testament.

SEVENTEEN-LIKENESS

A PRAYER AND A REALISABLE DREAM

This psalm is a Tephillah or prayer. The burden of David is "to truly be a man in God's image". His prayer was answered for scripture says, "David had God's testimony, "I have found David the son of Jesse a man after mine own heart which shall fulfil all my will"(1Samuel 13.13 & Acts 13.22). As a bible student I hold the view that the central plank of Paul's doctrine of sanctification was "Christ-likeness" and that at Antioch he opened his teaching ministry on this subject. The result was that disciples who learned at his feet there were called "Christians" or "little Christs." Anyone who will read his literature thoroughly will find that this truth is the inescapable central plank of his teaching. Christ came to create a "new man"-the "new creation" and Paul was never content till Christ was "formed within" his converts. David-like Paul who freely confessed himself "the worst of sinners" was forced to confess "My sin is ever before me." The broken image of God, praise God, can be restored. Augustine as he contemplated man unjustified, being sanctified and glorified put it succinctly "Non posse non peccare; posse non peccare; non posse peccare"

SANCTIFICATION AND TRIAL 1-4

A supplication or intercession that becomes a song- The word root is the Hebrew *llp* relates to the Hebrew for God's tribunal (Hebrew *hl y p*) which Gesenius takes to mean "to roll out" and make even" as in bread-making. The idea however seems to be to roll over and over in the mind and roll upon the Lord. Hence it allies to the sense of the New Testament text "cast all your cares on Him". No one should ever cease rolling their troubles round without rolling them to Jesus. He is just a prayer away.

(1) HEAR O LORD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SHARPEN YOUR EARS TO MY TREMULOUS CRY

(Hebrew *tlr*-a word related to the "strich" cry of the female that gives the **ostrich** its name) **Listen to my thoughts rolled over to You - A "no" to lips of deceit**

(2) FROM BELONGING TO YOUR PRESENCE MAY MY KIND OF JUSTIFICATION ARISE

(Issuing forth as refreshing water) **May Your eyes contemplate with joy or with insight the kind of things that are right.**

You have tested (Hebrew *njb* to try by watching for a "likeness" in the pure metal)

You have visited (Hebrew *dqp* as to search for a lost sheep)

You have purified me as gold and not found anything (base).David here uses the verb *prx* which is applied to the purifying process of gold-so God has applied the highest standards to His saint-this is His purpose-nothing inferior

(1) I have meditated lest my mouth should overwhelm or assail anyone. The danger of the king's anger becoming a problem like that of Saul was something David guarded against.

(2) Concerning the wicked deeds of man by the word of Your lips I have kept myself from the paths that run into the distance - paths of the destroyer (Hebrew *xrp* for one who "disperses hostile forces"; a "ferocious beast" hence a "destroyer") The word of God or

the divine "oracle" which David sought in the daily situation was his protection. The message is that of our Lord, "Man shall not live on bread alone but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God"

COMPANIONSHIP AND INTIMACY

HIS PEOPLE ARE "THE APPLE OF GOD'S EYE 5-9

(1) **Support or take hold of my happiness/going on straight in your military chariots -do not let my "tramping footstep"**(Hebrew *ym*[p-the strike of anvil-cf Elijah's prayers-which are called "hammer-blows"]) **cause themselves to slip.**

I have called You because You have listened O God; bow your ear down for me

(2) **Hear my thought, my supposition, my stammering words, my little matters, and my light (on the subject)**

David asks the mighty God to bow his shoulder and bend an ear to listen to his "take" on the world he is living in.

(3) **O the extraordinary nature of your covenant love accomplishing the salvation of those who confide in You. Here is a statement that would be consistent with the best praise of New Testament Christians. The wonder is the wonder that so difficult miraculous and distinctive an act has been achieved for us**

(4) **This salvation saves by the right hand of power from those who rise up against the redeemed** *Its defensive nature is emphasised*

(5) **Keep me as the little man of the daughter of the eye** *The eyeball has at its centre the beloved little pupil. Like an apple on an apple tree this organ is very vulnerable. Yet God has placed around it one of the strongest bones in the body as my wife had occasion to discover by a nasty fall when she struck her head on the side by the eye against an iron handle of the sink. The bone held -the eye was preserved.*

(6) **In the shadow of your wings (or garment train) veil me in secret.** *The "edges of the skirts" are associated with man's salvation as in the case of the woman with the issue or Ruth in the story of Boaz. David was conversant with the story of Ruth and Boaz and this idiom of bible truth was part of the family Idyll as well as personal experience.*

(7) **From the faces of the wicked disturbers who desolate this soul, the enemies of my soul who have a net around me. The redemptive hem of God's garment is the resource for the king in his lonely time and in his vulnerable time.**

THE WICKED THE IMAGE OF GOD IN THE AWAKING OF RESURRECTION 10-14

They are shut up like Jericho in fat hearts or the best of everything. Their mouths speak proud things (Hebrew *maq* that "sublime majesty" that belongs to God-gratuitously of excellent Rabbis .Evil men try to speak with this "majestas")

They have now surrounded the direction of our footsteps, set their eyes toward the earth (as they follow them)David is describing to God the closing net of Saul and his deep jeopardy.

Like a lion desiring to tear that which he has cut off, a young lion lying under cover.

Arise O Lord before his face -cause him to bow his knee. Your sword will constantly deliver my soul from the wicked -your hand

O Saving Lord from the "men of this world" whose lot is in this life (Hebrew *dlj mytmm* "men moles" as if the men of the world were like moles living underground and in the gloom of darkness)

You fill their belly with the northern or hidden treasure. They are satisfied with sons. They give their substance to their children.

The idea is that when they have some on earth who bear their image they are satisfied.

I will see Your face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied in arousing out of sleep (Hebrew *xmq*) **in your likeness or image**(Hebrew *mmj*)

David looks forward to that satisfaction that never came in the life of Absalom and even Solomon-but only in the life of the Lord who saves-whom he wants to mirror in the end-even though God wished to bring out His image in him in the earthly sanctifying and refining process.

EIGHTEEN

A SINGING SERVANT

An autobiographical psalm and among the four longest *The psalm belongs by its musical setting to the chief musician, by the freehold in its title to any servant of God who wants to sing to his Saviour and by composition to David . [David's psalms are still his after 3000 years and it is not down to copyright. I trust my material to the world with a Christian festival and A.D. date to the glory of Christ. Just as David would be glad that every man born of a woman owned his songs freely so would I count myself blessed to make what I write freely available]* *The song is spoken (Hebrew *rbd* in the infinitive or substantive meaning "using to speak" or "speaker speaking constantly") So David used it frequently as he kept in touch with God. The psalm glorifies God for David's many deliverances. It pronounces that "all things of salvation" initiate with God.*

TEN DIVINE SUPPORTS AND FOUR GREAT PERILS 1-6

I have tender affection(Hebrew *njr*) **for you Lord, my prevailing help**(Hebrew *qzj* meaning one who adheres)**O Lord my Petra Rock , my kind of net** (Hebrew *dkxm*) **or strength of assault, my continual deliverer**(Hebrew *Piel*), **my Strong One** (Hebrew *la*), **my quarry or Tyre rock in whom I rush for refuge, my shield, the horn of my salvation, my lofty one**(Hebrew *bqc* safe protection) **I will call on the Lord who has been continually praised**(Hebrew *Pual lhm*) **and I will be saved from my enemies.** *Here the psalmist compares God to the great defensive rocks to the South and North and shows that frequently-over and over- the Lord saved Him.*

FOUR PROBLEMS:

The ropes of death surrounded me-used in Psalm 116 and Jonah 2 more of "entanglement". So David was virtually entangled in death throes like Jonah; the winter streams without channels terrified me; the cords of Sheol came back to get me; the snares of death met me in the morning (Hebrew "were up before") **In my affliction by adversary I called the Living God and cried out to be saved by one in the form of God** (Hebrew *yh a*). **He heard my voice from His temple** (*poetic for heaven*) **and my cry came to belong to His face in the house of His ears.**

THE GOD OF MOSES AND OF DAVID 7-19

The onomatopoeic "gash" and "rash" of the earth is concussed /moves and tumbles in a crash and the foundations of the hills tremble or fret like a horse. **They are continually concussed** because of the anger of the Lord. **Smoke arose in His anger, fire devoured from His face, from it live red hot coals were flaming. He spread out the heavens like a river in flood and came down like the Jordan River, and dark clouds were under His feet. He drove a war chariot upon a Cherub(with lion ox man and eagle appearance) and went swiftly. He flew rapid as a bird of prey on the wind's wings. He made darkness his hiding place. His surrounding cover** (Hebrew *Jks*) **was the darknesses of waters-thick clouds of the firmament. From the shining splendour**(Hebrew *hqn* of His glory)**before Him dense thickness of his hailstones and coals of fire passed.** *Here the fearfulness of the lord is understood in terms of*

earthquake, fire, flood, chariots and storm- the experience of Israel in the Exodus and the judgement of Sodom remind David that the Lord who spares him and vanquishes his enemies is the same as in earlier times. **The Lord thundered from heaven and the most high (Elyon) gave his voice-hail and coals of fire. He sent forth His arrows and scattered them(Hebrew זרפ). His great lightnings and they were caused to flee.**

Then the beds of waters were seen and the foundations of the world made naked at your rebuke O Living Lord from the panting of the breath of Your anger. Here David appears to be rehearsing the events of the Exodus or even **the judgement of the flood** after which the former seas became dry land and the former lands sank into the sea as its underpinning collapsed. cf Henry Morris "The great subterranean caverns collapsed and the surface elevations sank to become the bottoms of the postdiluvian oceans. The sedimentary strata which had been deposited during the flood in the antediluvian seas were now left suspended above them. (It is notable that the flood deposited sediment in columns at the rate of Inch every 5 minutes-1 mile in 220 days)

He sent from above and took me, He drew me... (Hebrew חמ -i.e. He Moshe-d me-made me another Moses)... out of great waters. He saved me from a strong enemy from those who hated me for they were swifter and more alert than me. They came in my face in the day of destruction and the Living Lord was the one on whose arm I leaned.(Hebrew א[V) He brought me into the open place by the gate of the city. David describes his weakness, his Lord as the great friend who changed it all so that he got back into society and to the wide public places of the city. Like Moses he was utterly dependant and like Moses he was raised to leadership.

THE LORD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINED DAVID 20-30

The Lord will reward me according to my righteousness, according to the examination & purifying of my hands He will complete repayment and have not acted wickedly against my God for all his judgements are before my face and I have not turned from His statutes Here we have a perfect exposition of vv7-15. The judgement of the Flood, the division of the earth, Sodom and the plagues of Egypt all combine to remind David of the wrath of God. **I am upright or complete with Him and have kept myself constantly from my iniquity and the lord has returned to be mine as my righteousness.** (Hebrew יקדך יל indicates a new enjoyment of relationship based on imputed righteousness) according to the cleanness of my hands in the very presence of His eyes.

With the covenant keepers you will constantly keep covenant, with the warrior of completeness (the Spiritual Soldier) you will constantly be perfect/his perfection ; with the one who keeps himself pure you will be his purity. With the deceitful You will constantly wrestle for You save needy people and the eyes of the haughty You cause to come down to the ground. For You will act to supply light for my lamp David was called "the lamp of Israel"² Samuel 21.17. This connection links with 2 Samuel 22 where the poem is recorded in a late prose history of David. The expression links with Proverbs 20.27 and is used of the man who with God looks at the matters of his own heart and looks indeed at the hearts of the people he pastors-Israel **The Lord my God will shine with morning sunbeams into my darkness for by Your support I will cut through enemy lines and by my God I will constantly leap over a wall.** David acknowledges that his perception and revelation comes from God. He believes that he will surmount all obstacles by faith. The verb here is a "Piel" of continual overcoming. What faith even in old age! **The strong God-His word is entire. The word of the Lord is proven like tested gold. He is a shield to all who make covenant with Him.** Here David is thinking back to Abraham for whom God covenanted to be his "shield".

DIVINE CHARACTER AND DELIVERANCES 31-50

Who is a rock except my God? Yahweh These expressions entail "being a founder" and "refuge" of a nation and also having in Himself a witness to His being-whereby the Father can witness to the Son and the Son to the Father. These for David are the authenticating marks of God. The "angel of God" in OT time provided this witness. We find it explicitly in Isaiah 48.16

Who is God as continually exceptional as Yahweh? The adverb (Hebrew יד[ל]bm simply means exceptional but it combines three particles "separate from" =worn out like a threadbare garment+"repeated" as by repeated witness-so the Lord is ongoing in witness-uniquely within the Trinity-the Father witnessing to the Son and the Son to the Father.

NINETEEN-A CONTRAST (GOD & MAN)

TO THE CHIEF MUSICIAN-A MIZMOR BELONGING TO DAVID

THE SPEECH OF NATURE

The interlacing story of the physical heavens and the work of Christ vv1-7

The heavens are a type of mathematicians of the Glory of God and the firmament a kind of celebration of the sort of work His hands offer. Day belonging to day bubbles forth illuminating speech; night belonging to night is intimate knowledge. There is no illuminating word or ordered discourse in which their voice does not make itself heard. They are gone out and lie in wait or live expectant of Yahweh in all the earth. In the extremity or end of the globe their discourse belongs to the sun-at that time of the tabernacle in them. The story of the heavens and of the atmosphere of the earth is one related to the life of the sun itself-which governs the continuance of days. The end times have to relate to the action of the sun indeed and yet there is another higher factor-the expectation of the Parousia of Christ and the final tabernacle of God with man in the latter days. The emphasis is not upon the sun as the centre but on the expected Lord and the timing of His tabernacle-for there is dual meaning in the phraseology. **He is as a bridegroom going forth from the Huppah shining with joy as a prevailing man of strength to hasten along his trade path or run his race faster.** The Saviour is seen under this figure of marriage was the bridegroom of His people and as one who is so overjoyed that he wishes to hasten the trade business of his working day to get back to his beloved bride. Alternatively He desires to speed up or hasten the day of His appearing. This fits in well with the shortening of the days of trouble in the latter years so that the Lord may come to the enjoyment of His people. **His coming forth is from the extremity of heaven-it's highest place-Zion, and his course or time period right until the extremity or cutting off of the heavens and nothing is hid from His judgement or wrath or the sun's heat.** We may meditate on the biblical feature of the marquetry of Christ's work and the work of the sun within the inspired psalm. The Spirit of God is teaching that Christ will return and judge all things-the church, the nations and in the last day the ungodly will be judged. It becomes increasingly clear that the Lord retired from building the highest structures of the universe to attend to the detail of forming the earth before He tasked the sun with its role. The sun itself is inferior to its maker and is represented as appearing in day four like a bridegroom from the distance around whom its mightily attracted spouse the earth circled obediently and found warmth for ever since. The sun for its part is of finite duration and has had a spectacular history-marking the conquest of Canaan by Israel-where **Christ shall rule**- and then marking the sun-dial of Ahaz the hope of Hezekiah-the virgin's son-and our hope in the **virgin birth of Christ** as it marked **the death of Christ** and will mark the **day of the Lord's coming**-so it is not the scientific importance of the sun that intrigues the Christian most but the extraordinary significance of it for the ministry of Christ. Despite its mass illumination and apparent age the sun is a young star subject to and illustrative of the plans of the son of God.

THE WORD OF GOD

- (1) **The Torah or teaching** (Hebrew from *hry* “to teach” by pointing out) of the Lord is complete (Hebrew *hmynt*) **converting the soul,**
- (2) **The repeated witness** (Hebrew *twd[]*) **of the Lord makes itself faithful** (Hebrew *hman*) or **a source of nurture making practically wise those who are “open”** (Hebrew *yp*)
- (3) **The visitations** (Hebrew *dqp*) **of the Lord to deposit a charge or “look after” one are straight** (Hebrew *rVy* a root related to *rVk* and *rVa* which mean “to prosper” and “to be happy”-so “being in the way” is being led”-“going straight” in life’s pathway)-these visitations cheer up the heart and make our face shine (Hebrew *jmv*)
- (4) **The commissions or prohibitions of the Lord are covenant ones** (Hebrew *hrb*) **conveyors of light to the eyes.** There is a covenant back of the commandments and commands 2 and 5 contain promises
- (5) **The fear** (Hebrew *hry* “trembling” or “reverence”) **of the Lord is pure** (Hebrew *hrwhf* meaning “cleansed from pollution” as a woman after childbirth) **enduring in ministry** (Hebrew *dmw[-* “stand to minister”) **for eternity** (Hebrew *d[]*) The wonder of a cleansed life is that it continues in awe of the Saviour mingled with joy and is set to serve eternally.
- (6) **The governing sentences** (Hebrew *fpVm*) **of the Lord are true, taken together as one** (Hebrew *dhy*) **they are righteous** David understands God’s dealing as a package-a plan for his life-an ordered “unity” of judgements which bring about the desired end. **They cause themselves to be more desirable precious or pleasant than gold-than much purified separated gold, sweeter to the spiritual palate than honey and honey dropping and overflowing. Also by them your servant is taught or shines** (Hebrew *rhz* as the light of God’s will is revealed) **and in keeping them there is a great finish or end reward** (Hebrew *bq[]*) God’s word is rich in worth; it is sweet to the mind and heart that meditates on it and obeys it; it makes life luminous and teaches wisdom and it yields a glorious end!

THE HUMAN HEART

Who will succeed to understand (Hebrew Hiphil Future *nyby*) **his wanderings** (Hebrew *ajyv*-as in Proverbs 5.14 “errors through love’s intoxication”)

Keep cleansing (Hebrew Piel repetitive *hqm*) **me from “hidden things** (Hebrew *rts* Gen 31.49 “The Lord watch between us when we are hidden from one another”) David realised the price of safety is eternal vigilance in matters of the soul **Also restrain your servant from bouts of haughtiness or pride** (Hebrew *mydi* “Egyptian & Babylonian style arrogance”) **Then they will not have dominion over me or assimilate me** (Hebrew *lVm* from which root we get “similitude” –so David does not wish to be as other model rulers-he wants to walk humbly) **Then shall I be innocent of the great breach of covenant** (Hebrew *[vp]* –falling away of this sort parallels our notion of “apostasy”) **May the words of my mouth and the plans of my heart** (Hebrew *mygh*-the word means “notes struck by the harp” in its concrete sense) David is not just a poet and spiritual song writer but also a saint of God who wants his heart to conform with his speech and vice-versa **belong to pleasure or delight before your face.**

O Lord my rock (Hebrew *rwx* a word which as in Isaiah 51.1 speaks of the founder of a nation-and here of the founder of a dynasty-the house of David-from which sprang Christ-the “root of David”) **and my redeemer** (Hebrew *lag* The Lord is the one who forgave him and brought him back from dire sin and shame cf Job 19.25 the one who is Job’s resurrection hope is David’s Lord of the future-his “I will be what I will be”)

TWENTY-PERIL

TO THE CHIEF MUSICIAN –A MIZMOR OF DAVID I

The chief Musician

The term “superintendent” or “chief musician” also means “the perfect, faithful, victorious one”-so we have warrant for a dual address-one to a skilled musician and one to a victorious redeemer who is overseer and Shepherd of His people. I will begin by quoting verbatim some notes I made in the 1980’s on this psalm which are relevant for 55 psalms. One reservation on these notes is essential. There has to be and most probably was a “director of music” in place under David. Jeduthun & Asaph come to mind –a Levite would have suitably filled the post. Notwithstanding the following notes are worth thinking about.

“The compositions of David were for the superintendent of music-a surpassing musician. Now the root meaning of the term “superintendent” (Hebrew: *hxw*) “The lead musician” “the one who sprinkled” Arabic: “the pure, innocent or faithful one” or Syriac: “the conqueror” Outside of the psalms it the word is used in:

- i. **Jeremiah 8.5 “Why is this people slidden back with a perfect (jw) backsliding?”**
- ii **Daniel 6.4 He was faithful ((Hebrew *hxw*) neither was there any error or fault in him**
- iii **1Samuel 15.29 “The strength or victory (jw) of Israel will not lie, He is not a man that He should repent”**

From the last of these references-in Samuel’s rebuke of Saul-the word is clearly applied to the Lord God.

A MIZMOR-TRACING THE WORD TO GENESIS

One deduces from the Holy Spirit’s preface to 55 psalms of this nature that they are for the attention of the Lord and have the most intimate bearing on the saint’s appreciation of His glorious person and work. He is the “lamb”; “the covenant Lord”; the one who established David in “sure mercies” (Isaiah 55.3 and Acts 13.34)

Psalms of this sort 3-5,7-8,10-13,17-21,30,35,38-41,43-46,48,51-61,63-69,74-76,79-80,83-84,87,108,138-139

The word “Psalm” (Hebrew *rmmz* from *rmmz*) is said to connote “purity clarity good order”. In Genesis 43.11 where I find the earliest use the text of scripture reads, “Israel(Jacob)said, “Take some of the best fruits (Hebrew *trmmz*) of the land in your vessels and carry down a present for the man-a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds.” If we accept this meaning as basic and the type of fruits as illustrative of the meaning then a psalm would be a gift for a very Great man-whose life could be in parallel with that of Joseph-and his present would include thinking about him in terms of:

- (a) *the vessels we bear-representing our lives*
- (b) *the balm & honey of His salvation and his pure doctrine*
- (c) *the spices and myrrh of prayer and His atoning death*
- (d) *the almonds of the Lord’s eternal watch care and the pistachio of His uniqueness*

Here then is what a "Mizmor" or psalm may best be described as a vessel carrying praise of Christ-of his healing and doctrine; His priesthood and death; his watch-care and uniqueness

DAVID CITES THE EXAMPLE OF JACOB WHOSE DESIRE AND PRAYER GOD ANSWERED THROUGH MANY TROUBLES. 2-6

The Lord will answer you in a day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob will defend you (Hebrew *bgv* lift you beyond danger or set you high on a rock) Jacob confessed to Pharaoh that his days were "few and evil" (Genesis 47.9) and for his 130 years life had known much trouble not least the loss of Joseph. However, faced as he was with life's most fearful meeting with Esau Jacob was promised God's help in the form of a blessing. This made Jacob a "prince" so that despite the power of his brother He was given pre-eminence with God.

(1) He will send you help (Hebrew *rz* like "enclosure or "prevention") **from His holy place.** Jacob knew the "shepherd of Israel" Gen 49.24

(2) And from Zion he will sustain you (Hebrew *d[s]* which speaks of food -clearly in Laban's house he was kept -as the tribes were kept in the desert for 40 years in a later period)

(3) He will remember all your bloodless offerings. cf Gen 28.18 & 31.49 Gen 32 14-15

(4) Constantly He will have been satisfied with your burnt offerings. cf Jacob's 3 pillars Gen 31.54 Gen 33.20 Gen 35.20 & Gen 35.7, 46.1

(5) He will give you all your hearts desire (Hebrew *bbi* "your affections") God gave him his beloved Rachel whom he loved so deeply

(6) Fulfil all your deliberations. (Hebrew *tx* plans which you have "consulted" about) Consultation with the Lord is very important.

Again Jacob is not famous for his prayers but is well-known for his schemes and stratagems. **We will cause ourselves to rejoice** (Hebrew *mr* meaning celebrate and put forth an invitation) **in Your salvation. And in your name we will raise our (victorious) banners.**

(7) The Lord will fulfil all your prayers. Prayers hinted in For Jacob that meant coming back to his Father's house safely & Gen 43.14

DAVID TURNS FROM THE EXAMPLE OF JACOB TO HIS OWN LIFE AND TESTIMONY IN A MYRIAD PERILS 7-9

For I know the Lord completely saves His anointed, He answers from the heavens of His holiness. Deliverance is by the strengths of His right hand. Some call to mind in complete detail (Hebrew Hiphil of *rkz* remembering the great horses they owned as we would vehicles-and the great chariots as we would ships or tanks) horses and some chariots and we have our detailed recollections in the name of Yahweh our Strong God. These have bowed their knees to other Gods and fallen and we have risen and will have testified again and again. Yahweh completely saves. (Hebrew Hiphil of full performance *dnf[ti]*) **The King will answer in the day we call.**

TWENTY ONE-GOD'S FATHER HEART

d[] m[] cf Daniel 7.18, 12.3

1 INTRODUCTION

"To the chief musician a psalm of David *hx* "Superintendent" The root of the word is "faithful" in Arabic and "conqueror" in Syriac. In Aramaic (Dan 6.4) it is used of Daniel's faithfulness. In the Hebrew of 1 Samuel 15.29 it is used of the Lord who is the "strength" or "victory" of Israel. The ultimate "superintendent" is the Lord himself. This psalm is a "Mizmor" or a "pure clear well-ordered" composition. (Ewald) The word *rmz* means "to purge" or "take away superfluous or dead wood" or "snuff out" a candle. The idea being of a song which is used in the morning when the light comes and the candle is no longer needed or to brighten the night when other light fails. Again the pure clear radiance of joy answers to the Ewald comments. cf Genesis 43.11 NB There are 55 such psalms of radiance for the morning or for dark times in our lives.

2 THE KING WILL REJOICE IN YOUR STRENGTH O Lord-and how greatly he will rejoice in your salvation. The "girding" of God is with a view to "restrain the enemy" of our souls. The joy of the saint is that the Lord "shuts in" the believer and David expresses his delight as "shining joy" and "jumping joy" or "wheeling joy"

3 YOU HAVE GIVEN HIM THE DESIRE OF HIS HEART and not withheld that which he espoused, Selah This is a radiant psalm-one that purges -it belongs to David and it testifies that the Lord gave him (1) his desire-the word *hna* comes from the root "house". God promised to build him a house and (2) God gave him "the request of his lips" [*vra*]-which was to "dwell in the house of the Lord"-that to him was an espousal-a "union with God"

4. FOR YOU GO OUT TO MEET HIM EARLY WITH THE BLESSINGS OF GOODNESS, you place on his head a crown of gold. **The Lord like Jacob meeting Esau or the Father meeting the prodigal because of his great love pre-empt us with His goodness and care.** Though an Amalekite slew Saul and presented his crowns to David-he did not wear it. (2 Sam 1.10) He wore the Ammonite crown-which is said to have "lived" or "was" on the head of David 2 Samuel 12.30. It weighed "a talent"- over half a cwt. The Lord was blessing David before he was blessing God. He planned a house-God planned his future. Is it not even so with the believer? His grace is prevenient-his plans eternal.

5. HE ASKED FOR LIFE AND YOU GAVE IT TO HIM-length of days "for an age and still" **d[] m[]** This expression is used by Daniel in Dan 7.18 & 12.3. There can be no doubt in the light of the meaning of Daniel 12.3 that David was conscious of having the gift of eternal life-even after the sweet age of the king-Messiah whom God promised was to sit on his throne.

6. GREAT IS HIS GLORY IN YOUR SALVATION. Honour and majesty You set upon him. David's chief glory was God's salvation. David also had "vigour" and "pomp"-in other words the trappings of earthly kingship-but he put before these the "glory of salvation"

7 FOR YOU HAVE ESTABLISHED BLESSINGS FOR HIM FOR "STILL" or for "time without end" or for "eternity" YOU continually (Piel) rejoice him with the shining joy of your presence. In Psalm 90.14 Moses speaks of shining and shouting for joy "all our days". David is of exactly that mind. Let us allow something of this glorious presence of God to enable such fervent joy. This *hdj* this *mr* are in too short supply! The presence of the Lord is its source for angels and men

8. FOR THE KING TRUSTS IN THE LIVING GOD and in the house of the covenant mercy of Elyon he will not totter. Here David has "faith"-the sort that "lies on its back" as confident of God as his bed for support. Here David has assurance whilst he has the covenant promise of the "beloved strong one" who has saved him

9. YOUR HAND WILL REACH AND FALL IN VENGEANCE ON ALL YOUR ENEMIES and your right hand reaches those who hate you.

10. YOU SHALL MAKE THEM AS A FIERY OVEN AT THE TIME OF YOUR PRESENCE. The Lord shall swallow them in His wrath, fire shall devour them. There is here a "stated time" to the divine wrath-which though it is long suspended in that day of judgement it will burn fiercely.

11. **YOU WILL DESTROY THEIR FRUIT FROM EARTH**, their seed from the sons of Adam. *This destruction is a systematic end to family lines and compares to the end of the Amalakites which is its harbinger in scripture. In the judgement of nations many people pass to such destruction.*

12. **BECAUSE THEY TURNED AWAY TO EVIL AGAINST YOU**-they devised counsel and were not able to carry it out.

13. **THEREFORE YOU WILL SET YOUR SHOULDER IN ARRAY** against (*cf arrows in a quiver*) them by Your string you aim at their faces

14. **BE HIGH O LORD IN YOUR STRENGTH**; we will sing and continually praise You as a warrior.

TWENTY TWO-THE SHEPHERD DIES

This psalm is referred to 24 times in the N.T.(15 of which are gospel references to the passion)

INTRODUCTION

This is a "mizmor" or "vessel carrying the fruits of praise to Christ". It is "on Aijalet Shaha" which means the "hind of the morning". It focuses on Messiah's suffering but its sheer glory is that it brings us to the early morning dawn of redemption. "The hind defiant against the shadows of night lifts her head at dawn and brays in triumph"(Mr Charlesworth of Barnstaple) There is no psalm like this-a negative of his saddest hours, a prophetic notice of His dying words, the bottle of his final tears, the memorial of his expiring joy

Why? For me **Hast?** The lamb was slain for me **Thou?** That I might be family! **Forsaken?** For my union **Me?** Comfortless for my peace

A WORM 1-11

Why are you so far from saving me-from the words of my roaring? (*Hebrew gav like a lion.*) **My God I call in the day and You do not answer, in the night and you are silent** (*Hebrew hmd silent as the desert*) **But You are holy** (*Hebrew cdq consecrated as a "high priest"*) and dwell in the praises of Israel (*Hebrew tll ht the celebrations or songs cantering on a person-hence "praise"*) **In You our fathers trusted. They trusted and they were constantly flowing free. To You they cried in need and delivered themselves** (the Niphal reflexive of the Hebrew links the cry with help) **In You they trusted and were not ashamed. I am a worm** (*Hebrew tllt a scarlet worm from which comes the dye of garments-hence this at once speaks of the humility of Christ and of the precious purifying blood which changes the life of every saint*) **A reproach** (*Hebrew prj "like a tree with its fruit plucked off*) **despised by the people. All who see me mock me in a foreign language** (*Hebrew gl to stammer in a language not one's own-the idea in its later historical setting interprets in terms of Jews viewing the cross stammering out the other titles above the cross*) **They are free like water**(*Hebrew rfp*) **with their tongue and shake the head. He rolled Himself upon Yahweh let Him cause Him to slide out of it like a new laid egg from a hen** (*Hebrew flp*) **Let Him snatch Him from danger like a brand for He delights in Him.** *This phrase shows the truth of the Father's statement at Jesus baptism. Did the Pharisees recall it at the cross? Mat 27.43 quotes this passion sentiment*

You brought me forth in a rush like the Gihon from the womb. You persuaded me to trust upon the breasts of my mother *Here are lines which lead to the heart of God in respect of incarnation. I was cast upon You from the girl/womb. The suggestion of a young mother is stamped on the text. Trust in the Lord would be vital From my mother's womb You wee my Strong One. (cf the dereliction cry "My Strong one My Strong one"). Do not be far from me for trouble is near-there is none to help Here is the loneliness of Christ forsaken by his own*

2. BULLS & THE LION 12-13

We read in 1 Peter 2.23 that when destruction *λοιδοσ* like a war of ruin was launched against Christ he did not open hostilities. **Many bulls surrounded me** (*Fit young opponents encircling the cross*) **Great bulls of Bashan** (*fat or luxuriously provided leaders*) **crowned themselves with me** *Hebrew rtk Brazen Jewish leaders acting more as kings than He who was King called out "If You are the king of Israel come down"* **They threaten with their mouths like a lion tearing and feeding and roaring too** *Satan Himself was behind the bullish warfare of the minds of men-promoting a Satanic final blast in the Judeans who reviled Christ.*

3. WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE THE DEATH OF CHRIST 14-15 THE N.T. ERA BEGINS

As waters I pour myself out. *ytqvll (Niphal) He breaks His heart and as the spear thrust showed our precious Lord had already poured out His life a drink offering to God.* **All My bulwark bones were separated**(*Hebrew drp-the shoulders wrists thighs and knees under the immense pressure were stressed apart-not necessarily dislocated fully*)**My heart is become as wax** *Stephen Tregelles notes Gesenius' rendering of qmd as "extended" or enlarged before breaking. Wax is mentioned in Psalms 68.3 & 97.5 as in Micah 1.4 and the parallel with volcanic lava recurs. The power God in Christ pouring out His blood breaks the chambers of the heart. The white zeal of Christ to atone lay like a volcano behind this sacrifice. My organs of compassion sorrowed away or ran in streams. (l m "viscera" in Isa 48.19 are compared to the depths of the sea) My strength is dried up as broken earthenware and my tongue is damasked to my jaws. You will spread me out for the dust of death.*

4. DOGS 16-21 TEN PROPHECIES RE-THE ROMANS

For dogs have surrounded me. *The slang for "foreigners"* **The crowd of wicked has surrounded me.** *The verb pql is used of "fastening with nails". As a Hiphil it reads perfectly "performed my crucifixion...piercing my hands and my feet* *The Kal participle yrak confirms this unique event in prophecy* **I will muster all my bones** *None was broken in crucifixion as was usual in delayed death.* **They look with trust and look prophetically at me**-*here is prophecy of the faith of the Roman centurion and others! "This man is the son of God"* **They share my garments and for my robe they threw little lottery stones.** (*The sandals himation, kaffiyah and belt were shared between the quaternion, the seamless robe was subject to the custom of Roman dice as prophesied .*) **And You Yahweh do not be far away, and My Strength or Hind of morning hasten to help me.** (*Hebrew ytllja compare with title "hind" tllja -the word is retained in the name "Eilat" and applied to the "nobility" and "chief rank" and "power" of the oak or the deer or the river Uli in Susa Persia or Idumean port. Thus this psalm is the chef of all psalms and "Eli" on whom Christ calls is His noble Father) Snatch my soul from the sword, my all (or darling)soul from the hand of the dog.*(*The word ytdjy is feminine to agree with "Soul" and means "my united one" "my all" "my mutual" "my only one"(from which we get "only-begotten" in John's N.T. writing. The fact is that Christ gave up His life just before the sword thrust) Have my salvation completed from the mouth of the Lion.* (*From the words of the Judeans who backed with the Romans in a plot succoured by Satan-cf "Satan entered into him"[Judas])From the "horns" of the buffalo not the oryx-which was called a unicorn because it had antlers growing from one root like the genuine Tibetan unicorn? This refers to the fact that Christ's deposition was*

effected by friends not rudely by soldiers with swords cutting the bodies down **Here are 10 remarkable prophecies of the enactment of crucifixion**

5. BROTHERS TOGETHER 22-24 THE ERA OF THE CHURCH

I will celebrate Your name with my brothers *The word rps means Christ promised to indelibly inscribe the name of the Living God-Yahweh on the disciples' hearts. In the "midst" of the gathering I will praise You. It was to be an "interior" In 2 Samuel 4.6 it refers to the upper bedchamber-so an upper room. You who reverence Yahweh give Him praise, All you seed of Jacob give Him glory This word speaks of those whom Christ met and confronted as the Lord confronted Jacob after His resurrection. And congregate or sojourn to him out of all the seed of Israel. Again this stretches to the global later day ingathering of the Jews. For He has not trampled -He has not counted abhorred the affliction of the afflicted He has not hid his face from Him (him) -when He (he) cried He heard. Here the response of the Father in the resurrection of Christ is proclaimed as an earnest of the resurrection of Israel prophesied in Ezekiel 37***And when He repeatedly cried to Him He heard.** *cf Eli, Eli*

6 SAINTS TOGETHER 25-26 THE ERA OF MESSIAH'S KINGDOM

My glorious praise sources from You in the great congregation I will complete my sacrifice, thanks , vows in the presence of those who fear Him. The poor (hm[those who sing and testify or submit themselves) shall eat (cf lka "feed on one's flesh" as the community shared in the king's sacrifices) and be satisfied. Those who seek /follow Yahweh shall praise Him. That will be the way for your hearts for ever *It will be an era of praise and one of joy and peace of heart on an on.*

7.THE ENDS OF THE WORLD

All the ends of the earth shall recall to mind or contemplate *(although this might mean the memorial-cf Lord's Supper it seems rather to mean a vivid recall of what had been heralded) or call it to mind and convert to Yahweh. All the widespread families of the Gentiles shall worship before You. For the kingdom belongs to Yahweh and He is Ruler (Who assimilates or makes equal) among or in the house of the nations. We have here a delineation of Christ moving among the nations He counts as His sheep." Them also I must bring and there shall be one fold and one shepherd")*

8.THE PROSPEROUS HEBREW ^{ivd}

All the anointed ones of the earth shall eat His memorial meal (the Lord's Supper) or better taste and enjoy and worship. *Widespread worship will everywhere entail enjoying the presence of the One who was formerly remembered before He came again. But as the Passover was relegated by the New Testament the Memorial table is relegated in face of the presence of the glorious returned King. All those who are going or have gone down to the dust will bow low before Him and His soul will not continue alive The Christian and unbelieving alike*

A seed (of His planting) shall serve Him-one reckoned to Adonai for a generation (an age or circuit of time-not to be replaced) They will come and will declare /solve the enigma of His righteousness for a People who will be born or birth because He has laboured/prepared it/offered (Himself) a sacrifice *The Haggadah and the people who births itself (Heb Niphal suggests not Spiritual but political) are Jewish*

TWENTY THREE-THE SHEPHERD LEADS

N.T. REFERENCES JOHN 10.11 REVELATION 7.17 LUKE 7.46

INTRODUCTION

Inn the mid-nineteen eighties I listened to Mr. Thumper give a unique address on the 23rd Psalm. He had a deep interest in the Waldensian Church which suffered persecution in pre-Reformation days. His comments were never written but I have preserved excerpts from them in the text that follows.

A SHORT HISTORY OF JEWISH SHEPHERDS

The world's pastoral history began with the Lord companioning Adam daily. ABEL-ROEH -the first human shepherd suffered the first violent death. "REU" the shepherd of Gen 10.25 & 11.18 appeared when the earth was dividing. Abraham was rich "in cattle & sheep" -the patriarchs learned caring through husbandry. Jacob had sympathy not to drive too hard a pace for women & children. Joseph (Gen 45.11) desired to "nourish" his fickle brothers Moses and David learned leadership and care through shepherding. Our Lord characterised Himself as the "good shepherd" and inculcated similar care in the disciple-cf John 21.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Our Lord was born in the shepherds' fields and died as a sacrificial lamb to gather the church and Israel to his bosom-cf "other sheep". He purposes in the eternal years to extinguish the inventory of sorrow and every tear εξαλειψει (Rev7 .17).It remains third for us to anoint him as Lord of all. These are the three fundamentals-his person and work and the deposit of our tenderest obedience.

A MIZMOR

The psalm is one of 56 "choice bunches" of grapes. Augustine called it "the Martyr's psalm" Knox introduced 12 psalms to Scotland and his nephew Melville could rehearse them in original Hebrew. Psalm 23 is one of these.

SIX GLORIOUS VERSES

1 JEHOVAH ROEH. I shall not be "diminished"(as in Gen8.3, 5) or "wanting". (As in Gen 18.28) Its future tense displays "faith". In life I will have no lack and "when the Roll is called up yonder I'll be there".

2 In 'Noah's' of first sprouting grass he cause me to lie down, by waters of "water-Noah/rest' He causes me to lie in my heritage. The verbs are both Hiphal and speak of the practice and permission of God-also his declaration. Here David sees his life cast in a wonderful new age of the world. cf Genesis33 .14 "I will lead softly" [*Heb yffal (aff is onomatopoeic)*]

3 He keeps on turning my soul and His practice is to guide me in the "winding or revolving paths" [Heb *ylgam*] of righteousness belonging to the "intention" of His name. He is the Good shepherd-to do this He must exercise Himself, the word JI JC comes from 'furrow' so He had to work as a ploughman to shepherd me!

4 (A) Also because I will walk in a valley of shadows/"shadow of death" [Heb. *tm /xs*] is not the gates of the shadow as in Job3.5 10.2128.3 34.22 &38.17 "I am not afraid because you are with me". This is a "trembling fear" [Heb. *ary* "a dread of loud noise"]. Bunyan catches this truth in his portrayal of Giant Despair. From the "noise" some have conjectured the "valley of hyenas" WADI ABU DABA- this is "ZEBOIM" meaning "tinged" as with blood of prey. Of the 400 NT references to psalms many have to do with "security" in God

4 (B) "Your rod & staff comfort me" His "rod" [Heb *fbv*] prods the conscience and separates us out as His own, His staff [Heb *l[v]*] is that which David can "lean upon" -with this instrument of care the shepherd draws the sheep from danger- it is His comfortable faithfulness to promise. This verb is a PIEL meaning that David will constantly be comforted by the fact God has the means to help him

5 You will extend a table in front of me within sight of my enemies. The practice of the shepherd to beat grass to expel snakes and then to use a pungent odour around the margins of this area was "preparing a table" This "orderly preparation" [Heb *Jr[]*] is also used of the table of showbread- David, once driven from Saul's table, had resort to Gods. 1Samuel 21.6-you constantly anoint my head with oil, Also MEPHIBOSHETH enjoyed this extended table by the grace of David to Saul's house 2 Sam 9.11

6 "Surely goodness and covenant mercy (cf Isa55 the "sure mercies of David") will follow me all the days of my live and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for length of days" Gods goodness and covenant love are as steady as the Jordan-flowing through time. This great Sabbath rest of David is the "length of space" [Heb *Jr[]*] multiplied by the "length of time" [Heb *cc}*

THE FORCE OF ANGLO- SAXON SIMPLICITY

The psalm can be interpreted through its two "nots" (1) "I will not be wanting" and (2) "Yea though I walk ...I will not fear" first because the LORD "leads" "feeds" and "turns" me round and second because His rod and staff support me. (a)His rod (that is "His word") prepares a table. His staff and His bottles of odour and unguent represent "the Holy Spirit". The final verse speaks of the "goodness" and "covenant love" of God-as ethical guidance of His 'kindness' and spiritual guidance of his 'covenant mercy'. The Hebrew word *pdr* is used in this connection. It means to "follow quickly" "like the wind". So the sheep dogs represent the Lord's voice in cheering and chiding too.

FOR EVER AND EVER

The psalm ends "I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever"

TWENTY FOUR-THE SHEPHERD KING RETURNS

The earth is the Lords A psalm looking far ahead to worldwide worship of Christ.

INTRODUCTION

This is one of 39 "Selah" psalms. These are 4,7,9,20,21,24,32,39,44,46-50,52,54,55,57,59-62,66-68,75-77,81-85,87-89,140,143. Three "Selah's" are found in Psalms 46,66,77,89 & 140. This psalm is also a "mizmor" like earlier psalms 3-6. The Hebrew word means "pruned" suggesting a shortened song and one better on that account as a vine is pruned in order to produce more fruit.

1. The earth belongs to the Living God and its fullness too... *Billions of planets there may be but on the earth is life created by the Life-giver and testimony to Him. Its fullness (Hebrew *alm* usually refers to "corn and wine" and its luxuriant products besides its ores and their potential...the inhabited globe and the settlers or dwellers. Earth is a 1bt globe which is described in Job 37.12 and many other places as having a face or literally "faces" as if to speak of an all around appearance- like the human head or like the cherubim more accurately.*

2. For He founded it on the waters. *The idea is that He placed it above or near the waters. He prepared or established it above or by the rivers-as the Tigris Euphrates and Hiddekel. This salt sea and freshwater provision is peculiar to earth so far as we yet know. It is signature and testimony to His long developing purpose in humanity.*

3. Who will go up to the house of the hill of the Living God? Who will rise up in the house of the place of His holiness? *One must "be lifted" to stand with God-one must "be raised" to abide with the Holy One*

4. The man of clean hands and pure heart... *Where the purging and sprinkling of pure water as in priestly baptism (Hebrew *hqm*) is accompanied by the sifting of chaff (Hebrew *rb*) from character...who has neither lifted up his soul to violence nor empty disappointing living nor bound himself by oath to defraud.*

5. He shall carry away blessing from the Living God and righteousness from the God of his salvation. *We recall Jacob who carried blessing and being right with God from his meeting with God. Jacob known as a "deceiver" was called "a prince". This booty comes with humble prayer confession and intimacy.*

6. This is the generation of the persecutors -the sort that seek your face, O God of Jacob. *David has been musing on Jacob and he includes himself and the singers as keen to pursue a saving relationship with the Lord and to maintain it by prayer. When David says "persecutors" he uses the Hebrew *vqb* which means "to examine by touching". So whereas the Lord "touched his sinew"(Gen32.32) he was keen to "touch" the Lord-to "Hold Him", to be with him.*

7. Lift up your heads you Gates and age-long doors lift yourselves up and the King of Glory will come in. *The millennial age of the Lord's rule is in view. It is notable that the first gate was the "eastern or old gate"(Hebrew *mcar*) The word **gate** (Hebrew *r[v]* has the root "a fissure" "an aperture" "a crack" so there will be a shuddering, a cleavage, a breaking open that heralds this age. This is clearly the case as one studies the words of Zechariah which herald an earthquake that divides Olivet north-south as harbinger of this era. The Hebrew word **doors** (*yj tp*) means "house doors" -doors which are clearly of enduring materials and put in place in readiness for the King of kings. In the first instance these doors which are said to "lift themselves up"(Niphal tense) may be automatic. "Automatic doors" have been introduced to public buildings in modern times but were unknown to David. How appropriate for the King's coming*

8. Who is this king of Glory? The Life-giver, the strong One (Hebrew *mz*) ["One strengthened by wisdom or by victory", "one who is robust") -a Warrior, the living Lord mighty in battle.

9. Lift up your heads you Gates and lift up you age-long doors. *As to the gates we have the same expression, which is also associated with being cheery, wealthy and being freed from prison. So with the Lord's coming Israel is once and for all out of bondage and will rejoice. As*

to the doors here we have the Perfect imperative. The Lord's command has gone forth. Great doors last long-these doors which are to last out the millennium. **And the King of Glory will come in.** This is a promise a fact and of course the beginning of a millennial rule. (The Hebrew ml^ā is indicative of a long age or a millennium)

10. The Lord of **armies** He is king of Glory. Selah. The word "host" is used of "forces of war" but probably originates in the word for "shining stars (Hebrew hbx giving abx) It is also applied to the Levites. The creator of the hosts of heaven is also Lord of the hosts of angels who are especially in the last days a significant factor in hastening history to its judicial stage as they gather men out of the world and serve as officers of judgement. The host of priests of this final era are also "shining ones" who will with all the lord's people proclaim His kingdom and carry His message to the ends of the earth.

TWENTY FIVE-LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

SURSUM CORDA

It was Cyprian of Carthage (200-251) who adapted this psalm as a call to worship. The term for his invocation is "sursum corda". It was Hugh Redwood who popularised the BBC thought for the day under the title "Lift up your hearts". This is a cheerful psalm for the people of God

A DAY WITH GOD

This psalm is one where the psalmist spends a day with God. Psalm 84 10 gets it right, "A day in Your courts is better than a thousand." David had come to confess his sin, to learn God's ways and to praise God in this alphabetical which uses 19 Hebrew letters to begin its many thoughts in verse. This poem being more involved might represent the passage of hours in composition. As Spurgeon said, "Sincere penitents can't get through their confessions at a gallop"

To You O LORD I offer my all. My Strong One in You I trust for security. Let not my enemies exult over me. Also may everyone who waits on you be unashamed David wished others to bind themselves to God and to be bold confessors. **Let those who deal in occult schemes be ashamed. O LORD you have disciplined me in Your ways, disciple me in travelling the path with others.** David uses the Hebrew Hophal past tense of dml "to accustom" of what he has learned and the Hebrew Kal or present tense of what he needs to learn about walking in fellowship. **Develop me in your faithfulness** (Hebrew tmā "to keep covenant promise" to "be consistent perpetually" "to show integrity") **and disciple me** David recognises the stress must be on character-an aspect of "likeness to God" cf. 1 Sam 13.14 Acts 13.22. David has got through ALEPH TO ZAYIN so far

For You are the Strong One my Saviour. With You I continue to wait(Hebrew Piel continuous of j^{mq} meaning "bind "-so "Hope" is a "Rope "and "waiting" is "binding" under this Hebrew concept) **all the day**

GENESIS FEATURE

Remember your tender mercies and covenant mercies for they have been age-long. To follow mhr and dsj as David did would mean turning back the pages through Genesis-Deuteronomy.

Genesis 43.14 Jacob said, "God Almighty give your tender mercy before the man"(TM)

19.19 Lot Said, "You have shown great mercy in saving me" (CM)

Exodus 33.19 "I have caused all my goodness to appear before you"(TM) cf God merciful & gracious

20.6 God forgives "to a thousand generations"(CM)

Leviticus In this priestly book of sacrifice neither surfaces

Numbers 3.18 Every "child that opens the womb is mine" (TM)

14.18 Israel desires new leader to go back-yet God has mercy (CM)

Deut 13.17 The Lord is tender in every other way to those who abhor idols (TM)

7.7 To 1000 generations God is faithful (C.M.)

WARDROBE OF GRACE

Do not remember the sins of my youth nor my transgressions. According to your covenant mercy remember me and according to Your goodness. David first rejoiced in being the object of a covenant. God is not only faithful to covenant, **He is cheerful** (Hebrew b^{wf} lifting the spirit like a good morning like Hab2.4 Hebrew r^{vj} meaning "composed and tranquil" for "upright") **He points sinners into the house of the way. He journeys with** those who are exercised about or who cultivate balanced judgement and disciples the downcast/those who have lost courage/are brought low (Hebrew h^{ml} cf Numbers 12.3 "Moses was very "meek" or "lowly") **in His way. All the "fellowship paths" of the LORD are covenant and faithful paths. Because of Your name O LORD pardon** (Hebrew h^l s^{be} "gentle" with me-go" lightly") my vileness for it is great. (**He is gentle**) David has now gone from HE to LAMDA in the Hebrew alphabet

WHO IS THIS MAN?

What man? The man who reverences the Lord. The LORD points him in the way he selects. It is the way of trial or the touchstone but also the excellent way which Paul speaks of in 1Corinthians 12.31 It is the way of Boasting nothing-of humility and meekness; the way of love. And just look what happens? (1) **His soul tarries or continues in cheerfulness.** Well might David ask about the man-cheerful against all odds. Like that glorious man of God, Dion Pope of Bognor who against difficulties smiled broadly and said, "Praise God anyway. There goes a special man-dying in service thrown to death from his scooter en route from one of London's prisons.(2)**His seed will inherit the earth** Jesus said so in Mathew 5.5-first thing in the sermon-thee is a spread of truth and righteousness from men like Moses and David-a testimony-an evangel (3)**The secret of the Lord-as He sits with such a man and discourses familiarly -is with those who reverence and worship Him and he makes his covenant known personally to them.** David proposed the House -Nathan said "no" David was disappointed-but God said "I will build you a house-how thrilling! **My eyes are always towards the LORD for He plucks my feet from the net. Turn Your face to me-be gracious. I am** (Hebrew d^hy meaning both "alone" and "your darling") downcast and solitary. **The troubles of my heart have broadened. Bring me out of my siege mentality. Look at the despair and weary vexation going with my sins and lift it. See my many enemies who really hate me. Guard my soul, snatch me from danger for I run in faith to You for refuge.** (4) Ruth 2.12 David's great grandmother rushed to Boaz feet.

This is the position David treasures. Let wholeness-the complete Godly image and tranquillity (Hebrew r^{vj} and m^t) **form my life into the vessel God wants** (Heb r^{xy}) TAU the final letter is the "cross. How else could it be possible? **For I bind myself to you in hope!**

O Strong one Redeem Israel as the sheep sets the donkey free to serve from all rivals. May You have unrivalled sway in the life of your people as Lord of all!

TWENTY-SIX-INTEGRITY

BELONGING TO DAVID

INTEGRITY

The borough of High Wickham once weighed its mayoral candidates at the inception & close of office to ascertain if they had grown fat at public expense. John McMurray has said that "complete individual integrity is the condition of personal relationships. Dominican mystic Echart said, "Integrity is best preserved by silence. Doug Hammarskjold defined it as "being bound by duty." David said, "Unite my heart to fear your name" Psa86.11; Jesus said, "Let your eye be single" Mt 6.22; James said, "The double-minded man is unstable in all his ways" James 1.8

1. DAVID IS WILLING TO OPEN HIS HEART HONESTLY 1-3

Be my judge, measure me, and declare me straight O Yahweh. For I have walked in my integrity Hebrew *mmt* "completeness, wholeness, sincerity, soundness marked his "way of life" It means "to shut the door behind you"-to complete what you begin. **In Yahweh I have trusted-I will not totter.** Job speaks on this topic of "slipping." He says, "The lamp is despised by those who sit around but lit for him who knows he slides" (Job 12.5) David knew this for he said, "Your word is a light to my feet". **Try me like metal or by touchstone, test me by smell** That is by sniffing out the detail of one's way o life. **Melt and purge like metal my reins and my heart** The reins are "double" so as Schultens observed a pure simplicity of desire or a double-minded complexity is discovered. The emotions will and conscience are opened to God as they should be **For Your covenant love is before my eyes and I have walked in Your faithfulness /truth** This is the basis of David's integrity-God's faithful word.

2. DAVID WORSHIPS WITH BELIEVERS 4-5

I have not spent Sabbath with men of emptiness, desolation or lies. I will not go with those who hide what they are with words Niphal of Hebrew *ml* [**I have hated the congregation of the hurtful/malicious and I will not dwell with the false** David's company is dictated by common fellowship with God. This distances him from hypocrites and meetings of a harmful sort and the guilty people who live false lives...cf Thomas Watson "Pharaoh taught Joseph to dissemble"! US depression-repudiated debt Stephen Douglas wanted to be carried to the legislature on a stretcher to vote saying, "Let Illinois be honest"

3. DAVID WASHES (HIS HANDS) 6-8

David more fully explains how he comes to be innocent. He relates sacrifice to baptism and praise & testimony or preaching **I will wash my hands of defilement declaring my innocence and turn myself to approach** (Hebrew *bbs*) **Your Altar, Yahweh.** The action of Pilate in Matthew 27.24 is pointless because it is unrelated to sacrifice. David was innocent only because he had an offering and that was to be sacrificed on the altar. Pilate despised the Lamb of God. **In order to listen /obey in the house of the voice of praise and to enumerate all your wonderful works.** David often listened to others sing while he testified and gave the word. Some years ago we listened to a Greek virtuoso Eleni Keventsidou playing "Jesus Christus unser Heiland in Cambridge with much joy. **I have loved delighted in and breathed after the defence or fortress of Your house O Yahweh.** David counted the Lord his fortress (Psalm 37.39, 43.2) and found God's house a refuge too. **I have loved the place where Your glory abides familiarly.**

4. DAVID WALKS BY GOD'S WORD 9-12

Here David seeks openness not as we now say "closure" of the Bathsheba episode. **Do not gather or collect the fruits or harvest my soul with that of sinners and with men who have the much blood of saintly lives on their hands. Who in their hands have wicked counsel and their right hand is full of bribes.** Here we begin to understand that David was no serial murderer. His was not the intent to do good men down and to kill the righteous. He gave no bribes -even concerning Uriah. Yet his appeal is occasioned by his coming within a hairbreadth of being associated with such felons. David promises for the future to conduct himself godly. **For me I will walk in my sound way of life-Redeem me-show me grace or favour. My foot stands to minister in a place of straightness** Hebrew *rvj* means "level tranquillity" "rough places smoothed out" "with access to God" **In the congregations I will kneel to bless Yahweh.** Here is David promising he will be there at all the gatherings and feast. He will be taking the humble position. He will be bringing blessing to God His Saviour-whose salvation and grace he had large need of as we ourselves also have.

TWENTY SEVEN-WHEN BEREAVEMENT STRIKES

MEMORY LANE

As a boy I learned the psalm by heart. After 55 years I come back to this fountain of light and salvation and enjoy drinking in its truth again. The psalm has back grounded my life.

MY SALVATION 1-3

Yahweh is my light and my salvation. David found revelation and liberty in the LORD. **The LORD is the powerful protection of my life of whom shall I be in trepidation/terrified. When the wicked** (Hebrew *my[r* "noisy sick or evil ones"-of bad cattle)) **approached me to devour my flesh or accuse; my adversaries and enemies they shook for want of strength and fell. If a host should rise...** (Hebrew *hvj* "pitch its tent")... **against me my heart will not fear. If war should rise against me -in this war I will trust (My God) David does not trust to the "arm of flesh" but to the "arm of God".**

SABBATH AND WAR 4-6

David had one highly significant prayer. **The first thing (or) one thing (or) a unique thing I prayed, and this I will seek or cherish; that I might Sabbath in the house of the LORD all the days of my life.** Whatever wars the king had to face his prayer was they might be short. The siege of Rabbah was one exception. The slaughter of the Philistine-his first conflict put an end to weeks of military stand-off and so it continued to be. All his success derives from trust and this unique prayer of a worshipping saint who put the Lord first. I have not done a full examination but I believe this principle worked out in many struggles of the king. Even where war may have run longer David

would withdraw to worship in Jerusalem. To behold the pleasantness or friendship of the LORD and to open (any matter) or think on (it) in His temple Here the word used for Behold is Aramaic *hʒ* and it has to do with ""experiencing God" by "prophetic vision". He will treasure or restrain me in the secret place in the day of trouble. He will defend me in the secret place (Hebrew *hks* "woven cot") of His tent. He will place me high in the house of a rock. (The tabernacle or rock threshing floor of Ornan 1Chron 21.20) My head now high above encircling enemies David spoke not of his own head but of his "high priest" interceding and his "commander in chief" being in full charge. And I will offer sacrifices in His tabernacle-sacrifices of joyful trumpet playing. I will sing- I will play instrumentally to Yahweh.

During and following war and victory David would praise God. This is one of such songs.

A VOICE IS CALLING 7-10

Hear O LORD my voice -I am calling. Show me favour. Answer me. My heart speaks with light of an oracle, "Seek my face!" O LORD I will seek Your face! Do not turn me away (Hebrew *hfn* "to stretch out the hand to usher away") You are & have been my help. Do not let me go or forsake me Two battle words(Hebrew *vfn* "to spread the battle widely and inconclusively"-don't leave me without answer and *bz* "to desert" in the fight)O Strong One of my salvation. When or because my father and mother forsake me the LORD will gather me up (The Hebrew word is used in its military significance "agmen claudere" "to bring up the rear". David as a king may have been contemplating the loss of his mother following the death of his father on whose advice and help he could have relied. The reference and its poignancy is the only reason I have for suggesting this expected sadness.

GUIDANCE 11-14

Point out your way O LORD. Usher me into a fellowship path of tranquillity because of my oppressors. (Literally how they are "twisted around me") Do not hand over my soul to the desire of my Adversary. David had many who pressed him but as all saints do recognised he had one enemy-Satan. False witnesses are risen against me who puff out violence. Otherwise my confidence of future views of the goodness, cheer and kindness of the LORD in the land of the living would not be mine

Wait on the LORD. He will repair you/restore you/stick fast to you and strengthen or alert your heart. You also must wait on the LORD Advise out of a rich experience of God in family & war times

TWENTY EIGHT: PRAYER

GOD HEARS IMMEDIATELY 1-2

Unto You O LORD I will call : My rock do not be deaf as to me (Hebrew *vrj* "don't be a providential ploughman-or a creative metal worker" i.e. engaged in important but all consuming work that dulls the ears)Lest if you turn away silent I make myself lie those who go down to the sepulchre. Hear the voice of my entreaty for grace in the house of my cry (Hebrew [*rv* "cry for salvation"])In the house of my lifting my hands to the oracle of your holiness David desires to be heard "in the house" not when he leaves it.

GENESIS FEATURE- CREATIVE WORK DESPISED 3-5

Do not scatter me (Hebrew *Jvm* "Scatter as seed") with the men of uproar , with those who labour in evil(Hebrew [*p* "work in a narrow pit shaft"])giving the oracle of "Shalom" to neighbours but that of evil in their hearts(or under their breath) Give them after their underground or hidden acts and crush them noisily from their own repeated gratification of lust(Hebrew [*l* "entering in"])Give them according to the victims they prepare with their hands. Return to them as the camel. (Hebrew [*mmg* and [*mq* Bochart calls the camel the "re-payer" because it "remembers ills" & revenges) But why this prayer that God should judge these repetitive lustful perpetrators of ill? Not alone for their miss-deeds but for what they will not do!) For they will not understand by mediation... (Hebrew [*nyb*]... the great labours of the LORD... (cf the cross)... and the creative acts of His hands. He will pull them down. (Hebrew *srh* as houses that are in such ruin as to be a gross danger- Spurgeon puts it, "The wicked like rotten houses will be demolished"- Isaiah refers to Leontopolis in Egypt as "the city of destruction" cf John Bunyan)He will not build them (they will be without issue)

CHRISTOLOGY 6-9

Blessed be the LORD for He heard the voice of my cry for grace. The LORD is my strength (Hebrew [*rz*] "strength", "help") My heart leaps and dances and my song will praise Him. The LORD is His strength (The AV, NKJ has "their" and the NIV "His people") He is the defence or fortress and salvations of His Anointed. Save your people and bless your inheritance and shepherd them and bear them up in Your arms till the age to be. In this closing section David is as specific about Christ as in the text our Lord quoted-Psalm 110.1 -here David says, "The Lord is the strength of his Anointed -who does four things David could never do

1. He saved His people from their sins
2. He blesses His inheritance
3. He Shepherds His people
4. He lifts them up or "carries them away"(Hebrew *avn*) into eternity.

TWENTY NINE-THE HOUSE & VOICE OF THE LORD

MIZMOR NO.13

Here again, as in each "presentation vessel" is salvation and doctrine, prayer and atonement; divine uniqueness and watch-care. Readers may enjoy tracing these elements for themselves in the psalm.

GENESIS FEATURE 1-2

"Give" (Hebrew [*bh*] from [*bhy*]) is used by Jacob in Genesis 29.21 when he says to Laban, "Give me my wife", that is, what is his by right. Give to the Lord O sons of the princes/strong ones-give to Him the glory and strength. Give Him the glory due His name. Worship the LORD in the house of the most excellent ornaments of holiness. The furniture of the tabernacle speaks of Gods holiness. In the lamp we see-Christ the light of the world, in the brazen altar-His cross, in the table-His fellowship, in the incense altar-his intercession, in the veil-his death and in the ark lid-His blood shed.

QOL-VOICE

The Hebrew word for voice is "Qol" which means, "to call" "to demand attention", "to speak". IN some instances God is "speaking" within the confines of conscience and demanding David's attention and that of others through the stentorian sounds of the elements and above them. God's voice in the final count brings men back to worship

THE LORD'S VOICE IN THE CONSCIENCE 2-4

The voice of the LORD is above the water. The LORD the Strong One of the Glory thunders above the great waters. God is to be respected and feared above the sea. The voice of the LORD is in the house of strength. The voice of the LORD is in the house of excellent ornament or majesty. It is as if David can hear the roaring of God's voice above the washings of the brazen altar and the flames of the offerings in the house of ornaments but also in the house of conscience.

THE LORD'S VOICE IN THE CHURCH 5-7

The voice of the Lord shatters the cedars These trees were named for their "firm roots" and God's voice commanded that they be felled by a mighty storm-presumably when David was anxious that Hiram harvest them to build his house. **The LORD tears down the cedars of Lebanon. He makes them dance like the calf - Lebanon and Sirion like the offspring of the Oryx. The voice of the LORD hews out the flames of fire.** This great disturbance on the mountains is linked with fire which is halted or divided by the LORD. Pentecost demonstrates the living God in action dividing the Holy Fire of the Spirit among the apostles. The connection is this. God humbled David by an arresting display of His might in Lebanon whilst the king sought to build the house-and the LORD showed by the power of His Spirit in Acts how truly His house would be built.

THE LORD'S VOICE INSTRUCTS 8-11

The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness. The LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. The Hebrew *luj* means "to twist" "to go in circles"-so David is saying that the desert storm is a twister that goes round in circles destructively. The Lord's judgement that Israel should go round in the desert for 40 years reflects this "twister" In Kadesh Israel doubted God could enable them take Canaan. It was there about that Moses struck the rock and took the glory. It was there Miriam was buried. **The voice of the Lord has continually twisted and caused women to give birth or go into labour** The Hebrew for female deer *tlja* is also used in loving address to a woman. **The voice of the Lord strips the luxuriant forests naked** The Hebrew verb *pvj* means to "strip bare". Great winds blow every leaf off the forest trees. David records the power of God's voice in the desert, on the mountains, in the home and over the countryside. **And in his palace (the tabernacle) everyone says luminously "Glory"**

God's voice promotes obedience as it touches the conscience, reverence as it ushers in new life; humility as it strips off pride and joy as it promotes an understanding of who the LORD is. The LORD sits as king eternally; gives strength to His people and blesses them with SHALOM

THIRTY-FOR THE NEW HOUSE OF GOD-SORROW TURNED TO JOY

A MIZMOR: A PSALM FOR THE DEDICATION OF DAVID'S HOUSE

In His church as in His temple the LORD gives His people the sunshine radiance of a life-time of praise and joyful worship and brief intervals of His anger like dark clouds soon pass away.

HOUSE-WARMING

David's idea of house warming was to compose a song.

1. A psalm *rumzm* of David cf Psalm 20 for the nature & elements of a Psalm

2. "I will lift you high Living One for you drew my soul **like a bucket from a well** from Sheol. My enemies do not continue to "take the limelight" over me.

3. "O Living God my Strong Lord, I prayed to You and You healed me"

4. "O Lord You brought up my soul from Sheol. You caused me to live -separating me from going down like a river to the pit."

5 "Praise the Lord you saints of His. Praise for the recollection (*He has of us*) in His holiness."

6. **"For merely a wink in the house of His anger-while our whole lives are spent in the house of His pleasure. In the evening weeping passes, shouts of joy belong to the morning."**

David believes God has disposed life on the side of celebration as the ultimate experience!

7. "I said in my quietness my prosperity, my tranquillity my negligence *hl v*, 'I shall not be shaken for ever.' It is easy to speak in happy times of one's rock like stability. Peter the apostle exuded confidence whilst yet a distance from death and we are all too prone to this fault. The comforts of home had already proved their insufficiency and David states that he will not neglect the Lord

8. "Lord, You have favoured me-caused my mountain to be established." This is a prime example of "mountains" standing for "kingdoms". In those days capitals were built on Acropolii. It was so with Athens, Philippi and Jerusalem too. David's palace was built in Jerusalem and was on the fortified rump of Moriah south of the temple Sacra.

"When you veiled Your face I trembled or was terrified." In Psalm 51.11 David desires God to hide His face from his sins-but here although he has experience of the hand of God he cannot bear to feel God's face is turned away.

9. "To you O Living Lord I called, I called to the Lord for Grace," David displays how Grace is to be found-by calling on God who may seem to be hidden or far away. Grace features strongly in this little psalm. The idea of "calling out" *arq* is to call on a specific name. The only source of Grace is the Living God through his Life giving Spirit and the work of His Son the Word of God

10. "What is gained by my going down to the pit?" lit. What spoils of battle are there in my blood-in my death. "Will the dust praise you-will it declare (*Hebrew the enigma of dqn*) your faithfulness?" **David in life had a very special role and He argues for its continuance so that he may magnify the Lord**

11. "Hear O Lord and give me Grace. O Lord of Life be my Helper." David seeks Grace as he enters a new phase of his life and opens the doors of a new home. He expresses the need for "help" as well-the primary notion in this word *rza* is defence or girding up in battle. With this new era he saw little prospect of settling down-like the Christian-who faces continual spiritual warfare he was committed to life-long warfare.

12. "You turned my wailing to dancing-took off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy"

13 "That I might sing Glory and not be dumb O Lord God for ever I will praise You" David speaks of the era ahead and ultimately his last statement is pregnant with eternal significance-he anticipates living for ever-even though, despite the use of some songs in current worship, he has hardly reckoned on his songs being used over 3000 years by Jew & Gentile alike.

THIRTY ONE- COURAGE

A MIZMOR OF DAVID

cf Psalm 20 "A vessel bearing the quintessence of praise".

(1) THE I-YOU RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST 1-9 (HEBREW VERSIFICATION FOLLOWED)

1. In or into You O Lord I flee for refuge. Do not let me be ashamed ever (Hebrew *m|a*) 2. By means of Your righteousness cause me to escape (Hebrew *flp* describes "the escape of a baby from the womb never more to enter") 3. Extend or incline Your ear to me. Completely snatch me from danger (Hebrew *l xñ Hiphil*) quickly or skilfully. Be to me a Rock-Home -a house of lying in wait or searching eyes (Hebrew *dlx*) belonging to my salvation. (Hebrew [*vj* meaning victory for me and riches and space afforded) David here refers to "Maon" which means "a dwelling" -in this case probably the Rock-dwelling of Petra which Buckhardt discovered. 4. Therefore "Petra" me and "Zod" me which means garrison me and by Your eye watch to snatch me from danger. Lead me back and keep claiming me (Hebrew *Piel*) as Your own-your possession on account of Your name. Here David stresses his desire to get back to God from where-ever and to be the Lord's treasured possession at all times 5. Raise me in a complete act from the net they set for me for you are the one who holds me in your strong grasp. 6. Into Your hand I commit /deposit my Spirit. Redeem ransom or loose me O Living Lord Strong God of truth. A prophecy of the final words of our Saviour -words which should be our final words too! 7. I hate those who preserve or worship idols of emptiness but I trust in the Lord. Hatred here constitutes an "enemy" Those who continue in idolatry oppose the living God and lie outside His covenant. 8. I will dance for joy and be radiant on account of Your covenant love which looked ahead at my affliction The Lord foresaw our trouble and provided a Saviour. You have been acquainted with my soul by its adversities or pressures or "as being wrapped in the bundle or purse of life with the living God." (Hebrew *rx* for a purse or wallet of wealth squeezed together) 9. You have not shut me up completely in the hand of my enemies. You have appointed /caused me to remain or minister in an open place

(2) GRACE FOR ADDED AFFLICTION -WHEN THE ENEMY IS ACTIVE 10-14

10. Be gracious to me Lord for I have an enemy. My eye wastes because of irritation or provocation-my soul and body also because they have filled my life with sorrow or moving about (Hebrew *mqj*) and my years with sighing. 11. My power or wealth sinks or weakens because of depravity and my bones fade like the moth (Hebrew *vv*). In this section David calls for Grace to meet his need. His eyes his body his general strength and means are more limiting and his failures weakens even his bones. A lady had to have an eye replaced from failing sight. She said to the physician, "Be sure to choose one with a twinkle in it"! 12. I am of little account or as a winter scene from the perspective of all my enemies-more so to those who live by me and one who causes fear or shame to those acquainted with me. Those who see me in public move away from me David was going through a "cold season" in his relations with the nation - perhaps through Absalom's revolt. People avoided him. 13. I render myself forgotten like a man who is dead-is gone from the heart - like a wasted vessel or utensil. 14. For I hear the slow creeping slander (Hebrew *hbd*) of many. Fear or turning aside (i.e. *rnj* tarrying or staying with David for just a little time) are all around consulting together against me This relates to David but prophetically refers to Christ-persecution bonds David and the Lord, Christ & the believer They murmur or meditate to take my life.

MY TIMES ARE IN YOUR HANDS 15-19

15. But I trust in You O Lord, I say," You are my Strong God" 16. My times (Hebrew *t* [opportunities limits calamitous times vicissitudes seasons reviving times) are in Your hand, deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. David is never willing to hand his future over to the evil one. In extreme straits even he prefers "to fall into the hand of the Lord". 17. Shine Your radiant face upon Your servant-save me completely by your covenant love. 18. O Lord do not put me to shame before my enemies for I am calling on You. David is attune to God's attitude to him-the joy-the pleasure of the Lord. He holds to the covenant in hard times. Let the wicked be silent in Sheol 19. Let the lips of the arrogant be bound to silence for speaking bold words of "removal" (Hebrew *qt* [) against the righteous in despising and majestically or with arrogance (Hebrew *hwag*)

OH, OH, OH, HOW GREAT IS THE LORD! 20-24

20. How great is Your cheer prosperity beauty agreeableness (Hebrew *bwf*) which you store up or destine for those who fear You.- which you have undertaken as an illustrious deed (Hebrew *l [p*) for those who flee to You for refuge and protection over against the (threatening) sons of men. 20. You will hide them in the veiled place of Your presence from the calamities (Hebrew *skr* meaning the tabernacle and its curtains) You will hide or store them in a booth from the strife of tongues. 21. Blessed be the Lord for He has continued to display His covenant kindness to me in a rock city or besieged city. (Hebrew *rxm*) 23. For I said in my haste, "I have cut myself off from the presence of your eyes." Establishing it or definitively you heard the voice of my cry for favour or grace in my cry to You or "my wealth as I turn to You" (Hebrew [*iv* has the meaning of "crying for help" and "searching for wealth") 24 O love the Lord all His saints for the Lord is a watcher or preserver of the believing or faithful and makes continual recompense (*Piel participle*) of those who remain proud or are "very proud" 25. Be strong continually -keep growing strong-continue to prevail (Hebrew *Piel mqzj*) and continue to be courageous or to be repaired and restored in heart (Hebrew *Piel xmay*) all you who day on day hope in the Lord (Hebrew *Piel participle myl j ymh*) This third part of the psalm exhorts the people who "expect" "wait for" "hope in" the Lord to keep on strengthening and gaining the victory-to keep on being repaired and restored in heart and all this as we keep on waiting for the Lord to act or as in N.T. times to come again and deliver us.

PSALM THIRTY TWO-FORGIVENESS

MASCHIL-THE GENESIS (EARLIEST MOSAIC) DERIVATION OF THE TERM

This is the first of 13 "Maschil's or teaching psalms- the Arabic equivalent is "doctrine". Maschil has been understood of an **Emperor's message or speech to unite his leaders & people**. I would trace the biblical use back to Genesis 48.14 where Jacob guided his hands "knowingly" in blessing Ephraim. It appears that Jacob crossed his hands in so doing while Manasseh and Ephraim were before him. (LXX) The other later valuable meaning of the word is "to bind"-so a "Maschil" is "good and binding doctrine".

HAPPINESS

David commends repentance with his opening line, "O the happinesses (echoed in the Sermon on the Mount) of the one whose transgression (PESHA "break with God" or "rebellion" or "discord") has been forgiven (NASA "lifted" as a burden gone) whose sin (HATAAH "stumbling to one's hurt" and interestingly "covering" as the word can mean "sin offering" cf "Christ was made sin/sin

offering for us" 2Cor.5.21) **has been covered** ("covered" KASAH as an over-garment-of Gods clothing of Adam & Eve hsk is also used of "sackcloth" cf. Jonah 3.5) The teaching of David on forgiveness is that repentance should be genuine and thorough. It needs to reach to real "sackcloth and ashes" type sorrow. Paul emphasised this also in 2 Cor.7.10-11

O the happinesses of Adam -the LORD will not account ("impute" "reckon" or "mix") iniquity. The latter concept of "imputation" is central to all the bible teaches. We are told that the LORD will not mix our sin **like a permanent deep dyed red thread** the weaver might use in a garment on the loom or **like permanent damask** in the artificer's woodworking. And in whose spirit there is **no guile** (Hebrew *hymr* meaning "remaining high and proud" or "still firing the arrows of deceit")

DEAF TO REPROOF & CONSCIENCE-HIDDENNESS 1-4

When I stayed deaf (Hebrew *vrj* "to act as if dumb" "to be quiet about something" **like a ploughman who through the actions of the shear hears nothing else**) my bones grew old or wasted through my "in house" roaring all day long (Hebrew *gav* "the lion's roar" characterised David's private grief for a time) **For day and night your hand was heavy upon me.** (It is to be noted in 1 Samuel 5.11 that much deadly destruction accompanied the sin of the Philistines in holding the ark-showing the weight of God's hand of judgement. Job says God's hand was heavier than his sighing Job 23.2. The absence of true penitence leads to burdensome discipline. **My vigour or oily frame has converted to the dryness or wasting or open fissures of summer or harvest.** David uses the image of "baking". **The word "vigour" is used for fruits put in a very juicy cake and the word "converted" is used for turning a cake over** and the word "dryness" is a cognate of "open cracks" and "astonishment" so that the results of wrong use of ingredients is **a burnt cracked dry disappointing cake.** It is here David adds a "Selah" to warn that we can dally in sin-as he did with Bathsheba when kings should go to the defence of the realm

ALIVE TO THE BENEFIT OF CONFESSION-OPENNESS 5

You knew or experienced my sin. **The Hebrew word for "sin" *ash* like its cousin *msa* "guilt" or "sin offering" relates to a "slip of the foot"** and the appropriate Levitical penalties relate to improprieties with respect to money, marital matters or vows. David is saying more than "God was aware" -he was saying "sin affects God"-there is a penalty. In the law man must make restitution and understand penalty by offering-although only God "knows" the true penalty-this is what David teaches. The Hiphil means "You did something as one who knew-you performed sin-offering". So God in the O.T. did not sit on the sidelines of awareness with His binoculars-he supplied a symbolic "life for life" substitutionary placebo which spoke of the true cure in His atoning work. **My iniquity I have not veiled. I said** (the word *rma* means to speak with illumination) "I will accuse myself as to my rebellion in respect of the LORD. David teaches that he "judges himself" honestly and admits the effect for God in terms of the breach of relationship (Hebrew [*vp* "break" or "rebellion"). **And You lifted up in offering the iniquity or vileness of my "slip"** "Slipping" or a temporary default in the believer's walk for all that it is short-lived has to be understood as grave not only as "sin against light" but as deserving God's anger. Yet David teaches "You keep lifting the heavy load". He emphasises God's grace which deals with our sin and this is the reason of his second "Selah"

ROLL YOUR BURDEN ON THE LORD -JOYFULNESS 6-7

For this shall every one who is "concerned" or "excellent" (Hebrew *djsj* like "the stork" which considers its young-even supposedly nourishing them from its blood) intercede with You at a time of finding or reaching You: **excepting at the outpouring of great waters they shall not weary Him in coming to pray.** Here David teaches us to "roll out as a scroll" the sin that concerns and- **except for the impenitent violence and vileness that the God of the deluge must judge**-people who pray draw near & will not weary the Lord-He will hear and He will forgive. **You are my hiding place You will keep me from trouble or adversary. You will keep surrounding me with songs of deliverance Selah.** David teaches that God is the one who truly hides sin. God is the one who conquers our enemy. God is the one who gives "deliverance or "flowing away" as he saved Noah by the Ark so we are saved as by atonement of our Lord on the cross-and all around the returned sinner is joy in the church and in the heavens right from the heart of God. This is worthy of a third "Selah".

AVOIDANCE OF SIN OR SLIPPING- CLOSENESS TO GOD 8-11

I will instruct you and teach you in the way this joy and blessing is possible. I will dig in my foot guiding your step with my eye The call here is for "**understanding**" which word and concept the prophet Samuel (David's mentor and second founder of Israel) personalises as "**a champion**"-"**a man between**" "**a Mediator**" 1Samuel 17.4 & 23. David vis-à-vis Goliath was such a champion as is our Lord between us and our Adversary. This skill is learned from the word of God and involves watchfulness rather than blind guiding as in reining the horse or mule. (1) *lkv* First, **God guides us with his hands**-the blessing He has conferred on us. Our question here is, "What are our gifts?" (2) *hry* Second, **God guides us with his finger** or **as by Jonathan's arrow.** He points to His word and doctrine-He points to the distant future which we are to reach -our character-our developed ministry. Our question here is, "How is my walk with God?" (3) *ny* (eye) and *x[y]* (foot) Third, **His eye will guide our step as a man placing his foot deep into the ground showing its fruitfulness.** He watches over us and His counsel is of such nature as shows us places of fruitfulness along life's path. She there is "His eye" and "his foot" in this third area. Our question is, "Are the fruits of Character growing in my life?"

Each form of guidance depends on our being near to God **Do not be like the horse or mule on which he puts ornaments of bridle and bit to shut its mouth lest it come near you.** The impossibility of developing in a stubborn mulish heart the character God wants is plain to all. The animal instinct like sin is to run from the master. The believing instinct is to keep close to the master.

Many sorrows (Hebrew *bak* "things that mar" as **stones that make land sterile** and life uncultivated like fields untilled) belong to the wicked but covenant love surround the one who trusts in the Lord. The righteous shine joyfully and dance in the present of the LORD. Shout with vibrant joy all you tranquil in heart.

THIRTY THREE

REJOICE

Shout for joy in the LORD you righteous; praise from the tranquil ones is beautiful. Praise belongs to the LORD with harp, with ten-stringed lyre keep playing for Him. Sing to Him a new song; they are performing well as they sing with the daughter of a shepherd or prince. For the Oraclar word of the LORD is tranquil and all his work is in faithfulness. He is a lover of righteousness and a right plan (Hebrew *fpv* "plan" or "judgement")

LOVE AND CREATION

The earth is full of the covenant love of the LORD. *The New Song sees the sweet providences of God as worldwide too. God gave the oracle as he would do to David. By the Oracle of the LORD the heavens created themselves and all its hosts by the RUAH of His mouth. (A surprising Niphal showing an enabling Word that all of "space" just came from a word but the "hosts" came by the operation of the Spirit of God. He heaps the waters of the sea up (Hebrew סִלַּק like piles of stones or treasures) He gives the depths as treasure store-houses. The depths of the earth contain much ore and mineral wealth which shows the detailed providential care of God. Let all the earth fear apart from the LORD. Let all the settlers of the world turn aside from Him for He spoke illumination and it was in existence and will continue to exist. He continues to constitute or command (Hebrew Piel חָקַע keeps commissioning it") and it was standing and will stand to minister. The New Song sees God at work renewing His world -not least from resources He placed in its depths.*

LOVE AND PROVIDENCE

The Lord causes the counsel of the nations to break *The Hebrew רָחַץ is used but twice in the O.T-here and in Ezekiel 17.19-where a "broken covenant" is spoken about. The idea is "crushing counsel as in crushing grapes or dividing it as in Purim where the enemies of Israel cast lots to destroy the Jews. He brings to nothing the plans of nations. (Hebrew מַלְחָה "easy" and the negative אֵין "No") "He says "No" to easy schemes") The counsel of the LORD ministers age-long. The plans of His heart from generation to generation. Happy is the Gentile nation which has the LORD for its God; the people whom the LORD chooses for his heritage. The Lord looks with expectation from heaven. He sees all the sons of Adam in prophecy. From the existing or established (throne) of his Sabbath He looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth. (Hebrew יָצַק meaning "looks" in their windows Canticles 2.9 metaphorical for "providence") He makes their hearts singly (Hebrew רָחַץ and דָּבַק meaning "He forms each heart as a piece of pottery through time" and each is "unique") He is the mediator (champion in the midst) of all they do. The New Song shows the individual providence of God over each believer-indeed each created being.*

LOVE AND WAR

No king saves himself by the multitude of his forces *(A further sign that this psalm is one of victory over a large army) A warrior does not snatch himself out of danger by great strength. The horse is vain as a means of salvation. By its military panoply/harness it cannot keep saving itself from danger. Behold the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him; on those whose hope is in His covenant Love to snatch their souls from death and keep them alive in famine. The New Song sees God as the direct helper of endangered lives-now as in all past time.*

Our soul waits for the LORD *(Hebrew חָקַע "tied in a knot to") He is our help and shield. For in Him our heart rejoices. For in the name of His holiness we trust. Let Your covenant love be over us, as in like manner we keep on hoping in You. The New Song is adamant that in the knot of union between the LORD and the believer there is continual response of love*

THIRTY FOUR-THE PURSUIT OF GOD

Psalm 34 **Belongs to David. David claims it. It sums up David. He is a man "in pursuit of God"**

In the day that David changed his reason or as we would say "normality" before the face of Abimelech. *This psalm has an address based on the Hebrew word מַלְחָה which carries the idea of "wisdom" or "ability to discern" so that as most renderings put it, "David feigned madness". The spiritual lesson being adduced is found however when we read v.8, "O change your taste or behaviour or wisdom base and see prophetically that "the Lord is good"-that "the warrior who "flees for protection under His shadow". David presents his protective Lord under the figures of a "mighty rock" in a weary land; as a terebinth sheltering from the sun, as a calling caring feathered fowl ever comforting and protective-cf Psalms 2.12,5.12,7.2,25.20,31,2,37.40 et alii.*

MOVING WORSHIP 1-3

In that day Abimelech "drove David out" *(Hebrew צָרַח like a wife to be divorced from him and no longer welcome to enjoy his company any more or like cattle into the field. And David "went out" (Hebrew דָּלַק) to follow his way of life.*

I will bless the Lord at all times *(Hebrew תָּלַל) The poor or afflicted shall hear of it and shine for joy. The experience of David among the Philistines was a fabulous ancient testimony as to how to continue in worship not just at "opportune times" but in "bad times" which on balance this word often refers to-as well as in "happy days". His praise shall continually be in my mouth. The word "praise" (Hebrew לָהַל) has the connotation "celebrate/glory/show forth" and also means "make foolish" in that continuing to render praise or make a boast in sharp brilliant and sometimes repetitive sounds as "el el el" is so regarded.*

In the Lord my soul will glory-or boast. *The afflicted will hear and rejoice. Praise of God is contagious and when one in deep trouble praises God it encourages others in trouble. Continually make great (Hebrew לָדַק "the strength of cord or rope"-for example, "A three-fold cord") what belongs to the Lord with me, and we will constantly raise his name high together.*

PURSUIT OF GOD 4-7

I sought the Lord and He heard me, and freed me *(Hebrew שָׁלַח "to take off the shoe"-so the Lord gives rest and comfort to the soul) and delivered me from all my worries over the unknown (Hebrew רָחַץ the word "fear" here is built on "foreign" and "strange" things) They looked with respect to the Lord and made themselves bright and clean. They did not blush. This poor man called and the Lord listened and from all his fears of the strange He delivered him (Hebrew צָרַח-a word which with help brings conquest-so that the one helped or saved is overwhelmed by the riches of divine grace) David is saying that he is not just forgiven-not blushing-but He is positively overwhelmed by the Lord's gracious deliverance. His heart is won to God.*

The angel of the Lord inclines/pitches his tent around those who fear HIM and plucks them out *(Hebrew לָחַץ) Here we have a conviction of David that God himself in the form of an angel acts for those who fear him. We who believe in the incarnation have to appreciate that the ancient Jews believed in another and a repeatable miracle of interposition of Almighty God-deliverance executed personally by God as "the angel of the Lord". This is promised to Abraham in the phrase, "I am thy shield" and probably to be understood of his conquest over the kings. It is repeated in the case of Lot prior to the burning of Sodom. It is spoken of in the days of Isaiah when the Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold and was slain by the hand of the Lord. We who believe that the Lord took on flesh should be capable of projecting our principle "nothing is impossible to God" to include such executive actions. Spurgeon's understanding of the "angel of the Lord" as*

Christ pre-incarnate demonstrates he had no problem here. The lord was also personally present at the Passover to deliver with his "mighty hand" and that it was He who appeared to Manoah and who would grant to Samson the judge His Spirit in acts of deliverance.

ALTERED TASTE 8-14

Some have enough conscience to scare them in sin but not enough to save them from it Taste and see that the Lord is good, O the happinesses of the warrior who shelters under His protection The word "taste" (Hebrew *m[f]*) is as used in v.1 means "taste" or "discernment") So "to taste" is in the context of having a palate for other things and other ideas. The Spirit of God through David is inviting us to change our taste. Recently I managed to introduce chocolate to my grand daughter. She at first scorned it but within about a minute her taste buds told her it was good stuff. Our taste is changed by "seeing"-this word (Hebrew *har*) is related to the prophets-so our new palate for the Lord is encouraged greatly by scripture and the work of the Spirit of God. Another expression here-"O the happinesses of" shows that the multiple victories and deliverances of the one who shelters under the Lord's protection yield very high joy. Spiritual warfare may be hard but when souls are snatched "as brands from the burning" what joy results. Holy ones(Hebrew *cdq* not exactly "priests" but as we might say ""a believers' priesthood)-fear the Lord, for there is no want/diminishing to those who fear him. Thinking of Abraham's prayer in Genesis 18 there was "no diminishing" of saving on God's part though Lot's wife perished on her own part through disobedience. Again in Abraham's recovery of Sodom's souls and goods there was no diminishing. This principle is related to those who devote themselves to God-and so can be invoked by such as live devoted in the now of the New Testament era.

The young lions may take possession of prey and be hungry but those who pursue the Lord will not be diminished or deprived of all that is good.

The lion cubs in learning to hunt are starving. They get hardly enough to manage to continue and are at the mercy of the pride. Not so those who begin to fear the Lord. He takes care of lambs-cf John 20.

Come my sons, listen to me. I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Who is the man whose desire is days-one who loves days for the sake of prophetic visions of goodness/happiness/wealth/cheerfulness. Watch your tongue against evil and guard your lips from speaking any kind of fraud or deceit Here we see what scripture calls "guarding the vineyard" or life(Hebrew *rxn*)we are to take care for the fruit of our lips and tongue. Depart from evil and do good -seek peace (Hebrew *mml* C)and go in pursuit of peace This latter pursuit is of wholeness the competed temple of our lives-over which there will be rejoicing as in Solomon's day.

THE LORD OF CALVARY SEES AND HEARS 15-18

Trouble & fear are spurs to prayer. I thought my cause irremediable. He delivers beyond expectation-John Knox said "How lovely are the faces of the men who talk with God-lit with an inner sureness of the path their feet have trod"

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous. His ears are listening to their call for aid. God is watching and listening to those with a just or right cause. The word can mean "sincere" but those whom He has justified are people committed to a cause He began. The face of the Lord is against evil-doers to sever their memory from the earth. The righteous cry and He hears and plucks them from all their troubling and strange experiences (Hebrew *mtwx*) The Lord is near to those who are breaking their heart performing perfectly the salvation of the trampled or crushed.

Many are the calamities of the just but from the whole the Lord will perfectly pluck them out. **He keeps all his bones-not one is broken.** Calamity shall deal death to the wicked but those who hate the righteous shall be judged guilty. Hatred of the righteous is a gross failure-especially the righteous one who of whom a bone was not broken at Calvary. (John 19.36)The Lord sets free by paying the price (Heb *hdp*) the soul of His servants and none from the whole of those who shelter in Him will be guilty. Calvary like our problems was calamity & perfect salvation at the same time. Worship, pursuit of God, a taste for His peace and a walk & talk with God-these are life's rich spiritual mosaic

THIRTY FIVE-AVOID RETALIATION-CALL GOD IN

Inscription Belonging to David **PRAYER FOR NEMESIS FOR DAVID'S ENEMIES 1-8**

VENGEANCE IS GODS-SO GOD IS CALLED

David resorts to requesting the interposition of the angel of the Lord. He wants a complete rout like that on the eve of Exodus.

We have to understand that as with the Egyptians so David was incessantly pursued. He sought His Saviour-the Angel of the Lord Plead my cause O Lord against them who are at war with me or besiege me Bind fast small shield and large shield and rise in the house of my help. Send forth a spear and shut up my persecutors in battle. Say to my soul "I am your Salvation". Let those be ashamed and pierced/exhausted (Hebrew *mlk*) who seek my soul. Let them draw backward (Hebrew *gst*) and blush (Hebrew *rpj*-used of Mt Lebanon as the trees turn red)who devise evil for me. Let them be like the chaff before the faces of the wind (i.e. going this way and that) Let the **Angel of the Lord** expel them (Hebrew *hwd*) Let their path be dark as night and slippery (Hebrew *qlqlj* -a place of spoil or divided booty) and **let the Angel of the Lord pursue them** for "freely" or "undeservedly" they have hidden their net of destruction for me-without cause they have dug a pit for my life. Let destruction come upon them without their knowing it. And let his net which he has hidden catch himself -let him fall into that very destruction.

PREDICTED RESPONSE TO ANSWERED PRAYER 9-16

For this intervention-which was made for Moses and also for Hezekiah later and doubtless here for David too-if we are to understand that the upset of the Absalom conspiracy is spoken of David says "every bone in his body will say "thanks"

My soul will dance because of the Lord, and will rejoice in His salvation. **All my bones shall say, "Who is like the Lord!"** (The body has some 613 of them-the idea seems to be that every bone will move in joyful response-because it has been saved)Delivering the poor from him that is stronger. Saving the poor and the abysmally poor from the one who claims him as a slave.(Hebrew *lyg*)Violent witnesses rise up against me-they ask me things I do not know (Here is the pitiful interrogation of David under false charges put by "Hamas"(Hebrew) "violent" men. They return me evil for good. A condition of being devoid of company belongs to my soul. (David is forsaken-as a prisoner) As for me-in their sickness my clothing was sackcloth. I humbled myself in a fast of my soul-my prayer returned to my bosom or into my arms. As if a friend and a brother of my own I paced around-as mourning a mother I bowed low in the dirt But in my fall they rejoiced and gathered themselves-killers gathered themselves and I did not know it. In profanities belonging to circles of cake (feasts) gnashing they got their teeth into me.

LORD HOW LONG? 17-21

Lord how long will you see it -return my soul from their destructions-**my only begotten** from the shaggy young lions. I will give You thanks in the great congregation. I will praise You in the house of a strong people. Let them not rejoice over me who are perfidious enemies let not those who hate me gratuitously wink behind my back (*Hebrew xrq*) Against those who dwell quietly in the land **they devise big schemes** and opened their mouths wide against me-they said "Aha, Aha!" "Our eyes have seen!" *Here David speaks of his "only begotten"-(Jedidah) The treatment he speaks of was meted out possibly to Solomon and certainly to God's only begotten-Christ. It was indeed a daring scheme when Absalom set out to unset his noble godly father. It was a very big scheme when men set out to crucify the "only-begotten" of God.*

YOU HAVE SEEN IT LORD 22-26

LORD You have seen -don't just say nothing. **My Lord, do not be far from me.** Awake arise to my defence, O Lord my God in my contention. Vindicate me like your righteousness, Yahweh my God, and let them not rejoice over me. Let them not say in their hearts, "Ha!, we have our soul's desire" "We will swallow him up!" Let them be ashamed as one man/ unitedly and let them blush with shame and be hurt or treated shamefully who **did big things** against me.
The confidence of David that God has seen the scheming conspirators is assured and his prayer amid all this is that the LORD remains nearby throughout the terrible experience. The presence of the LORD just means so much to David and should mean everything to us too

A DAY OF PRAISE 27-28

There are no less than 30 individual requests in the psalm concerning David's enemies.
Let them shout and rejoice who have pleasure in my righteousness. Let them say continually, "The LORD be magnified-who has pleasure ("deep desire" -cf Isaiah 53.10 twice) And my tongue shall celebrate poetically (*Hebrew hgh* -"to meditate" or "sing poetry") Your righteousness all the day long I will continually praise You (*Here is "a day of praise" promised for the Lord's answer to this prayer. We can be well assured that there was such a day-and that this psalm featured in it.*

THIRTY SIX-FACETS OF LOVE'S JEWEL

THE TITLE

1. For the chief musician; for the servant of the LORD; for David. *The psalm belongs in three directions. It is one to which we are to be attuned like the musician, one which is geared to enable our serve; and one which come from a heart of Love-of David "The beloved".*

DAVID'S PERCEPTION OF THE WICKED 2-5

2 The rebellion-whisper of the wicked in the midst of my heart is whispering "There is no fear of God before his eyes. *From early times the Jews wore God's name on their forehead-as a sign of commitment. Those who broke from the covenant ceased to show diligence in this matter*

3. For he uses smooth flattering words about himself in his own eyes when he finds the deep iniquity that links to his attitude of hatred *He soothes himself although he has to admit to an attitude of hatred*

4. The words of his mouth are empty calamity (*Hebrew ma*) and high fraud (*Hebrew mrm*) He has ceased/desisted to give proper attention (to the things of God) and to do good *He has determined long we get evidence of it from his words and actions that he will not bother with God. His "drift" from the Lord had a deliberate beginning.*

5. He thinks out trouble upon his bed, He makes himself ready (*Hebrew bxn*) for a course of action that is not good. He does not avert from or reject the vane calamity. *His meditations and contemplations in private are of a sinister and evil sort*

GOD-THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE 6-7

1. COVENANT LOVE AND THE DEFENCE OF THE BELIEVER

6. Your **covenant love** (*Hebrew dsh*) **O LORD is in the heavens**. Your faithfulness to the clouds (*Hebrew qj v* the very clouds that brought the flood have brought life and nurture instead ever since.)

7 Your righteousness is as the great "pregnant" mountains (*Mountains Hebrew rrh* which swell in life production-with rivers and trees and verdure. *These are the same mountains which swelled up in the days of the flood-which deluge lies behind the contemplations of the psalmist in v.6*) Your power to judge and to defend is as the great deep-you save man and beast. *Here the psalmist thinks of the flood as it displayed the judgement of God-both condemning a rebellious race and saving a faithful believer and his family. God went to the trouble of designing a ship and giving Noah three able sons and His grace to prepare and build.*

2. COVENANT LOVE IS A GEM -ITS FACITS INCLUDE ACCEPTANCE ASSURANCE AND PREACHING

8 How rare (*Hebrew rgy* like a gem-stone, like the heavy marble of great houses) is Your covenant love, O God, and the sons of Adam flee for refuge to the shadow of Your wings. *This fleeing connected to "trust" is familiar in the psalms cf. 2.12; 5.12;7.2;25.20; 31.2; 37.40 and the "protective wings" re-appear in Psalms 18.11;36.8; 57.2;61.5; 63.8; 91.4.*

9. They are satisfied with the fatness of our house. **Kimshi** has a useful comment that "the fatness of a burnt offering was its acceptance." So in Psalm 20.3 the text reads "pronounce your offering 'fat'. The truth taught is that those who believe are assured and forgiven as they understand the Lord has accepted their offering. The whole offering of Christ has provided precisely this assurance as being acceptable to God. And they minister drink (*Hebrew qvt*) like a cup-bearer from the river of your pleasure (literally "**Eden**"-so those who know forgiveness can carry the joy and message of forgiveness to others -which is like spreading the joy and fellowship of Eden or paradise regained around)

10. For with You is the well of lives, in Your **light** we ourselves see light *A well is dug by some-one-but this great "flowing forth" is God's provision-the NIV uses the word "fountain"(though the Hebrew is not nna but nq. The "light" here is Christ as teacher and God's ways revealed by the "Word"*

3.COVENANT LOVE CONTINUES TO THRILL WITH PROMISE AND PROVIDENCE

11. May Your covenant love be long "trumpeted" for those who know you personally and your righteousness for the upright in heart. *The idea here is that the jubilee trumpet and the great ram's horn trumpet blast should be blown to commemorate and anticipate the LORD'S presence. It should also be blown to herald his righteousness which can belong to those who put their hearts "straight" with God. It is to be "planted along all the watered furrows" as seed. (The Hebrew word kvm signifies both "trumpeting" and "planting")*

12 Let not the foot of arrogance come against me and let not the hand of the wicked exile become agitated against me. *Here David prays that pride will not be able to pursue and cut him off nor the hand of wicked men send him to exile.*

13 There the workers of vain calamity have fallen. They are thrown down (as a wall) are unable to rise

THIRTY SEVEN-ANGER

TITLE "Belonging to David"

TEN COMMANDMENTS AGAINST ANGER 1-8

Anger is like a tiger. It is vicious. David enables the believer to get a true assessment of what annoys and of one's own needs to that distressful anger can be conquered

1. (A) Do not be make yourself hot with anger day after day with rivalry in the house of the evil doers. The verb *hrj* is used by Jeremiah of that foolish rivalry that would try to outrun horses or believe oneself a great king because one has a house of cedar as Jehoiakim built.

(B). Do not be hot with jealousy continually in the house of those who do evil or distort righteousness and turn from God i.e. the "depraved"

They shall fade like an enclosure of grass hastily; (*Hebrew hrh* a word used in *Psalm 147.15* of "God's word hastening to the ends of the earth") and like the first green sprout of the garden vegetable they shall wither. This was the effect of too much sunshine in Israel -it occurs because of frost in Britain.

2. Trust (*Hebrew hfb* means "fear nothing for yourself" "lay down as confidently as on your bed or on an armchair" or "cast care upon" as a believer) in God.

3. Dwell near the Lord and in neighbourliness with those around in the land and feed on fulfilled promises or faithfulness, that is, God's covenant and sureties.

4. Be continually allured on account of the love or delights of the Lord

(*Hebrew l[* means "from high above" or "upon" and in concrete terms is cognate to "a yoke") so the direction is to enjoy the close union one has with God in a covenant of love.

The result- quite simply your prayers will be answered. **"He will give you the demands, the things you beg or borrow, as health and wellbeing." The Lord is kinder than any husband-spouse.**

5. Roll or wheel, that is scroll out (*Hebrew llg*) your "journey"; your "course ahead"; your "homeward way" in union with the Lord

6. And trust in the union with Him (*Hebrew hfb* again-meaning "be confident in" or "hang on to") and **He will make a way** (*Hebrew hv[-to* "make out of the materials supplied") and **He will cause your righteousness to be published as the light or to be promulgated speedily** and widely understood and your body of law or judgement based on them to go forth as "double light" or noon day light (*Hebrew myrhx*). Noah was told to make "splendid light" for the ark.

7. Be silent as one belonging to the Lord

8. More intensively twist yourself or hurl yourself (*Hebrew llwhth* -leap with palpitating heart and stay or dally as one who is the Lord's)

9 (A) Do not become hot in anger in the house of him who prospers in his "course", because of the man/husband who engages in incest rape fornication or uncleanness (*Hebrew hnz*)

(B) Decline from breathless anger (*Hebrew hpr* "loosen the belt" "Undress from it" or "decline"="let it be the end of the day of wrath" or "put down your hands and stop fighting in anger" "Let go of it")

10. Forsake as a ruin (*Hebrew bz[*) the poison (*Hebrew hmj* for "burning wrath" like the heat of the sun is also the word for "poison")

David repeats his direction "Do not fret" or try to outrun others -it belongs to "the evil".

TEN STATEMENTS OF CONFIDENCE BASED ON COVENANT PROMISE

1. THE DAY OF RECKONING 9-15

The evil doers shall be cut off (*from the covenant*) and those who endure or bind themselves o God shall take possession of the earth. Yet in a little while there will be no wicked ones. You will keep trying to distinguish his seat and he is not there. (*So righteous ones live as umpires of the wicked*) The afflicted lowly or pious oppressed (*Hebrew hml*) will possess the earth. he will -and you will constantly delight yourself as in God so in the union with Him of great peace (*Heb ml c*) The wicked meditates mutters against the righteous and grinds his teeth against him.-**the Lord laughs at him** for He sees prophetically ahead to his day as it comes. The wicked have drawn sword and trodden on bow to flex it for the downfall of needy impoverished ones to execute the righteous ones of the way. *This appears as a statement fitting N.T. style persecution* Their sword will house in their own heart and their bows will be broken.

2. THE GOOD SCRAPINGS OF THE RIGHTEOUS 16-17

These are better than the wealth of the wicked for their arms will be broken but **the Lord liberally sustains** (*Hebrew Jms*) the righteous

3. THE LORD KNOWS THE DAYS OF THOSE MADE WHOLE OR ENTIRE (HEBREW Mmt)

Their inheritance is for an age/ever. Unashamed in time of calamity, satisfied in famine. The wicked will be destroyed, Gods enemies as the preciousness of vineyard/garden. They will waste as smoke

4. HIS BLESSED ARE THE POSSESSORS OF THE EARTH

The wicked gets a loan but does not repay. The righteous is a gracious one and a giver. The cursed are cut off

5. THE LORD IS A SUSTAINER WITH HIS HAND

From the Saviour are the paces/ march of Gods warrior are established. He delights in his course.

Though he fall he will not have been thrown prostrate or cast out (*Hebrew lwf* as if ruined by throw of lots) **I am a youth and I am an old man** and I have no experience or prophecy of the righteous deserted nor his seed praying for bread. All his days he is merciful-a lender and his seed belong to blessing.

6. THE LORD LOVES JUSTICE (CF EZEKIEL 21.27 SHILOH)

Escape from evil-(*Hebrew rws* as "cutting off a rotten branch") Do good and dwell in the land for the age to come. *David sees this long age of Messiah's reign in prophecy & testifies to it uniformly in his psalms-twice in this one alone*) The Lord does not forsake those who have ardour-or desire Him. (*Hebrew dsj* hence "Hasidic" -cf the prayer zeal of the Western wall) They watch themselves as to belonging to the age. The seed of the evil will be cut off from covenant. **The righteous will possess the land and dwell in it still on in time.** *This use of dl is indicative of the permanent final residence of people of faith in the last era of God's purpose for the earth.* The mouth of the righteous teaches practical wisdom, his tongue speaks of justice. The Torah of the Lord is in his heart and none of his straight goings shall waver.

7. THE LORD WILL NOT FORSAKE HIM IN THE HAND OF THE WICKED

The wicked watches (*Hebrew hpx observes from a tower-selects o closely spies on*) the righteous following him to kill him. The Lord will not forsake him nor agree he is liable to punishment in his house of judgment.

8. WAIT ON THE LORD, WATCH HIS WAY

He will make you rise high to inherit the land. You will see it prophetically in the cutting off of the wicked. I have seen the wicked terrifying others, pouring or spreading out like a battling tree (*Hebrew rza*)-happy fresh as oil (*Hebrew l[r*) He passed by and behold he is no more. I sought him and he would not show up. (Niphal)

9. MARK THE COMPLETE MAN AND BEHOLD THE STRAIGHT ONE

For the aftermath of that man or warrior are Shalom. But the sinners shall be made desolate together. *United in evil and destroyed in one swoop.* The aftermath of the wicked is cutting off from the covenant

10. THE YESHUAH'S OR SALVATIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS OF THE LORD

He is their help in the time of trouble (*cf Psalm 46*) **The Lord shall help them and cause them to flow away safe. He will deliver them from the evil ones and be their Yeshua. Because they shelter or take refuge in him** (*Hebrew nb nsj yk-David's famous "In God we trust" is mirrored here*)

THIRTY EIGHT-THE BURDEN OF SIN

A MIZMOR OF DAVID

David writes a poetic memorandum on the burdensome nature of sin. Out of the melting pot of sinful failure David explores his hurting soul in a sevenfold paean of melancholy relieved through being open to the God ward and man ward sides of healing. He develops a song to advise all and sundry of the burden sin imposes; achieving in verse what Bunyan succeeds in doing within his allegory, "Pilgrim's Progress" (The effect of the Hiphil infinitive construct r'kzh "Memory" in the title is "reference point(s) in the past of the acute effects of sin) There are seven personal experiences well understood and set to music here that that are sweet counsel to each and every afflicted soul. The Mizmor is quite simply a "Song" "a vessel of praise" containing the "balm & honey" of salvation & pure doctrine; the "spices & myrrh" of prayer and atonement; the "almonds and pistachio" of His watch-care and uniqueness-*cf. Genesis 43.11* and my comments on Psalm 20

(1) I AM TROUBLED 1-7

We don't need to go to the 51st to meet Uriah and Bathsheba and Nathan and a deeply penitent David and supremely the Lord his redeemer -these are the shadow realities he cannot get out of his mind. Waking and sleeping the offended ones live on in his conscious mind-his sin **runs through his head** in numerous psalms and here special lessons for the downcast are fresh for the picking.

The spiritual goes "Nobody knows the trouble I'm in, nobody knows but Jesus". David's opening ambit is **Do not reprove me mildly with words of altercation and punishment in your breaking wrath** (a judge's reproof)-anger that splinters rocks and could break his heart. **In the heat of Your rage do not keep chastising me as a child must be corrected by whip or cane** (A Father's correction). (The milder jky and the harsher rsy are in counterpoise here but David wants neither.) **For Your arrows penetrate deeply into me.** David has already suffered "flying wounds"-calamities that fell upon him like lightning, **and Your hand was coming down upon me.** The Lord has already immediately acted to rebuke through suffering and the effect is what we would call "depression"- feeling downcast.

There is no "closing up of my flesh" or wholeness (*Hebrew root mmt "complete" "perfect"*) **in my flesh from the face of Your anger** (This original anger is described by the Hebrew word mlz derived from the anger of the camel which "foams at the mouth"-hence fierce rage-like the Greek οργη) **There is no Shalom in my bones because of the presence of my sin. For my many vile acts continue to pass through my head** I prefer the present tense rendering-serving to show real trauma continuing and also to show full appreciation for he is far from misunderstanding his vileness -it is not "over his head" in any sense. **Like a debt I shall never repay they are heavy - way too heavy for me!**

My scars as they begin to join together are stinking fetid (*Hebrew vab*) **and running like wax candles** (*Hebrew qqm*) **from the presence of my folly of pre-eminence** (*Hebrew tlwa is a complex word of "being ensconced in power yet being foolish-combining as it does the notion of impiety and that of strength*) **I am guilty- ruined** (*Hebrew huf unites the idea of "guilt" with that of "ruin"*) **I acted corruptly destructively...** (*Hebrew tjv meaning I laid lives waste like war ravages a country.*)... **very much so. All the day I walk around turbulent, dull, feeling dirty** (*The Hebrew word rdq is famously used of the Kedar tribe with its black goat hair tents. It also describes "filth"; "days without sunshine"; and muddy waters*) **For my kidney muscles are full of burning inflammation and there is no wholeness in my flesh** (*We see the great candour of David as he shows us that spiritually he festers and physically he suffers through what we would call nervous reaction with physical stress and what seems an accurate description of urinary infection*)

(2) I AM FEEBLE 8-12

I am freezing cold and can do nothing (*The Hebrew verb is gap combining ideas of "chill" and "languor"*) **I am crushed-a very broken man-oppressed in spirit** (*Hebrew akd like one trampled down-very broken as crushed to dust.-broken with words or criticism like Job by Bildad in Job 19.2*) **I roar like a lion from the grief mingled with compassion in my heat** (*This psalm describes complexes of emotion. In this section alone there are three complexes of which this is the third-David feels deep repentance for his sin together with grief and sympathy for the doubly bereaved mother Bathsheba. His feelings find voice in loud cries of regret and pity-he is the worst example of a lion king*)

Lord all my past lust and present desire is before you. (*The Hebrew hwa is definitive of sexual desire -I refer to the words of Jeremiah in 2.24 "A wild donkey used to the wilderness sniffs at the wind in her desire. In her time of mating who can turn her away?"-David can truly say in the 51st "I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me"*) **And my sighing cannot hide itself from You. My heart palpitates** (*Goes quickly like a beggar saying "please, please, please"*) **My ability or strength lets me loose like a beast** (*David has no innate resources. The failure of his strength renders him as vulnerable as an animal free to roam*) **The light of my eyes is also gone** (*his joy had gone*)

My female loved ones and my caring friends stand to minister (*Hebrew dm[may indeed mean "stand" but I have chosen the broader meaning "stand to minister-otherwise they might just leave untraced*) **at a distance from the eruption on my flesh. My relatives also minister at a distance. Those who demand my life execute the laying of snares, those who study my downfall propose a plan against (many) lives. Some would be content by simple regicide-others want the end of a dynasty. They meditate deception in low voice all day long.**

(3) I was like a deaf man 13-14

-I was hearing nothing. I was like a dumb man-silent-I was not opening my mouth. It would appear David heard much serious plotting and acted circumspectly I am like a man who has not heard. There is no manifesting or appearance of hearing in my mouth Ever the acute thinker and artful actor David betrays no awareness.

(4) I hope in You O Saving Lord. 15-16

I have developed and caused my expectation to belong to you. "You will hear me O Lord my God" for I said to myself, "Lest they rejoice over me" "When my foot slips they will endeavour to become great through me" David still thought clearly and prayed steadfastly

(5) For I am ready 17

(Hebrew *mk* normally meaning "established" here means "made ready" like food being prepared) **to limp** (Hebrew [*l*] like one of those weary sheep David once lead over distance) **and my pain** (Hebrew *bak* destruction akin to vines destroyed by hail is always before me

(6) For I will make a lesson of my vile iniquity 18-19

(Hebrew *dgn* means "to solve the mystery"-so David tells all.-he is absolutely open and frank here. **I will be anguished or fearful for my sin** Fear will prevent its repetition as fear of burning keeps one from flames.

My enemies live on and they are strong. There are a host who hate me but deceive me that it is not so.

(7) I follow the Good One 20-23

Those who recompense me evil for goodness. They lie in wait because I earnestly follow the Good One. **Do not forsake me O Lord my God. Do not be far away from me. Haste to help me, my Lord, my Saviour.** Here lies the key and glorious crescendo. David lives a life of prayer. He values the presence of God. He uses an onomatopoeic word for "speed". The Greeks called the gods by the name *Θεοι* meaning "those who sped through the heavens" The Lord is quick to support (Hebrew "Help" *rz*) girding David against his enemies'

THIRTY NINE-LIFE IS AS A VAPOUR

1. PRODUCTIVE SILENCE. 1-3

This 19th Mizmor or song is dedicated to **Jeduthan the chief musician** to be used in praise of God-as a testimony to the way from "being a stranger to God through sin" to enjoying renewed fellowship. Before we consider the body of the psalm be reminded that a "mizmor" is a vessel of praise with three dual elements-(a) the "balm & honey" of salvation & pure doctrine; (b) the "spices & myrrh" of prayer & atonement; and the "almonds and pistachio"(the pistachio nut was unique to Syria and unknown in Egypt) of divine watch-care and uniqueness-they are always there! **Genesis 43.11 *trmzm***

The name Jeduthan means "praising" with a termination that lays stress on the notion of "loving to praise." As David breaks his silence the fire of his love for God who rebuked but spared him flames into praise and worship

I said to myself "I will watch my ways from sinning with the tongue" I will guard my mouth with a muzzle while wicked men continue in my presence David is doing exactly as Christ taught when He said, "Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they turn again and rend you." We should be ever aware of the danger of the public context of our words. **I bound myself to silence I was hushed from a good or pleasant or upright (man) or God in His glory or from personal cheerfulness.** (when expected to speak or sing or just smile) **My pain of mind and body troubled or disturbed me. My heart was burning in the midst of my festival or my terror or both the fire kindled or burned away (all this)** This period of silence and deep concern for his life ended it would seem at a festival David claimed as his own. If we go back to the appearance of the shepherd lad on the national scene you will recall that David's family had a festival which they solemnly kept. It was the great providence of God and provision for sin that drew David back. Others might point to a birthday or to the anniversary of enthronement but the other view is preferred

2. KNOWING YOUR PURPOSE 4-6

Lord cause me to have experienced my latest days The meaning of the Hebrew *hxq* is "my life as a whole", "the sum of my life". "the judgement on or decision about" it, even" the peeling off of it bit by bit" or "dividing of it up" in parts are allied cognates from *xxq* and [*xq*]

The purpose driven life gives us a useful take on our life's "end" in the sense of "what we are here on earth for?" and Rick Warren puts it succinct: For God's pleasure; For God's family; to become Christ-like; to serve God and to have a good news mission.

David further explains, **and what is the extent of my days** He is thinking about the divine parameters of life on earth. A man's life is at best three-score and ten or four score. Nothing has changed -life expectancy is still 78-9 in Britain today.

David through this period of silence and because of the severe threat to his life is praying in serious vein. He is asking God whether he will live to a ripe old age or whether he is near the end. It could be just one more song! It could be volumes more! **That I may know how forsaken I am.** The sense is how near "to ceasing to be something". **You have given my days as handbreadths and the duration of my life is as nothing before You** The idea of "handbreadths" is one of measuring out by the width of four fingers-so every day is from God's hand and it has four parts 6-9,9-12,12-3,3-6. Each day has four quarters and even the shortest life has numerous handbreadths. The idea of "duration" is that of a furrow smoothly ploughed -but the plough quickly slides to the end. Now David goes onto speak of three things settled like a pillar a throne or an arrow's course

Surely every man who establishes himself in office is all vapour or sinful folly. We cannot allocate our own span of days-to think we can be self-established in prominence is folly

Surely every man or warrior keeps on walking in a shadow. The shadow is that of death.

Surely he who will be angry and hot is a foolish sinner or vapour David sees anger as foolish and sinful-Psalm 38 deals specifically with its management. **He heaps us riches and does not know personally who will gather them**

3. PROFITING FROM DIVINE REBUKE 7-11

And now, Lord, what am I waiting for? My expectation or delay belongs to You. "Snatch me from the danger of every transgression" Jonah was snatched out of danger from the sun by God's provision of the gourd in Jonah 4.11 and Joshua the high priest was snatched like a "brand from the burning" Zech 3.2 and Shadrach Meshech and Abednego were snatched from flame in Dan 3.29. The Hebrew verb *lxn* "deliver" has an uncommon association with deliverance from fire. The sin of "anger" like every sin is a fire which will consume unless we are saved from the heat of desire that allures the heart. **Do not make me** (Hebrew *mic* constitute me permanently) **the butt of scorns and stigma of a fool. I kept mute I did not open my mouth for You did it.** The Lord may have allowed that but only for a season-but what David is doing is not blaming God for reducing his reputation-but or snatching him from sin's dominion and giving him this most coveted of victories over self and sinful desire. **Remove (the infliction of) Your (calamity, Your touch (or its far-reaching effect), Your (mark of) smiting from me. I am simply finished** (Hebrew *jlk*) **by the strife or rough treatment of your hand** (Hebrew *hrq*)

4. THE END OF ESTRANGEMENT 12-13

In the house of Your argument against vileness you will chasten or censure a strong man You bring to a complete end his delight to others, his desirability, and his beauty. It is settled -every man is a vapour-Mark that.

Hear my prayer O Lord and give ear to my cry for help. Do not be silent or deaf to my tears Though David has spoken in a surly manner to his Maker he implores the Lord to see his tears. Tears speak of repentance and a genuine change of heart. I am a foreigner with You, a settler making my home with You and enjoying Your fellowship as all my fathers were. David is reduced to confessing a serious breach in His fellowship with the Lord. Turn Your eyes from me and I will be "cheerful" before the beginning of my going to be no more. Here David uses a concept not familiar to peace-loving people. He asks God to "cease looking into his face as an adversary and warrior who any moment will strike a deadly blow." (Hebrew h[v]) The look of such warriors is deadly but short-lived before one or other falls. David knows that any continuance of God's anger and he will go hence. David has a deep desire to live "cheerful" This Hebrew word glb speaks of a New Dawn and David is looking to a new day of right relationship with God and teaching us that only by Repentance will such a day open to the sinner.

FORTY: PREACHING

MIZMOR NO.22

Here is another special presentation basket of praise. Here is "prayer" for David is Prayer personified, "Many O Lord my God are your wonderful works"; "I delight to do Your will O my God"; O LORD You know I have not hidden Your righteousness"; Do not withhold your tender mercies O LORD"; "Be pleased O Lord to deliver me"; "Do not delay O my God". Here is watch-care, "Let your covenant love and Your faithfulness always watch over me"; "He brought me up"; "He head my cry"; "He opened my ears"; "The Lord thinks on me". Here is atonement, "Behold I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I come to do Your will O my Strong One" Here is the message and balm of salvation, "I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation" Here we find uniqueness, "Let those who love You say, "The Lord is great"(Like a chain that extends long) Here is the doctrine of divine sovereign guidance which prepares, establishes and firms up our path of life "He brought me out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay and He set my feet upon a rock"

GENESIS FEATURE.-HAPPY HUNTING GROUND OF THE MODERN MUSICIAN 1-3

I waited and waited for the LORD. He inclined and heard my roar David spent time with God. He felt the LORD "extended His tent" (Hebrew f[m]) and knew his hunger for God's answers. He brought me up also from a pit of destruction from the heavy clay. He raised my feet on to the rock-establishing my prosperous way. We see David look back to the experience of Joseph who was lifted as the youth of his home to be second in Egypt exactly as David, a ruddy youth, was lifted and made king of Israel. He gave my mouth a New Song -praise for Our Strong One. Many will see it prophetically and be in reverential awe and trust in the LORD David prophesied that what happened to David-his testimony- would become known in future and lead hosts to faith in Yahweh.

SUCCESS AND A BLESSED WAY AHEAD

Blessed is the warrior who places the LORD as his confidence or security, and does not turn back his face at fierce ones and from those who turn away to deceit. Many O LORD my Strong One are Your works where You were Yourself the miracle (Hebrew Jytalpn "wrought in God")and Your thoughts toward us (Hebrew JytbvJ[m] meaning "the detail of the embroidery of your thoughts")beyond detailing to You (Hebrew Jr["Setting in array" meaning they are more than a battle host) If I should celebrate and speak of each in turn the body of them is beyond counting David continues his simile acknowledging that such is God's detailed care that it would be like celebrating every soldier who fought in his army and giving an encomium to each if he were to creditably praise God's detailed care.

CHRISTOLOGY AND THE GREATEST MIRACLES

David by the Spirit of God brings to his New Song the most special Christological truth of scripture.

You did not delight in sacrificed animals and meal or gift offerings. Ears that belong to me You have made listening ears. (Hebrew tyrk meaning "to dig" or "open up") David is not speaking of his own ears else instead of the Hebrew "ears that I can claim heed my doctrine or Your truth" yl myza he would write yza "my ears. He is speaking of all to whom the truth he sang was being revealed even 1000 years before Christ)Burnt Offering and Sin Offering You did not demand. There and then I said, "I am coming. In the scrolls of the book it has been written about me" "I delight to do Your will My Strong One" Hebrew literally, "Belonging to the acts or offerings of Your pleasure My Strong one I am delighted" The hyphenation of "Acts and Will" in the Hebrew text sharpens the idea of pleasure arising from "association" "And your Torah is in the very centre of my bowels of compassion or inmost soul."

PREACHING

I have continually preached (Piel) righteousness in the great congregation (Hebrew "A vast gathering called together" or "the congregation of a great One". David himself is saying that at several festivals which have to do with offerings he laid stress on the centrality of the One who was coming to fulfil all righteousness. This also holds of Christ who at several Jewish festivals as recorded by John preached the truths of righteousness to the people. To doing this He testified before the High Priest.

Behold, I have not restrained my tongue, You, O LORD know that. Neither David nor our LORD "restrained" themselves or "curtailed" their ministry to reach and teach others. Preaching must continue while lives are in the valley of Decision. I have not veiled your righteousness in the midst of my own heart. I have spoken luminously of your truth and salvation I have not hidden Your covenant or Your faithfulness from the great assembly David had not concealed any part of his message. The Hebrew word dhk means to "put stibium (eye-shadow) on" to conceal wrinkles and make the eyes look brighter. Paul once said, "If our gospel is hid it is hid from those who are lost" 2Cor 4.3. The principles of Covenant Love/Grace dsj and Faith/Faithfulness tma are the most vital principles for people to know. They exceed and outmode all legal sacrificial shadows and David was clear that he had made them quite salient.

GENESIS FEATURE-DAVID PLEADS LIKE A "PRINCE WITH GOD"

O LORD do not withhold Your tender mercies from me Hebrew alk meaning "imprison me from them" Your grace and Your faithfulness will always shape my life. The pottery of our lives is in the hands of God and it is grace and his faithfulness that develops our character. For evils such that there is no counting them have circled me Hebrew ppa like wheels or revolving months My

iniquities have removed me from a place and I cannot see ahead Hebrew *ymyc sin has* "removed the landmarks" and David cannot see the way ahead for his life. Their body is more than the mantle of my head and my heart pains me. Be as one pleased to snatch me to safety, haste to help me. Let them blush from disappointment and be ashamed together who seek to take my life in war. Let them retire of themselves/fall back and exhaust (or wound only themselves) who sought to do me evil. This is often called "imprecation". David is actually quite gentle in many of his prayers directed at stemming evil. He recognises that sin has a self fulfilling evil harvest. Let them be desolate/astonished because of their "supplanting" in utter shame who say angrily "Ah, Ah". The king might well have slain every perpetrator of rebellion but in character with the LORD he pardons the attempt to replace him as king Let all those who seek you rejoice and be glad ,let those who love Your salvation always say, "The LORD be magnified in the future" The Hebrew *ldj* derives from the strength of a wrestler and takes us back to Genesis 33.24 David wishes the name of the LORD-the God of Jacob -to be given greater honour as time goes by. I am afflicted and abysmally poor yet my Master gives precious time & thought in detail about me (as a damask weaver would to the pattern he creates) You are my help and my deliverer my God -do not delay! David desires a resolution of the national division and a return to quietness. In 2Samuel 21 we read of 3 great battles still to come against Philistinia and then the song which is Psalm 18 signalling the quietness that David sought. The present prayer was timely for one of Goliath's brothers almost got his revenge but the "lamp of Israel" was kept safe and this great prayer answered

FORTY ONE-POVERTY

TITLE To the chief musician-a mizmor of David's

A TOOL FOR EXPOSITORS

This is the 20th song or vessel of salvation & doctrine, prayer and atonement; divine watch-care & uniqueness.. Please check for each element in every Mizmor

Let me do the spadework in this instance for the reader.

Salvation: "I said Lord Show me grace" v5

Doctrine: "Blessed is he who prospers or puts first (cf Isaac Gen48.14)the poor-he will be healed"v1-3

Prayer: "Lord ,be merciful to me. Raise me up. I shall repay my enemies with peace" (*Heb mlv*) v10

Atonement: "My man of peace whom I trusted, who ate with me, made his heel great against me" v.9

Watch-care: "The Lord shall watch Him and he shall live Gods life blessed on earth "v2

Unique Lord: Blessed be Yahweh God of Israel from the age and unto the age. Amen, Amen" v14

A VEHICLE OF DEVOTIONAL THINKING

This psalm is the 20th Mizmor. The reader will develop his or her love for the word and understanding of the word, the psalms and David himself and become more like the "man after God's own heart." You stand to profit much from writing down examples of these truths in each "song" and preachers would do well to weave them into the theme of the psalm as they expound its truth.

1. MERCY (GRACE) AND THE POOR 1-3

Blessed or "happy" is he who attends to the poor The Hebrew verb *lkC* is used when Jacob prefers Ephraim to Manasseh by crossing over his hands. Gen48.14. It is used of "prospering" in 1Kings 2.3 where David directs that an obedient Solomon will prosper. The poor are those who are thin or have long hair hanging down (Hebrew *ld*) because they have no money for extras.

The Lord delivers him in a day of trouble or evil. The word for deliver is *flm* which is used for "an egg slipping out." Here is the central issue both of the exodus and of the Passion of Christ. Israel slipped out of Egypt like a new-laid egg slipping from the hen. Egypt made a song and a dance about it indeed-but that is not the analogy-it is the "consummate ease" with which a new nation was born. In the resurrection of Christ the Lord slipped out of the tomb so quietly and secretly that none saw it happen. So both Jew and Christian quite rightly use the egg as signifying a "New Nation" and "New Life" coming so quietly by divine sovereign grace upon the scene of history. Ultimately Christ is the one who is aware of the needy ones and delivers them though every benefactor treads in his footsteps.

Yahweh will watch him and He shall live God's life and be felicitous on earth. The nature of watch-care is "to watch a garden" "to mind cattle" "to guard property" (Hebrew *rnc*)

You will not give him into the soul of his enemy. This is a spiritual consideration. God's own will not become a gift overwhelmed in the plan or ploy of the wicked mind. **The Lord will support him with food on his bed of occasional illness** God "feeds" the soul and renews the body. When we are on the bed with curtains around (Hebrew *cr*)there is loneliness, concern. This *hnd* like the monthly sickness of a woman shall pass. **All his lying down as to die or mourn in pain weariness You will change-when worn out or weak so that others stroke the face hlj** God will change as clay is altered by the seal of the owner *kph*

2. MERCY (GRACE) WITH THE LORD 4-6

I said "LORD be gracious to me. Heal my soul for I have sinned against You. My enemies are saying "evil belongs to me. How long until he dies and his name passes? And if my enemy comes for a number of times to look at me he speaks "noisy" words. A home-coming of vile evil takes possession of my heart. My enemy goes outside broadcasting the matter. David seeks grace. He could see this new brand of scheming talkative Job's comforters far enough. These are glib fellows whose coarse words sum up in easy speak "You'll be better soon-cheer up-you've nothing to worry about."

3. FRIENDS WITH NO EXPERIENCE OF MERCY OR GRACE 7-9

All who hate me unite to constantly use enchantment against me. This is much more than what we call "a whispering campaign" (Hebrew *cj*). Here are people combining with Satan against the king. **They are all against me devising evil against me. Belial (An affair without profit) is laying siege to his house.** The ongoing nature of the event respecting Uriah and the ongoing revolt of Absalom were deservedly compared to sieges. The word "Belial" Gesenius finds is from Hebrew *ylb* and *l* [y] though *l* [] and *l* [b or lb i.e. Bel of Babylon) means "Ball is the Most high"(14 OT uses-Also NT 2 Cor 6.15)I think Gesenius is too isolated and in discord with usage to be relied on here. I believe Satan as an enemy was behind this siege. **Now he has laid on his bed he will not add to rise again.**

Even the man o my peace in whom I trusted who ate my bread has made great his heel against me.

This is quoted by Jesus in John 13.18. David had a companion who turned informant and this psalm as given under the Holy Spirit's inspiration relates exactly the atonement scenario of Judas Iscariot's infamy

4. GRACE AND UNEXPECTED REQUITAL 10-13

But You Lord raise me up and I will pay them with peace. In this I will know You are pleased with me. For the enemy will not sound the trumpet over me. *Here is ml v requital and spiritual victory* As for me you hold me fast in my entirety. You plant me as a tree or a column before Your face for ever. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from the age to the age Amen and Amen
Here is another clear testimony to "eternal life" within the psalms. David anticipates Messiah's reign. What "peace"-larger than his godlike heart. The king will be benevolent in recovery as with Shimei. But a far greater peace thrills the soul of this saint-the peace of the golden age.

THE END OF BOOK ONE

**Bob Coffey L'shuvkha Marya
To the glory of the Lord
Aramaic Bible Companion**